

ON MATRIMONY.

AN EPIGRAM.

Tom prais'd his friend, who chang'd his state,  
For binding fast himself and Kate,  
In union so divine;  
"Wedlock's the end of life," he cried,  
"Too true alas!" said Jack and sigh'd:  
"I will be the end of mine."

THE  
EARL OF DESMOND;  
OR  
O'BRIEN'S COTTAGE.

AN IRISH STORY.

(Continued from our last.)

"Most certainly," said the colonel. "You well know, my beloved Frederic," (softened both by grief and affection) "that your happiness is the first wish of my heart; and it was in pursuit of that, I made the solemn promise I did to poor Arnold; for, in the fulness of my soul, I thought we could do no less for a poor destitute good girl, who has neither friends or fortune, than to take her to our protection; and in what other way could we do it? And I doubted not, Fred, you would have loved her, even if it had been only from pity, as I did.—But," continued he, after a moment's pause, observing Frederic continued silent and gave no encouragement to his hopes, "I am determined to provide for her. I will immediately set about the arrangement of poor Arnold's affairs. I will comfort the afflicted girl, and I am not yet without hope of accomplishing my original design and promise."

So saying, he left the room, in which Frederic continued for some time to sit, ruminating on his uncle's wishes, and feeling sincerely hurt that he had not the same avidity to comply with them, in this respect, as he had with every other he ever formed. At length, he walked out, still reasoning on the extreme selfishness of his disposition, and the unaccountable obstinacy of human nature in general; and a thousand times asked himself, why, having merely seen a form which pleased him, should make him so utterly repugnant to fulfil the ardent desire of the person he loved best in the world.

Unobservingly his steps were bent towards the place where Mrs. M'Donald took her daily walks; for, contrary to the custom of the climate, she persevered in declaiming, that exercise in a moderate degree was necessary to health, and could not be omitted or exchanged for any other without injury. How far she was right in this opinion must be decided by the physicians; but herself being a hardy Scotchwoman, and the few young ladies she instructed, being, as before stated, of European parents, this kind of management succeeded perfectly well, and their continued good health encouraged her adopted style of conduct.

Frederic had soon the pleasure of seeing her approach. He addressed her with his usual politeness, and for a short time walked by her side, but his eye in vain searched for the object which continually engaged his attention—he her sought was not of the party.

His spirits, before depressed, now sunk so low that he found himself undispersed to continue the conversation, with Mrs. M'Donald, with his accustomed attention and vivacity; therefore soon found an opportunity of taking leave, with more than usual ceremony, to apologize for the shortness of the time he had bestowed upon her.

Never had a day appeared so long to Frederic Fitzhugh as the present. He scarcely saw his uncle the whole of it, as he was at lieutenant Arnold's looking over papers and arranging his effects. The deprivation of his uncle's society, with the melancholy cause of it, he wished to argue himself into a belief of the reason of it; but the disappointment of not seeing the admired object of attraction with Mrs. M'Donald most certainly was the principal reason of his present dejection.

The next day the colonel was again engaged in the occupations of the former, and Frederic longed for the hour in which he hoped to be repaid for the loss he had sustained the day before. At the accustomed time he met Mrs. M'Donald, but again the idol of his ideas appeared not. He now felt consciously assured Mrs. M'Donald had perceived his warm admiration of her pupil, and had on that account prevented him the pleasure of seeing her. Provoked at her cautious false delicacy and ill-nature (as he termed it), he soon left her, without those

marks of respect he was accustomed to show; and returned, much piqued, to his own apartment, where every reflection was engaged in plans to discover who she was that engrossed his every thought; and by what means he might make himself and his wishes known to her.

From these flights and reveries he was recalled by colonel Dunscomb, who, entering his room, informed him that day was set apart for the funeral of Arnold, which he begged he would attend.

Frederic said he wished to show every mark of respect to the memory of one so highly esteemed by his uncle, and would certainly be with him at the appointed time.

"God knows," said the colonel, musing, "how that poor girl will support this day, no persuasions or entreaties can prevail on her to decline attending the funeral rites of her father. You will see her, Frederic, and if your heart is not made of marble, she will cause it such a pang for her distress as you have never yet felt, and make you prefer her to every other woman you have yet seen."

Assured as Frederic was of the impossibility of this assertion, he avoided any further argument with the colonel, and separated from him to prepare for the last awful visit to the house of Arnold.

At the appointed time the melancholy procession took place—the daughter of Arnold, as chief mourner, supported by the colonel, followed the bier of her father, with the firm steps of an heroine, habited in the deepest mourning; a veil, which nearly reached the ground, concealed her emotions from the prying and strict eye of curiosity, and she listened to the awful services, and subsequent distressing ceremonies, in silent agony; but when concluded, nature could struggle no longer, and, with a deep groan, she fainted away in the arms of colonel Dunscomb.

Frederic, whose tenderest sentiments were called forth for a gentle female, suffering under such a calamity, and whose efforts to conquer or conceal her emotions had greatly attracted his observation, flew to her assistance; and, removing the veil for air, his astonished and delighted eye saw the fair form before him he had been so greatly enamoured with at Mrs. M'Donald's; and whose absence now was so fully and amply accounted for.

The extreme assiduity of his efforts for her recovery, and the more than common solicitude he expressed on her account, attracted the earnest attention of the colonel, who greatly rejoiced in the accident this mournful occasion had furnished; for he doubted not the goodness and humanity of his nephew's heart had been deeply affected by it, that it would create an interest no other incident could have so forcibly caused, and he drew from it the happiest inferences.

On the recovery of Ophelia, the most pleasing explanation took place; the worthy colonel was rejoiced beyond description to find the lady he had so solemnly (though rather prematurely) engaged his nephew should marry, was the one of his decided choice; and, well knowing the virtues of both, he augured a long succession of felicity to all parties.

As soon as propriety permitted, after the death of lieutenant Arnold, the union took place between Frederic and Ophelia, and certainly none ever bore the prospect of more lasting happiness. The colonel appeared to renew his youth again, by the pleasure he proposed to himself in a numerous race of nephews, and nieces, whom, he often fervently prayed might inherit all the perfections of their parents, whom, in his partial eyes, had no equals. But this prospective of felicity, which the colonel had in idea, was not verified: for the happiness of the young couple received its first interruption by the death of this truly amiable man, who, in less than a year after marriage, died suddenly of an apoplectic fit, having just lived long enough, after that event, to congratulate them on the birth of a beautiful boy.

This was so very severe an affliction that it was long before they recovered it, particularly the affectionate Ophelia, who regarded and esteemed the colonel as a tender father.

Frederic succeeded to his uncle's command; and the lenient hand of time was beginning to restore their usual tranquility,

when their sorrows were again renewed by the loss of their beloved son, who died in the convulsions frequently attendant on infancy.

About this time colonel Fitzhugh received the letters from England, which conveyed his father's wishes for his return. Conceiving change of climate and situation would facilitate the restoration of their accustomed happiness, he proposed to his beloved Ophelia a return to his native country, to which request she joyfully consented, having often had a strong desire to visit the island which had given birth to her parents. The colonel, having obtained a long leave of absence, embarked, and during his passage, the adventures, losses, and troubles befel them which have been related.

Dennis O'Brien had been several hours at work in the morning before colonel Fitzhugh left his humble apartment. When the farmer saw him he warmly enquired after his health, and that of his lady's, and expressed his fears that the poor accommodation they had had prevented them from resting well.

"My wife now reposes," answered the colonel, "though she had a restless and uneasy night; but I hope she will be refreshed by the sleep she has now fallen into, which we must be careful not to interrupt."

—The farmer sincerely wishing the lady might be perfectly recovered, employed himself in assisting his wife to provide the best breakfast they possibly could for their noble guests. During these preparations the colonel enquired respecting what means for travelling the town of Clonish afforded; and, being satisfactorily answered in these particulars, by which he found he could there have a proper conveyance and good horses, he determined, as soon as breakfast was over, to ride there, and give the necessary directions for their proceeding on their journey the next day, judging it proper Mrs. Fitzhugh should have at least a day's rest before she proceeded on further her journey, which he intended to finish two days.

Mrs. Fitzhugh soon awoke, and to the distress of her husband appeared extremely ill. This she evidently wished to conceal; she, therefore, arose and sat down at the breakfast table; but, her indisposition rather increasing than abating, the alarmed colonel eagerly enquired what medical persons resided near enough to be immediately consulted.

Judy O'Brien eagerly recommended the doctor who attended her, who, she assured the colonel, was not only the most skilful man in the world, but one of the best, as he would attend the poorest person in the neighbourhood by night or by day, and without fee or reward, if they were poor.

The colonel, rejoiced to find a man of abilities and humanity was near, dispatched O'Brien instantly for him, with orders likewise to provide for him many necessary comforts, which their present habitation was deficient in.

Whilst O'Brien was thus employed, colonel Fitzhugh sat by the bedside of his beloved Ophelia. Distressed and agonized, he anticipated all the bad consequences which might probably ensue from the fatigue and terror she had undergone; and, almost worked up to despair, by imaginary apprehensions, he thought every moment an hour till the return of O'Brien, particularly as Mrs. Fitzhugh appeared rather to grow worse. O'Brien, who was himself greatly alarmed, had made the best of his way, and had represented the case to the doctor as admitting of no delay; he had, therefore, returned with him, and fortunate was it that the gentleman now introduced by O'Brien, if he was not what Judy in her zeal had represented him, "the most skilful man in the world," was, nevertheless, a man of great professional knowledge, humanity, and good sense.

His name was Maynard: he had been in an extensive line of business in Dublin, where, having brought up a young lad he took a fancy to his own profession, he employed him in his shop. The regard he had first felt for this young man increasing, he at length took him in as partner, and, putting the utmost confidence in him, concealed no part of his affairs from him. The unworthy partner repaid this extraordinary friendship by endeavours to injure his benevolent patron by every means in his power, in hopes to get the business all to himself; but finding that extremely dif-

ficult, he contrived, by forgery, to draw from the funds all the little fortune Maynard was possessed of; and, with the money thus obtained, he escaped to France. The deceived Maynard caused no pursuit to be made after the worthless, ungrateful man, his kindness alone had brought forward from the greatest obscurity; but, calling all his creditors together, and settling his affairs to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, he left Dublin, and soon after fixed himself at Clonish, where living was remarkably cheap, and pursued his professional studies with the highest reputation and honour; and had been but a short time established there when he heard his ungrateful partner had died in the greatest distress, having lost almost all he had robbed him of at a gaming table. The kind heart of the forgiving Maynard gave a deep sigh when he heard this, to the recollection of the disappointment his hopes in this young man had experienced; and, from that time till the present, had lived as happy and respected as the lot of human nature admits of.

Doctor Maynard being now taken into the apartment of his patient, the anxious colonel watched his looks, but could gather no great encouragement from them. When his visit was ended, the colonel followed him out of the room, and, with faltering enquires, begged to know his opinion; and whether he did not think it proper Mrs. Fitzhugh should be removed to a more commodious apartment.

Maynard told him it was utterly impossible the lady could be removed; that, from her symptoms, he greatly dreaded a premature labour, and he wished every possible preparation to be made for so probable an event, though he should certainly, by every means in his power, endeavour to prevent it; though he greatly feared, in this respect, without effect. He added, he would now return home, and send many little things for the accommodation of Mrs. Fitzhugh, from his own house. "Happy should he be," he continued, "if she could be with safety conveyed there, where she might be better lodged, but that it would be at the utmost risk of her life to bear the slightest motion."

The afflicted colonel entreated the doctor to act in every respect according to his own good judgement, but to let nothing be spared which could possibly conduce to her relief or comfort.

The Doctor then left him, to make those arrangements which he well knew would be soon required.

The illness of Ophelia rapidly increasing, the doctor's predictions were now found by all to be verified. Judy O'Brien having so young a child was a very fortunate circumstance, she was very neat and careful, and had a decent change of clothes for her child, a part of which were now produced; and doctor Maynard soon after arriving with a car, loaded with a good bed, blankets, and every refreshment and necessary the time permitted him to collect together. The apartment of Mrs. Fitzhugh soon bore a very improved and respectable appearance; and the doctor encouraged, both the suffering lady and the colonel to think the matter light and trifling, which would at some future time serve to amuse them, and make them laugh in talking over the awkward difficulties they now experienced.

Mrs. Fitzhugh, who was by nature of the most condescending and easy disposition, was fully content with her accommodations; highly pleased with her doctor, whose assiduous attention she with many expressions of gratitude remarked; and quite delighted with the honest simplicity and tenderness of Judy O'Brien.

(To be continued.)

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