

## AT THE SIGN OF THE RED TRIANGLE.

Now, Terry Kane was a troublesome fellow: his Company Commander said so, and it is not for me to contradict him. And, besides, it were idle to deny that Terry was wont to parade bare-headed before the C.O. with disturbing frequency.

As a rule, however, his offences were slight and usually derived from a disease of the throat—a peculiarly irritating dryness—to which he was subject when the battalion was in rest billets behind the line. In the trenches he was a good soldier, always ready to do his full share of the work on hand, and never prone to “windiness.”

Also, he was a noted bruiser, with a host of triumphs in the ring to his credit, and the sledge-hammer punch that was latent in his calloused left had brought honour to the battalion on numerous occasions. Withal, he had a heart as simple as a child’s and as kindly as a saint’s.

If you should wonder how I—a mere writing fellow, whose pen holds no such punch as Terry’s wondrous left—came to be on terms of such intimacy with this famous Bohemian and scrapper as to be his confidant in the delicate

matter hereinafter related, I may tell you that it was on account of a favour I once did for him.

Over the destinies of the kitchen in a villa situate in placid Pollokshields there presides a bright-eyed Irish lass who is happy—or ought to be—in the name of Monica Mary Boyle. (I know about the brightness of her eyes, because I have seen their glory reflected in the stamp photos. that Terry carried in the envelope of his pay-book.) It was to be near this syren that Terry forsook his native Kinsale in pre-war days, and settled (as far as one can settle there) in the wilds of Pollokshaws.

Once, when I was on Quarter-Guard at Annequin, I beguiled the tedium of the hours by writing a set of very amorous verses to Miss Monica Mary. They were written to the commission—at the pleading request—of Terry, who happened to be a prisoner in the Guard Room just then; and he copied them, signed his name at the foot, and sent them to his divinity. They were very bad verses, but Terry was delighted with them, and, being unable to express in words all the gratitude he felt, nearly crushed my hand to pulp and smashed my shoulder blades with all the shakings and slappings that he bestowed on me.

There was only one line in the poem with which he found fault, and as luck would have it

that was a remarkably good line—out of all measure the best in the poem. Also—(you may have guessed it)—I did not write this line: it was one which I stole. I needed something to rhyme with “night”—and because it tickled my fancy to see it glowing amid my own turgid verses, and because my plagiarism, had it been known to Terry and Monica Mary, would have been reckoned by them of no account, I wrote this—

“A lovely lady garmented in light.”

But Terry was doubtful of it: as applied to Monica Mary it seemed to him to imply that she did not wear clothes, and he was sure she would deem this an “ondacent” suggestion. And, tasting again the questionable line in much the same manner as a professional tea taster seeks the full and true flavour of tea, a brilliant poetic inspiration seized Terry: he begged my permission to change “light” to “white,” and this being granted (the which I had no right to do), he made the necessary alteration and his happiness was complete.

Thereafter I was a pal-in-particular to Terry, and hence I was privileged to learn all the circumstantial details of the *affaire* which I set down here.

Fickle Terry!

. . . . .

The scene was St. Omer; for all this happened during that happy time when the Glasgows were on the Lines of Communication.

You are to imagine me, then, one evening seated in a corner of the hut that was my billet, patiently struggling through a bewilderingly colloquial French novel with the aid of a cheap candle and a cheap dictionary whose luminary powers were equally feeble: when suddenly, the door at the farther end being opened, there entered Private Terence Kane in a highly exhilarated state. There was no doubt of his mental exaltation for he was informing everybody within a half-mile radius, in booming tones that impinged on the ears with the force and effect of a series of shell bursts, that when he told them how bee-yu-tiful She was, they wudn't belave him. And then launched, roaring and irrelevant, into a ditty of the trenches—

“ We march up the Yellow Road night after night,  
We're shniped at from left an' we're shniped at  
from right,  
An' if somethin' don't happen an' that very soon,  
There'll be nobody left in this blinkin' platoon.  
Tra-la-la, tra-la-lee,  
An' it's all for the sake of our King an' Countree.”

“ Terry, Terry,” I remonstrated, “ for heaven's sake shut up or the whole camp will

know you're drunk, and you'll have the Orderly Officer buzzing about the hut."

"Dhrunk!" said Terence; "'tis the way that ye're thinkin' I'm dhrunk?"—He paused a moment, then threw back his head in a bellowing laugh.—"Faith, an' mebbe ye're right. It's full I certainly am—fuller, I'll wager, than yez ever was in yeer life. I've had——" he ticked off the various items on his fingers—"I've had eleven cups av tay, three sangwidges, fourteen morsoh de cake—as ye were!—morsoh de gattoh, four packets av woodbines, an' seven tunes on the pianny—all at the Red Triangle Pub. But dhrunk! Smell me breath if ye like. I've never stepped wan fut out av the Y.M.C.A. hut this night an' I'm no liar 'at says ut."

He seated himself on his roll of bedding that was beside mine, and, "Howly Saints!" said he, "it's me kilt 'at's chokin' me in the middle."

I saw that he spoke truth, and his next words informed me that his exhilaration was the effect of something as potent to stir a man's senses as red wine—namely, the light that lies in a woman's eyes, that lies and lures.

"Have ye seen the new shop-gyurl they've been afther gettin' in the Red Triangle?" he asked.

I shook my head.

“Faith! an’ she’s the swatest little bit of stuff I’ve seen outside av Blighty. Three shillin’ I’ve spent this night just for the privilege of astin’ her for cups of tay an’ gattose (*gateaux*), an’ seein’ the smile lickin’ roun’ the corners av her pretty lips as she handed me the stuff. An’ she was smilin’ goodo whin I come up to the counter for the umpteenth time, believe me.”

“But, Terry,” I expostulated, “this will never, never do. What about Monica Mary? Surely you are not going to desert her, and transfer your allegiance to this other fair charmer? Fie on you, Terence Kane!”

“Desartin’ is ut? An’ I’m thinkin’ ’tis the way Monica Mary is desartin’ me. Hasn’t she wrote to me that she’s just afther bein’ to the pictures wid another block—an’ him wid three stripes to his arrm? A lousy Sarjint, an’ him not even a soldier neither—just an A.S.C. man! —To blazes wid Monica Mary, I says, an’ I’ll be afther gettin’ you to write some more potery wan av thim days to the little shop-gyurl in the Y.M.C.A. An’ now I’m gettin’ down to me scratcher to drame av the saucy little darlin’, so there!”

Thus sudden was it: in the time that it takes a smile to lick roun’ the corners av two pretty

lips, Terry was off with the old love and on with the new.

Fickle Terry!

On the following evening I visited the Y.M.C.A. hut, ostensibly to buy Yellow Perils, but really to see for myself the "new shop-girl" who had charmed away Terry's susceptible heart. My visit occurred during one of the busy hours, and ere one could win to a position of vantage at the counter a long and tedious wait had to be endured. For it was necessary to take one's place in a long queue that extended from one end of the building to the other; then, having eventually achieved the premier place in this procession and been supplied at the pay box with tickets to the amount of one's intended purchase, one became last man in another queue of even greater length and whose forward motion was still more sluggish, for it washed past the sales counter.

From my position in the queue I turned my head this way and that, craned and strained to catch a glimpse of Terry's syren. At last I saw her—filling mugs with tea from a big urn. And it was instantly borne in upon me that my Irish friend was a man of discernment and taste in the quality feminine.

Of a surety she had charm and loveliness of an uncommon kind. She had an air of distinction—the appearance of being possessed of a strong and original personality: she was different, yet it's impossible for me to convey to you in what her difference consisted.

Her hair was the colour of a new penny after its first lustre has been dimmed; and it was cut short—it was no more than three inches long, I'll swear—and was so deliciously fluffy that it deliberately enticed a man to—— As you were! That's nothing to the point! And a fringe of it hung, comb-like, low over her forehead—somewhat in the fashion that you may see in Japanese dolls.

Her face was a perfect oval, and there was more than a hint of firmness in the chin: and her complexion was of a rosebud delicacy.— But, bless my soul, I know that that conveys nothing, for you and I have a bowing acquaintance with a hundred damozels of whom that might be a Police Court Records description.— Still, there was something different. Perhaps it was in the nose of patrician mould, or in the frank grey eyes with the lazy drooping lids: or maybe it was in the generous, full-lipped mouth with its slow creeping smile that dimpled one soft cheek and revealed the flashing whiteness



of her even teeth. She wore a blouse of champagne colour with a V-shaped opening at the neck, and in contrast her throat was like a pillar of virgin snow. Yet her blouse had nothing to do with the "difference," for later I was to see her in an ordinary housemaid's overall or wrapper, and, if possible, she looked then even more charming and distinctive: "more arty," Gussie called it.

But there! I must relinquish this job of auctioneer's clerk that I've been imposing on myself: one can't really make an impressive inventory of feminine charms. They are much too subtle and illusive to be recorded ledger fashion. A poet may find subject for an ode in his lady's eyebrow: your auctioneer's clerk can only record the colour, texture, and number of the hairs that compose it. An unsatisfactory business at best!

I was almost at the counter when I felt a tap on my shoulder, and, turning, saw Terry. He had a strip of purchase tickets in his hand.

"Och, Leo," said he, "there's no need at all, at all, for ye to be waitin' here in this line. It's a slow business an' a waste av valuable time, an' ye wantin' to be gettin' on wid yeer letter writin' an' readin'. Let me take yeer place an'

I'll do the waitin' an' will get yeer fags for ye."

Of course I saw his little game, but I yielded him my place in the queue and stood by his side. He manœuvred for position at the counter, so that he might be served by none other than The Lemonade Girl (which was the sobriquet that the boys later attached to her).

Her face lit up with a friendly smile and her lips twitched as with a secret sense of humour when she saw Terry standing before her.

"Back again?" she queried.

"Yes, ut's the forgetful cratur ye'll be thinkin' me," said Terry, with the blandness of an Imperial ambassador, "but 'tis the way I clean misremimbered whin I was gettin' the tay an' gattose that there was somethin' else I was wantin'."

"And what can I give you now?"

(There's no use in talking about it, but her smile really was charming and her voice inordinately soft and mellifluous.)

"Well, an' phwat wad ye be afther advisin' me to buy now, do ye think?"

She turned her head away in soft laughter.

"Oh, but—really, you know—how can I tell you that?"

"Well, how wad it be if I took some shmokes?"

“Cigarettes or woodbines?”

“Och, I’ll be takin’ a packet of woodbines for mesilf an’ some yellow perils for me potery writin’ pal.”

“That all?”

“Well,—let me see now—yes, that’ll be doin’ in the meantime. Maybe ’tis the way I’ll be remimberin’ somethin’ else later, an’ I’ll come back whin ye’re not so busy.”

“All right!” Her face betrayed her good-humoured merriment. “There’s still plenty of stuff left to buy.”

“An’ ut’s me ’tis the bhoy for the buyin’ av ut. Bo’ jour, maddymoselle.”

I withdrew to the farther end of the hut and Terry joined me.

“Isn’t ut that she’s the swatest thing yez ever saw?” he asked, in an intense whisper.

“She certainly looks very nice,” I said. “Something of the artist in her, I fancy.”

“Artist, is ut? More likely angel, I’m thinkin’. Did ever ye see the beat of her figgur? Did ever ye see a waist that so tempted ye like? So nate an’ trim ut is—an’ just the span of a man’s arm. Yirra, yirra! but she’s the very spit of them gyurls ye read about in books an’ never see.”

And much more to the same effect.

In a little while Terry betook himself again to the end of the queue and worked his way slowly up to the counter, when doubtless his conversation with the bun-distributing divinity followed much the same intimate and intellectual course as before.

So it was on every succeeding night. Terry worshipped regularly at the shrine of the Red Triangle, and the other men, seeing only his lavish purchases of food and fizz, marvelled at his insatiable hunger and thirst, yet knew not that these were of the heart.

And he made progress with his wooing. Often during the quiet hours, when there was no press of purchasers, you might find Terry, leaning over the counter, engaged in cheerful, confidential talk with The Lemonade Girl; and the laughter with which it was punctuated seemed to indicate that it was highly agreeable to both.

One night he informed me jubilantly that after much coaxing she had consented to call him "Terry," and had told him that her name was Kathleen—Kathleen Arnold.

"An' a swate an' pretty name ut is," said Terry, "but none so swate as Kathleen Kane wad be. God be wi' the day!"

He told me, too, that he had invited her on more than one occasion to "promenade" with him, but she had always been unable to accept because her free time was so very limited.

"An' it's a howlin' shame how that poor gyurl's worked," he added. "All thim hungry soldiers pesterin' the life out av her for fags an' tay an' what else. Shure, they shud be afther larnin' to reshtrain their appetites. I'm in the mind to write to 'John Bull' about ut."

And once on the occasion of an entertainment given by the Lena Ashwell Concert Party the battalion was tickled by the spectacle of Terry striding up the aisle at the very moment of beginning, and seating himself in a vacant chair beside The Lemonade Girl—who, moreover, welcomed him with a smile. An usher, in syllables more terse than tolerant, informed Terry that that row was reserved for the Y.M.C.A. staff, and would have removed him—but a word from The Lemonade Girl set matters right, and Terry remained beside her throughout the concert.

The influence of this amatory episode on Terry's work as a soldier was most marked: for, as you will understand, a sentence of C.B. would have been highly disagreeable and inconvenient for him just then. Hence his every

duty was performed now with the maximum of efficiency, and he was ever the cleanest and tidiest man on parade and the most punctual. And I have heard him shout of a morning, when the signal for the "Fall in" sounded, "Come on, you fellas! Putt down them papers an' get fell in: the whussle's went"—thus usurping the duties of the Corporal.

The Company Commander noted the improvement, and complimented Terry upon it. "Keep it up, Kane," he said, "and who knows how soon promotion may be yours? You're a first-rate soldier, you know, when you try, and if you'll only keep out of trouble there's no reason why you should remain a private much longer."

"Glory be!" said Terry, in relating the incident to me, "I see meself a Sarjint soon—wid three stripes on the wan arrm an' *trois* on t'other. The matther of a pound a week I'll be makin', an' there wad be a big separation allowince for the missis. Yirra, yirra! 'tis the way I'll be astin' her soon to marry me."—His brow furrowed in annoyance and perplexity.—"The divvle av ut is that there's always so many sweds trapesin' round that Red Triangle, an' shure a man doesn't want to propose a solemn thing like a marriage right forninst his pals an' wid them all listenin' an' lookin' on."

But the opportunity that Terry desired came soon.

. . . . .  
A boxing tournament had been arranged, and joyous expectation and excitement filled the minds of the troops stationed at St. Omer. For, of all the forms of entertainment arranged for the benefit of Mr. Atkins, none so appeals to him and attracts him in such large numbers as this.

Now, at previous tournaments Terry had always been the bright, particular star of the Glasgows, and never yet since his arrival in France had he tasted defeat. But of late a certain Company of the A.S.C. had been boasting of the prowess of a champion of theirs, and had been clamouring for a meeting between him and Terry—welter-weights both.

“What! A fighter in the ranks of the A.S.C.! *Allez!* You’re kiddin’.” Thus our fellows when they heard of Terry’s rival—in their tones all the fine contempt that the infantryman habitually assumes when speaking of other branches of the Service.

But here was the opportunity that all had been waiting for, and an effort was made to arrange a match between Terry and Binthorn, the A.S.C. champion, at the forthcoming tourna-

ment. To the consternation of everyone concerned Terry declined to consider the proposition.

The battalion gasped, staggered, and collapsed with its head between its nerveless hands. Terry!—Refuse a scrap!—The battalion confessed itself to be botched, blowed, and bewildered: fozzled, fed-up, and far-from-home.

But Terry vouchsafed no further explanation than—"I'm off the fightin' biz—in the meantime. If yez wants to fight the A.S.C. galoot, fight um yeersilf. I'll not meet um."

The Sports Committee coaxed him—the Subalterns pled with him—his Company Commander spake soft sawder unto him—his pals argued with him and finally abused him—all in an effort to get him to reconsider his decision. Terry did not budge. Nor did he relent when he saw the other boxing men being relieved from all duties and parades, and in happy freedom devoting themselves to a course of special training for the forthcoming event.

One night I talked to Terry about it.

"You know, Terry," I said, "when you go to the tournament you'll just be thirsting for a scrap yourself, and when you see that A.S.C. bloke putting his opponent down for the count you'll be mighty sorry you didn't stand up to him."



“An’ that’s just phwat I won’t be,” Terry snapped, “for ’tis the way ’at I won’t be at the toornymint, see?” Then he leaned forward and became confidential. “’Tis not that I’m afraid of the blighter: I’ve stud up to better nor him in me day an’ come out on top. But—’tis becace av Kathleen that I’m afther refusin’ to fight.”

“Has she made you promise to give up the game, then?”

“Sorra a bit av ut! But—well, yez see—I towld ye I couldn’t get the chanst to putt the question to her, an’—now I’m makin’ the chanst. On the night av the toornymint every swed in the place will be to see the fightin’, an’ the Red Triangle will be as desolut an’ desarted as No Man’s Land in the grey av the mornin’. That’s my chanst, an’ I’m afther takin’ it. When all youse fellas is watchin’ wan man bangin’ the guts out av another, I’ll be standin’ agin the counter tellin’ Kathleen the tale, an’ hearin’ her say ‘Yus.’ Och, yirra, yirra, ’tis the great game entoirely!”

When the eventful night arrived I went with others of the boys to the great building, formerly a riding school, in which the contests were to take place. During the first hour the

boxing was not of an exciting nature, and several times I found myself wondering what success Terry was meeting with in his wooing—or if at the crucial moment he had fuked his proposal.

The third contest had just ended when there was a sudden commotion and a hubbub of voices at the rear of the hall. Men turned in their seats to see what was the matter. Somebody was forcing his way through the huddle of spectators who stood in the side passage. "It's Terry Kane," I heard men say. And there were shouts of "Come on, Terry, get into the ring!"—"Good old Terry-lad!"—and the like.

It *was* Terry. He emerged suddenly from the press of spectators, and ran up the passage leading to the ring-side. A little group of officials gathered around him, and Terry was seen to be talking to them with wild and excited gestures. The party retired to the contestants' dressing-room, Terry still in frenzied gesticulation. And a few minutes later an officer mounted to the ring and announced that the man who was to have met Binthorn of the A.S.C. had withdrawn, and that in his place Private Terence Kane of the Glasgow Highlanders would meet Binthorn in a 15 round contest.

A deafening uproar followed—cheers and more shouts of "Good old Terry!"—"Stick it,

Terry-lad"—"Carry on, the Glasgows!"—that gradually subsided to a buzz of excited conversation. Opinions, emphatic and lurid in their expression, were loudly proclaimed, and bets were freely exchanged—the odds on the whole being against Terry, for many even of his most ardent supporters were violent in their denunciations of his folly in entering the ring without any preliminary training.

I thought of all the bottled fizz and the buns and the woodbines he had consumed during the past few weeks, and I too feared for his chances. And all the time I kept wondering what had happened. Had The Lemonade Girl "turned him down?"—or had he funked the proposal?—or had the lure of The Game proved stronger than the lure of The Sex?

I was still puzzling when a burst of cheering told me that the fun was about to begin, and looking up I saw Terry and Binthorn, with their seconds, scrambling through the ropes into the ring. The usual preliminaries were gone through, and when eventually the two men squared up to each other a hush descended on the onlookers, who sat eager-eyed, tremblingly and delightedly expectant.

At the end of the sixth round Terry's supporters were at the nadir of sick disappoint-

ment and despair. Terry was already a beaten man, and they knew it. He was in no condition for fighting; and at the very start seemed to have lost his head: he hit wildly and with terrific energy, indulged in aimless rushing tactics, and had no thought to protect himself. Now he was badly winded, and showed signs of the severe punishment he had received—and Binthorn had taken his full measure and was craftily playing with him.

In the seventh round Terry, acting on the advice of his second, remained on the defensive: his left eye was closed, and his right cheek glistened where a considerable patch of skin had been scraped off: his breathing was heavy and laboured—he exhibited symptoms of “grogginess.” The spectators—those of them who were not too fed-up to say anything—opined that it was all over but the shouting. It had been a disappointing contest.

And then a strange thing happened. Terry was at bay in the centre of the ring, his opponent circling warily around him, feinting now and again, twice getting in light taps on the body. Suddenly the A.S.C. man stepped in with a straight drive from the right: Terry side-stepped—his left hand jabbed viciously upward, the weight of his whole trunk behind it: the blow

caught the other on the point of the chin, and almost simultaneously Terry's right swung round and landed on the jaw. For perhaps two seconds Binthorn swayed dizzily—his hands dropped to his side—then he pitched forward and lay still.

“One—two—three—” the referee counted the seconds aloud, but his voice was lost amid the hubbub of excited ejaculations that arose from the crowd.—Then a sudden breathless silence broken only by the slow dropping words, “Eight—nine—ten.”—And then confusion and clamour indescribable.

It was not until long after “Lights Out” that I got a chance to have a confidential word with Terry. On his return to the hut he was the centre of a noisy, admiring crowd, and every incident of the fight was rehearsed a hundred times with adjectival art, sexual and sanguinary. The criticism, comment, and ejaculatory appreciation continued even after the hut was in darkness and the speakers rolled in their blankets, but at last there was silence.

Then—“Are ye awake, Leo?”—I heard a whisper come from the adjoining bed.

“Yes. How do you feel now, Terry?”

“Och, not so bad. But's the bee-yu-tiful face I'll be afther havin' to-morra—like a night-

mare rainbow. I've got half the carcase of a bullock on my eye now."

"Whatever made you fight to-night?"

A pause, then—"Shure, 'tis the way I got a knock-out blow mesilf to-night, an' I had to be givin' ut to another. . . . I feel the betther av ut. I've got the madness out av me system. An' it wuz a lovely scrap."

"Tell me what happened."

"Ye'll not be for belavin' me if I tell yez. 'Tis the strangest story 'at ever I larned."

"Of course I'll believe you. Carry on!"

"Well, I wint to the Red Triangle, an' as I was afther prophecyin' it was almost deserted, an' I had Kathleen all alone to mesilf. We stood talkin' acrost the counter for a while, talkin' about everythin' except the wan thing. Always whin I thried to spake the wurrd they changed in me throat to somethin' else. But at last I got started, an' thin there wuz no stoppin' av me. The wurrd rowled out like the Liffey in flood, for I towld her all that wuz in me heart to say. At first she smiled as though she found it amusin', an' thin she grew as sarious-like as though she'd just larned av the death av a frind, an' her face wint as white as a Summer cloud. Thin the colour come creepin' into her cheeks again like the red into the sky av an evenin'

an' all the time her eyes wuz lowered modest-like.

"Whin I had finished she sez all trimblin' an' slow-like,—'I'm sorry,'—she sez, an' thin stopped.

"'Shure, there's nothin' to be sorry about,' sez I, 'whin a man tells ye he loves ye.'

"'Tis not that,' sez she. 'But—but—oh, I can't explain it,' she sez, 'but 'tis the way I can't be marryin' ye.'

"'An' why not?' sez I. 'Is ut that I haven't enough money?'

"'An' at that she breaks in sudden-like, 'Oh, 'tis not that at all, at all.'

"'Becase if ut is,' sez I, 'it's me 'at'll be drawin' a pound a week soon, an' ut's the fine big allowince ye'd be havin' as a Sarjint's wife. An' think av the glory av ut,' I sez. 'A Sarjint's wife! Faith, that's the next best to havin' the three stripes on yeer arm yeersilf. An' ye wudn't need to wurrk behind a counther no more.'

"'I know 'tis a very great honour,' she sez. An' thin suddintly she putts one av her little hands on mine as it lays on the counther, an' I looks an' sees 'at she's all trimblin' an' agitated-like. An', glory be to God, her eyes wuz shinin' wid somethin' that wuz first cousin to tears.

'Oh, Terry,' she sez, 'I had no idea that you felt like that. Indade, I didn't. I thought you just wanted me as a frind,' she sez.

"'Shure, an' I do,' sez I. 'Tis the quare man 'at wud be wantin' to have his wife for his inimy.'

"'Oh, but don't yez understand,' sez she, 'I can't be yeer wife.' An' thin her voice became as soft an' tender an' plaintive as a bird's song in the evenin'. 'Terry,' she sez, 'Terry, I like ye treminjous. I like ye betther nor annywan I've met since I come to France, an' 'tis the way I look on yez as wan av the dearest frinds I have in the wurld. Ye do belave that, don't ye?' she sez.

"'Shure, an' if ye say ut, thin ut is so,' sez I, 'an' I shud like to meet the man 'at says he don't belave yez.'

"'Well, ye are my frind, Terry,' sez she, 'an' I want ye to kape on bein' ut. But don't ye see——' and she hesitated, an' I saw she didn't like to say ut—'don't ye see—'tis not the way I'm in love wid ye, an' so I couldn't be for marryin' av ye?'

"'Yirra, yirra!' I sez, 'is that all ut is 'at's throublin' ye? Shure, ye can kape an aisy mind on that same score, for ut's me 'at has enough love to be doin' the two av us. An' whin we're



married I'll be afther givin' ye some av my love, an' thin ye'll have some, yet my store will be no less—which is a quare thing, but ut's thru.

“An' thin before she cud say wan wurrd more, five or six fellas come thrampin' into the buildin', an' she turrs her head away an' blows her nose an' dabs her eyes wid her hanky. An' whin they'd got their tickuts she goes to the other ind av the counther to sarve thim. An' just a moment afther the postman comes in an' dumps some letthers on the counther beside me. Me eyes fell on the top wan av thim, an' I saw—for ut wuz in a big, bowld handwrite—that ut wuz addrist to 'Lady Kathleen Arnold.'

“Now, that seemed to me to be a funny way av addressin' an envellup. Sometimes whin I wuz writin' to Monica Mary I wud address the envellup to Miss Monica Mary Boyle, but oftener than not I'd lave out the Miss as onnecessary. But I'd never thought av writin' Lady Monica Mary, though shure I knew she wuz a lady an' not a gintleman. An' thin it suddenly struck me 'at 'Lady' was parrt av Kathleen's name—'at ut must be hers by right an' wasn't just stuck in, the same as you stick in 'Mister' whin ye're in a good mood an' writin' to a pal. An' I knew it wuz only the gintry 'at had 'Lady' stuck afore their names.

“So whin Kathleen—I mane whin She come back, I sez to her very solemn-like, I sez, ‘Is that letther mint for ye?’

“She looked, an’—‘Shure,’ sez she, ‘ut is.’

“‘Thin ye belong to the gintry,’ I sez, ‘for who ever heerd av a shop-gyurl which wrote “Lady” afore her name?’

“She seemed took aback for a moment an’ as though she didn’t know phwat to say. Thin sez she, ‘Me father’s the Earl av Mintshire,’ sez she, ‘an’ I’m the Lady Kathleen Arnold. But there’s nothing in that. Ut makes no differ to our frindship.’

“‘An’ why have ye not towld me this afore?’ I axes.

“She laughed narvous-like, an sez she, ‘Well, it seemed so trivvle,’ she sez, ‘that ut wasn’t worth the tellin’. An’ besides,’ she sez, ‘I’m Miss Arnold here. That letther is from a frind who has forgot my inshtructions.’

“I wuz angry wid mesilf by this time for makin’ a fool av me by fallin’ in love wid wan av the gintry, an’ becace I wuz angry wid mesilf I wuz angry wid her too an’ every wan else beside. So I sez to her sharp-like, ‘An’ phwat right have yez,’ I sez, ‘to be maskyradin’ here as a shop-gyurl whin ye’re no shop-gyurl at all, at all? Kapin’ some pore, desarvin’ cratur out

av a job :—ye've a divvle av a cheek,' I sez, ' an' I'd say ut to yez even if ye wuz the daughter av the Earl av Hell hisself.'

" ' An' ut's a divvle av a mishtake ye're makin', ' she sez. . . . Well, annyway, if that isn't phwat she said it's phwat she mint. . . . ' 'Tis the way I'm not doin' it for money at all, at all,' she sez : ' it's worth more nor money just to have the privilage av doin' some little thing for all youse boys phwat's doin' so much for us.'

" I thought over that a while, her not spakin' more, an' it seemed to me 'twas the strangest thing I'd ever heerd. But I saw she wuz spakin' the truth as far as she knew ut, an' man or woman can do no more nor that.

" ' An' if that's the way ut is,' I sez, ' I'll be afther astin' yeer pardon for makin' a bluddy fool av mesilf an' for the cheek I gave yez a minute back. Ye can forgit all I've said to ye to-night, but remimber that ut wuz all throe.'

" Thin I made to lave, but she called me back an' shuk me hand, an' towld me very narvous an' trimblin'-like 'at she wuz very proud av the honour I had done her, an' that she wud always reckon my decleration av love wan av the greatest honours in her life.

" I left the buildin' in a ragin', tearin' madness wid mesilf, knowin' mesilf for the biggest

fool in the Army. To put mesilf up among the gintry! To be thinkin' 'at the daughter av a Earl wuz a shop-gyurl! To be astin' a aristocracy to be my wife! Yirra, yirra, but it bates me!

"I wanted to kick mesilf, to punch the foolishness out av mesilf, to sit on me head for a quarther av an hour or two: but not bein' a contortionist I couldn't do none av thim things to me satisfaction. An' thin I bethought me av Binthorn, an' I knew he wuz the wan man app'inted by Providence to give me the lickin' I desarved. So I ran to the boxin'-ring as hard as though I wuz bein' shniped at wid minnies (*minenwerfers*), the officials fixed up the match all right, an' the rist ye saw for yeersilf.

"I didn't count on batin' Binthorn. I knew I wuz in no condition for a fight, but I wanted a good hammerin', an' faith! I got that same. An' I wanted to work off some av the bad timper 'at wuz fizzin' in me veins like ut wuz the ginger pops I've been dhrinkin' thim last three or four weeks. I didn't desarve to win: on p'int I wuz licked proper: an' I wuz lucky in gettin me left in as I did. . . . But ut wuz a pretty punch, wuzn't it? A cleaner knock-out than Kathleen—I mane Her Leddy—

give me. Shure, I'm falin' as happy now as a pig among muck."

About a fortnight later a large flat parcel was delivered to Terry, and on being opened it was found to contain a photograph—by Madame Lallie Charles—of an exquisite lady in a shimmering satin gown. On it was inscribed—"To Terry, best of pals,—from Kathleen."

Enclosed was a note to the effect that the writer was returning to England almost immediately, and hoped that Terry would keep in touch with her: and an invitation was extended to Terry to visit Mint Castle whenever opportunity occurred, where he would be received as an honoured guest. On the same day Terry received from England a sumptuous parcel, richer and more varied in its contents than any man in the platoon had ever received, and in it was a card inscribed thus—"To my daughter's friend, with warmest thanks for his kindness and courtesy to her.—Mintshire."

"Glory be!" said Terry, "is ut me 'at's mixin' wid the gintry, or is ut dramin' I am? 'Mintshire,' he signs hissself, just as though I wuz an old pal av his: it's like him shlappin' me on the back an' callin' me 'Kane, owld chap!'"

Then his eyes wandered again to the photograph and its vision of feminine daintiness and sartorial splendour.

“ ’Tis the way I’ll be kapin’ this,” he said, “ an’ if Monica Mary does be ever castin’ her Sarjint in me face afther her an’ me is married, I’ll be tellin’ her about the Earl’s daughter what was a flame of mine, an’ showin’ her this here. Yirra, yirra! that should be puttin’ the proper awe av her hushint in her. An’ mebbe ’tis the way ’at Monica Mary an’ me an’ the childher will be callin’ at Mint Castle an’ havin’ a dish av tay an’ a palaver wid owld Mintshire an’ Kathleen — I mane Her Leddy. Uh-huh! Pootater (*Peut-être*) ”

I took that to mean that Terry had restored Monica Mary to her former place in his affections. Which was as it should have been.