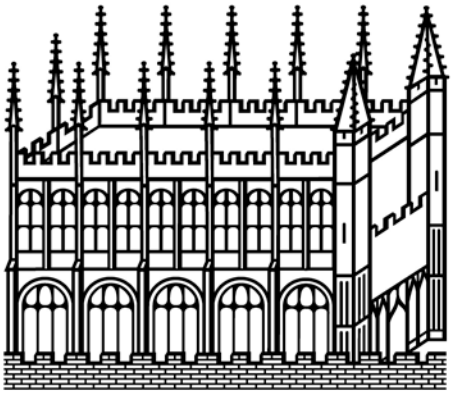


Shamrock
Leaves.

SHAMROCK LEAVES.

W. Monkhouse, Lith. York.

THE OGHAM STONE. *Page 28.*

SHAMROCK LEAVES.

DUBLIN,
Published by J. M'Glashan.

SHAMROCK LEAVES;

OR,

TALES AND SKETCHES OF IRELAND.

BY MRS. HOARE.

Quivi lieto ride il
bel smeraldo.

TASSO.

DUBLIN:

J. M'GLASHAN, 50, UPPER SACKVILLE STREET.

LONDON:—PARTRIDGE & OAKEY.

MDCCCLI.

PREFACE.

THE following Tales and Sketches originally appeared in various periodicals, and, by the kind permission of the Editors, are now, for the first time, republished in a collected form.

This may serve to account for their desultory nature: for their many defects and shortcomings I shall offer no excuse, believing that if they are worthless it would be of no avail. Even the apologetic genius of Cabeb Balderstone failed to transform a salt herring into a substantial banquet.

At the same time, I trust the British

Public will not utterly despise these few wild "Shamrock Leaves," gathered with a loving hand from the famine-stricken fields of my native country.

Monkstown, Co. Cork,
February, 1851.

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SHAMROCK LEAVES.

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY.

"THE beautiful city!" Such is the appellation bestowed on CORK, fondly by her inhabitants, often ironically by her visitors, who, regarding the regular irregularity of the streets, where scarcely two houses can be found alike, and the absence of handsome public promenades, are apt to pronounce our town a mere vulgar depot for beef and butter, unworthy to be washed by the silver ripples of our lovely river. But we Corkagians are far from acquiescing quietly in the censure. On the contrary, we boldly maintain that each man, building his house of that shape and size which best please him, with a lofty disregard of his neighbours' tenements, just gives a proof of independence, originality, and national invention. Why, each crow in a rookery builds his nest of form and dimensions exactly resembling those of his forefathers; and we would ask, are men, and Irishmen in particular, to exercise no more architectural ingenuity than mere crows?

Another point in which our city claims a high and proud pre-eminence above its fellows, is the exceeding and excelling dirtiness of its streets. A caustic critic once designated the productions of a certain prosy writer "a continent of mud." Well might the simile have been suggested by the smooth dark brown profundity of that "slough of despond" which fills our widest thoroughfares at the close of what we—amphibious southerns that we are!—choose to call "a fine soft day;" but which beings of less decidedly aqueous habits might not improbably stigmatize as a determined and unintermitted down-pour of rain.

Then we have what a provincial bard happily styles "our pepper-box steeple," and which, towering above the classic precincts of Blackpool, is, as the following anecdote will show, entwined with the fondest affections of our townsmen's hearts.

Some time since a gentleman was coming from Bristol to Cork in one of the steam-packets. The deck was crowded with steerage passengers; and as the weather was fine, our friend amused himself by going among them, and entering into conversation with those whose appearance happened to interest him. One man who was leaning over the bulwark especially caught his eye. He was a tall fine-looking fellow, with an expression of humour in the "turn of his mouth" (to use a significant Iricism), and a quick glance of the eye, which, together with the careless *degage* air of his costume, marked him a denizen of the Green Isle. It was no difficult matter to draw him into conversation: he had been ten years out of Ireland, he said, living in London, and working at his trade

as a journeyman shoemaker; he had realised some money—"a nate little penny"—with which he intended to set up in business for himself in the neighbourhood of his native city. He had an old father and mother there, that could never content themselves with the "clane cowld English ways;" and there was a pretty black-eyed neighbour's daughter, whom he had left a wild light-footed *colleen* of fifteen, and who at the mature age of five-and-twenty was still unmarried, all for the remembrance, as Corny Casey more than insinuated, of a certain interchange of rings, and weeping promises, which took place ten long years before, one moonlight evening of July.

"I wonder will she know me," soliloquised Corney. "'T would take a dale anyway, to put her purty eyes and roguish laugh out of my head; and, plase God, 't won't be long before we're man and wife. She's as fond of the old people, and they of her, as if she was their own flesh and blood; and since my mother got wake and stiff, there's not a hand's turn but Kitty is ready to do for her."

"Shall you be sorry to leave London?" asked our friend.

"Oh, then, I won't, sir. 'Tis a fine rich place, no doubt; nothing but quality rattling about the streets from morning till night: and then the grandeur and riches of the shops!"

"Did not you find the style of living there very comfortable?"

"Oh, sir, as to that, they ate a power. Why, in the shop where I worked, a good many of the boys used to dine together; and when a fine leg of mutton was put down before them, never fear you'd soon see the bone of it."

"Did you think the public buildings very splendid?"

"Oh, indeed they were very fine and big, no doubt. There's St. Paul's, now: well, 'tis a grand place, and the round top of it very high,—but after all, *I would n't give up Shandon steeple to it!*"

Such was the fond partiality towards his native city, and all it contained, which animated the breast of the returned shoemaker. We are happy to add that the course of his true love *did* run smooth: and ere a month had elapsed, "CORNELIUS CASEY, BOOT AND SHOEMAKER, FROM LONDON," figured in golden letters over the door of a neat looking tenement in —— street.

Our never to-be-forgotten laureate, Father Prout, when under the influence of "home sickness," has fondly commemorated the "Shandon bells."

With deep affection,
And recollection,
I often think on
Those Shandon bells:
Whose sounds so wild would,
In days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells.

On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
Sweet Cork! of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the river Lee.

One of the oldest streets in Cork is Duncan, formerly Grattan-street. Ever-changing fashion

has robbed it of its pristine pretensions to gentility, and it is now considered an obscure part of the city. About sixty years since, it contained the best, indeed almost the only respectable lodging houses in Cork; and one of these, at the time I write of, was tenanted by a rich old Quaker, Thomas W——. Our late king, William the Fourth, was then a gay middy on board the *Pegasus* man-of-war, which happened to be stationed at Cove. His royal highness obtained leave to remain on shore, and took up his abode in the neat and orderly dwelling of old W——. At first they got on pretty well together, the humours of the wild young sailor prince being regarded by his staid host much in the same light that the gambols of that other aquatic animal, a Newfoundland puppy, are viewed by his steady, superannuated parent, who basks lazily on the sunny step of the hall door.

"Friend William is a nice lad," said the old gentleman, when talking one day confidentially to his next door neighbour, "and thee sees when he becomes more steady, and leaves off his profane habits, and that shining instrument of mischief which he wears by his side, I have much hope of him. Indeed, he seems to love the society of the Friends, even to that degree that he bestowed a salute yesterday on Rachael Lecky, as he passed her in the hall, and told her she was a fair damsel, in a tone so grave and solemn, that, thee knows, it did me good to hear him."

The neighbour took a pinch of snuff, and replied not, save by a dry, short cough, which might have been produced by the titillating powder, as well as by Friend W——'s information. The happy impres-

sion, however, which the princely tone and action produced on his host, was speedily effaced, or at least impaired, by the very late hours which the youth began to keep.

There were public assemblies and theatricals in the city, while private balls and dinner parties without number were given in honour of so distinguished a visitor; and three and four o'clock in the morning would often find poor old W—— seated bolt upright in his arm-chair, with a sad-looking, snuff-encumbered candle before him, awaiting in grim silence the return of his lodger. He would not entrust the key of his hall door at night to any one; no, "not even to him whom men call the king;" so there he would sit, gazing at the fire, and twirling his thumbs with as great a degree of solemn energy as ever he employed at "fifth-day meeting." One night, or rather morning, the old clock had struck four, and quaker though he was, Thomas W—— felt considerably past his patience, when a merry voice was heard carolling a sea ditty along the quiet street, and a loud knock was given at the stone-coloured door. Out walked old W——, candle in hand, and admitted the prince, whose mode of progression was of somewhat a zig-zag nature, as brushing past, he said:—

"Good night, old boy—why, you look as solemn as my worthy great-granddad on horseback at the end of the Parade."*

"Friend William, friend William," said his host, "I grieve for thee, but yet more I grieve for myself, and my peaceful household, to say that our

* An equestrian statue of George II. adorns the principal street in Cork.

nightly repose should be destroyed by thy ungodly gaieties. And moreover, I tell thee, friend William, that albeit I am loth to fret thee, yet if thee does not behave thyself better, and learn to keep seasonable hours, I will most assuredly write to thy home in London, and acquaint George thy father with thy conduct."

The good-humoured prince laughed heartily; and although it does not appear that for the time being, he profited much by the worthy quaker's admonition, yet he ever retained a ludicrously affectionate remembrance of him, and years afterwards, would recount the anecdote.

An interest of a more tragical nature attaches to another house in Grattan-street. The following account of the incidents connected with it, I extract, nearly verbatim, from a little work written, printed, and published, in Cork, and which merits a wider circulation than it has hitherto obtained, viz., *Historical and descriptive notices of the City of Cork and its vicinity*, by J. Windele.

Towards the close of the last century, there lived near Cork a gentleman named Arthur O'Leary. He possessed considerable personal property (the then laws not allowing Roman Catholics to hold real estates,) and fell a victim to the atrocity of the old penal enactments. He had been an officer in the Hungarian service, and was married to a daughter of Daniel O'Connel of Derrynane (grandfather to the Liberator). On his becoming a resident in Ireland, his influence over the peasantry of his old patrimonial district excited the jealousy of Mr. Morris, one of its landed proprietors; a jealousy increased in consequence of one of his horses having won a race

against a horse of Mr. Morris's. This led to a quarrel. Mr. Morris, probably a gentleman in other respects of honour and character, disdained not to avail himself of the oppressive weapons afforded him by the then existing laws against the Roman Catholics, and attempted a legalized robbery, by publicly claiming from O'Leary, after the race, the very horse that had won it!—tendering to him, at the same time, the price (five pounds) awarded for a papist's horse.* O'Leary refused compliance, saying "he would surrender him only with his life;" and a scuffle ensued, out of which he was glad to escape by flight. A somewhat summary mode of proclaiming him an outlaw on the spot, by magisterial authority, was instantly adopted, and soldiers were sent out to intercept him, on his return to his residence, near Mill-street. Two men were placed in ambuscade near Carriganimy, who, on O'Leary's approach, fired at him. The first shot was without effect, and O'Leary returned the fire from a loaded gun which he carried; at the same time directing his servant to speed for home with the horses. Another shot from the soldiers laid him dead on the road. The penal laws followed him in death. It was prohibited then to bury within monastic ground; and O'Leary was interred in a field outside Kilcrea Abbey, where the body lay during several years, before it was removed into the church. It seems that Morris was tried in Cork for O'Leary's death, but was acquitted. The relatives of the deceased, animated now by wild feelings of revenge, watched their opportunity, and on the seventh of July, 1773,

* By the 7th William III. (chap. 5), Roman Catholics were disabled from having or keeping any horse exceeding 5*l.* in value.

the *Cork Remembrancer* records "that three shots were fired at Abraham Morris, Esq., at his lodgings in Mr. Boyce's house, Hammond's-marsh"—so the quarter was then called.

These shots were fired by the brother of the slain gentleman. He had been seen to advance deliberately up Peter's Church-lane, a gun in his hand. Boyce's was the corner house; Morris was near the window, and one of the shots inflicted such a wound on his side, that he never left that house alive. O'Leary, the brother, escaped after this act, and, it is said, died a few years ago, in America.

In the south-east angle of the nave in Kilcrea Abbey, situated about eight miles from Cork, is a low altar tomb, covering the burial place of Arthur O'Leary, the "outlaw." The inscription upon it is as follows :—

Lo! Arthur Leary, generous, handsome, brave,
Slain in his bloom, lies in this humble grave.

Died, May 4th, 1773, aged 26 years.

THE OGHAM STONE.

AMONG the many curious antiquities peculiar to Ireland, perhaps few are more calculated to interest the tourist than the monumental stones inscribed in *Ogham*—a character as much restricted to our country as *Runes* to Scandinavia, or Cuniform letters to Babylonia. It was the hieroglyphic writing which prevailed among the Irish Druids, previously to the adoption of part of the Roman alphabet. It consists of seventeen letters and seven compounds. The characters are of the simplest form—short straight lines, never exceeding five to a letter, and distinguished by their position on, above, or under the medial line. The scale was called *Ogham craobh*, or *branchy type*, from its resemblance to a tree, and the letters were named from trees. They were inscribed on wooden tablets, and on monumental stones. When Christianity was introduced, these letters were generally discarded, and the Roman substituted; but the old order and number, commencing with B, preserved. Yet it is probable that the Ogham may have been occasionally used on monuments long after that period, especially by the Druids, whose order was not entirely extinct in Ireland, even in the eleventh century. Four of these stones, which

have been discovered in the county of Cork, are preserved in the institution of its city; but learned and grave doctors are yet at variance respecting the exact import of the inscriptions engraved on them.

Notwithstanding this rather unpropitious circumstance, the exhumation of these really curious stones gave a vast impetus to the spirit of antiquarian research which has always distinguished the literati of our southern Athens.

Long and wearisome were the journeys which these worthy brethren of Jonathan Oldbuck took, in the course of prosecuting their inquiries. And surely, in the good old times of Syrian pilgrimage, no palmer ever returned displaying his scallop and cockle-shells with greater triumph and exultation of heart, than did these our pilgrims of science and old-world lore, as they marched gloriously home, bearing aloft their captive Oghams.

One fine morning in July (of what year I do not choose to remember), a loud knock resounded at the door of one of our most worthy citizens—a man too, who, as in our civic egotism we devoutly believe, possesses more real antiquarian knowledge in his little finger, than the whole Archæological Society in its body corporate. Our friend had just commenced operations on his second egg, his third round of toast, and his fourth cup of tea—for even philosophers must eat; and be it said, *par parenthèse*, few of them now-a-days could be brought to fancy, like Sir Isaac Newton, that their untasted dinner had already been discussed, or that creature comforts are by any means superfluous to those who dine with Buckland, soar with Herschell, or take a far-reaching flight between both, with Whewell.

Be this as it may, *our* antiquary was sufficiently untranscendental (nothing for dignity like a long word!) to be seated at his breakfast-table this particular morning, in the enjoyment of very decided physical comfort, while his intellectual faculties were agreeably excited by the light literature contained in the new number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The knock which we have mentioned was repeated at the hall door; and at length the loud summons was responded to by the ancient serving-woman, yclept Sally—for everything appertaining to our friend's establishment savoured of antiquity, down to the very grey-whiskered grimalkin who leisurely exterminated the equally hoary-haired patriarchs of the *mus* tribe. A tall shambling countryman, habited in a frieze coat, and from beneath whose shapeless *caubeen* peered forth a pair of eyes twinkling with undisguised humour, presented himself to the grave optics of Sally.

"Is it here Mr. —— lives, if you plase?"

"It is, sure enough," was the response: "and what would you be wanting of him, honest man?"

"Oh, then, 'tis himself will be proud this blessed day, when he hears what I want; and 'tis to his own ears I must tell it."

The damsel tossed her head. "Why, then, I'm sure it must be a great secret entirely, that you wouldn't trust a body with it, even to carry straight into the parlour. And this I can tell you, that Sally Kenah is used to talk to your betters."

"I humbly ax your pardon, ma'am," said the man, who seemed for a moment, to use his own phrase, considerably "*dumbfoundered.*" "Indeed

and deed, I meant no offence; but you see the things I want to make the master sensible about are mighty high in the larning, and may be yourself, being a womankind, might n't be able all at wanst to carry them straight in your head, or rattle them glib off of your tongue."

"Wisha, have done with that talk," responded Sally, "I never heard the word yet I couldn't say. Foolishness it is to think a woman's tongue wouldn't bate a man's any day."

"I bleeve you, ma'am," was the dry response; and the lady's rejoinder threatened to be of anything but a pacific nature, when suddenly the parlour door opened, and her master's head appeared, which had the effect of allaying the rising storm. True, however, to the privilege of her sex, Sally took care *to have the last word;* and tossing her head, till the pink streamers that environed her cap waved to and fro, she walked off, muttering audibly—"Little I care for any news you could bring, or any country *omadhaun* like you."

The man drew a long breath, as he watched her retreating footsteps. "I'm proud, your honour, she took herself off," said he, "for now I'll have pace and quietness, till I'll insense your honour into something you'll like to hear."

"What is it, my good man, you wish to tell me?"

"Isn't your honour mighty cur'ous entirely about them big old stones, with quare scratches like on 'em, that do be out about the country?"

"Ogham inscriptions, do you mean?" asked our friend eagerly.

"Indeed, myself doesn't know rightly what they're called," said the man; "but any way I

often heard the neighbours tell of your honour, and how you were the truth of a good gentleman, and says they—'Tis quare fancies, to be sure, the quality takes; for now Mr. —— is as fond of old stones as if they were diamonds, and he'll go digging as deep for them as if he expected to find a crock of goold.' 'Who knows,' says Tim Leary, 'but 'tis that same, after all, the gentleman is looking for.' You see, them old stones, in the ancient times, used to be put over the graves of the giants that lived here then, like Finn M'Coul and the rest of 'em. Now them old fellows knew the value of a tenpenny as well as e'er a boy in Munster, and they used to have a dale of treasure buried along with 'em, and there some of it stays till the present day. Now the way of it is, the most of us boys would be afraid to have any call to the graves, for fear the dead giants would be after us in the night time, to ax what made us have any call to their money. But the quality is different that way; they don't care about ghosts; and mark my words, 'tis that makes 'em be digging about the old stones, and working as hard as wire-drawers."

"Indeed, my good man," replied Mr. ——, "I assure you, you and your friend, Tim Leary, are quite mistaken. It is not in hopes of gaining a treasure, at least one of gold and silver, that my friends and I search and dig. There is a pleasure in antiquarian discovery, a pure delight in archæological research that—but I forget. Have you made any discovery likely to advance the cause of science?"

"Myself doesn't know about *that*, your honour, for I never heard them kind of words before, bar-

ring when Father Jerry would talk from the altar about 'advancing the cause of liberty;' but if it's plasing to you, I'll make you sinsible of all the ins and outs belonging to a stone I found yesterday. 'Tisn't long ago since my honourable landlord, long life to him! built a parcel of cottages for his small tenants. Nate, and clane, and elegant they are, to be sure, and fit for the priest himself to live in. 'Twould delight you to see the power of roses and posies of all sorts the misthress herself made the gardener at the big house bring down and plant before the doors. 'And now, Mick,' says she to myself, the day after I moved my little sticks of furniture into one of 'em, 'don't you, for your life, offer to lave the pig show his dirty snout among the flowers, but keep him in the nate little sty that's built for him.' You know, your honour, 'twasn't altogether them words she said, but that was the maning of it; for if you were to shoot me, I couldn't discoorse high English. 'Why, then, your ladyship may trust me,' says I, 'that I'll do my best endayvours to make the pig keep his distance; but I'm fairly bothered to know how I'll ever larn manners to the cocks and hens that are used ever and always to roost in the rafters; and indeed, my lady, 'tis the poor ducks that will be praying for you all their lives, if you'll only allow 'em the little sup of a pool of water overright the door, that the crathurs were always used to.' 'Not on any account whatsomever,' says she; 'that green odoriferous puddle (oh, indeed, your honour, them were the very identical words she said) must be banished from the front of the new cottages.' 'And, saving your presence, ma'am,' says I, 'where'll we make the manure for our little

gardens, if you won't lave us have it where a body can walk through it?' I give you my word, sir, the dear lady sighed as if her heart would break. 'I fear,' says she, 'your habits are incorrigibly filthy: how *can* human beings endure to live like pigs? But you must arrange the matter with your landlord; I shall interfere no further.' And off she walked, laving me ready to bite my tongue off, I was so vexed with myself for fretting her."

The antiquary had listened to this long recital with considerable impatience, heightened, no doubt, by the fact, that his final cup of tea was gradually parting with its genial caloric on the breakfast table; and, interrupting the countryman, he said,

"Well, well, my friend, come to the point: what has all this to do with Ogham inscriptions?"

"Sure I'm coming to it as fast as I can, if your honour will lave me. For the first month or so the *bannathee** and myself done our very best to plase the masther and misthress, and many a hard battle we fought with the dumb crathers, to say nothing of the childher, that weren't used to be bound up that way to their good behaviour, to make the whole of 'em keep their paws out of mischief. But at long last the family at the big house went off to England, and I began to think 'twould be no harm in life for me to scoop a little hole in front of the door, (I could do it unknownst while they were away, and fill it up after, in less than no time,) and have the comfort of the pool that the misthress misliked so, and make the manure for my little praties. Well, sir, I set to work ere yesterday, and the wife and childher

* "Woman of the house,"—a term usually applied to the wife and mother of a family.

helped me, and we dug a good piece down, for there was a fall in the ground that prevented the water of lodging. The next day I went to finish it, and my spade struck on something hard, that wouldn't come up in a hurry, so I dug about it, and there was a big long flat stone, all done over with quare scratches like. 'Oh!' says to I myself, 'this must be one of the things the gentlemen were looking for about here last week, and sure 'twill be worth the price of a *slip** to myself when I show it to them.' So there I left it, and came off this blessed morning, *without breaking my fast*, to make your honour sensible!"

The first thought of the philosopher was little short of rapture at the discovery; the second was hospitable anxiety to feed his hungry guest: so, raising his voice, he invoked Sally, and directed her to take the man into the kitchen, and give him a good breakfast. The summons was tardily obeyed, although Sally was not far to seek. She had stationed herself at an angle of the stairs, whence she could hear what was passing in the hall; and fiercely did her anger boil at finding the conference terminate in the proposed introduction of "more of them ugly stones that aren't even fit to make flags of." It was therefore in no dulcet mood that she signed to Mr. Mick Twomey to follow her, and placed before him a loaf of bread and a bowl of skimmed milk. Now it happened that the above-named gentleman had heard the master of the house utter sounds which, though breathed *sotto voce* into Sally's reluctant ear, had struck very plainly on his tympanum, and resolved themselves into the words "bacon, cold mutton,

* A young pig.

and a jug of beer." "'Tis I'd be the quare cut of an Irishman," thought he to himself, "if I missed a good male of mate, for the sake of not knowing how to blarney a woman, so here's at you, *macolleen.*"

There was a neat deal table near the fire, at which Mr. Twomey seated himself, and looking all round with an air of respectful admiration, he said,—"Well, to be sure, of all the nice clane kitchens ever I was in, this is the foremost! I'm sure, ma'am, when you're putting on your new bonnet of a Sunday, 'tis little you want a looking-glass to see the bright ribbons or the handsome face, when you have all them beautiful tins and coppers on the shelves, that shine like gold and silver."

This well-aimed shot took some effect on Sally, yet the muscles of her face only partially relaxed, as she answered with dignity: "I was always used to have things clane and nice about me. I could never live in dirt and discomfort like the common sort."

"That's true for you, ma'am, as a body might see with half an eye. There's many a lady I seen up at the big house, dressed out in silks and satins, that don't become their clothes half as well as your illigant faytures do that beauty of a cap."

This volley settled the business. "I suppose, honest man," quoth Sally, "you walked a long way this morning, and maybe you'd like a bit of bacon; the master is the most particular gentleman alive about having it nicely smoked; and here's a leg of roast mutton;—help yourself, and I'll bring you a glass of good strong ale to wash it down."

Need we say that Master Mick made a most satisfactory clearance of the viands, and that, when he was summoned to the parlour by Mr. ——, he left Sally half intoxicated by the copious draughts of insinuating flattery which he had found it his interest to administer.

Meantime Mr. —— had hired a car—a "*gingle*" in Cork phraseology—and invited two friends like-minded with himself to accompany Mick Twomey back to his residence. Off they started, and beguiled the journey, a distance of ten miles, with deep discussions touching the Pelasgico-Scoto-Etruscan antiquities, or something like that, which I should certainly fail to make my readers comprehend, for the best of all possible reasons, *viz.*, that I could never understand it myself.

On arriving at the scene of action, Mr. Twomey, with much ceremony, (after having, with due hospitality, entreated his guests "to take an air of the fire," an invitation which, however, they did not accept,) ushered them towards a very common-place looking excavation, at the bottom of which reposed THE STONE. Some loose clay and pebbles having been removed, and the flat surface washed, the expected lines and markings presented themselves to our friend's delighted eyes. "True Ogham characters!" he exclaimed; "not a doubt of it. What a fortunate discovery! I must write off by the next post to Sylvanus Urban, and I'm sure he'll publish my letter in next month's *Gentleman*."

His companions were almost equally enthusiastic; and assisted Mick with hearty good-will to raise the ponderous flag and deposit it in the car, where, with some difficulty, they laid it on one of

the side-cushions. "Why, then," growled the driver, "I'am astonished at the gentlemen like yees to do the like. 'Twas to carry Christians and not tomb-stones I hired my car." A promise of a handsome gratuity at their journey's end, however, speedily silenced the charioteer, who, merely remarking that he'd "rather 'twas their honours than himself that had to sit on that could hard stone while they'd be jolting over the hilly bit of road," quietly resumed the reins, and soon the whole party were on their way home.

Before they started, Mr. Twomey approached, hat in hand:

"Your honours won't be after forgetting Mick, that found out that illigant *iniquity* for you."

A whispered conversation ensued between the *savans*.

"What shall we give him?" asked Mr. T—— the most sober minded of the party.

"Suppose a pound," replied Mr. C——"that will pay him handsomely."

"A pound!" said our excited friend, *the* antiquary, "let us give him two; I'll pay half myself."

This was agreed to; and Master Mick, having pocketed his two bright sovereigns, bade the gentlemen adieu, with a profusion of thanks and blessings.

The next day there was a meeting of the scientific association, of which our friend was president, and, with infinite pride and pleasure, he introduced his invaluable trophy. Who can describe the host of sapient heads, and still more sapient spectacles, that clustered round it, while the tongues

appertaining thereto, with clamour fast and furious, commenced expounding the occult characters.

One quiet-looking little man, a mere nebulous spot among that shining galaxy of science, remained for some time silently listening to the war of words. At length he approached the group, and a bright smile stole over his countenance as he looked at the object of dispute.

"There is something very modern," he said, "in the appearance of these scratches. Why, the very dust caused by the tool that made them has hardly been removed. Besides the *shape* of the stone is very suspiciously sepulchral."

Fancy the envied possessor of an undoubted Corregio informed by some *dilettante* friend that his prized original is a mere copy: conceive the high and mighty possessor of the Pitt diamond assured that his jewel is a bit of glass: and you may form some slight idea of our antiquaries' feelings on hearing the heretical opinion quoted. Undismayed, however, by the flood of defensive eloquence which threatened to overwhelm him, the little man said, quietly:

"Would you have any objection to *turn* the stone?"

It was done. And, lo! a most unmistakeable though somewhat effaced "SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF DANIEL LUCY," &c., &c., appeared. The scene that followed is more easily conceived than described. Our friend seized his hat, and, without staying further question, fairly bolted. His companions were not slow to follow his example; and it was *sauve qui peut* among the antiquarians. The unlucky tombstone, which Mick Twomey had feloniously abstracted from a

country cemetry, was conveyed that night, with strict secresy, to consecrated ground. The story, however, got wind, and sore was the quizzing which our man of science had in consequence to endure. The only individual who appeared to sympathize with the antiquary was his domestic, Sally; who "really wondered how such a decent, well-spoken man could have the heart to take in the poor master, who, to be sure, was as innocent as a babe about them big ugly stones."

It happened some months afterwards, that the quiet man who had caused the stone to be turned, passed, in the course of a fishing excursion, by the door of Mick Twomey's once rose-bedecked cottage. The "misthress" was still in England; so the flowers died and the green pool flourished. Mr. —— addressed the master of the house, who was lounging against the door-post, and asked to be shown the nearest way to a neighbouring village. Mick civilly directed him; but there was a roguish twinkle in his eye, and a leer in his countenance as he did so, that caused Mr. —— to say as he thanked him—"I hope, my good fellow, you have told me the right way."

"Oh, the never a bit of it your honour, though indeed, if I did set you astray, you wouldn't be the first Cork gentleman I bamboozled."

How was that, my friend!"

Mick pointed significantly to the deep unsavoury puddle that graced the front entrance to his dwelling; and then, with inimitable humour, and at much length, detailed the history of the pseudo Ogham stone. "At any rate," continued he, "'twas chape enough at two pounds. I know

some of the quality give five for an old pewter pot that wouldn't boil a praty, or even a cracked brown crock that wouldn't hold a sup of milk. And I don't know in the world what ailded 'em that they couldn't be satisfied with it when they got it; for I'm sure poor Dan Lucy (be marcy to his sowl, amin!) was adacenter Christian, in all conscience, than one of them ould Haythem Turks of giants!"

THE BLACK POTATOES.

In former years it was a pleasant thing to take a summer ramble through the shamrock-covered fields, and among the wild mountain districts, of the green isle. To be sure, the features of the scenery were not so bold and striking as those of the Scottish Highlands, nor did the country present that aspect of rich and high cultivation that distinguishes the rural districts of "Merrie England" from those of all the world beside: yet many and abounding were the points of interest that caught the tourist's attention, including the humours of the light-hearted Irishman, as well as the romantic beauties of his land.

Among the more homely and characteristic charms of the latter, the stranger never failed to notice wide districts covered with the rich green leaves and star-shaped purple-and-white flowers of the potatoes, which, in the months of August and September, were wont to render the island one fragrant garden, and held out the prospect of winter plenty to the poor dwellers in the road-side cabins, whose most valuable possession was frequently the large iron pot, in which they boiled their sole and simple food.

But what a change has the present year* brought! Nothing in autumn was to be seen save black withered stalks, exhaling a strong offensive odour. I have been lately sojourning in a remote district of Munster, and there I have seen a ghastly famine-stricken figure, feebly wielding a spade, which, after hours of toil, would not dig out a sufficiency for one meal, of such roots as an English pig would turn away from in disgust. I have entered the cabins where working men were seated at their dinner, consisting of potatoes, a great proportion of which were about the bigness of marbles, the larger ones not much exceeding the size of a walnut. Happy the labourer who could obtain in addition a small quantity of thick milk; for to many of the poor it is an unwonted luxury. Before the time arrived for digging the miserable crop, Relief Funds, supported partly by a government grant, and partly by liberal subscriptions from the landlords, were established through the country. The committees appointed were enabled to sell yellow Indian meal at one shilling for fourteen pounds: and great was the delight with which the poor women, whose husbands and sons were working on the roads for eightpence a day, would walk a distance of six, eight, and sometimes ten miles, to purchase the meal and carry it home on their backs. About the end of August this seasonable supply was obliged to be stopped, and the poor were thrown on the resources afforded by their miserable gardens.

Then I have seen the labourer, his once stout limbs reduced by the presence of famine to the semblance of a skeleton's bones, standing in the

* 1846

furrows of an apparently empty field, languidly trying to strike his spade into the brown parched earth, and turn out the unripe blasted roots, which for many a long autumn day were to form his and his family's sole sustenance. His wretched ill-clad wife, standing beside him, with a dish, to receive the black unwholesome food, looked first on the ground, and then, glancing upwards with such a look of patient death-stricken anguish as Englishmen seldom see, said, "Well! God Almighty look down upon us! What will become of us at all, at all?" The children, poor little things! once, even in the midst of rags and filth, so ruddy and happy, now wanting the accustomed mealy potato, which, evermore grasped in the tiny hand, and defended from the encroaching pig by many a sturdy cuff bestowed on his inquisitive snout, afforded healthy nourishment, are become pale, spiritless, and hollow cheeked; eagerly devouring blackberries and the fruit of the mountain ash, to stay the fierce cravings of hunger.

This is no exaggerated picture: it falls indeed far short of the truth. To our poor people the potato was all in all; it formed the sole food of the labouring classes, and the refuse skins and small potatoes served to fatten a pig, on the price of which his owners chiefly depended for their rent and clothing. But this year pigs and potatoes are alike gone, and the small modicum of meal which the labourer can procure for his wages of eightpence a-day, scarcely serves to sustain life in a family of eight or ten persons. In one district of the south-west of Ireland, upwards of one hundred deaths are ascertained, on unquestioned authority, to have been caused by starvation, during the

month of October and the first fortnight of November. The famine is indeed "sore in the land," and to use the emphatic language of Scripture, "all faces gather blackness."

Instead of dwelling longer on an abstract view of the subject, let me relate a little narrative which may serve, in some slight measure, to illustrate the sufferings of the poor; and I trust, on their behalf, to awaken the efficient sympathy of our kind English and Scotch fellow-subjects.

In a mountainous part of the south-west of Ireland lived Tade Mahoney, his wife, and six children. He was a labourer employed on the ground of a middle-man, who rented a farm on the estate of a rich absentee landlord. Tade was an honest, industrious, poor fellow, who, at the age of twenty, had married a blooming girl of sixteen, possessing the considerable fortune of a feather bed, a dresser, two goats, and a lamb.

He had a brother who was usually described by the neighbours as "a wild young devil that wouldn't be sed nor led by the priest himself;" and to whom even his best friends could not deny the possession of that "truant disposition" which better befits the Prince of Denmark's favourite on the stage, than the son of a poor Irish labourer in real life. Yet the lad, whose name was James, possessed a fund of native untaught energy that seemed to promise no common results; and when, at the age of nineteen, on the death of his father, he sold his share of the patrimonial goods and chattels and set sail for America, to seek his fortune, the old village schoolmaster shook his head and said, "Well, there goes the 'cutest lad and brightest scholar that ever thumbed a Voster in my siminary.

If his heels don't carry him off from the work that his hands know well how to do, and his head to plan, the never a fear but he'll be coming back to us a gintleman one of these days."

After some time a letter arrived from him, to say that he had got into excellent employment in New York, and hoped soon to send for his brother. But after this no more was heard of him, and his friends, after making many fruitless inquiries, came to the conclusion that he must be dead.

Meantime, Tade and his wife lived happily, though poorly, in their humble cabin. In the course of twelve years, six rosy brats might be seen about the door, wading through the pool of stagnant green water which, in imitation, no doubt, of the ancient moat, forms an exterior defence to our Irish cabins. Tade worked for his master, a "strong farmer," on the usual terms. Throughout the year he worked for him four days in each week, and received in return a cabin rent free, an acre and a half of potato ground, and grass for a few sheep and goats. He had also a pig; and his wife Jude reared hens, and sold the eggs and chickens at the next market town; so that on the whole they were tolerably comfortable, and more contented under their narrow straw roof, and seated round their supper of potatoes and goats' milk, than many a nobleman partaking of seasoned dainties in his gilded hall.

But this was not to last; the summer of 1846 came, and with it a blight on the food of the poor. Never was Egyptian plague more swift and noiseless, and deadly in its effects than the fearful "potato cholera." One by one their scanty articles

of furniture, and then their goats and sheep were sold by the Mahoneys, to procure food for their starving children; and this resource would soon have failed, had not public works been established in the beginning of August. Until the funds of the relief committees were exhausted, most of the men in the country were employed on the roads at eightpence a day; poor wages, indeed, yet hailed by the perishing people as a blessed boon.

One wet day, towards the end of last August, Tade Mahoney returned to his cabin about six o'clock, faint and weary, after a day's work, which he thought himself only too fortunate to have obtained. He had tasted nothing since the previous evening, save a small piece of Indian meal cake, and a draught of water; and yet he did not feel hungry. His head was dizzy, his hands hot, and burning pains darted through his frame. He entered the cabin, and throwing his hat on the floor, sank heavily on a wooden stool placed near the small turf fire. His eldest daughter, a fair, blue-eyed child of ten years old, ran up to him, and, putting her little hand in his, said, joyfully :—

"Ah, daddy, we're to have a fine supper to-night, for mammy went to I—— for the male! And she brought home a bagful of it on her back; and see what a potful of it there's down for us all. She left Johnny and me to stir it, while she'd be out to look for a dhrop of milk."

The father tried to smile, as he replied, in a tone of sorrow,

"I'm proud to hear it, Mary; 'tis long since ye had yer 'nough to ate, *ma colleen bawn.*"

Just then Jude entered with an empty wooden can in her hand.

"Well, Tade," she said, "I thought to have a dhrop of milk for yer supper, so I wint to Mrs. McCarthy to ax it; and I towld her I'd pay her in fresh eggs when the hens would lay to-morrow: but she said she had none for me, and so we must ate the boiled male dry—thanks be to God for giving us that same! But, Tade, *a chree*, what ails you? You look very white, and there's a thrimblin' over you."

"'Tis only a sudden hate and pain in my heart I got, Jude; plaze God 'twill be nothing. I'll go to bed, and I'll be well wanst I'm asleep."

"And daddy, won't you ate any supper?" said little Mary and Johnny together, while his wife, laying one hand on his, and pressing his forehead with the other, looked anxiously in his face.

"I couldn't ate any thing, childher," he said, "if I was paid for it; and sure there'll be the more left for yees all to-morrow. Give me a dhrink of wather, Jude," and, rising with difficulty, he went towards a bundle of straw, which, scattered on the damp floor, formed, with an old rug, and the tattered remnant of a blanket, the only sleeping place for the whole family. The children felt frightened, they knew not why; yet the healthy appetite of their age prevailed, and they made a hearty supper on the Indian meal stirabout. Very little, however, did their poor mother swallow; her heart, as she expressed it, "rose to her mouth," when she thought that perhaps her husband was struck with "the sickness," as the poor people emphatically designate typhus fever, the plague that in wet and scarce seasons is wont to desolate the country. With a heavy heart she took a little straw, and placed it for the children

as far as she could from the spot where their father lay, and then tried in vain to cover them with a few torn rags, in addition to their own miserable clothing. She lay down near her husband, whose burning skin, heavy breathing, and restless tossing to and fro, showed too plainly that her fears were well-founded. In the morning his illness had greatly increased; he called incessantly for water, and soon became quite delirious.

It was dispensary day in the next village of I——, and Jude, having settled her husband's miserable bed as comfortably as she could, and left the two elder children to watch him, and mind the younger ones, set out on her walk of six miles to procure medicine and advice. I—— lies in the centre of a populous district, and the physician's attendance at the dispensary being limited to one day in the week, there is always a large crowd of country people assembled to watch for his coming; some really ill, and greatly requiring attention, others afflicted with none but imaginary maladies, yet demanding physic with the utmost eagerness; for the Irish peasant (when he can be supplied with them gratis,) is quite as fond of swallowing drugs as any titled lady in London can be, when suffering from an attack of the nerves.

On the day in question, when Dr. —— had disposed of about half his patients, kindly and skilfully prescribing for those who really needed his care, and dismissing somewhat summarily those whose maladies were of as infinitesimal a nature as the Homœopathic doses, which, did their rank in life permit, the genius of quackery would certainly have doomed them to swallow, Jude Mahoney advanced and said: "Plase your honour, it's what

I wanted to ax you about my poor man. He was taken very bad last night with pains through his bones, and a splitting in his head, and to-day he's worse, and out of his mind entirely."

Dr. —— made some inquiries, and, finding from Jude's answers that her husband's disease was certainly typhus fever, he gave her the proper medicines, with directions how to use them, and promised to visit him as soon as he could. On her return she found the poor man in a paroxysm of delirium, and it was with much difficulty she could prevent his rushing out of doors. After a time she induced him to swallow the medicine, but no refreshing drink could she procure to allay his raging thirst—nothing but cold water. The next day a kind neighbour, almost as poor as themselves, brought a little milk, and another a handful of meal, "to make a bit stirabout for the crathurs of childher;" but Tade grew worse and worse: and when, after some days, the doctor, whose professional engagements, extending over a wide district, had hitherto detained him, came to the cabin, he saw at once the case was hopeless.

Heart-rending were the lamentations of poor Jude, when, on the tenth day of his illness, she saw him, who was indeed the "delight of her eyes," stretched before her cold and lifeless as the clay on which he rested. Her neighbours flocked in, and, regardless of danger from infection, crowded the house for two days while the body was "waked." Part of that time the widow was seated on the ground, rocking herself to and fro, in the stupor of grief; and, when occasionally she was roused to a full consciousness of her loss, she would pour forth a torrent of that eloquent heart-

felt lamentation, which is seldom heard out of Ireland—calling on her husband to return to her and to his "fair-haired jewels," and almost cheating herself into the belief that he could indeed hear and answer her entreaty.

It was the evening after poor Tade's funeral, and the widow sat down with her six little orphans in their lone and desolate cabin. Everything, even to the griddle on which she baked their meal-cakes, had been sold to defray the expense of burying her husband, "dacently;" for this the Irish think much more needful than procuring comforts for the living, and, to secure a handsome "berrin" for a dead relative, they will literally take the bread from the lips of the survivors. On this evening, therefore, when Jude Mahoney looked round the four bare walls of the cabin, she could see nothing in prospect but the starvation that awaited her and her helpless ones. She collected a few crusts which had been left from the entertainment of the "wake," and, after dividing them among the children, she knelt down, and in simple uncouth language implored the protection of Him in whom the widow and orphan are invited to trust, and who hears the petitions that arise from a clay-built hovel, as well as the proud anthems of praise that swell through the cathedral's fretted aisles. They then lay down on the floor, where the children slept, and the mother watched till morning.

Soon after sunrise they prepared to set out on their mournful journey; for nothing was left for them but *to travel*, that is, to wander about the country, calling at every house they passed, and subsisting

on the charity which is never withheld from the beggar, by those who are themselves but a few degrees better off. Jude had told the farmer for whom her husband had worked, that she would surrender her house and now worthless garden; and this day he was to take possession. With a bursting heart the poor woman set out, carrying her youngest child a year old on her back, and leading the next little creature of three by the hand; the others walking on. She carried nothing with her save an empty bag, which Johnny bore across his shoulder, and in which they meant to deposit any donation of meal, bread, or black potatoes, which they might receive.

They had not gone far when they were met by two men, whom Jude recognised as distant cousins of her husband, and who were themselves poor labourers living in the county of Kerry, about thirty miles from the village of I—.

"God save you, Jude," said the elder of the two, "'twas only yesterday we heard of your trouble, or else we'd have come to poor Thady's 'berrin;' and thinking that, now your provider is gone from you, and the times so bitther ye'd have nothing to do but to take to the road with the *grawls*, we settled with our women that, if it's plasing to you, we'll ache take one of the young hings from you, and give it the run of the cabin along with our own, till such time, plase God, as you'll be up in the world again."

The widow's eyes filled with tears; gratitude to the kind-hearted speaker mingled with reluctance to part from her little ones, yet she knew that in her situation it would be madness to hesitate; so she answered: "God for ever bless you, Denis and

Jerry, for thinking of me and mine in our desola tion; and sure, though it tears the sore heart within me to part with them that I bore and suckled at my breast, 'tis all for the best, and may be I'll be able some time or other to travel into your parts, and get a sight of the crathurs that ye're taking now for the love of God."

"Then 'tis you that will be kindly welcome," said the man, rubbing the back of the hand across his eyes, "'tis little we have to give, because 'tis little we have for ourselves, but little or much, your *lanuveens** shall share the bit and sup with our own. Which of them will come with us, Judy?" he continued in a more cheerful tone. The mother hesitated, but at length it was decided that the youngest boy and girl should be taken, as being the least able to bear the hardships of a wandering life; and, with mingled tears and blessings, Jude gave them into the hands of their relatives, to whom feeling hearts had taught more true tenderness than dwells under many a smooth aspect and jewelled robe. She watched them on their homeward path, till a turning in the road hid them from her view, and then with the other children she resumed her weary journey.

It would be tedious and harrowing to the feelings to accompany this poor family through their wanderings for the next month. Sometimes they got a night's shelter and a piece of bread in the house of a farmer; often they had to sleep under an open shed, or behind a haystack; and their fasts were frequently prolonged for twenty-four hours. Yet Jude preferred undergoing those sore

* Little children.

privations to seeking admission into the overcrowded pestilential precincts of the workhouse, where she would be separated from her children. They travelled, as the poor little ones' failing strength would admit, over a distance of many miles. One evening, at sunset, they stopped at a cabin, a little removed from the high road, to ask for a night's lodging. They had travelled all day without food, save a few fragments of hard oaten cake, given them the night before by a farmer's wife: they were now therefore faint with hunger, and the poor children's blistered feet refused to carry them farther. The youngest boy, of six years old, a fair-haired child with regular features and soft intelligent eyes, showed symptoms all day of heavy sickness. He did not complain, but, whenever they sat down for a brief rest, his head was nestled in his mother's bosom, his little hot hand stole round her neck, and his white lips (once so rosy) asked plaintively for "water, mammy! more water!" She carried him in her arms, or on her back, as long as she could; for their path lay over a desolate mountain, where, for many a mile, no human habitation was to be seen; but for the last hour the little fellow insisted on trying to walk, saying,

"You're wake, mammy, and 'tis worse to me to be tiring you than to walk myself."

But now his emaciated limbs failed, and, when they were within a few steps of the cabin, he sank on the ground.

"God Almighty help my child, and look down on him," said the poor mother, raising him in her feeble arms; and, entering the cabin with the customary salutation, 'God save all here," she asked

a woman who was seated inside the door, to give a night's lodging to her "*lanuv brotha.*"*

"You shall have that same," replied the woman, "but 'tis little else I have to give. Look here"—— and she took from the shelf a wooden can, containing about a pint of coarse flour. "My husband," she continued, "is working on the Caherah road since yesterday week without getting a penny wages: he went there to day without breaking his fast, except with a drink of water and a small taste of cold cabbage; and now that's all I have to cook for him and five of us besides, for this night and the whole of to-morrow."

Famine, with his stern graving tools, had indeed carved deep lines in the haggard countenances of the two women; and the miserable children of the wanderer, when mingled with those of the dweller in the cabin, presented a lamentable picture of premature decay.

The husband soon came in, and the meal, if such it could be called, was prepared for him. He just tasted it, and then calling his wife and children, insisted on their sharing the morsel; he even offered some to the poor travellers, and the three elder children ate a scrap each; but the widow thanked him and refused to touch it. Her heart was full, and her eyes were fixed on the heaving chest and clammy forehead of her dying child; for it was evident that the sorrows of the little wanderer were nearly ended. She watched him through the night while he lay insensible; towards morning he gave a few convulsive sobs,

* Sick child

and then, with one long sigh, the gentle spirit was released.

I will not try to paint the mother's anguish; nor what she felt when, on that day week, another child was taken from her—her dark eyed smiling little Ellen. In the midst of her sorrow she knew they were at peace.

"And, oh! darlings of my heart," she said, "'tis hard to part ye, but 'twas harder still to feel the parched lip and not have a drop of milk to wet it, and to see the very life draining away for want of the bread that I'd give my heart's blood to buy for ye. But now 'tis all over, and only for them that are left me still, I'd be glad to lie down beside ye."

At length the widow's wanderings brought her back to her former abode. The cabin had not been since inhabited, and beneath its desolate roof she and her two remaining children prepared one night to take up their lodging. They had a few turnips and a bit of barley bread to eat, and they had collected a bundle of fern and heath to sleep upon. They were all ill and feeble, but Jude had, as she expressed it, "a weight of sickness on her heart," that she felt would soon terminate her earthly sorrows.

Johnny closed the door, they lay down on the ground, and were trying to sleep, when a loud knocking outside aroused them.

"Who's there?" asked Jude, starting up.

"Is it here," said a voice, "that Tade Mahoney lives!"

"God help me, 'tis here he did live, but he's gone to his rest these six weeks."

An exclamation of surprise and sorrow was the

answer, followed by a request for admission. Jude hesitated, but at length opened the door. There was no light in the cabin, but she lighted a splinter of bogwood which happened to have remained on the ground, and the uncertain flame shone on the person of her visitor. He was a tall good-looking man, well dressed, more in the fashion of a town than in that of the country; and there was an expression in his countenance of amazement, almost horror, as he looked on the cabin and its inhabitants.

"Can you," said he, "tell me any thing of Tade Mahoney's family?"

"I'm his wife," replied the poor woman, "and these are his childher. I buried two more of them since the light of my eyes was taken from me, and there are two living with his cousins."

The man seemed deeply moved; he trembled as he asked in a faltering voice—

"Don't you know me, Judy? I'm James, your husband's brother, and little I thought to find you this way on my return. My poor Thady! many's the time I longed for a warm shake of your hand, and a welcome home from your pleasant voice."

He could say no more, but, turning towards Mary and Johnny, he clasped them both in his arms.

After some time he continued:—

"Now, Judy, you must not be this way any more; I'm well to do in the world, for, when I left New York, I got a fine farm far up the country. There I married an English girl, whose family are settled near me, and a good wife she makes. I often wrote to Thady, but never got an answer."

"We never heard from you," said Judy, "and so we thought you were dead."

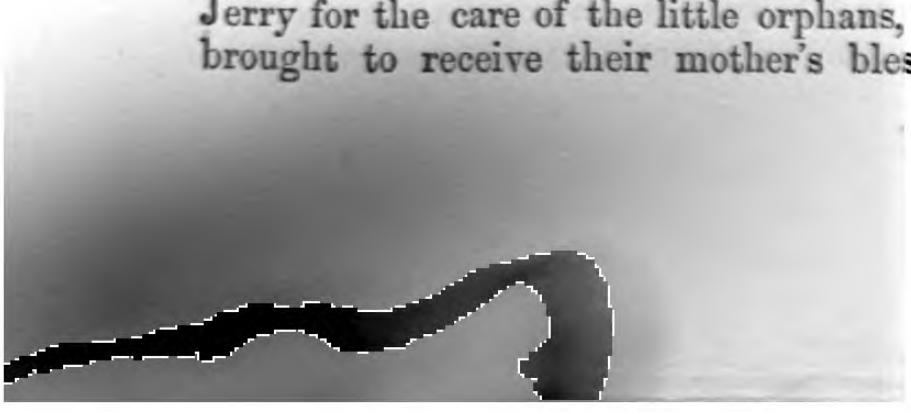
"Letters often miscarry in these remote places," answered James, "and I suppose it happened that way. At all events, I came over now, intending to take you all out with me; and rely on it, Judy, I'll do as much for you and the children as if my poor brother was alive."

The widow burst into tears—"God for ever bless you, James," she said, "and sure 'twas He sent you here to us, when I didn't know where to get another bit to keep life in my perishing orphans. For myself it doesn't matter; the hand of death is on me, and soon I'll be where hunger and thirst and nakedness won't part me from them that were more to me than life itself. My blessing be ever on you and about you, and keep you and yours from harm and loss. I know you'll be a father to them two darlings, and to the other two weeny ones that I'll never see more in this world."

James could no longer restrain his emotions: he sobbed like a child, and pressing the wasted hand of his sister-in-law, he could only say—

"May God protect and bless them, Judy—I'll do for them as if they were my own. My wife has a tender heart, and I'll answer for her she'll be a mother to them."

In a fortnight after the scene I have described, the widow breathed her last in a comfortable lodging in Cork, whither her brother-in-law had removed her. In the meantime he went into Kerry, and rewarded the kind-hearted Denis and Jerry for the care of the little orphans, who were brought to receive their mother's blessings. In



accordance with her wish, he arranged to pay their protectors liberally for their board and lodging, until they should be old enough to cross the Atlantic. After a little time he succeeded in calming the wild grief of Mary and Johnny, and reconciling them to go with him. He now only waits the approach of spring, to engage a passage for himself and them in a packet bound for America.

IRISH BEGGARS.

WILL the happy day ever arrive when Ireland and mendicity shall be words expressing two distinct ideas, not, as now, linked together in the closest bonds of mental association? Much we fear the advent of that reformation is distant. Irish beggars there always have been—Irish beggars there always will be, while the character of the people remains unchanged. Perhaps there is not a country under the sun, where the word "independence" is less understood, and the blessed freedom of heart and hand which it implies less valued than in our unhappy island. It would be beside our present purpose, and serve but to launch us on the troubled sea of political discussion, were we to attempt an analysis of the causes which have produced and fostered this degrading peculiarity of our national character; but it may not be without interest for English readers to depict some of the strange and humorous manners and customs of a "rale" Irish beggar. In the first place, he is not ashamed of his calling; he considers it quite as respectable and far more pleasant to collect potatoes, meal, and sour milk, as alms among the neighbours, than to labour for the same

with his hands. In the second place, no abstract love of truth ever interferes to clip the soaring wings of an inventive fancy, which revels in describing "the things that are not." An Hibernian mendicant's conscience, if there be such a thing in *in rerum naturæ*, is never "hurt by being found out." He neither blushes a confession, nor stammers a denial, when convicted of having uttered a tissue of the most palpable untruths, but on he talks, quietly though volubly, shrewdly avoiding the main question, and imploring "your honour's glory to bestow a thrifle on the poor dissolute orphant, that'll never stop praying night and day for the blessed souls that left you:" the said orphan being, perhaps, a stout Kerryman, aged from forty to fifty years.

During the bitter famine of the past season, the practice of street-begging prevailed to such an extent, that the thoroughfares of the city where I reside were, during the winter months, rendered almost impassable by the crowds of miserable, famine-stricken objects, plaintively imploring "a soup-ticket for the love of God," and ofttimes displaying sick, dying, or dead children, in order still further to move compassion. Whole families migrated from the rural districts to the towns, hoping to share the alms which almost every one dispensed according to their ability; but the intrusion was fiercely resented and forcibly repelled by the old established town-beggars, whose faces were as well known to the citizens as the marble visage of King George the Second, whose equestrian statue adorns the principal street in the "beautiful city."

"Why, thin, isn't it a purty thing to have them country *omadhawns* thronging in upon us like a

flock of crows, ating up what God knows is little enough for ourselves, and coming round the quality with their innocent talk, and the shovel on their shouldhers." This was part of an oration delivered by a strong, raw-boned, coarse-looking beggar-woman, the remainder of it being so profusely garnished with certain forcible expletives, as to render it unpresentable to eyes polite. While speaking, she was making her exit from a whiskey-shop, and her heightened colour and inflamed eye abundantly testified that the consolation partaken of had not been afforded by Father Mathew. Just as her huge red fist was raised to wipe her lips, she perceived a gentleman passing, whose charity she had often implored under the plea of being "a poor honest, industrious widdy, with six small orphans to support."

"Ah, your honour," said she, in an indescribable tone, between banter and explanation—"'tis only wather—nothing in life but could wather. The phrase of refusal—"I have nothing for you, my good woman"—is usually reproved with—"Wisha, darlin', you have enough, with a blessing." A lady choosing a dress at a haberdasher's, was beset by a lame old man, in the following words:—"Long life to you, my lady, and bestow your charity on the poor ould helpless *boccough*, an' that you may live to enjoy your clothes and your comforts here, an' be covered wid the garments of glory hereafter!"

Imposition in abundance there is, no doubt, yet our Irish beggars are not *all* impostors. The sunken eye, hollow cheek, and livid lip, often testify the truth and intensity of their sufferings; while a heart-touching, because heart-felt tide of eloquence

bursts forth to confirm the tale of woe they picture. The story of one poor blind creature, a widow, whom I lately met, led by her little daughter, interested me greatly. She was not a street-beggar, but subsisted on the scanty casual bounty obtained at the houses of a few individuals who knew the truth of her story.

"Tis many a year now," said she, "since my husband worked as a journeyman tailor in Mr. M——'s shop. A clane, dacent boy he was, and as quiet as a pet lamb, only when he'd get great privication entirely. He had good wages, and he brought me to a snug little place of his own, where I kep everything comfortable for him, and I had as good a feather-bed as any poor family need wish to stretch on; and the little *bonnuveen* that we bought to fatten had a decent corner to himself. Well, whin our eldest boy was born, I thought I never could thank God enough for sending me my darling, an' sure I thank him still, though now—well, well' I'll keep down the foolishness, though *that* was the sore heart-scald. Time went on, and more children came to us; and the more mouths we had to feed, the dearer provisions grew, till at last himself and I had often to live on one male a-day, though we always struv to give two to the young things. One bitter winter's day—'t will be eight years next January, for little Mary, that's eyes to me now, was a babby at the breast then—my poor Denis came home to me, looking so sorrowful that I started when I saw him.

"'Ah, Mary, says he, 'tis ruined entirely we are now, for the times are grown so bad that Mr. M— says he must cut down our wages; and sure 'twill be nothing else but starvation trying to live

on what he can afford to give. But I was thinking maybe if he went to Limerick, I'd get work there; I'm tould there's better wages given there than here, and more hands wanted. At all evints I can't do worse than fail, and as soon as ever I get anything to do, I'll send for you and the childher.'

"'Go, avourneen,' says I, 'in the name of God: and may He be about you, and keep you, and send you good luck.' Well, ma'am, he wint; and indeed 'twas only by fighting him I could get him to take four shillings of his wages agin the road. He wanted, my poor fellow! to lave it all for myself and the childher. Day afther day went on, and my heart grew sore with waiting, and my eyes dark with watching for the letter he promised faithfully to send me. Every day when I'd boil the little handful of praties, one of the childher (I had four of 'em then) would say, 'Mammy, is it long before daddy will send for us?' Little they knew, the crathers! how them same words kep burning before me day and night. One morning afther I sent the three biggest to school, and was busy claning up the little place, a dacent friendly man of the neighbours, of the name of Darby Kelly, came in. 'God save you, Mary,' says he. 'God save you, kindly, Darby,' says I. 'Did you get any account of Denis since?' says he. 'Not a word,' says I; 'and I'm afraid 'tis sick he is.' 'Indeed,' says he, 'I heard say he isn't well.'

"And so, your honour, to make a long story short, Darby broke it to me by degrees, that my poor man got to Limerick, and tuk up his lodging at a public-house till he try'd for work; and the second night he was there, a ruction riz among some people that come in, and my poor Denis

striving to interfare between them, got a blow on the temple that knocked him speechless, and the doctor had no hopes of him. Oh, my lady! I pray God this day that you, or any one belonging to you, may never feel the cold deep sickness that came to my heart when I heard them words. As soon as I roused myself from the stun, I raised a thrifle of money at the pawnbroker's on the little things I had, and off I set with the childher on the road to Limerick. It was a long, long journey to make with the heart and the feet both sore and weary; but the bitterest part was still to come.

"Whin I got to the place, sure 'twas only the red earth on the top of my darling's grave I had to look at! There was a sort of lonely comfort in keening over him there, and hours upon hours I spent where he was lying. I believe the sense left me for awhile, for when I roused up the night was closing in, and the three youngest childher were crying with could and hunger; and one of them said, 'Oh, mammy, we were frightened, for we thought you were gone to sleep like daddy.' I stood up, and was going away with them, when I thought of my eldest boy. 'Where's Johnny?' says I, looking round. The little ones couldn't tell me, for they didn't notice him laving the graveyard. And now, ma'am, I'm telling your honour no lie—from that day to this, and that's close on eight years, I never found my boy; though I travelled the globe in search of him. After that minnit my eyes were never dry by day or night—the crying was mate and drink to me—till the sight went away from me entirely, and the light of my eyes and the joy of my heart were quenched for ever."

This poor mendicant's tale, I found on inquiry, to be perfectly true. Her son who vanished so mysteriously has never been heard of, nor can his fate be even conjectured; and excessive weeping has totally destroyed her sight. Who knows, "in the changes and chances of this mortal life," but perhaps the vanished sunshine of her heart may yet one day be restored by the wanderer's return.

THE KNITTED COLLAR.

ONE dark dismal morning in the month of November, 1846, a miserable group of human beings were assembled in the attic of an old crumbling house, situated in a filthy obscure lane in a large Irish city. The room contained no furniture save an old empty box, a broken pitcher, and a bundle of damp straw, on which lay a man pale and ghastly. His wife and four children were crouching on the ground, near a fireless grate; their tattered rags and famine-stricken faces testifying too surely the dreadful extremity to which they were reduced.

"Nelly," said the man, "give me a drink of water. Oh, then, if 'twas *that* I always drank, 't isn't this way we'd be now?"

"Denis, agra, don't fret yourself," replied the poor woman, rising feebly, and holding the jug to his parched lips. "If I had any thing at all to give you, darling, you'd do well yet; but where to get even one halfpenny to buy a grain of meal, I don't know."

The eldest daughter, a girl of fourteen, who had been holding one of her little brothers in her

wasted arms, and trying gently to hush the plaintive cries of the starving child, looked up, and said eagerly, "Oh! mother, I had the collar that Jane Brown gave me thread to knit, nearly finished, when little Denny began to cry; maybe I could put the last stitch to it now, if you'd take him in your arms, and then I might be able to sell it in the streets."

"Do, darling," said her mother, "in the name of God, though He knows this blessed minute that 'tis badly able you are either to work or to walk."

Mary Sullivan, like many Irish girls, had much taste and facility in executing fine knitting; she had learned the art in happier days, while attending an excellent charity-school, and now she tried to make her talent available for the support of her family. They had once been well off. Denis Sullivan was a journeyman shoemaker, and earned a sufficiency for their wants. In an evil hour he was persuaded by a fellow workman to enter a public-house and take a glass of whiskey; then the common oft-repeated fate was his—his earnings squandered, his family reduced to want, and finally his own health totally destroyed. Things were in this state, when bitter famine visited the land in 1846. Then the Sullivans were literally left to perish, for those who had charity to dispense could scarcely reach one half the cases of heart-rending misery which they witnessed; and therefore justly selected as objects of relief those who were brought to destitution by the pressure of the times, and not by any fault of their own. A drunken journeyman shoemaker could not hope for assistance while so many sober industrious

men were perishing; and Sullivan's unfortunate family of course suffered with him. His wife, a poor weakly woman, in a spirit of almost Turkish apathy, was content to lie down and die; and when all their little articles of clothing and furniture had been pawned, the three young children pined away from hunger in slow but sure decay.

Mary alone of all the family tried *to do something*. She was a gentle, dark-eyed girl, with a look of patient suffering in her thin pale face, and a soft low voice which few, one would think, could litsen to unmoved. The sale of work, however, had become almost hopeless; so many were trying to live by it, and so few had money to buy. The delicate fabrics, both in knitting and embroidery, which many a bony finger worked at till the hollow eye grew dim, were often disposed of for two or three pence beyond the price of the materials. The collar which poor Mary had now finished was beautifully fine, and had cost her many hours of toil; yet she almost despaired of selling it, as she sallied forth at eleven o'clock, shivering with cold nd hunger.

About four o'clock the same day, as a fashionably dressed lady was walking along a road at the western end of the city, she heard a plaintive voice behind her saying, "Will you please, ma'am, to buy a knitted collar?!'

She turned, and poor Mary, now almost fainting from exhaustion, offered the lace-like piece of work for her inspection.

"What do you ask for it, child?"

"Two shillings, ma'am."

"Oh, that's much too dear! I'll give you one for it."

"It took me several days to knit, and my parents and brothers are starving:" said poor Mary, bursting into tears.

"Oh, yes; I suppose the old story. Well, child, if you don't like to give it for a shilling, you can sell it elsewhere."

"Take it, ma'am," said Mary, giving it to the lady, and eagerly seizing the offered shilling. There was life to her and those she loved in that bit of silver, that paltry coin which its former possessors would have squandered without a thought for any unneeded trifle, yet now considered well-spent in securing a *bargain*.

Let us change the scene to a baker's shop, in —street. It was a large establishment, and the deep shelves were piled with the crisp, fresh loaves of every shape, size, and quality, from the fine light French roll, to the dark, compact "household brick;" and the wide window displayed biscuits, cakes, and confectionary, in various tempting forms. It was half-past four o'clock, and the space outside the counter was filled with purchasers, very different in their rank and appearance. Two richly dressed ladies, whose carriage was in waiting, were selecting, with jewelled fingers, some of the prettiest *bon-bons* which the attentive master of the shop produced, and mirthfully discussing which kind "baby" was likely to prefer: near them stood a stout, fresh-coloured country-woman, wrapped in a blue cloak, and holding up her checked apron, while she impatiently called out: —"Ah, then, good luck to you, honest man, and don't be keeping me this way, but just give me them two lumps, and three bricks I axed you for:

here's the money ready, and 'tis three miles of the road home I ought to have over me by this."

The master of the shop had but two boys to assist him behind the counter, and though they hurried and toiled and "did the impossible" to content their clamorous customers, the latter were by no means satisfied to wait for their turn to be served. There were but two individuals in the shop who appeared to possess the very un-Irish quality of patience. One of them seemed to have learned it in a hard school; she was a thin, pale girl, barefooted, and clothed in miserable, scanty rags, which, however, were clean, and as tidily put on as they would admit of. She held a shilling tightly grasped in her slender fingers, and advancing through an opening in the crowd, asked the youngest shopboy for a stale loaf of "thirds"—(the coarsest kind of bread manufactured). He had just finished serving a farmer, and hastily giving her what she wanted, took the shilling, and returned her the change. There had been standing next the girl, a pleasing-looking, neatly-dressed lady, who now advanced, and asked for some Naples biscuits.—The boy was busy weighing them, when the girl came back, and said to him, "If you please, what did you charge for the loaf?"

"Threepence, and I gave you the change."

"But you gave me sixpence and a fourpence, so you kept a penny too little."

The boy looked vexed at his blunder, which he probably feared his master might observe; so hastily taking the silver fourpence, and giving the girl threepence, he said, "'Tis all right now, you may go."

She was hastening away, when the gentle-look-

ing lady next her said, "Stay, you have been very honest; good principle may be shown as well about a penny as a pound—here is a shilling for you."

The girl involuntarily raised her clasped hands.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, ma'am," she said, "God for ever bless you!" and then hastened out of the shop, before the lady could again address her.

Miss Saville had only moderate means, but possessed a truly benevolent heart. She usually resided in a remote part of the country, with her brother, who was a clergyman, and who was wont to assert, that in attention to the schools, and visiting the sick in his parish, his sister Sarah was worth two curates, "aye, and hard-working ones, too."

She was now staying on a visit with a married sister, who resided near ——; and who, although blessed with an excellent husband, and several fine children, could not be called as truly happy as her maiden sister; for though, in the main, a good-natured woman, she lacked that generous, thoughtful benevolence of spirit which distinguished Miss Saville. On this day, however, the latter walked home to dinner in a self-reproaching frame of mind.

"How very thoughtless I was," she said to herself, "not to ask that poor child where she lives, and something of her history. I'm sure she's in great distress, and she seemed so honest and so grateful. I wish very much I could find her out."

A few hours afterwards, a happy family party were assembled in Mr. Elliott's drawing-room.—

His sister-in-law, Miss Saville, held her youngest nephew on her knee, and was surrounded by four other bright-eyed little ones, among whom she had just distributed her purchase of Naples biscuits; and as they ate, they listened with much interest to Aunt Sarah's account of the honest girl, who, "though she looked so very poor, would not keep a penny which did not belong to her."

Mrs. Elliott, who was seated at her work-table, arranging some lace trimming on a cap, now got up, and handing a small collar to her sister, said—

"Look, Sarah, did you ever see any knitting so fine as that?"

"It is, indeed, beautiful—quite like lace; where did you get it, Eliza?"

"I bought it to-day in the street—such a bargain! Just fancy—the girl who had it asked two shillings; and when I offered her one, seemed quite glad to take it. Really, there's no knowing what to offer; for now money is so scarce, people who live by knitting and needlework, are willing to take almost anything. I dare say Miss Wilson, the milliner, would charge me five shillings for that collar."

Miss Saville looked very grave, and was silent; but Mr. Elliott, who had been reading the newspaper, now laid it down, and said—

"Do you think it honest, Eliza, to take the fruit of a poor girl's industry for one-fifth of its value?"

"Really, James, you men have the strangest notions!—why should it not be honest to purchase an article for the price at which its owner is willing to sell it?"

"Not *willing*, Eliza. By your own account it is wrung from them by the direst want; and perhaps the other shilling which you withheld from the poor maker of that little article, and which to you is nothing, might have given food and comfort to a starving family."

Mrs. Elliott blushed, but did not speak. Her conscience told her her husband was right, yet she did not like—what woman does?—to own herself in the wrong.

Mr. Elliott did not wish to give his wife pain; and her sister felt glad to see that an impression, which she hoped might prove lasting, had been made on her mind; so, after a momentary pause, the conversation turned on other subjects, and the evening concluded happily. In the silence of night, however, ere they fell asleep, perhaps the last reflection of each was something of this kind:

"How I wish," thought Miss Saville, "I knew where that poor girl lives. I shall not forget her pale face and gentle voice for some time."

"Well," thought her brother, "I blamed Eliza for not being charitable, and I fear I'm not half enough so myself. When I'm paying my subscriptions next week, I think I'll double them."

"I wish I had given the shilling to that poor girl," was Mrs. Elliott's reflection. "James is right. I'll never again bargain with a poor workwoman."

Let us now return to the wretched attic inhabited by the Sullivans.

A month had elapsed since the day when our story commenced, and their miserable resources were utterly exhausted. Denis and his youngest child lay dead; they had both expired of hunger

the preceding day, and as yet no one came to bury them. The wife lay gasping at the corpses' feet, and a low, dull moaning proceeded from the white, drawn lips of the two little skeletons lying on the floor, who, but for that sign of life, could scarcely be distinguished from their dead brother.

Where was Mary? Day after day, when the last halfpenny was expended, had she crawled forth to beg alms for her perishing family: often she returned to them empty. Her failing strength and eyesight, together with the long December nights, unlighted by fire or candle, forbade her resuming her ill-rewarded knitting. This day she went out, almost frantically, to beseech a morsel of bread; for she felt that ere another sun went down, they must all perish. We will leave her tottering towards a crowded thoroughfare, where she thought, perchance, even one halfpenny might be obtained.

About two o'clock, that day, Mr. and Mrs. Elliott, and their sister, emerged from a haberdasher's shop, in a street where the ladies had been making various purchases, and the gentleman—as gentlemen always have done, and always will do—amused himself by commenting on their proceedings, and thanking his stars that masculine costume is so much more easily arranged than that pertaining to the softer portion of the creation. They were about to cross the street, when Mr. Elliott said—

"There's a crowd on the opposite footpath; we had better wait till it disperses."

'Tis only a poor hungry crathur that fainted," said a man who was passing, "and she's lying now like dead."

"Let us go," said Miss Saville, "and see what can be done." And on she went, followed by her brother and sister.

There lay poor Mary, apparently lifeless, her head resting against a lamp post. Miserably death-like as she looked, Miss Saville immediately recognised the girl she had met at the baker's; and her sister the same moment knew the poor seller of the knitted collar.

No time was lost by Mr. Elliott in getting her conveyed to the nearest apothecary's shop; where, after some time, she was restored to consciousness. A few words sufficed to make known her story, and to direct her benefactor to the miserable dwelling where her parents lay. Thither Mr. Elliott went, and found that Nelly Sullivan had breathed her last since morning. The little boys were still alive, and able to swallow the cordial he offered them. He summoned some of the neighbours to his assistance, and provided for the decent burial of the dead. He then had the poor children wrapped up, and conveyed to a house inhabited by an old woman who had nursed in his family, and who readily undertook the charge of them and of Mary. After some time, they all recovered their bodily health, but it was long before Mary could be roused from a state of deep dejection. At length Miss Saville took her to the country, and there the grateful girl lives with her as a servant, each day becoming more useful. The boys, through Mr. Elliott's interest, have been placed at school, where they promise to do well. Their benefactors found that such giving was indeed "twice blessed;" for they experienced an abundant enlargement of their own hearts, while doing good to others. Mrs.

W.Monkhouse, Lath York.

Mrs ELLIOTT & HER SISTER RECOGNIZE MARY. *Page 66.*

Elliott especially, though thrifty, as a housewife should be, in buying from rich tradespeople, has never been known to cheapen the work of the poor, since the day on which she purchased the *knitted collar.*

FATHER AND SON.

One evening in the month of March, 1798,—that dark time in Ireland's annals whose memory (overlooking all minor subsequent *émeutes*) is still preserved among us, as "the year of the rebellion,"—a lady and gentleman were seated near a blazing fire in the old-fashioned dining-room of a large lonely mansion. They had just dined; wine and fruit were on the table, both untouched, while Mr. Hewson and his wife sat silently gazing at the fire, watching its flickering light becoming gradually more vivid as the short Spring twilight faded into darkness.

At length the husband poured out a glass of wine, drank it off, and then broke silence, by saying—

"Well, well, Charlotte, these are awful times; there were ten men taken up to-day for burning Cotter's house at Knockane; and Tom Dycer says that every magistrate in the country is a marked man."

Mrs. Hewson cast a frightened glance towards the windows, which opened nearly to the ground, and gave a view of a wide tree-besprinkled lawn, through whose centre a long straight avenue led to

the high-road. There was also a footpath at either side of the house, branching off through close thickets of trees, and reaching the road by a circuitous route.

"Listen, James!" she said, after a pause; "what noise is that?"

"Nothing but the sighing of the wind among the trees. Come, wife, you must not give way to imaginary fears."

"But really I heard something like footsteps on the gravel, róund the gable-end—I wish"—

A knock at the parlour door interrupted her.

"Come in."

The door opened, and Tim Gahan, Mr. Hewson's confidential steward and right-hand man, entered, followed by a fair-haired delicate-looking boy of six years' old, dressed in deep mourning.

"Well, Gahan, what do you want?"

"I ask your Honour's pardon for disturbing you and the mistress; but I thought it right to come and tell you the bad news I heard."

"Something about the rebels, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; I got a whisper just now that there's going to be a great rising intirely, to-morrow; thousands are to gather before daybreak at Kilcrean bog, where I'm told they've a power of pikes hiding; and then they're to march on and sack every house in the country. I'll engage, when I heard it, I didn't let grass grow under my feet, but came off straight to your honour, thinking maybe you'd like to walk over this fine evening to Mr. Warren's, and settle with him what's best to be done."

"Oh, James! I beseech you, don't think of going."

"Make your mind easy, Charlotte; I don't intend it: not that I suppose there would be much risk; but, all things considered, I think I'm just as comfortable at home."

The steward's brow darkened, as he glanced nervously towards the end window, which, jutting out in the gable, formed a deep angle in the outer wall.

"Of course, 'tis just as your Honour plases, but I'll warrant you there would be no harm in going. Come, Billy," he added, addressing the child, who by this time was standing close to Mrs. Hewson, "make your bow, and bid good night to master and mistress."

The boy did not stir, and Mrs. Hewson taking his little hand in hers, said—

"You need not go home for half-an-hour, Gahan; stay and have a chat with the servants in the kitchen, and leave little Billy with me—and with the apples and nuts"—she added, smiling as she filled the child's hands with fruit.

"Thank you, ma'am," said the steward hastily. "I can't stop—I'm in a hurry home, where I wanted to leave this brat to-night; but he *would* follow me. Come, Billy; come this minute, you young rogue."

Still the child looked reluctant, and Mr. Hewson said, peremptorily—

"Don't go yet, Gahan; I want to speak to you by and bye; and you know the mistress always likes to pet little Billy."

Without replying, the steward left the room; and the next moment his hasty footsteps resounded through the long flagged passage that led to the offices.

"There's something strange about Gahan, since his wife died," remarked Mrs. Hewson. "I suppose 'tis grief for her that makes him look so darkly, and seem almost jealous when any one speaks to his child. Poor little Billy! your mother was a sad loss to you."

The child's blue eyes filled with tears, and pressing closer to the lady's side, he said:—

"Old Peggy doesn't wash and dress me as nicely as mammy used."

"But your father is good to you?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, but he's out all day busy, and I've no one to talk to me as mammy used; for Peggy is quite deaf, and besides she's always busy with the pigs and chickens."

"I wish I had you, Billy, to take care of and to teach, for your poor mother's sake."

"And so you may, Charlotte," said her husband. "I'm sure Gahan, with all his odd ways, is too sensible a fellow not to know how much it would be for his child's benefit to be brought up and educated by us, and the boy would be an amusement to us in this lonely house. I'll speak to him about it before he goes home. Billy, my fine fellow, come here," he continued, "jump up on my knee, and tell me if you'd like to live here always and learn to read and write."

"I would, sir, if I could be with father, too."

"So you shall;—and what about old Peggy?"

The child paused—

"I'd like to give her a pen'north of snuff and a piece of tobacco every week, for she said the other day that *that* would make her quite happy."

Mr. Hewson laughed, and Billy prattled on, still seated on his knee; when a noise of footsteps

on the ground, mingled with low suppressed talking was heard outside.

"James, listen! there's the noise again."

It was now nearly dark, but Mr. Hewson, still holding the boy in his arms, walked towards the window and looked out.

"I can see nothing," he said,—"stay—there are figures moving off among the trees, and a man running round to the back of the house—very like Gahan he is too!"

Seizing the bell-rope, he rang it loudly, and said to the servant who answered his summons:—

"Fasten the shutters and put up the bars, Connell; and then tell Gahan I want to see him."

The man obeyed; candles were brought, and Gahan entered the room.

Mr. Hewson remarked that, though his cheeks were flushed, his lips were very white, and his bold dark eyes were cast on the ground.

"What took you round the house just now, Tim?" asked his master, in a careless manner.

"What took me round the house, is it? Why, then, nothing in life, sir, but that just as I went outside the kitchen door to take a smoke, I saw the pigs, that Sheenan forgot to put up in their stye, making right for the mistress's flower-garden; so I just put my *dudheen*, lighted as it was, into my pocket, and ran after them. I caught them on the grand walk under the end window, and indeed, ma'am, I had my own share of work turning them back to their proper spear."

Gahan spoke with unusual volubility, but without raising his eyes from the ground.

"Who were the people," asked his master

"whom I saw moving through the western grove?"

"People! your honour—not a sign of any people moving there, I'll be bound, barring the pigs."

"Then," said Mr. Hewson, smiling, to his wife, "the miracle of Circe must have been reversed, and swine turned into men; for, undoubtedly, the dark figures I saw were human beings."

"Come, Billy," said Gahan, anxious to turn the conversation, "will you come home with me now? I am sure 'twas very good of the mistress to give you all them fine apples."

Mrs. Hewson was going to propose Billy's remaining, but her husband whispered:—"Wait till to-morrow." So Gahan and his child were allowed to depart.

Next morning the magistrates of the district were on the alert, and several suspicious looking men found lurking about, were taken up. A hat which fitted one of them was picked up in Mr. Hewson's grove; the gravel under the end window bore many signs of trampling feet; and there were marks on the wall as if guns had rested against it. Gahan's information touching the intended meeting at Kilcrean bog proved to be totally without foundation; and after a careful search not a single pike or weapon of any description could be found there. All these circumstances combined certainly looked suspicious; but, after a prolonged investigation, as no guilt could be actually brought home to Gahan, he was dismissed. One of his examiners, however, said privately, "I advise you take care of that fellow, Hewson. If I were in your place, I'd just

trust him as far as I could throw him, and not an inch beyond."

An indolent hospitable Irish country gentleman, such as Mr. Hewson, is never without an always shrewd and often roguish prime minister, who saves his master the trouble of looking after his own affairs, and manages everything that is to be done in both the home and foreign departments,—from putting a new door on the pig-stye, to letting a farm of a hundred acres on lease. Now in this, or rather these capacities, Gahan had long served Mr. Hewson; and some seven years previous to the evening on which our story commences, he had strengthened the tie and increased his influence considerably by marrying Mrs. Hewson's favourite and faithful maid. One child was the result of this union; and Mrs. Hewson, who had no family of her own, took much interest in little Billy—more especially after the death of his mother, who, poor thing! the neighbours said, was not very happy, and would gladly, if she dared, have exchanged her lonely cottage for the easy service of her former mistress.

Thus, though for a time Mr. and Mrs. Hewson regarded Gahan with some doubt, the feeling gradually wore away, and the steward regained his former influence.

After the lapse of a few stormy months the rebellion was quelled: all the prisoners taken up were severally disposed of by hanging, transportation or acquittal, according to the nature and amount of the evidence brought against them; and the country became as peaceful as it is in the volcanic nature of our Irish soil ever to be.

The Hewsons' kindness towards Gahan's child

was steady and unchanged. They took him into their house, and gave him a plain but solid education; so that William, while yet a boy, was enabled to be of some use to his patron, and daily enjoyed more and more of his confidence.

Another evening, the twentieth anniversary of that with which this narrative commenced, came round. Mr. and Mrs. Hewson were still hale and active, dwelling in their hospitable home. About eight o'clock at night, Tim Gahan, now a stooping, grey-haired man, entered Mr. Hewson's kitchen, and took his seat on the corner of the settle next the fire.

The cook, directing a silent significant glance of compassion towards her fellow-servants, said:—

"Would you like a drink of cider, Tim, or will you wait and take a cup of tay with myself and Kitty?"

The old man's eyes were fixed on the fire, and a wrinkled hand was planted firmly on each knee, as if to check their involuntary trembling.

"I'll not drink anything this night, thank you kindly, Nelly," he said, in a slow musing manner, dwelling long on each word.

"Where's Billy?" he asked, after a pause, in a quick hurried tone, looking up suddenly at the cook, with an expression in his eyes, which, as she afterwards said, "took away her breath."

"Oh, never heed Billy! I suppose he's busy with the master."

"Where's the use, Nelly," said the coachman, "in hiding it from him? Sure, sooner, or later, he must know it. Tim," he continued, "God

knows 'tis sorrow to my heart this blessed night to make your's sore,—but the truth is, that William has done what he oughtn't to do to the man that was all one as a father to him."

"What has he done? what will you *dar* say again my boy?"

"Taken money, then," replied the coachman, "that the master had marked and put by in his desk; for he suspected this some time past that gold was missing. This morning 'twas gone; a search was made, and the marked guineas were found with your son William."

The old man covered his face with his hands, and rocked himself to and fro.

"Where is he now?" at length he asked, in a hoarse voice.

"Locked up safe in the inner store-room; the master intends sending him to gaol early to-morrow morning."

"He will not," said Gahan, slowly. "Kill the boy that saved his life!—no, no."

"Poor fellow! the grief is setting his mind astray—and sure no wonder!" said the cook compassionately.

"I'm not astray!" cried the old man, fiercely. "Where's the master?—take me to him."

"Come with me," said the butler, "and I'll ask him will he see you?"

With faltering steps, the father complied; and when they reached the parlour, he trembled exceedingly, and leant against the wall for support, while the butler opened the door, and said—

"Gahan is here, sir, and wants to know will you let him speak to you for a minute?"

"Tell him to come in," said Mr. Hewson, in a

solemn tone of sorrow, very different from his ordinary cheerful voice.

"Sir," said the steward, advancing, "they tell me you are going to send my boy to prison—is it true?"

"Too true, indeed, Gahan. The lad who was reared in my house, whom my wife watched over in health, and nursed in sickness—whom we loved almost as if he were our own, has *robbed* us, and that not once or twice, but many times. He is silent and sullen, too, and refuses to tell why he stole the money, which was never withheld from him when he wanted it. I can make nothing of him, and must only give him up to justice in the morning."

"No, sir, no. The boy saved your life; you can't take his."

"You're raving, Gahan."

"Listen to me, sir, and you won't say so. You remember this night twenty years? I came here with my motherless child, and yourself and the mistress pitied us, and spoke loving words to him. Well for us all you did so! That night—little you thought it!—I was banded with them that were sworn to take your life. They were watching you outside the window, and I was sent to inveigle you out, that they might shoot you. A faint heart I had for the bloody business, for you were ever and always a good master to me; but I was under an oath to them that I darn't break, supposing they ordered me to shoot my own mother. Well! the hand of God was over you, and you wouldn't come with me. I ran out to them, and I said—'Boys, if you want to shoot him, you must do it through the window,' think-

ing they'd be afeard of that; but they weren't—they were daring fellows, and one of them, sheltered by the angle of the window, took deadly aim at you. That very moment you took Billy on your knee, and I saw his fair head in a line with the musket. I don't know exactly then what I said or did, but I remember I caught the man's hand, threw it up, and pointed to the child. Knowing I was a determined man, I believe they didn't wish to provoke me; so they watched you for a while, and when you didn't put him down they got daunted, hearing the sound of soldiers riding by the road, and they stole away through the grove. Most of that gang swung on the gallows, but the last of them died this morning quietly in his bed. Up to yesterday he used to make me give him money,—sums of money to buy his silence—and it was for that I made my boy a thief. It was wearing out his very life. Often he went down on his knees to me, and said: 'Father, I'd die myself sooner than rob my master, but I can't see *you* disgraced. Oh, let us fly the country!' Now, sir, I have told you all—do what you like with me—send me to gaol, I deserve it—but spare my poor deluded innocent boy!"

It would be difficult to describe Mr. Hewson's feelings, but his wife's first impulse was to hasten to liberate the prisoner. With a few incoherent words of explanation she led him into the presence of his master, who, looking at him sorrowfully but kindly, said:

"William, you have erred deeply, but not so deeply as I supposed. Your father has told me everything. I forgive him freely and you also."

The young man covered his face with his hands,

and wept tears more abundant than he had ever shed since the day when he followed his mother to the grave. He could say little, but he knelt on the ground, and clasping the kind hand of her who had supplied to him that mother's place, he murmured;

"Will *you* tell him I would rather die than sin again."

Old Gahan died two years afterwards, truly penitent, invoking blessings on his son and on his benefactors; and the young man's conduct, now no longer under evil influence, was so steady and so upright, that his adopted parents felt that their pious work was rewarded, and that, in William Gahan, they had indeed a son.

LITTLE MARY.

A TALE OF THE BLACK YEAR.

THAT was a pleasant place where I was born, though 'twas only a thatched cabin by the side of a mountain stream, where the country was so lonely, that in summer time the wild ducks used to bring their young ones to feed on the bog, within a hundred yards of our door, and you could not stoop over the bank to raise a pitcher full of water, without frightening a shoal of beautiful speckled trout. Well, 'tis long ago since my brother Richard, that's now grown a fine clever man, God bless him!—and myself, used to set off together up the mountain, to pick bunches of the cotton plant and the bog myrtle, and to look for birds' and wild bees' nests. 'Tis long ago—and though I'm happy and well off now, living in the big house as own maid to the young ladies, who, on account of my being foster-sister to poor darling Miss Ellen, that died of the decline, treat me more like their equal than their servant, and give me the means to improve myself; still at times, especially when James Sweeney, a decent boy of the neighbours, and myself, are taking a walk together

through the fields, in the cool and quiet of a summer's evening, I can't help thinking of the times that are passed, and talking about them to James, with a sort of peaceful sadness, more happy, maybe, than if we were laughing aloud.

Every evening, before I say my prayers, I read a chapter in the Bible that Miss Ellen gave me; and last night I felt my tears dropping for ever so long over one verse,—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." The words made me think of them that are gone—of my father, and his wife that was a true fond mother to me; and above all, of my little sister Mary, the *clureen bawn** that nestled in her bosom.

I was a wild slip of a girl, ten years of age, and my brother Richard about two years older, when my father brought home his second wife. She was the daughter of a farmer up at Lackabawn, and was reared with care and dacency; but her father held his ground at a rack-rent, and the middleman that was between him and the head landlord did not pay his own rent, so the place was ejected, and the farmer collected every penny he had, and set off with his family to America. My father had a liking for the youngest daughter, and well become him to have it, for a sweeter creature never drew the breath of life; but while her father passed for a *strong*† farmer, he was timorous-like about asking her to share his little cabin; however, when he found how matters stood,

* White dove. † Rich.

he didn't lose much time in finding out that she was willing to be his wife, and a mother to his boy and girl. *That* she was, a patient loving one. Oh! it often sticks me like a knife, when I think how many times I fretted her with my foolishness and my idle ways, and how 'twas a long time before I'd call her "mother." Often, when my father would be going to chastise Richard and myself for our provoking doings, especially the day that we took half-a-dozen eggs from under the hatching hen, to play "Blind Tom" with them, she'd interfere for us, and say,—"Tim, *aleagh*, don't touch them this time; sure 'tis only *arch* they are: they'll get more sense in time." And then, after he was gone out, she'd advise us for our good so pleasantly, that a thunderbolt itself couldn't look black at her. She did wonders too about the house and garden. They were both dirty and neglected enough when she first came over them; for I was too young and foolish, and my father too busy with his out-door work, and the old woman that lived with us in service too feeble and too blind to keep the place either clean or decent; but my mother got the floor raised, and the green pool in front drained, and a parcel of roses and honeysuckles planted there instead. The neighbours' wives used to say 'Twas all pride and upsetting folly, to keep the kitchen-floor swept clean, and to put the potatoes on a dish, instead of emptying them out of the pot into the middle of the table; and, besides, 'twas a cruel unnatural thing, they said, to take away the pool from the ducks, that they were always used to paddle in so handy. But my mother was always too busy and too happy to heed what they said; and, besides,

she was always so ready to do a kind turn for any of them, that, out of pure shame, they had at last to leave off abusing her "fine English ways."

West of our house there was a straggling, stony piece of ground, where, within the memory of man, nothing ever grew but nettles, docks, and thistles. One Monday, when Richard and myself came in from school, my mother told us to set about weeding it, and to bring in some basketsfull of good clay from the banks of the river: she said that if we worked well at it until Saturday, she'd bring me a new frock, and Dick a jacket, from the next market-town; and encouraged by this, we set to work with right good will, and didn't leave off till supper time. The next day we did the same; and by degrees, when we saw the heap of weeds and stones that we got out, growing big, and the ground looking nice and smooth and red and rich, we got quite anxious about it ourselves, and we built a nice little fence round to keep out the pigs. When it was manured, my mother planted cabbages, parsnips, and onions in it; and, to be sure, she got a fine crop out of it, enough to make us many a nice supper of vegetables stewed with pepper, and a small taste of bacon or a red herring. Besides, she sold in the market as much as bought a Sunday coat for my father, a gown for herself, a fine pair of shoes for Dick, and as pretty a shawl for myself, as e'er a colleen in the country could show at mass. Through means of my father's industry and my mother's good management, we were, with the blessing of God, as snug and comfortable a poor family as any in Munster. We paid but a small rent, and we had always plenty

of potatoes to eat, good clothes to wear, and cleanliness and decency in and about our little cabin.

Five years passed on in this way, and at last little Mary was born. She was a delicate fairy thing, with that look, even from the first, in her blue eyes, which is seldom seen, except where the shadow of the grave darkens the cradle. She was fond of her father, and of Richard, and of myself, and would laugh and crow whn she saw us, but *the love in the core of her heart* was for her mother. No matter how tired, or sleepy, or cross the baby might be, one word from *her* would set the bright eyes dancing, and the little rosy mouth smiling, and the tiny limbs quivering, as if walking or running couldn't content her, but she must fly to her mother's arms. And how that mother doated on the very ground she trod! I often thought that the queen in her state carriage, with her son, God bless him! alongside of her, dressed out in gold and jewels, was not one bit happier than my mother, when she sat under the shade of the mountain ash near the door, in the hush of the summer's evening, singing and *cronauning* her only one to sleep in her arms. In the month of October, 1845, Mary was four years old. That was the bitter time, when first the food of the earth was turned to poison; when the gardens that used to be so bright and sweet, covered with the purple and white potato blossoms, became in one night black and offensive, as if fire had come down from heaven to burn them up. 'Twas a heart-breaking thing to see the labouring men, the crathurs! that had only the one half-acre to feed their little families, going out, after work, in the evenings to dig their suppers from under the black

stalks. Spadeful after spadeful would be turned 'dn and a long piece of a ridge dug through, before they'd get a small kish full of such withered *crohauneens*,* as other years would be hardly counted fit for the pigs.

It was some time before the distress reached us, for there was a trifle of money in the savings' bank, that held us in meal, while the neighbours were next door to starvation. As long as my father and mother had it, they shared it freely with them that were worse off than themselves; but at last the little penny of money was all spent, the price of flour was raised; and, to make matters worse, the farmer that my father worked for, at a poor eightpence a day, was forced to send him and three more of his labourers away, as he couldn't afford to pay them even *that* any longer. Oh! 'twas a sorrowful night when my father brought home the news. I remember, as well as if I saw it yesterday, the desolate look in his face when he sat down by the ashes of the turf fire that had just baked a yellow meal cake for his supper. My mother was at the opposite side, giving little Mary a drink of sour milk out of her little wooden piggin, and the child didn't like it, being delicate and always used to sweet milk, so she said:

"Mammy, won't you give me some of the nice milk instead of that?"

"I haven't it *asthore*, nor can't get it," said her mother, "so don't ye fret."

Not a word more out of the little one's mouth, only she turned her little cheek in towards her

* Small potatoes.

mother, and stayed quite quiet, as if she was hearkening to what was going on.

"Judy," said my father, "God is good, and sure 'tis only in Him we must put our trust; for in the wide world I can see nothing but starvation before us.

"God *is* good, Tim," replied my mother; "He wont forsake us."

Just then Richard came in with a more joyful face than I had seen on him for many a day.

"Good news!" says he, "good news, father! there's work for us both on the Droumcarra road. The government works are to begin there to-morrow; you'll get eightpence a day, and I'll get sixpence."

If you saw our delight when we heard this, you'd think 'twas the free present of a thousand pounds that came to us, falling through the roof, instead of an offer of small wages for hard work.

To be sure the potatoes were gone, and the yellow meal was dear and dry and chippy—it hadn't the *nature* about it that a hot potato has for a poor man; but still 'twas a great thing to have the prospect of getting enough of even that same, and not to be obliged to follow the rest of the country into the poor-house, which was crowded to that degree that the crathurs there —God help them!—hadn't room even to die quietly in their beds, but were crowded together on the floor like so many dogs in a kennel. The next morning my father and Richard were off before daybreak, for they had a long way to walk to Droumcarra, and they should be there in time to begin work. They took an Indian meal cake with them to eat for their dinner, and poor dry food it

was, with only a draught of cold water to wash it down. Still my father, who was knowledgeable about such things, always said it was mighty wholesome when it was well cooked; but some of the poor people took a great objection against it on account of the yellow colour, which they thought came from having sulphur mixed with it—and they said, indeed it was putting a great affront on the decent Irish to mix up their food as if 'twas for mangy dogs. Glad enough, poor creatures, they were to get it afterwards, when sea-weed and nettles, and the very grass by the roadside, was all that many of them had to put into their mouths.

When my father and brother came home in the evening, faint and tired from the two long walks and the day's work, my mother would always try to have something for them to eat with their porridge—a bit of butter, or a bowl of thick milk, or maybe a few eggs. She always gave me plenty as far as it would go; but 'twas little she took herself. She would often go entirely without a meal, and then she'd slip down to the huckster's, and buy a little white bun for Mary; and I'm sure it used to do her more good to see the child eat it, than if she got a meat dinner for herself. No matter how hungry the poor little thing might be, she'd always break off a bit to put into her mother's mouth, and she would not be satisfied until she saw her swallow it; then the child would take a drink of cold water out of her little tin porringer, as contented as if it was new milk.

As the winter advanced, the weather became wet and bitterly cold, and the poor men working on the roads began to suffer dreadfully from being all ay in wet clothes, and, what was worse, not hav-

ing any change to put on when they went home at night without a dry thread about them. Fever soon got amongst them, and my father took it. My mother brought the doctor to see him, and by selling all our decent clothes, she got for him whatever was wanting, but all to no use: 'twas the will of the Lord to take him to himself, and he died after a days' illness.

It would be hard to tell the sorrow that his widow and orphans felt, when they saw the fresh sods planted on his grave. It was not grief altogether like the grand stately grief of quality, although maybe the same sharp knife is sticking into the same sore bosom *inside* in both; but the *outside* differs in rich and poor. I saw the mistress a week after Miss Ellen died. She was in her drawing-room with the blinds pulled down, sitting in a low chair, with her elbow on the small work-table, and her cheek resting on her hand—not a speck of anything white about her but the cambric handkerchief, and the face that was paler than the marble chimney-piece.

When she saw me, (for the butler, being busy, sent me in with the luncheon-tray,) she covered her eyes with her handkerchief, and began to cry, but quietly, as if she did not want it to be noticed. As I was going out, I just heard her say to Miss Alice in a choking voice:—

"Keep Sally here always; our poor darling was fond of her." And as I closed the door, I heard her give one deep sob. The next time I saw her, she was quite composed: only for the white cheek and the black dress, you would not know that the burning feel of a child's last kiss had ever touched her lips.

My father's wife mourned for him after another fashion. *She* could not sit quiet, she must work hard to keep the life in them to whom he gave it; and it was only in the evenings when she sat down before the fire with Mary in her arms, that she used to sob and rock herself to and fro, and sing a low wailing keen for the father of the little one, whose innocent tears were always ready to fall when she saw her mother cry. About this time my mother got an offer from some of the hucksters in the neighbourhood, who knew her honesty, to go three times a week to the next market-town, ten miles off, with their little money, and bring them back supplies of bread, groceries, soap, and candles. This she used to do, walking the twenty miles—ten of them with a heavy load on her back—for the sake of earning enough to keep us alive. 'Twas very seldom that Richard could get a stroke of work to do: the boy wasn't strong in himself, for he had the sickness too; though he recovered from it, and always did his best to earn an honest penny wherever he could. I often wanted my mother to let me go in her stead and bring back the load; but she never would hear of it, and kept me at home to mind the house and little Mary. My poor pet lamb! 'twas little minding she wanted. She would go after breakfast and sit at the door, and stop there all day, watching for her mother, and never heeding the neighbours' children that used to come wanting her to play. Through the live-long hours she would never stir, but just keep her eyes fixed on the lonesome *boreen*;* and

* By-road.

when the shadow of the mountain-ash grew long, and she caught a glimpse of her mother ever so far off, coming towards home, the joy that would flush on the small patient face, was brighter than the sunbeam on the river. And faint and weary as the poor woman used to be, before ever she sat down she'd have Mary nestling in her bosom. No matter how little she might have eaten herself that day, she would always bring home a little white bun for Mary ; and the child, that had tasted nothing since morning, would eat it so happily, and then fall quietly asleep in her mother's arms.

At the end of six months I got the sickness myself, but not so heavily as Richard did before. Any way, he and my mother tended me well through it. They sold almost every little stick of furniture that was left, to buy me drink and medicine. By degrees I recovered, and the first evening I was able to sit up, I noticed a strange wild brightness in my mother's eyes, and a hot flush on her thin cheeks—she had taken the fever.

Before she lay down on the wisp of straw that served her for a bed, she brought little Mary over to me:—"Take her, Sally," she said—and between every word she gave the child a kiss—"Take her; she's safer with you than she'd be with me, for you're over the sickness, and 'tisn't long any way I'll be with you, my jewel," she said, as she gave the little creature one long close hug, and put her into my arms.

'Twould take long to tell all about her sickness —how Richard and I, as good right we had, tended her night and day ; and how, when every farthing and farthing's worth we had in the world was gone, the mistress herself came down from the big

house, the very day after the family returned from France, and brought wine, food, medicine, linen, and everything we could want.

Shortly after the kind lady was gone, my mother took the change for death; her senses came back, she grew quite strong-like, and sat up straight in the bed.

"Bring me the child, Sally, *aleagh*," she said. And when I carried little Mary over to her, she looked into the tiny face, as if she was reading it like a book.

"You won't be long away from me, my own one," she said, while the tears fell down upon the child like summer-rain.

"Mother," said I, as well as I could speak for crying, "sure you *know* I will do my best to tend her."

"I know you will, *acushla;* you were always a true and dutiful daughter to me and to him that's gone; but, Sally, there's *that* in my weeney one that won't let her thrive without the mother's hand over her, and the mother's heart for her's to lean against. And now —." It was all she could say: she just clasped the little child to her bosom, fell back on my arm, and in a few moments all was over. At first, Richard and I could not believe that she was dead; and it was long before the orphan would loose her hold of the stiffening fingers; but when the neighbours came in to prepare for the wake, we contrived to flatter her away.

Days passed on; the child was very quiet; she used to go as usual to sit at the door, and watch hour after hour along the road that her mother always took coming home from market, waiting

for her that could never come again. When the sun was near setting, her gaze used to be more fixed and eager; but when the darkness came on, her blue eyes used to droop like the flowers that shut up their leaves, and she would come in quietly without saying a word, and allow me to undress her and put her to bed.

It troubled us and the young ladies greatly that she would not eat. It was almost impossible to get her to taste a morsel; indeed, the only thing she would let inside her lips was a bit of a little white bun, like those her poor mother used to bring her. There was nothing left untried to please her. I carried her up to the big house, thinking the change might do her good, and the ladies petted her, and talked to her, and gave her heaps of toys and cakes, and pretty frocks and coats; but she hardly noticed them, and was restless and uneasy until she got back to her own low sunny door-step.

Every day she grew paler and thinner, and her bright eyes had a sad fond look in them, so like her mother's. One evening she sat at the door later than usual.

"Come in, *alannah*," I said to her. "Won't you come in for your own Sally?"

She never stirred. I went over to her; she was quite still, with her little hands crossed on her lap, and her head drooping on her chest. I touched her—she was cold. I gave a loud scream and Richard came running; he stopped and looked, and then burst out crying like an infant. Our little sister was dead!

Well, my Mary, the sorrow was bitter, but it was short. You're gone home to Him that com-

forts as a mother comforteth. *Agra machree*, your eyes are as blue, and your hair as golden, and your voice as sweet, as they were when you watched by the cabin-door; but your cheeks are not pale, *acushla*, nor your little hands thin, and the shade of sorrow has passed away from your forehead like a rain-cloud from the summer sky. She that loved you so on earth, has clasped you for ever to her bosom in heaven; and God himself has wiped away all tears from your eyes, and placed you both and our own dear father far beyond the touch of sorrow or the fear of death.

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

AN IRISH SKETCH.

In common with other imaginative and half-civilized people, the lower orders of Irish have many wild superstitions connected with death. Not a mere cold belief, but a firm and lively faith in the existence of "a world beyond the grave," fills their minds with a vivid conviction that their departed friends are with them and around them still. "Not lost, but gone before," is a truth ever present to the warm-hearted Irishman; he continues to associate his buried ones in all the cares and pleasures of existence, and that in an every-day and life-like manner, which would often border on the ludicrous, did not the wild pathos, the genuine poetry, that clothe the expression of his mourning, seem fully to redeem it from any touch of vulgar association.

The little damsel who, in Wordsworth's touching ballad, so repeatedly asserted "We are seven," ought to have been a native of our Green Isle; for there many a childish heart holds the loving faith that cheered that little churchyard lingerer. The anxious care also bestowed by the very poorest peasant on the obsequies of his relative, shows that

he believes the latter still cognizant of his actions: all business however important, is postponed, whenever any funeral within a circuit of several miles is to be attended. To have "a dacent berrin, and all the neighbours at it," is the grand object of an Irishman's solicitude, when he feels his end approaching. Many an old *boccough*, the sum total of whose worldly possessions is borne on his back, and, being the tattered remnants of "Irish old clothes," would probably not fetch a silver sixpence at the rag-dealers, has died with a sum of money stitched into his fragment of a waistcoat, and encircled with a scroll enjoining those who find it "to bury him dacent, or else his sperrit will haunt them for evermore." The injunction, coupled with such a penalty, is, I believe, never disobeyed. In the lack of relatives, professed *keeners* are hired, whose practised tones of woe sound in their wild cadence so like the burst of real grief, that it is often only by watching the unmoved countenance and unquivering lips of the old crones, one can distinguish their mourning from that of the wife or mother of the dead.

"How can I expect other people to come to my berrin, if I don't go to theirs?" was the unanswerable query of a labouring man, whose employer sought to convince him of his folly in losing many days' work by attending the funerals of persons with whom he had had only a slight acquaintance.

But I forget—I am writing of my country, not as it is, but as it was. Now the stern hand of hunger, ay, of direst famine, has dimmed the merry eye, and closed the white lip, whose tones were once so joyous. Buoyancy of spirit is gone with vigour of body; all the energies of mind are

concentrated in the one fierce craving of animal life. "Food! food!" is the cry that echoes through the land :—the short bleak wintry day, and the long dark frosty night, alike resound with the shrieks of those who perish from hunger and nakedness. In nothing is the utter disruption of old cherished feeling more apparent than in the poor creatures' forced disregard of their dead. Instead of the careful laying out of the corpse, the lighted candles, the protracted wake, where all who came were regaled with pipes and whiskey, at an outlay which often sorely pinched the survivors, but was at all times made without grudging, they are now often compelled to leave the rites of sepulture to be performed by the rats, which swarm around the hovels, allured by their loathsome prey; and in many cases devouring the flesh of the dying as well as of the dead. In some rural districts, the bodies that have died of what is emphatically called "*starvation fever*" are interred by wholesale at the public expense, uncoffined and uncared for. Such scenes are horrifying to contemplate, yet they are true; nor can any human being foresee their termination. I will not, however, dwell on them longer, humbly trusting that the same gracious God, who, in Judæa's favoured land, had compassion on the multitude, and, not willing to send them away fasting to their distant homes, created with His word a plenteous repast in the wilderness, may ere long send forth that mighty voice, to bid our fields once more be fertile, and our perishing poor ones live.

I will notice a few instances of the strange picturesque superstitions with which the poor

Irishman, in happier times, loved to encircle the memory of his dead.

On a fine day in autumn, about two years since, as a friend of mine, who resides in a wild district of the south, was walking on the road near his house, he overtook a countryman returning from the next market-town. He was a stout middle aged man, tolerably well-dressed, and evidently belonging to the class of small farmers. After the customary salutations, (in no country do strangers meeting casually on the road greet each other more cordially than in Ireland,) Mr. —— entered into conversation with him, as they walked along together.

"This is a fine day for the country, your honour, thanks be to God for it."

"It is, indeed," replied Mr. ——, "and pleasant weather for walking. Have you far to go?"

"Why, middling, sir; my little place is about five miles off, up at Gurthunowen."

"I suppose you were at M—— this morning?'

"I was, then, sir, just doing a trifle of business at the market; for *herself** wasn't able to go in to-day, and I had to sell some fresh eggs and young chickens for her."

"You seem to have been purchasing also;" said Mr. ——, looking at a large brown paper parcel, which he carried under his arm.

The man's countenance changed. "I was, your honour," he said, in a mournful voice. "After

* In Ireland, "*herself*" is the term invariably and emphatically employed by the peasant to designate his spouse, when speaking in the third person; the masculine pronoun being similarly applied to him by his better half.

two years' savings, 'tis only now I was able to buy the makings of a cloak for my little girl."

As he spoke, he opened the parcel, and displayed its contents, a piece of fine blue cloth.

"That will make a very nice cloak indeed," said my friend smiling, "your daughter will outshine all her neighbours next Sunday at mass."

"It cost two guineas, sir; and though I'm a poor man, 'tis no more I'd think of that than of the mud under my feet, if 'twould bring ase or comfort to the soul of my darling. Ah, *ma colleen bawn!*" he cried, clasping his hands in sudden agony, "the fifteen years you were left to me ran by as quick as the winter streams down the side of Coom Rhue, and as pleasant as if the warm summer stopped with them always. But the dark day came at last;—and when the mother and I saw you stretched before us as cold and as white as the snow-drift on the hill, we thought the life within ourselves was gone for ever! I ax your pardon, sir, for talking so wild, but indeed there was few in the whole country like our Nelly. Even when she was a slip of a child, going to the school, Father Jerry himself would stop her every Saturday after the catechiz, to stroke her fair head, and tell her she answered the best of them all. Well, after a while, when the first stun was over, and the mother and I had time to take some comfort from the two boys that were left us,—it began to give us sore trouble to think that she died without a cloak, and that maybe the crathur that we kept all her life tender and warm, like a pet lamb, might be suffering now for the want of it. So we set to work, saving every penny we could scrape together, till we'd have enough to buy

her a good one; and though the sorrow and the lonesomeness is hurting our hearts yet, still 'tis proud the mother and I will be to see it handsomely made, and waiting for her in the house."

"Surely," said Mr. —— "if your daughter be, as I hope she is, in heaven, she will not need a cloak to shelter her there."

"No, sir," replied the man, reverently touching his hat, "I suppose she won't."

"And in the other place, of dreadful punishment, it is equally certain that no earthly garment can avail as a covering."

"True for your Honour."

"Well," continued my friend, "you believe, what we deny, that there is a third place, which you call purgatory; but by all accounts it is a very hot place—what could she want with a cloak there?"

"Some of them," replied the father earnestly, "do be very cold there. In parts of it there's a dale of frost and snow, and sleet, and hail; and how do I know but my darling child might be there, thinking hard thoughts of the father and mother that wouldn't get a cloak to cover her. Any way, 'twill be made, and left in the house; herself may take the loan of it to wear at times, but 'twill be Nelly's cloak, and ready for her there when she wants it."

"In that case," said Mr. —— "it would, I think, be a good plan if you had made it large enough to cover both; your daughter's spirit might then find shelter under it, without depriving your wife of its use."

"That's very true; indeed, sir, I never thought of that before. Plase God, I'll have it done; and,

sure 'twill comfort the mother's heart, when she's going to mass or to market, to think that she has the sperrit of her *colleen bawn* along with her undernathe the cloak."

This is the substance of a *bona fide* conversation: the firm persuasion entertained by the poor father that the departed possess a sort of semi-corporeal existence, is very general among the peasantry in the remote districts. Near the towns, of course, such superstitions have dwindled away, and the present general diffusion of education through the land will probably tend to banish them completely from the minds of the rising generation. Even now it is often difficult to draw from the mountaineer a candid confession of his faith in such matters. Does he suspect that you are quizzing him—and his perception of the slightest approach to *badinage* is quick beyond expression—he immediately either shelters himself under a most natural appearance of stupid civility, agreeing with everything your honour says; or, if the humour takes him, and that he sees you are a British tourist, bent on making yourself thoroughly acquainted with all the chameleon shades of Irish character during a three weeks' excursion, he will be likely to cram you with a series of as improbable, not to say impossible fictions, as ever graced the hot-pressed pages perpetrated by an errant and arrant cockney. Those, however, who reside amongst them, and converse with them skilfully and kindly, without betraying any latent disposition to mock, will often discover curious corners and recesses of the Irish mind. Old customs and traditions also, lingering among the pagan monuments to which they probably owe

their origin, are often, when explained, interesting alike to the poet and the antiquary. In later times the imaginative spirit, which still dwells amidst our highlands, has given form and consistency to many a strange idea connected with the abode and occupations of the dead.

I was struck with an instance of this which fell lately under my own observation, in the mountain district of the south to which I have before alluded. A belief is entertained there, and very generally, I think, in other places, that the last person interred in a churchyard is compelled to draw water for the refreshment of the souls in purgatory, until he is relieved by a new comer. When, therefore, it happens that two funerals are fixed to take place on the same day, the hurry, the racing, the fighting that occur between the rival parties, each wanting to secure precedence of interment for their friend, defy all description. On such occasions it will sometimes happen that the coffins are fractured in the struggle, and the cold ghastly faces of their occupants become exposed, presenting a horrid and reproachful contrast to the flushed angry countenances that surround them. Sometimes the scene ends in bloodshed; more frequently the weaker party yield the *pas*, with a bad grace, indeed, and generally inspired with thoughts of peace by the cogent arguments of the officiating pastor's horsewhip, which, potent in its office as the trident of Neptune,—pungent in its application as the sceptre of Ulysses, when it visited Thersites' back,—seldom fails to quell a rising tumult.

In the village of I—— there is an old churchyard whose narrow precincts are already filled with graves; yet, as it lies in the centre of a large

parish, funerals arrive there very frequently. The grounds of a friend of mine adjoin it; his flower garden is, indeed, divided from it only by two low fences, and a narrow lane between, so that the inexpressibly mournful tones of the Irish cry are often heard distinctly there, contrasting painfully with the sweet song of birds, and all the joyous melodies of summer time. One day, as Mr. ——— was standing in his garden, he saw a long procession appearing on the brow of the opposite hill. It wound slowly down a path made through the heather, and the wild sound of wailing that floated faintly on the breeze, told the reason of the sad array. As they approached nearer, the bearers of the coffin quickened their pace almost to a run, followed by their companions; and when they reached the road that led towards the churchyard, they dashed forward with a speed most unsuited to their solemn errand. The reason was soon evident. Passing a turn of the road, in the opposite direction, there appeared another funeral approaching with equal rapidity. At the moment that they came in sight, both parties were about equally near the goal; and it seemed impossible to tell which would win the race. A race indeed it was, for the rival bearers, exchanging a loud shout of defiance, rushed on as rapidly as if no burden rested on their shoulders. Arrived at Mr. ———'s gate, the people from the mountain saw that their direct path lay across his lawn and garden, and that by rushing through, they might gain upon the enemy. No sooner thought of than accomplished. With the most reckless disregard of crushed flowers and trampled beds, they ran across, thinking not of the mischief they were doing one whom,

nevertheless, they all loved and respected. They gained the churchyard, but owing to the intervening hedges, which had to be surmounted, their rivals were there before them.

"'Tis no good for ye, ye mane spalpeens," shouted the leader of the mountain party. "'Twas well we licked ye last fair day, when poor Denis was to the fore,—and why wouldn't we do as much now to save him from demaning himself by being water-carrier to one of your breed. Hurroo for the Cartys!"

And, without waiting for his foe's retort, which was by no means slack or slow in coming, he brandished his shillelagh, and, followed by his friends, rushed on to the combat. Furious and deadly would have been the affray,—indeed, at its conclusion, the candidates for sepulture would scarcely have been limited to two, but just at the critical moment, five or six well-armed "peelers," were seen advancing. The constable who headed them was a shrewd elderly man, thoroughly versed in the character of the people, and "up," to all their ways. He did not make any hostile demonstration, but interposing boldly between the parties,

"For shame, boys," he said, "for shame, to be fighting and destroying one another over the cold corpses of them that desarve better usage at your hands."

"Mr. Nagle," said the leader of the Callaghans, lowering his brandished cudgel,—a pacific movement which produced a pause between the combatants on both sides,—"I'm satisfied to lave it all to you, for 'tis well known you're an honest, sinsible man; though, not being of our profession,

'tisn't rasonable to suppose you'd feel the same as we do in regard of the other world. Howandever, you see, we won the race fair; and I put it to you, now, is it right that then *shingauns* forninst you should bury their friend first, and have Thady Callaghan attending the likes of him with water?"

"Hould yer tongue!" exclaimed the warlike chief of the Cartys; "'tis happy and proud the best Callaghan that ever handled a spade ought to be, to put his hands under the feet of a Carty! Whether or no, we're here as well as you, and the never a sod shall be laid this blessed day on Tade Callaghan's grave, till we have our own Denis handsomely settled."

"'Tis a folly to talk that way, man, while every mother's son of us here is able and willing to fight you—ay, and to take the consate well out of you, too, and show that your fists, at the best of times, arn't aqual to yer tongues."

"Oh! as to prate and palaver," retorted his adversary, "'tis aisy seen who has the most of it; but, *you might as well get holy wather out of a minister's wig*, as be standing argufying here with me."*

"Whist, boys, whist, with that unsignified talk," said Nagle, "and let me insense you at wanst into the rights of the matter. 'Tis a sin and a shame for any two sets of Christians, let alone neighbours, to be fighting with one another, like wild bastes, over the bodies of the dead. Callaghans and Cartys, you seemed both of you to come up purty much about the same time. Now,

* This sentence was taken down, verbatim, from the lips of a countryman, a few weeks since.

I'd like to know what's to hinder Father Jerry—I see him coming towards us now, walking, poor man, as fast as the gout will let him—what's to hinder him, I say, from standing right between the two graves, and reading the service for both at wanst. Then you may lower the two corpses into the ground exactly at the same moment; so that Sir Isaac Newton himself, that flogged the world at algebra, couldn't tell which would have to draw the first pail of water."

This well-timed suggestion seemed to give general satisfaction. It was immediately acted upon, to the great joy and relief of the good Father Jerry, whom repeated attacks of gout had rendered less active than heretofore in the discharge of that arduous portion of his pastoral duties which included promiscuous flagellation. After the simultaneous interment of the bodies, all present dispersed peaceably to their several homes; perfectly satisfied that, in consequence of Nagle's ingenious expedient, the purgatorial labour of water-carrying would be fairly divided between the departed.

Soon afterwards a circumstance occurred in the same place, somewhat similar to the above, yet also differing from it. Mr. —— had been very kind and constant in visiting and relieving a poor man who lived at some distance, and who had long been afflicted with an incurable disease. His dim eyes used to brighten, and his thin hands were clasped together, as, with all the fervour of an Irish heart, and all the eloquence of an Irish tongue, he was wont to invoke unnumbered blessings on the head of the visitor, who, kneeling

beside his straw pallet, sought to direct his mind towards the things of the eternal world. At length he died, and his family were left desolate mourners. They were poor—miserably so—and could not afford "a handsome wake;" but, when the day of interment arrived, the remains of Daniel Lynch were followed to the grave by a weeping train of relatives, whose hearts swelled with sorrow, deeper perhaps and more sincere than is sometimes found under crapes and sable drapery. Their number, however, was few when compared with the crowds that thronged towards the house of a rich farmer, who had died on the same day, and was to be buried at the same hour as his humble neighbour.

It so happened, that Mr. —— was again in his garden, engaged in the pleasant task of cultivating his flowers, and watering them from a clear well, which bubbled up near the boundary edge. Even in that country, famous for its thousand sparkling streams—"diamonds enchased in a setting of emeralds," a jeweller might call them, if a jeweller happened to be taken poetical—this spring was distinguished for the sweetness and clearness of its waters. He looked up, as the "keening" met his ear, and saw the two parties approaching. They met at the churchyard gate, and for a moment loud sounds of contention and mutual threatenings of hostility drowned the plaintive tones of grief. Mr. —— immediately hastened towards the ground, and when he arrived there, saw with pleasure that the weaker party had resolved to yield. Already the priest's voice was heard reading the solemn service over the rich man's grave, while poor Daniel's friends drew moodily aside, and bent

their eyes on his humble coffin. Mr. —— went towards them, wishing to speak some words of comfort, but they seemed not to regard him. At length the widow, clasping her hands, threw herself on her knees, and raising her streaming eyes towards his face, cried, with a voice as earnest as though she were begging for her life,—

"Ah! Mr. ——, 'tis yourself that was fond of him, while he was alive; and sure, now that he's gone, and has the sore burden laid on him, you won't refuse to let him go to your well for the water!"

THE FACTION FIGHT.

THE savage custom of faction-fighting is, I am happy to say, becoming each year more rare in Ireland. Sometimes, indeed, at the close of a fair, when the temperance coffee-stalls are deserted for the more potent attractions of the whiskey-selling booths, a bit of a fight *does* get up; often arising from no more dignified cause than "the differ of a shilling in the price of a cow, betune Tade Reilly and Jerry Mahony." Then the kith and kin of each fierce belligerent come running at full speed to join in the fray; both parties commence shouting and "wheeling" at each other (sticks understood), and a general scene of tumult ensues, which an Englishman would find it difficult to believe could ever have an end, without affording subjects for a coroner's inquest. The softer sex also mingle, nothing loath, in the thickest of the combat; and frequently it happens that the smart of a broken head or blackened eye is increased tenfold to its male recipient, by the remark of his adversaries:—"Well done, Kitty! 't was you settled him in style, ma colleen! divil a man in the fair this day hot a betther stroke than yourself!"

A benevolent clergyman, who resides in a wild district of the south-west, was lately summoned to visit an old man, who had met with a serious accident. A large, sharp stone had fallen on his head from the top of a high ditch, and, falling edgeways, it regularly scalped him; the skin on the front of his head being turned down over his face. No surgeon was to be had within a distance of twelve miles, but Mr. —— dressed the wound with much care and skill.

On a subsequent visit it was necessary to open the bandages, when the cut presented so frightful an appearance, that the patient's wife, who was standing by, burst into loud cries and lamentations. "Why, then, I wonder at you," said her husband, "to be so foolish—you, that saw many a broken head in your day, and helped to give them, too. Oh, sir," continued he, turning with enthusiasm to Mr. ——, "'t is she was the good warrant to help a man in a fair!"

Contrary to expectation the man recovered, (the *mortification* that accompanies an Irish broken head is seldom of a fatal nature) and continues, I believe, to regard his spouse's ancient prowess with undiminished admiration; albeit the native of any other country would probably prefer a helpmate possessing a less Jael-like character.

In the present day, the casualties resulting from these "ructions" seldom exceed a few dozen black eyes and bloody noses, together with certain cranial dcvelopements, of so anomalous a kind, that Gall, in sheer despair, would have broken his callipers, and Spurzheim "buried his book deeper than ever plummet sounded," had they been called on to

phrenologize the champions of an Irish foughten field.

In less than an hour afterwards, it is not uncommon to see numbers of the opposite parties proceeding homewards together, on the most amicable terms; the arms, that lately interchanged blows both fast and furious, being lovingly linked together. affording a mutual, though often momentary, steadiness to the limbs, that through the day had spurned Father Mathew's wise controul. About thirty years since, the case was different: then the contests between two opposing factions were regularly organized, and frequently appointed to take place at stated times. Sometimes on a certain day every year—generally the festival of some popular saint—two powerful clans would assemble, and fight for supremacy, almost to the death. If, as constantly happened, a man was borne lifeless from the field, his relatives deemed it a sacred duty to revenge his loss tenfold on the enemy; thus closely imitating the ancient custom of deadly feud in the sister kingdom. But "with a difference;" for, whereas in the Scottish Highlands the vengeance, if sure and deadly, was often slow and silent, the fierce torrent of Irish grief vented its fury in maledictions more fearful than the English tongue can express. The threatened retribution was seldom long delayed, and there was usually an element of wild ferocious humour mingled and strangely contrasted with the expression of the darker passions.

Amongst the localities of the south, where these periodical contests were wont to take place, the village of Ballyvonrney stood pre-eminent. It is

beautifully situated on the road between Cork and Killarney, and lately, through the judicious liberality of a rich and benevolent landlord, several neat cottages have sprung up, in place of the original straggling filthy cabins which formed the street. Ballyvourney can now even boast a "shop"—a regular museum, which beats that London one, y'clept the "British," all to nothing, in the surprising heterogeneity of the articles it brings together. Indeed, as the proprietor of a similar establishment once assured me, everything may be had in it, "from a mouse-trap to an anchor." The church is near the summit of a wooded hill, and is built on the site of a very ancient edifice dedicated to St. Gobnate. A rude stone effigy of this respectable dame still adorns one side of the ruined walls, the features being almost worn away by age, and the devout kisses of her numerous worshippers, who assemble sometimes, in thousands, on Whitsun Monday, to pray, or "give their rounds," as it is technically called, moving along on their knees. Near the ruins, on the glebe lawn, is a well of clear pure water, dedicated to the saint, who flourished in the sixth century, and was made abbess of a nunnery of regular canonesses here by St. Abhan. A little to the north of this well is a circle of stones, about two feet high, and about nine in diameter, which seems to be the foundation of one of the small round towers placed in ancient Irish churchyards; round this and the well there are paths worn by the knees of the devotees.

Close by is a rock or large stone, about four feet high, covered with thick, soft moss; in connection with which the old people of the neighbourhood

tell a curious anecdote, which I will relate, as illustrating the manners of the "extreme wild Irish."

About thirty years ago, the country surrounding Ballyvourney was divided between two powerful factions—the Hurleys (descended from the ancient and noble O'Hierlys), and the Rileys, a clan of more recent origin. Stout and stalwart "boys," however, belonged to the latter family, and sturdily did they refuse to yield precedence to their neighbours of more gentle blood. Nor were the Hurleys a whit behind them in kicking up a row on every possible occasion, whether at chapel, fair, or market. Often, indeed, did the parish priest's whipmaker profit by their collisions; for, as the reverend gentleman was wont feelingly to complain, "They aren't like others that would fight a bit for fun, and then go off fair and asy after a few licks from my horsewhip; but the never a taste of the thong have I left, after the lashing it costs me to pacify the Hurleys and Rileys."

Not satisfied, however, with an occasional and extempore rencontre, the high contending powers entered into a regular treaty of war, agreeing to assemble in full force every Whitsun Monday, and, after having paid their devotions to St. Gobnate, and given their rounds to the holy well, they were to engage in a regular combat *a l'outrance*, each fighting, not like Harry Wynd, "for his own hand," but for the honour and glory of his party. The stone I have mentioned was to mark the centre of the field of battle; and whenever the leader of one side could succeed in taking his stand on it, waving his hat three times, and giving three dis-

tinct cheers, the fight was to be considered at an end, and his party proclaimed victorious. They were then entitled to take precedence of their rivals for the ensuing year, and to taunt them with their defeat, until Whitsun Monday came round again. At the time I speak of, the head of the Hurleys was a remarkably fine old man—past his prime, indeed, yet still possessing a strength of muscle and dexterity of arm, with which few of his juniors cared to cope. Added to this, there throbbed beneath his rough frieze coat a heart as firm and dauntless as ever warmed the steel-clad frame of Earl Angus. Two anniversaries in succession he vaulted on the mossy stone, waved his old *caubeen* with an air that would have befitted a plume-covered helmet, and gave three deafening shouts, in whose wild tones the conquered Rileys could discern haughty derision, mingled with a victor's triumph. It was a picture to see him.—The stalwart frame, which sixty summers had not bowed, drawn up to its commanding height—the long hair, which sixty winters had whitened, waving in the mountain breeze—the brawny arm wheeling aloft, and the ever ruddy cheek, now flushed with the deepest crimson. As his sons said, "'Tis a proud thing for us to be come of such a stock; for the old man has *that* in him that earth, and sea, and sky wouldn't tame."

It had always been an understood thing, that no weapons were to be employed in these periodical contests, save sticks, stones, and brawny fists, and by these alone had Hurley and his party triumphed. The third Witsun Monday was approaching, and anxiously did both parties anticipate the result.

"If we win the day, boys," said old Hurley, "and win it we will, with the help of the Blessed Virgin and holy St. Gobnate, we're made men for ever in the country. The third time is the charm, and the never a *gommul* of a Riley will dar rise his head before us. Oh, wait till I get my foot wanst more on the darling old stone, and see if I do n't give them a chivey that you may call a shout, supposing 't was the last breath I had in me."

Dark and sullen, on the other hand were the forebodings of the Rileys. Their leader was a man about forty years of age, stout and strongly built, and so far as muscle and sinew were concerned, full a match for old Hurley. But he lacked the wild and fierce, yet generous and enthusiastic, spirit of his rival; he fought from a dogged sullen feeling of revengeful hatred, unmingled with any touch of heroism: his was the stealthy assault of the tiger, contrasted with the rushing onslaught of the lion.

A few evenings previous to the combat, he and some of his friends met at a public-house in the village, to consult on the best means of retrieving their tarnished honour. They commenced by imbibing several potent "darbys" of mountain dew; for, in these olden times, that pleasant liquid was sold in a perfectly undisguised manner, at the road-side houses of entertainment in the remote districts. That guager would indeed, have required to bear a charmed life, who should venture west of Macroon on a still-seizing expedition; his punishment, in its mildest form, would probably have consisted in an ingeniously anticipated combination of hydropathy and teetotalism—his outer man being sub-

merged beneath a severer douche-bath than Priessnitz ever dreamed of, while his interior was deluged with a supply so unlimited of *aqua pura* that Father Mathew himself, if a man of any bowels, would connive at a little subsequent imbibition of unmixed and undeniable poteen. When "cheered, though not inebriated," by the said liquor, Riley addressed his companions—

"Why then, boys, would n't it be the murdher of the world if them hang-dog Hurleys get the upper hand of us next Monday? We might as well give in at wanst, and submit to be kicked like a football through the country, if we let that old fellow, that has the arm of Brian Boru, and the sperrit of ten divils, get his footing firm, for the third time, on the blessed and holy stone."

For some minutes no one replied, except by a muttered—

"True for you, Jack, but how the mischief can we help it?"

At length a pale, meagre, and especially ill-favoured man, who sat rather aloof from the others, took up the last words.

"How the mischief can we help it? 'Tis ye're the purty set of innocent spalpeens to ax such a question this time of day. I suppose, Jack, if you were out on the mountains at daybreak on a July morning, and seen a fine cock grouse forenent you, crowing on a tussock, and rising his red comb as proud as a king, 'tis by throwing a stone, or maybe shaking a stick at him, you'd expect to carry him home with you?"

"What foolishness at all are you talking now, Tade? Sure yerself knows there's nothing in life

but the shot of a gun a man could trust to for bringing down a grouse."

"Then mark my words; there's nothing but *that same* you can trust to for bringing down old Hurley!"

A deep flush passed over Riley's features, and a silence ensued, which no one for some time seemed inclined to break. At length their leader spoke—

"The like of that was never done here in a faction fight, since the first snow whitened the top of Mangerton. But still I'd a'most sell soul and body to bring down the pride of the murdhering Hurleys."

The men that surrounded him sat irresolute; no one spoke, but the pale lip of the adviser curled in scorn.

"After all," resumed Riley, "supposing 't was a thing we agreed to do, who'd be the man to fire the shot?"

"I would," said Thady. "I suppose, boys, I may reckon on yees all, hand and heart, not to 'sell the pass?'"

They all gave him the required assurance.

"Then," continued he, "lave the rest to me; fight away in the name of pace; do your best next Witsun Monday, and who knows but maybe you'll gain the day by fair fighting. But, if not, and that old divil gets his foot on the stone, he may give the first huzza, but trust me, boys, he'll never give the second."

No more passed on the subject, and the party, after some forced attempt at gaiety, soon broke up, and dispersed to their several homes.

The important day arrived. Never had been

known such a gathering of the factions. Every man and boy, for miles around, who could claim to be kith and kin to Hurleys or Rileys, assembled before daybreak on the field; nor did their relatives of the gentler sex absent themselves. Many a snowy muslin cap, destined, ere nightfall, to wear a hue as sanguine as the ruby-coloured ribbon that bound it, gleamed amidst the dark, shapeless caubeens which covered the owners' shillelah-proof heads. A perfect truce continued during the hours dedicated to devotion, although poor St. Gobnate, if on earth, would probably have been much scandalized by the whispered dialogues of warlike import, which interlarded the repetition of the accustomed prayers. After all, she was an Irishwoman, and lived herself in troublous times; so, who knows but she might have mingled in the fray, or at least have exhibited a very unsaintlike interest in the feuds of her devoted worshippers.—Be this as it may, the combat commenced about noon, by one of the Hurleys stepping forward, and shouting, in a voice of thunder—"Will the foot of a Riley dar rest this day on St. Gobnate's stone?"

Hundreds of voices answered the call, and immediately the fight became general. A spectator would have seen nothing but a confused mass of human beings, swaying backwards and forwards, while arms waved, sticks wheeled, and stones flew in thousands. The soft green turf became slippery with blood and heavy trampling, while the tremendous cries and shouting might be heard at a great distance. After a considerable time the Rileys, who were fighting with their faces towards the

south, had evidently given way; their adversaries bore onward, till at length a sudden opening was made in the crowd—a momentary hush succeeded, and then appeared the glancing eye, and wildly streaming hair, of old Hurley, towering above his fellows. His foot was planted on the stone—his arm gave one triumphant wave, and the first deep-toned shout resounded from his lips. Again the arm arose, but the second cheer was drowned by the loud report of a gun. The bullet passed through the old man's neck, and his sons rushed forward instinctively, to raise their murdered father. The smoke cleared away, and what did they see? Hurley calmly stooping, and, while with one hand, he motioned his friends away, pulling, with the other, a tuft of the soft thick moss that covered the rock. This he deliberately twisted into a sort of rope—friends and foes watching him in breathless suspense, while he rammed it tightly into the wound. He then seized his hat, waved it twice, gave two more distinct cheers, descended from the stone, and walked towards his home. From this moment all the fighting ceased. Hurleys and Rileys, in awe-struck wonder, watched the steps of the victorious champion, as he walked in silence, without looking to the right or left.—There was something in his manner which deterred even his sons from addressing him, but two of them set off, at full speed, a distance of six miles, to fetch the nearest doctor. The old man entered his cottage; he did not lie down, or evince the slightest symptoms of exhaustion, but, after sitting for a while erect on his chair, he took a spade and a kish (or wicker basket), and went out into the field to dig potatoes. His friends, who by this

time had assembled in crowds about the house, remonstrated with him in vain; he seemed not to hear them, and vouchsafed no reply. He was still busy, digging potatoes, when Dr. —— arrived, in breathless haste, believing he had been summoned to attend a dying man. What was his astonishment, when he witnessed his patient's employment; and still more, when he inspected the strange expedient for staunching the wound. The worthy physician tried to convince Hurley that he was risking his life by making such exertions, and implored him to return to the house, lie down quietly, and allow his wound to be properly dressed. The old man looked at him steadfastly—

"'Twas a coward's hand," he said, "that fired the shot, and a coward's heart that thought of it; but nothing belonging to a coward has power to hurt the life of a Hurley. I'm obliged to you all the same, sir, for your kindness, *but I wouldn't give them the satisfaction to say they hurt me.*"

Strange to relate, the old man did not die: his wild surgery succeeded as well as if he had been prescribed for by the whole faculty; the wound healed kindly, and Hurley lived many years to see his faction triumph in the country. Indeed, after that felon-shot, the Rileys could no more hold up their heads; the secret was in some way disclosed, and Jack Riley and his pale-faced cousin took their departure, next spring, for America, in order to escape the well-merited execrations of their neighbours. Since then, faction-fighting has nearly ceased in Ballyvourney; St. Gobnate's votaries, who still assemble on Whitsun Monday, usually

disperse in peace, and the horsewhip of the present parish priest is observed to last at least three times as long as that of his predecessor.

[It may interest the reader to know that the account of old Hurley's wound, and of his subsequent proceedings, is strictly true. The physician who visited him is still living, and frequently relates the story of the mossy plug, together with their interview in the potatoe field.]

AN AFFAIR OF HONOUR.

In former times many single combats were wont to defile the green turf of my native island. Of course I need not name that island: the two simple ideas of "fighting" and "green" will infallibly suggest to the least logical intellect in Great Britain a compound one representing the locality intended. But although the progress of civilization in my country has, through many painful causes, been wofully retarded, yet there is some comfort in reflecting that the enormity of duelling may now be classed among the things that "have been, and are not." I will, however, for the amusement of my readers, relate the history of an affair of honour which took place in a district of Munster some sixty or seventy years ago.

Albeit a wild locality, so far as the natural features of the landscape were concerned, yet the vicinity of Barnagore, as, for the double reason of concealment and euphony, I shall call it, was a tolerably peaceable place, viewed with respect to its inhabitants. Barring the occasional beating of a tithe-proctor, or ducking of a sheriff's officer, the country for miles around the village which gave it

a name, was singularly free from agrarian outrage. The land was divided into moderately-sized estates, each supporting the hospitable mansion of a country gentleman, with his good-natured wife, and their handsome rollicking progeny. During a long series of years various intermarriages had taken place between the several families; so that, at the time I write of, there was scarcely an individual of note in the country, who could not claim cousinship with each and every one of his neighbours. One gentleman there was, however, who was wholly unconnected with the magnates of the district. He was a Mr. Fooks, a rich old bachelor, residing in a very pretty cottage close to the boundary hedge of a large estate which had lain for some time unoccupied. The dwelling of Mr. Fooks stood in the midst of a beautifully-cultivated pleasure-ground, a wilderness of sweets, where the emerald turf of the lawn was soft, and rich, and smiling, as though it lay in the heart of England's sunny Hampshire. A kind man was Mr. Fooks; beloved by the squires, with whom he never quarrelled, when, in the heat of the chase, following the hounds in full cry after Reynard, they trampled his harvest-fields. He was beloved by them, I say, notwithstanding his uniform desertion of the dining-room after the first magnum of claret had gone its rounds; a grievous dereliction from the rules of good-fellowship, which would not have been easily pardoned in any one else; but Mr. Fooks was a privileged man, and as the ladies were wont to remark, "it was really a comfort to feel sure of having *one* gentleman steady on his legs in the drawing-room, so that one might venture to give him a cup of coffee without the

chance of having half of it spilled on one's best satin."

With the young people he was an especial favourite. No better partner in "Sir Roger de Coverley," or merrier opponent in the game of "Matrimony," could be found in the entire county; while his skill in making "hurleys" for the boys, and carving wooden babies for the girls, secured him a wide-spread popularity among the rising generation. By common consent he was known in the neighbourhood as "Holy Fooks;" and this epithet was bestowed not in ridicule, but as a sincere acknowledgment of his singularly blameless and useful life. Perhaps it was also meant to commemorate a peculiarity in his character—he was never known to fight. From the tithe-proctor, whom he hospitably entertained and regularly paid —an unprecedented line of conduct, which caused that much-enduring man to exclaim, "Sure Barnagore would be a heaven upon earth, if every man in it was like Holy Fooks"—from the tithe-proctor down to the urchins whom he often caught snaring hares or cutting sticks in his wood, he never abused or quarrelled with any one. Yet Holy Fooks was no coward; *that* the poor widow at the mill could testify, whose fair-haired boy he saved from drowning by jumping into the mill-pond at the imminent risk of his life. And when Tom Maloney's house was burned, who but Holy Fooks could be found to tread the falling floor; and while with one hand clinging to the blackened rafters, with the other to seize in succession three children, and land them safely on the outside?—Mr. Fooks, in short, was that, I grieve to say,

anomalous character in Ireland—*a brave good man who would not fight!*

The estate which bounded his had lain, I have said, for some time unoccupied; but at length a tenant for it appeared in the person of a professed duellist from Tipperary, who having made even that fiery locality too hot to hold him, and possessing as much money as impudence, resolved to settle at Barnagore, and break fresh ground amongst its quiet inhabitants. Tom Magennis, for such was his name, had not been long settled in his new residence, ere he managed to establish several "very pretty quarrels" with his neighbours. He was an unerring shot, seldom failing to kill his man at any number of paces, and was as prone to take offence as the infamous fighting Fitzgerald. He challenged one young gentleman for accidentally touching him with his whip, as they were leaping together across a stream, while following the hounds. All attempts at a reconciliation were rejected by the scornful bully: they met; and an hour afterwards a fine lad, the hope of his house, was carried home a lifeless corpse.

The neighbouring gentlemen tried to send Magennis to "Coventry," but it would not do; he was a man of good family, and contrived to maintain his position in society literally at the point of the sword. Every one wished him away, but who was to "bell the cat?"

It happened that a small field belonging to Mr. Fooks lay next the upper corner of Magennis's lawn, to which the latter wished to have it annexed; he accordingly wrote a letter, couched in a very high and mighty style, requiring his pacific neighbour to sell him the piece of ground in

question. A polite reply in the negative was returned; and Magennis, boiling with rage at having his will opposed, hastened to seek an interview with Mr. Fooks. He found that gentleman seated in his pleasant parlour, surrounded by his books; and after the first salutations had passed, Magennis began abruptly—

"Mr. Fooks, am I to understand from your letter that you refuse to let me have the lawn field?"

"Certainly, sir: I have no intention whatever of parting with it."

"But I tell you I want it, and have it I will."

"I should be sorry," said Mr. Fooks, mildly, "to disoblige a neighbour; but I am sure Mr. Magennis will see the impropriety of pressing the matter further, when I repeat that I am quite determined not to sell the field."

"You won't sell?"

"No, sir."

"Then," said Magennis, with a fearful imprecation, "if you don't give me the field, "you shall give me *satisfaction;* and maybe I'll find your 'heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns' easier to deal with than yourself."

A quiet smile passed over the countenance of Fooks.

"Do you mean, Mr. Magennis, that you wish me to fight a duel?"

"Certainly: name your friend, and I'll send mine to meet him."

"I am not much versed in these matters," said Fooks; "but, I believe, as the challenged party, I have a right to select the weapons and the place of meeting."

"Oh, certainly; nothing can be fairer. Choose what you like, my boy, the sooner the better."—And the bully rubbed his hands with delight at the prospect of slaying another man.

"Then," said Mr. Fooks, "I wish to dispense entirely with seconds, to fight on horseback, and to arrange that each of us can come armed with whatever weapons he may choose. Let the place of meeting be the wide common between the schoolhouse and the mill: the time twelve o'clock tomorrow; and let him who is first driven off the field be declared vanquished."

"Queer arrangements as ever I heard," said Magennis. "Why, my good fellow, don't you know that if I come armed with a long sword, and mounted on my hunter Highflyer, I'll ride you down and spit you like a lark, before you can say Jack Robinson. However, that's your look-out, not mine; so of course I agree to what you propose, and have the honour to wish you a very good morning."

He then marched away, marvelling much at the coolness of his antagonist, and thinking what fun he would have on the morrow. Every one he met was told of the jest, and invited to witness the combat. Great was the consternation caused by the news throughout Barnagore.

"To think," said Mr. Penrose, one of the chief landed proprietors, "that our own honest Holy Fooks, who would not willingly offend a worm, is to be slaughtered by this scoundrel: it mustn't be. I'll go to him, and offer to fight in his stead."

Accordingly, he repaired to the dwelling of Fooks, and found that gentleman as tranquilly

occupied with his books as when he was visited by Magennis in the morning.

"A bad business this, Fooks," said Mr. Penrose; "a very bad business. Why, man, rather than you should meet Magennis, I'll fight the rascal myself."

"Thank you, my friend," replied Mr. Fooks: "I feel most grateful for your kindness; but since Mr. Magennis has chosen to take causeless offence, I have resolved to give him the meeting he desires. Perhaps," he added, smiling, "the result may be better than you expect."

"Oh, my dear Fooks," said his friend, "don't, I beseech you, build on *that*. The fellow is a regular assassin, and if he had his deserts, would long since have gained promotion at the hangman's hands. However, there will be a score or two of your friends on the ground to see fair play, and have satisfaction from him for your death."

With this somewhat equivocal piece of consolation, and a hearty shake of the hand, Mr. Penrose took leave of his friend, who, during the remainder of the day, stayed within doors, and declined seeing any visitors. On the following morning a large concourse of people, including, indeed, nearly every inhabitant of the parish, assembled on the common to witness the approaching combat.—Long and loud were the lamentations of the poorer people, who had experienced much kindness from Mr. Fooks, at the fate which awaited him; while the deepened tones and darkened looks of the gentlemen testified their sympathy with him, and their abhorrence of his antagonist. Precisely at twelve o'clock Magennis appeared on the field, mounted on a splendid blood-horse: a dagger was

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Fooks; and suddenly throwing back the offensive garment, he raised his weapon, and shook it full in the face of his adversary. It was a long slender pole, having at one end a distended bladder containing some dried peas. A fearful thing it looked in the eyes of Highflyer; and so appalling to his ears was the rattling noise it made, that despite the furious efforts of his master, he fairly bolted, turned tail, and gallopped at full speed across the common. After him rode Fooks, shaking his rattle, and shouting, "Come back, Mr. Magennis! come back! 'tis a shame for you, man, to be afraid of a dressing gown and a child's rattle!"

But faster and faster flew the affrighted horse, bearing his enraged master beyond the sound of the inextinguishable laughter which hailed his defeat and the bloodless triumph of Holy Fooks. The bully had not courage to return to the country and brave the merciless ridicule which awaited him. He disposed of his property, and retired to England, where he was compelled to live in peace, as his neighbours soon learned to appreciate him, and declined to indulge his propensity for fighting. Yet the few persons who continued to associate with Mr. Magennis were often puzzled to account for the transport of rage which possessed him whenever the slightest allusion happened to be made in his presence to dried peas, Kerry ponies, or crimson dressing-gowns.

JAMES CRONIN.

I.

About thirty years ago there lived, in a wild district of the south of Ireland, a widow named Cronin and her family, consisting of two sons and a daughter. She was what is called "well to do in the world," being in possession of a small farm, stocked with three cows and some sheep, and for which she paid merely a nominal rent. At the time our tale commences, her eldest son James was ten years old, his brother Daniel nine, and little Ellen six.

One fine morning in the month of May, Mrs. Cronin and her children had finished their breakfast of milk and potatoes, and the pig was enjoying his, consisting of the skins, politely given to him on the floor, when the mother addressed her eldest boy; "Come, Jemmy, 'tis time for you to be off to yer school."

"I won't mind going to-day, mother; 'tis Inchigeelah fair, and I want to see the fun."

"Oh, thin, the never a step you'll go to the fair to-day. Is it to be kilt entirely you want in the fight they'll have wid the Kilmichael boys?"

"That's the very reason I want to go;" and the undutiful boy prepared to move in the forbidden direction.

His mother did not exert her authority to restrain him, but turning to her youngest son, who was leaning against the door, lazily biting a straw, "Dan," said she, "you'll be a good boy, I know, and go to school to-day; and next day I go to Macroom, I'll bring you a fine cloth cap to wear to chapel on Sunday, and Jim will have to go in his dirty ould caubeen, because he won't do my bidding."

James turned round, his face flushed with anger. "Mother," said he, "that's always yer way: you care more about Dan than you do about me."

"To be sure I do. Isn't his little finger worth your whole body?"

"Thin keep him, and make much of him, for it's little of me you'll see this day;" and off he set, leaving his mother in a most unenviable state of mind. She was far from meaning what she said when she spoke of preferring Dan to James; on the contrary, her eldest son was her favourite, and having spoiled him in infancy by foolish indulgence, she now tried to govern his wayward temper by exciting the fiendish passion of jealousy. The result of this most pernicious plan will be seen in the sequel.

II.

At that time the hedge-schools were the only means of education which the country afforded; and wild and uncouth as were both masters and

scholars, and primitive as was their place of assembly—for, as the poet says,

"Its roof was the heaven, its wall was the hill"—

yet a considerable share of learning was often acquired by the pupils, more, perhaps, than in some polished seminaries. To one of these schools Mrs. Conin sent her children as regularly as she could induce them to go, and thither Daniel and his little sister proceeded this morning.

Mister Dogherty's rustic establishment was rather a favourable specimen of its class. Some of the head boys were well versed in the higher branches of arithmetic, could write "copperplate," and the broad Doric intonation of their reading was abundantly compensated, at least in the opinion of most of their auditors, by the gallant speed and reckless rapidity with which the most jaw-breaking polysyllables were cleared in a flying gallop. True, this sporting pace constantly left both reader and hearers perfectly innocent of the meaning of the text. But this was a trifle, and Irishmen never stick at trifles.

"Why, thin, Dan, it's time for you," said Mister Dogherty, as the boy entered the school; "and where's James this fine morning?"

"He's gone to Inchigeelah fair, though my mother tould him not to go."

"Oh, it's like him, the young scamp! Never fear, when I catch him to-morrow I'll wattle him well, to tache him obedience in future."

The scholars were now examined on the subject of their lessons, and having acquitted themselves very much to Mister Dogherty's satisfaction, he

proceeded, as was not unusual with him, to tell them one of his drollest stories.

The happy frame of mind in which the recital never failed to put the worthy master, was quickly disturbed by sounds of clamour and crying among the more juvenile of his pupils. Seizing his formidable *wattle* (Anglice, cane), he loudly demanded what was the matter.

"It's little Ellen Cronin, sir, that's roaring because Dan is pinching her, and saying his mother doesn't care about her, and that he's the white-headed boy at home."

"Come up here, Dan." The summons was slowly and sulkily obeyed. "Take that, sir," said the master, giving him a few smart blows, "and I hope 'twill tache you to have more *nature* for yer sister. 'Twas one mother bore you both, and in place of tormenting, you ought to love one another." He then dismissed the school, and little Ellen, glancing fearfully at Dan, went up to a pleasant-looking boy of twelve years old, named John M'Carthy, who, taking her hand, said kindly, "Never fear, Aileen, Dan shan't touch you: I'll walk home with you to yer mother's door."

The children then dispersed in different directions, Dan walking gloomily apart, and John talking cheerfully to Ellen till they reached her home.

They found Mrs. Cronin in a state of fretful anxiety about James, who had not yet made his appearance. Several of the neighbours were passing on their return from the fair, driving a few lambs, or a cow, or a pig before them. One man, who was trying to quicken the pace of a peculiarly refrac-

tory specimen of the last-named animal, was accosted by the widow.

"God save you, Jerry!"

"God save you kindly, ma'am!"

"Was there a good fair to-day?"

"There was, ma'am, a power and all of people in it, but there wasn't to say much in the way of buying and selling."

"Would you see that gorsoon of mine anywhere there?"

"I did thin, ma'am, see him in the thick of all the fun; for there was a dickens of a scrimmage between the Walshes and Cotters; and never fear, Jemmy was wheeling his bit of a stick, and shouting for the bare life as well as the best."

"Oh yea, wisha! I wouldn't doubt him: he's an active boy anyway." And, strange to say, a kind of pleased pride at her son's courage and daring spirit mingled with anger at his disobedience and fears for his safety. "Was he hurt at all, Jerry?"

"Myself didn't see; for as I had this *slip* bought, I thought 'twas better to make the best of my way home without waiting to see how 'twould end." Then giving the pig a significant cut of his whip, he moved on, wishing Mrs. Cronin good-evening, and saying, "Oh, thin, won't I airn this one before I have her home to-night!"

Evening began to close in, and still no sign of James. At length a man appeared, driving a donkey-car, at the bottom of which the truant boy lay stretched on some straw. His mother ran out to receive him, and albeit the nerves of Irishwomen in her rank of life are pretty well steeled against fears connected with broken heads

and bruised limbs, yet when she saw her son's pale face, and his fair curls matted with blood, escaping from beneath a bandage which was bound tightly round his head she burst into a passionate cry of grief and terror, not unmixed with rage. The neighbour who had kindly brought him home raised him in his arms, and assisted her to lay him in bed, at the same time saying, "Don't fret yerself, Mrs. Cronin, you'll find the boy will be none the worse to-morrow. To be sure 'twas well I found him whin I did, for he was down on the ground, and a boy of the Walshes lickin' him at no rate; but still Jimmy showed the thrue blood, for he kept bating the cowardly spalpeen, that was twice his size, as long as ever he could stand."

"Oh, the murtherin' villain, to dar touch my child! Never fear, he'll sup sorrow for it yet."

So saying, she went to prepare some whey for James, who just then opened his eyes, and asked feebly for a drink. Her neighbour wished her good-night, and went home; and she, having settled the sick boy as comfortably as she could, retired to rest with her other children. James passed a sleepless night, and next morning was in a high fever. His mother, in great alarm, sent Daniel with all haste to summon Dr. Handley to see him.

III.

Let not our English readers imagine for a moment that the gentleman whom we have mentioned had ever in his life attended a school of medicine or taken out a diploma. He belonged to

a class of men who are every day becoming more rare in Ireland, and will probably soon be nearly extinct, owing to the now universal establishment of dispensaries, and the consequent residence in the country of regularly qualified practitioners; but at the time of which we write, the rural population might be said to be totally destitute of licensed medical assistance; for the expense attendant on bringing a physician fifteen or twenty miles into the country was of itself an insurmountable obstacle; besides that, the people in general entertained a strong prejudice against the regular practice, and much preferred their own unlicensed pretenders. Medical advice, such as it was, was offered by three classes of practitioners. The first were the "fairy-men," who undertook to charm away the diseases both of men and cattle; and although the effect of their prescriptions was of course purely imaginary, yet they were regarded throughout the country with much respect, not unmixed with awe; and if any one got a "blast" (the name for every kind of illness whose origin was unknown,) these men and their charms were always had recourse to. The second, and most numerous division, were the "old women," who, besides their prescriptive right to usher all the thumping young Paddies into a land of fighting and potatoes, were also called on for advice in various cases of disease. Here, it must be confessed, their practice was often most destructive, being characterized by a bold disregard of the plainest rules in medicine. Turning the head of a patient in typhus fever towards a blazing turf fire, heaping blankets on his bed, and administering copious libations of whisky punch, "to drive the

cold from his heart," and which, for fear of any mistake, usually first paid toll at the lips of the good lady herself—these formed part of their standing rules. Still, somehow, the patients often recovered, thanks to the ever-open door, the wide chimney, and creviced roof, which served to admit plenty of fresh air, and also to the hardy constitution with which the rural Irish are happily endowed.

The "old women," long life to them! still flourish. I very lately, when visiting the district where the scene of our story is laid, met with some amusing specimens of the tribe. They look on the encroachments of the dispensary physicians pretty much as the aboriginal dogs of New Holland regard those of their European brethren, condescending to emulate them to a certain extent, but jealously excluding them, as far as may be, from their lovely sylvan haunts.

The practitioner who was sent for on the present occasion belonged to the third class, who were a degree more learned; men who had picked up a smattering of medical knowledge, and assumed the grave title of "doctor." The doctor was regarded with much respect, and his advice sought on various matters—agricultural, political, domestic, and matrimonial; in fact, in each parish he was usually esteemed second in wisdom only to the priest.

Dr. Handley, who held this proud position in the parish of Inchigeelah, had formerly been gardener to a gentleman's family. While living in service, he was in the habit of uniting surgical with horticultural employments; and the younger members of his master's family found much

amusement in conversing with him. For their edification, he would invent the wildest and most ludicrous adventures, of which he would gravely assure them he had been the hero.

With all this extravagance, he possessed much shrewdness of character, of which I will give an instance. Just before he retired from service, the law forbidding to inoculate with the natural small-pox was passed, and emissaries were sent through the country to detect and prosecute any who did so. An apothecary from the city of C—— came into this district, and as he was known to Handley's master, he was hospitably received, and entertained at his house. Having strong suspicions that the old gardener was a transgressor, he endeavoured to ascertain the fact by searching inquiries among the country people; but in vain—not a man, woman, or child would inform or give him the slightest clue; and many a time that day did the town Galen find himself humbugged after the most approved fashion.

The next morning, accompanied by one of his host's sons, he went into the garden to try what he could do with the delinquent himself. The old man was busily engaged digging a border; and, giving one knowing glance of the eye as he returned the apothecary's civil salutation, he quietly continued his employment. "This is a fine morning, doctor."

"It is indeed, sir; glory be to God!"

"And 'tis fine healthy weather for the country; I suppose there are but few sick persons in the neighbourhood just now?"

"I know whomsoever 'tis healthy for, it agrees wonderful with the caterpillars; bad luck to 'em,

if they aren't ating up my early cabbages, just as the Moths and Sandals ate up Julius Casar."

Mr. ——, nothing daunted, returned to the charge. He wanted to establish the fact of the doctor's practising medicine in any way, hoping afterwards to detect the inoculation business; but Handley was thoroughly *up* to him, and turned his flank in masterly style. After an immensity of what our old friend, had he lived in the days of Sam Slick, would have termed "soft sawder," had been lavished in vain, the apothecary continued. "Now, Dr. Handley, I have heard a great deal of your medical skill; in fact you are better known and more esteemed in town than you think, and I should like to have your opinion on a difficult case. Suppose a man came to consult you, affected in such and such a manner, (detailing a variety of imaginary symptoms), what would you do for him?"

The old gardener stuck his spade in the ground, and leaning his arms on the handle, looked keenly at his questioner. "I'll tell you, sir. If he was a *good* fellow, I'd do the best I could for him; but if he was a *bad* fellow, that would talk friendly to your face, and turn agin you afterwards—*maybe I wouldn't give him a pill!*"

Not another word from the crest-fallen apothecary. He turned on his heel and walked off; while his young host, with a loud laugh, exclaimed, "I think, Mr. ——, the next time you're ill, you may as well not mind consulting Dr. Handley!"

The old doctor had now retired, with the savings of his years of labour, to a neat cottage and small farm about a mile distant from Mrs. Cronin's dwelling. Here, as his practice was

extensive, he picked up many small sums among the farmers, together with various fees in kind, consisting chiefly of eggs, butter, meal, and chickens; but he was always ready to prescribe gratuitously for the very poor, by whom he was much beloved. He united a thorough contempt for town-bred physicians to a most comfortable assurance of his own superior skill.

From this digression on an almost extinct class in Ireland, we return to our story.

IV.

Dr. Handley, summoned by Mrs. Cronin, soon appeared at her son's bedside. Having bled the boy pretty copiously, he ordered a fomentation of simples to be applied to his temples; and whether his prescriptions were *secundum artem* or not, certain it is that after a few days his patient became convalescent. The mother, who had been terrified at her son's danger, now lavished on him the most foolish caresses, indulging every wayward fancy, and straitening herself to gratify his whims. Instead of calmly reproving his sin and disobedience, she spoke only of vengeance to be taken on Tom Walsh, the boy who had beaten James; and she even promised Dan a new jacket as a reward for having thrashed Mickey Walsh, a younger brother of the offender, but who was himself quite guiltless of the affray. Daniel returned one day from school with a black eye and bloody nose, which would have excited his mother's displeasure, had they not been satisfactorily accounted for in the manner above-mentioned. While James's illness lasted, his brother and sister were made subservient

to him in everything. If he pettishly complained of them, the mother cuffed them without mercy, telling them that Jim was of more consequence than ten brats like them.

The old doctor often remonstrated with her on the subject. "Mrs. Cronin," he would say, "I seen a dale of childher rared in my time, and I never yet saw good come of setting up one above another. 'Tisn't in the nature of things but that they'll always be fighting and vieing with each other; and sure 'twould give you a sore heart-scald in your latter days to see them that you rocked in one cradle, and fed at your bosom, tearing and desthroying one another like them hathen Romans, Romulus and Ramus." These well-meant admonitions were in vain: blindly did the infatuated mother continue to minister to the worst passions of her children, reckless of the rapid growth of evil in their hearts.

Little Ellen was a child of a naturally sweet and yielding disposition; she had true womanly feeling, and, under different training, would have grown up all that was amiable and lovely. Even as it was, she received much less injury from her mother's misrule than did her jealous, turbulent brothers.

She had a beautiful white hen with a top-knot, which her aunt had given her, and which she dearly loved. Every day the fresh egg which Snowy laid was brought in for James's breakfast; but not satisfied with this, the selfish boy declared he must have the hen for his own.

"Ah, Jimmy," said his little sister, "don't take Snowy from me: sure you know how fond the crathur is of me, and I of her. She flies upon

my shoulder, and picks the bit of pratie out of my mouth; and she's quite strange to you and Dan. Sure you won't take her, Jimmy?'

The boy was that day more than usually ill-tempered, and, without replying, he tried to snatch the bird from Ellen, who held it closely in her arms. Enraged at meeting resistance, he seized the hen furiously, and wrung its neck. Its poor little mistress threw herself upon the ground, sobbing in an agony of grief. Just at that moment their mother came in; and when she understood the cause of the uproar, what course did she pursue? She blamed Ellen for trying to retain her bird, telling her she deserved to lose it for going to vex Jim; and merely told the latter he was a fool for having killed such a nice laying hen; never adverting to the cruelty and injustice he had shown towards his sister.

Scenes of this kind were of daily occurrence, and tended to foster every bad and jealous feeling in the children's minds. Their mother really loved them, and fancied she had their interests at heart; but truly it was a false kindness, a cruel love. What availed her care for their bodies, while, by a perverse system of fondling one at the expense of the others, she filled their young souls with envious discontent? Jealousy of a brother stained with blood the hand of the first murderer. Six thousand years have rolled on since then, and of all the sanguine torrents which, during their course, man has drawn from the veins of his fellow-men, who can say how many may have flowed from the same fratricidal source? Parents, if you would have your sons and daughters grow up a blessing and a praise, a crown of rejoicing to your old age, teach

them, while they are yet "little children," to "love one another!"

V.

Twelve years rolled on, and brought with them many changes. Mrs. Cronin's bright dark eye began to wax dim, and her raven hair was streaked with grey; but time, which robs youth of its beauty, clothes childhood with matured grace and vigour. James and Daniel had grown up to be stout handsome young men, while their sister Ellen was, beyond dispute, the fairest maiden in the country. Time did its work in developing their persons: their mother did hers in perverting their minds. But let us say, once for all, it was done in ignorance. She was a weak-minded woman, possessing undisciplined passions and affections; wishing to rule her sons, and finding herself without either physical or moral power to effect it. She therefore, as wiser politicians have done before her, tried to establish a balance of power, shifting the scale as the hasty fancy or irritated feeling of the moment might chance or dictate. But a plan which may answer indifferently well in the government of a nation, is often destructive when applied to the regulation of a family; and so it proved in this instance. Did Daniel offend his mother by betting at a horse-race, and losing his money, she would threaten to make his brother's share of the farm, at her death, treble his; did James spend the night at a wake or pattern towards morning intoxicated, she would promise to make a settlement on Daniel, whenever

he chose to marry, and leave her eldest son unprovided for.

In the commencement of our narrative we mentioned a boy named John M'Carthy, who good-naturedly protected Ellen from Dan's unkindness. This lad, now become a fine stout young farmer, possessing some acres of good land, did not lose sight of his former little playfellow. It is not my object to write a love story: indeed as the man said, when asked if he could play the organ, "I don't know whether I could do it, for I never tried." It will therefore suffice to mention that a strong attachment had sprung up between them; and as soon as Ellen attained the age of eighteen years (an uncommonly advanced period of life for a pretty Irish peasant girl to remain unmarried), John, with his parents' entire approbation, sought her for his wife. Mrs. Cronin at first demurred. It would be necessary to give her daughter a portion, and she did not like to diminish her stock, now consisting of six cows. She told her proposed son-in-law that she would take a night to consider, and give him an answer in the morning.

That evening, when James and Dan came in from work, they found the house neatly swept up, a bright turf fire blazing on the open hearth, and their supper of potatoes and salt fish ready and smoking hot. As soon as they entered, Ellen went out to milk the cows, and their mother, drawing her seat near the fire, began—"Why, thin, boys, you wouldn't guess who was here to-day?"

"Maybe 'twas the tithe-proctor, bad luck to him?"

"No, Jim, it wasn't the tithe-proctor, but a dacenter boy than ever he was. What do you think of young John M'Carthy?"

"I'll engage, then, he wanted to buy them three sheep I got last Candlemas, but the never a one of 'em will he get till I see what price they'll bring at the fair."

"'Tisn't them sheep he wants at all, but the nicest and purtiest lamb in the flock: he came to ax me would I give him your sister to be his wife."

"She might get a worse husband than Shame Age, there's no doubt of that," said James; "and I suppose the boy won't be looking for fortune, he's so well to do in the world?"

"As to that," said the mother, "I think I ought to give her three cows, half-a-dozen sheep, and a couple of feather-beds."

"Are you mad, mother?" was her son's energetic rejoinder; "that would be the purty bargain in airnest! To lave us all depinding on the other three cows to make our butter, while Miss Ellen is sitting like a lady in John M'Carthy's parlour; for no less would do him in the new house he built."

"Foolishness, boy. Ellen was ever and always the good daughter to me, and I'll give her what I plase, and as much as I plase. Maybe you and Dan will be sorry yet that you didn't thry to contint me better than you do."

James returned a violent answer, and the dispute waxed very warm. It ended in the son's going sulkily to bed, while their mother persisted in her intention, and threatened to give an additional gratuity of twenty pounds. Mrs. Cronin was

really piqued into acting thus, for her disposition was far removed from liberality; but she enriched her daughter in order to vex her rebellious sons.

VI.

After a reasonable delay, John and Ellen were married, and removed to a comfortable farm, which he had lately taken in conjunction with his brother, who was to live with them. Here, in the society of a husband whose temper and cheerful countenance knew no sullen cloud, Ellen enjoyed such happiness as she had never yet known. Her young heart and mind seemed to expand and brighten beneath the influence of domestic kindness; and there was not a prouder or happier wife than herself in the whole parish of Inchigeelah, when she put on her lace cap with pink ribbons, and her fine dark-blue cloth cloak on Sunday, and accompanied her husband to chapel.

Mrs. Cronin was a provident woman, and from her savings she soon contrived to replace the three cows which she had given to Ellen. Among her stock there was one red cow, a very fine animal, which yielded an immense quantity of milk, and was quite an object of admiration in the country. James had long wished to possess it for his own, and frequently importuned his mother to give it to him. This, however, she constantly refused. She had been left by her husband sole possessor of his farm, having power to divide it among her children during her life, or to will it to them after her death, in whatever shares or proportions she pleased. She was

most tenacious of her property, and, generally speaking, could with difficulty be induced to part with any of her stock. This cow, however, was employed as a powerful assistant in controlling the domestic economy. If the mother was pleased with James, she held out vague and uncertain promises that the animal should be his; did he displease her, he was told that Tiney should be forthwith presented to Daniel; or, were both brothers defaulters, she was to be driven to the next fair, and sold for whatever she would bring; till at length the poor innocent cow had become the cause of more envy and heart-burnings than the sacrifice of a hecatomb of oxen could in ancient days have appeased.

At length James contrived to extract from his mother a definite promise that from the 1st of the approaching month of June the coveted animal should be his; and all the profits derived from her were thenceforth to be appropriated to his sole use and benefit.

About the middle of May a great horse-race was to come off in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Cronin, knowing that much gambling and cheating would be likely to go on, peremptorily forbade her sons going there. They both, however, disobeyed; and going to the race-course, not only betted and played away all the little money they could collect, but James staked the precious promised cow, and lost her.

When their mother found they had gone in defiance of her positive injunctions, her rage knew no bounds; she stormed and raved aloud against her rebellious children. In the midst of her in-

vectives, her son-in-law, who was coming to pay her a visit, walked into the house.

"Good morning, ma'am," he said; "I thought I heard you talking to some one as I was lifting the latch, but I see you're all alone!"

"Oh, thin! thrue for you, John; I am all alone, and cold and lonely is my heart this day afther the treatment of them ungrateful boys that I tuk such care of, and such pride out of. The villains of the world! to go off agin my orders; but I'll pay them for it yet."

John, who was a most amiable, good-natured young man, and a great favourite with his mother-in-law, tried to soothe her and calm her anger; and to all appearance he succeeded. She talked quietly of Ellen, and asked many questions concerning the welfare of their household; but the bitter feeling still rankled in her bosom, and her thoughts were brooding over the undutiful conduct of her sons. After some time John rose to depart, and Mrs. Cronin followed him a few steps from the door. "And so you tell me," said she, "that Ellen is well in health, and happy, and content with everything about her. God keep her so; she was ever always a good daughter to me; and now, Shame, darling, I'll send her a purty little present, that may be you won't see the likes of agin in a hurry." So saying, she led him into the field where Tiney was feeding, and desired him to drive her home at once, and give her to Ellen with her mother's love and blessing.

John was as much pleased as surprised at his mother-in-law's unwonted generosity; and knowing nothing of the cow having been promised to James, felt of course no scruple in taking her.

He accordingly drove her home, thinking, as he went along, what a pleasant surprise it would be to his dear Ellen. Tiney was indeed greatly admired by her new mistress, who had often fed her when a calf; and John's brother pronounced her to be "a rale beauty, worth almost any money!"

My readers may perhaps imagine the miserable state of James's mind when he returned that evening to his mother's house. His conscience told him that he had been guilty of a great sin in disobeying his parent, and his selfish feelings reproached him with having thrown away every farthing he possessed: and last, and worst of all, he knew that on the 1st of June, he would have to part with his cow, or ransom her with a sum which he had no means of raising. He walked into the cottage, and sat down by the fire without uttering a word. His mother, who, now that her passion had in some measure cooled, felt rather apprehensive of the storm so soon to be awakened in his breast, was equally taciturn. Daniel had remained outside, to attend to the horse which they had ridden in turn, and there was no one else within doors.

Presently the girl entered with a pail of milk. "Arrah, misthress," said she, "I felt as quare and as lonely to-night without having poor Tiney to milk; and see yerself, the milk looks nothing since hers is taken out of it."

"Tiney!" said James; "what's the matter with her?"

"Ah, you may go whistle for Tiney!" said his mother; "I gave her to-day to a boy that's worth

ten of you, and that I heartily wish was my son in your stead."

"Mother!" said James, clenching his fist furiously, "you wouldn't *dare* do it!"

It would be needless and painful to dwell on the scene that followed. Dan having come in, joined in the war of words; and at length the wearied and enraged mother retired to bed, and her sons, breathing curses and threats, also sought their place of repose. Dan, who had not so much cause for excitement, and who, besides, was of a more apathetic disposition than James, slept soundly; but his brother did not close his eyes all night, and at four o'clock in the morning he awoke Daniel. In pursuance of a plan which they had concerted on the previous evening, they dressed themselves quickly, and stole noiselessly out of doors. They each carried a gun, and walked along rapidly for some time in silence. At length Daniel, looking earnestly at the inflamed features and bloodshot eyes of his brother, said, "Jim, what are you going to do at all at all?"

"I'm going to make that sneaking spalpeen give me up my fine cow, that he wheedled that foolish ould woman out of."

"And what'll we do if he won't give her up paceably?"

"Maybe I have a thrifle of logic here that'll persuade him," said James, touching the lock of his gun significantly. "Them M'Carthys never had much pluck in them."

On they walked, but the fresh morning breeze and glorious sunshine, which awakened all living things, and summoned them to joyous activity, had no soothing or softening influence on a heart

consumed by its own restless fire. After a walk of six miles, the brothers arrived at M'Carthy's farm, and in a meadow at some distance from the house they saw Tiney quietly grazing.

"Now for it, Dan," said James; "we'll drive her off, and let me see if one of the M'Carthys dare touch her agin." So saying, he proceeded to throw down the gap which had been built up to prevent the cattle in the field from straying beyond its precincts. At this moment John and his brother appeared advancing towards him.

"Good morning, Jim," said the former; "you're out early to-day."

"Not a bit too early to disappoint thieves and robbers," was the courteous rejoinder. "He! you'd have my fine cow all to yourself; but 'twas aisy wid ye, my boy. I'm come to take her back, and the never a hair of her will you see agin, if 'twas to save yer life."

"James, I don't understand all this. Your mother gave me the cow freely, without me ever axing her, many thanks to her for that same; and I won't have her taken back by you on a sudden without rhyme or rason."

"You won't, won't you?" said James; "see if you dare prevint me." And he immediately proceeded to drive the animal out of the field.

John ran to intercept him, and stood in the gap, at the same time saying, quietly, "Now, Jim, leave off this nonsense; you know I don't want to fight with you, but the cow shan't leave this field to-day." In a transport of passion, James raised his gun, fired it with deadly aim, and down fell the stout and manly youth before him a bleeding corpse at his feet. The wretched murderer

and Daniel, when they saw what was done, began to fly with speed; but the victim's brother, uttering a loud cry of horror, ran to lay hold on James. The latter, as if possessed by a demon, seized Daniel's gun and fired at his pursuer. He, too, fell mortally wounded. James stopped for a moment, raised him up, placed him with his head leaning against a tree, and then, with such a yell as might have resounded through earth's primeval valley when Cain stood a convicted and sentenced criminal before his Righteous Judge, the guilty being and his brother fled.

VII.

In less than an hour afterwards the Widow Cronin was standing in her house preparing the morning meal, when her eldest son rushed in. His face, notwithstanding his rapid flight, was colourless; his eyes red, and glowing with a fiendish glare. "Mother," said he, extending his hand, "look there!"

The wretched woman gazed at the blood-stained fingers. "Oh, James, for the love of God tell me what you were doing!"

"That's *blood*, mother," answered he, with frightful calmness; "the blood of an innocent man: it was *you* made me shed it, and on your soul be the guilt." He then rushed from the house, and ran wildly up the mountains, where Daniel had already found a place of concealment.

Of course the fearful hue-and-cry of murder was soon raised, and notice sent to the nearest police station: but the faction of the Cronins was numerous and powerful, and in those days the arrest of a

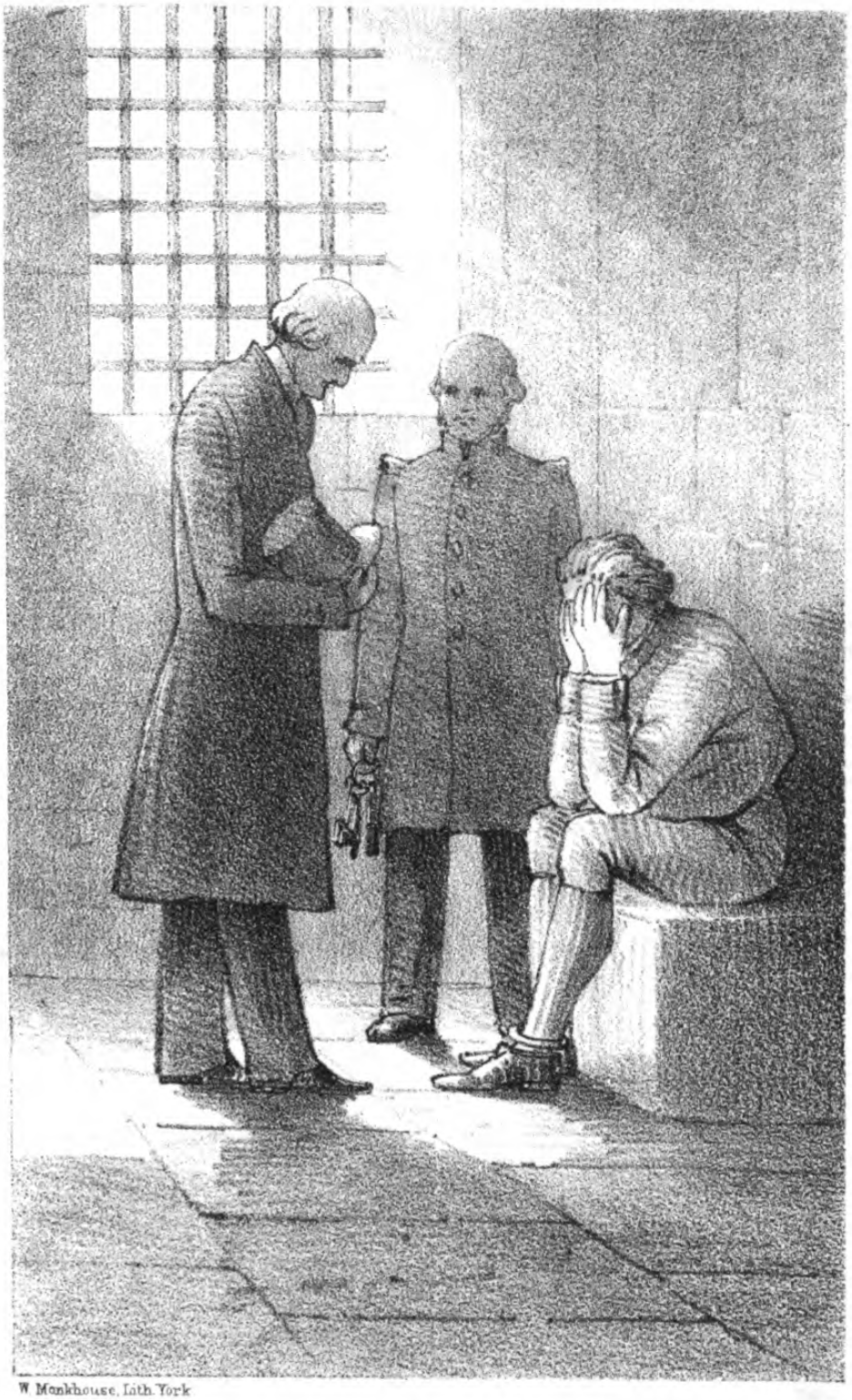
criminal in the remote parts of Ireland was almost impracticable. It was, and indeed is still, a point of honour among the peasantry never to deliver up a man to justice, even though he may have been guilty of the most atrocious crimes. That this point of honour rests on a false foundation, every lover of his country must grievously lament. The officious disclosure of circumstances of little moment may be neither honourable nor justifiable, but the concealment of murderers, of men who have outraged not only the law, but every just and holy feeling, is, to say the least of it, *dishonourable* —a crime too despicable to deserve any degree of sympathy. Yet, with feelings warped by prejudices of various kinds, the Irish, as we have said, give no aid in bringing malefactors to justice. In the present instance, notwithstanding the reward offered by government and the vengeful watchfulness of the M'Carthys, the murderer remained for several weeks undiscovered in the wild mountain fastnesses, being fed, lodged, and concealed by the farmers who inhabited these remote regions.

Who may attempt to picture the state of his mind during this period? He passed from the extreme of wild fiendish rage to the dull apathy of despair. This again gave way to a sense—oh, how keen and thrilling!—that all was lost. There he stood, *a murderer!* his hand dyed in the blood of those who had never wronged him. And when he thought of Ellen, "Oh, my sister; my own darling sister!" he would say, "bright were your eyes, and glad was your heart, till the dark cloud of sorrow came over you. 'Twas I that tuk him from you, that loved you better than his life; and

now you're down in the dust, Aileen, never to lift your eyes again to the face that was brighter to you than the sun, and more gentle than the moonbames on the river. Oh that I could buy back his life with my own; but this world and the next are shut up from me in darkness for ever!"

This mental conflict did not last long. The unhappy man one day set off for the nearest town, in order to surrender himself to justice, and while on the way, was suddenly surprised and seized by the officers of police, who were in quest of him. For a moment the instinct of self-preservation led him to make a show of defence, but all regular determination to oppose the demands of the law was gone; and the feeling, that whatever should befal him, could not be worse than the fearful remorse in which he was plunged, caused him speedily to submit to his fate. He was lodged in the county jail, and in due time brought to trial. He made no defence, confessed his crime, and sought no mercy. The fearful sentence of the law was passed on him, and he was remanded to his cell. During his imprisonment, and now in the brief interval that remained until the fatal day, he was constantly visited by the prison chaplain, and the priest of own parish, a kind good old man, who had known him from his childhood. He remained apparently unmoved by their pious admonitions, always saying there was no hope for him either in this world or the next. On the morning of his execution, as he was leaving the cell, he turned to his old friend, and said, "Tell my mother I forgive her; and may she and my Maker forgive me!"

These were the last words he uttered. In a few



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THE CONDEMNED CELL.

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moments the young and stately form of James Cronin lay a distorted and dishonoured corpse. Fearfully had the soul it enshrined been warped by unwitting error; fearfully was that error avenged.

VIII.

We return to the unfortunate mother whose mistaken preference and indulgence had led to such a dismal domestic tragedy. On the day of her last interview with her son she fell into a state of stupor, which was followed by a raging fever. From this she slowly recovered; but her reason was fled for ever. After a time, as she was perfectly harmless, though impatient of restraint, the person who was appointed to take care of her, allowed her to wander at will through the country. Nothing seemed to agitate her save the sight of a *red cow*. At this she would stop, and say, with a shudder, "Oh! don't you see she's stained with blood, and all the water in the sea can't wash out that colour?"

And Ellen—what of her? There are woes over which, like the artist of old, we must draw a veil. They are too deep for utterance, too sacred for description. From the day of her husband's death she never looked up, nor smiled; she languished like a wounded bird, the vigour of her young life struggling against the arrow whose death-thrust was in her heart. At length, on the day that the tidings of her brother's execution reached Inchigeelah, she expired, rejoicing in the hope of meeting her beloved husband in that world where no sin nor sorrow can enter.

Daniel continued for a time to wander about the country; but as no active exertions were used to bring him to trial, he ventured to return to the farm, which had now become his. We may mention that the late tragic events, in which he had been a guilty participator, seemed to have wrought a favourable change in his character. He watched tenderly over his mother while she lived; and after her death, he married the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, and led a quiet domestic life. He still survives; but it seems as if an evil destiny dogged his footsteps. Nothing appears to thrive with him; no doubt from the spiritless manner in which he conducts his affairs. His property has thus dwindled away, so that he now possesses only one or two fields,and supports his family by daily labour. I have often seen him; and without knowing his history, even a casual observer would remark the settled dejection and spiritless expression of his countenance.

One fine summer evening, about a year after the events we have narrated, a group had assembled at the door of Mr. Dogherty, the schoolmaster, consisting of several farmers and Dr. Handley, then verging on eighty years. While they smoked their pipes, and talked over the politics of the country, the Widow Cronin passed by. Her hair had become perfectly white, and her eye was lighted up with a restless fire which nothing but the hand of death could extinguish. She walked quickly by, looking vacantly at her old acquaintances, but not seeming to recognise any of them. "Poor woman!" said the old doctor, when she was gone, "sorely you supped the cup of sorrow. You had two as fine lads as ever brightened a mother's

eye or gladdened her heart. 'Twas a good soil to work on, but sadly 'twas misused. You thought to reap whate where you sowed nothing but hemlock !"

This, in its chief incidents, is an "owre true tale." The records of the county Cork prison contain the memorial of James Cronin's crime and execution; and it was from an old man in the country, who was present at the trial, that I lately heard the fatal history.

AN OLD IRISH MANSION.

One of the pleasantest spots I ever visited, wherein to dream away a summer's afternoon, was the wooded mountainous demesne of Oldcourt. How, in years gone by, I loved that place, with its mossy orchard, beneath whose venerable apple trees grew such hare-bells, pink, blue and white, as one never sees in these degenerate days. It belonged to a friend of mine; and there years ago, when a shy, dreamy child, living in a fantastic world, whose unreal garniture was furnished by those marvellous upholsterers, Haroun Al Raschid, Daniel De Foe, and the mighty two of the Tweed and Avon, whose names should never be disassociated—there I used, day after day, to ramble and repose amongst the solemn old trees, building those castles whose architecture owns no order, and whose foundation rests but on the key-stone of a rainbow-arch.

But I must remember what I am now, a sober woman, writing for sober people, in a sober age, whose only dreams are those that may be supposed to visit railway *sleepers;* so I will leave the fair wild grounds of Oldcourt, and describe the mansion they surrounded.

It was a real old Irish tumble-down concern, abounding in dark mysterious unswept corridors, long arched linnegs, and low-roofed rooms, whose flooring was in a state of dilapidation, which kept an exploring visitor in a most charming state of uncertainty as to whether his *premier pas* would land him on the boards of the second, or send him crashing through the ceiling of the first story.

One wing of the house was more modern than the rest, and kept in good repair by the family who resided in it. They consisted of a father, mother, and several sons and daughters of various ages, all kind, hospitable people, never so well pleased as when their house was crammed with visitors, for whose refreshment a superabundant table was kept perpetually spread, and a whiskey cask perennially flowing. The Hicksons, for so I shall call them, though themselves of excellent birth, were "no ways particular" as to the rank or breeding of their guests. Every one that chose to drop in at Oldcourt, from the baronet of twenty descents, to the livery-stable keeper who came from the next town to purchase hay, was made welcome to dinner, and afterwards despatched to the *terra incognita* up stairs, on a sort of haphazard chase after a bedroom, the usual formula employed by the host being;—"Just go up stairs to the lobby like a good fellow, open the doors as you go along, and take possession of the first room you see *without a carpet bag in it.*"

Of course, under these circumstances, rather queer rencounters would sometimes take place, and the nocturnal comforts of the guests be but indifferently provided for, had it not been for the superintending presence of an ancient dame, yclept

Mrs. Mahoney, whose stores of fine white herb-scented sheets, home-filled down beds, and soft warm blankets, appeared quite inexhaustible. The mistress of the house, in conjunction with her able *aide-de-camp*, the cook, was chiefly concerned with the commissariat department, leaving the care of all means and appliances for worshipping the drowsy god, to dear old nurse Mahoney. How well I remember her with her thick muslin neckerchief, and cap to match, encircled by a broad black ribbon, commemorative of the fact that she was "a lone widdy;" her shining, black stuff petticoat rendered visible by her bright cotton gown being turned up in front, drawn tightly back, and carefully pinned, so as to fall behind in a long pocket-shaped festoon,—a fashion, I believe, peculiar to Ireland. Since the earliest ages—for who forgets the exquisite mention of "Deborah, Rebecca's nurse," buried beneath the "Oak of Weeping"—the faithful old domestic, bearing that endearing name, suggestive alike of care bestowed on our earliest and latest day, has been cherished and respected among right-minded people. I am not ashamed to confess that, when somewhere about my tenth year, I first read of Montague and Capulet, I loved and understood the nurse far better than I did either Romeo or Juliet; only, I rather wondered that so big a girl as the latter would allow the old woman to scold her.

However, to return to the matter in hand, Old-court, amongst its various perfections, possessed one undeniable proof of its claims to a venerable antiquity, viz., a haunted chamber.

The great-grandmother of Mr. Hickson had been a distinguished personage in her day,—a rich

heiress, a haughty beauty, and withal, a clever woman of business. While assuming an overbearing manner towards the rich, she was hospitable and generous to the poor; in short, her character might be described as a sort of compound of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Bountiful. She stood mightily on her pedigree, and no lady patroness of Almacks' could be more exclusive touching the birth and breeding of those whom she invited to her house, than was the proud mistress of Oldcourt. She died at a good old age, expiring peacefully on a rich state bed in one of the best rooms of her mansion. After *her* funeral the apartment was shut up, and for years remained unoccupied. Of course, "there needs no ghost to tell us" that, by the denizens of the servants' hall and surrounding cottages, "the old mistress's ghost" was said to walk there, and terrify any bold nocturnal intruder, especially if he happened to be of humble rank.

Time, however, rolled on, and at the period I write of, the extensive hospitality of Mr. Hickson, at times, rendered inevitable the occupation of his ancestress's formidable bed-room by some jovial guest, who cared not for any spirits but those against which Father Matthew wages war. Still the state-room was not a favourite apartment, and was much less frequently inhabited than the smallest cranny-hole under nurse Mahoney's jurisdiction.

It was rather difficult to come at her real opinion touching the haunted room. She would sigh, shake her head, purse up her mouth, and look mysterious, when interrogated on the subject. I remember her once saying, when, fresh

from the perusal of "The Midnight Bell," I ventured to put some queries to her on the subject of apparitions. "Ask me no questions, child, and I'll tell you no lies." With which oracular response I was fain to content my youthful imagination.

It happened one day, in the month of August, when the house was more than usually crowded, that Mr. Hickson received a visit from an inhabitant of the neighbouring town. This was a Mr. Murphy, agent to a gentleman who possessed extensive grouse-moors, lying some miles to the west of Oldcourt.

Mr. Hickson was very fond of shooting, and had tried in various ways to obtain leave to go on these mountains from their non-resident owner. By a masterly course of conciliation, and a few judicious presents to Mr. Murphy, all fair and aboveboard, however, he had succeeded in obtaining the desired permission; and now the worthy agent had come out to Oldcourt on the 19th of August, bringing with him a formidable looking fowling-piece, and a very mongrel sort of pointer, in order, as he said, "to have a crack at the birds himself, Mrs. Murphy being particularly partial to cold grouse-pie." Truth to say, Mr. Hickson and his assembled friends would as soon have had Mr. Murphy's "room as his company;" however, there was no help for it—it was both polite and politic to make him welcome; and all the other dormitories being occupied, Mrs. Mahoney was formally directed to prepare "the old mistress's room" for this plebeian guest, whose father had been a baker, and who, in Hibernian parlance, "could not count a grandfather at all."

Mr. Murphy, when in the society of his betters,

was a timid sort of man, rather apt to be troubled with *mauvaise honte*—an unpleasant and unnational infirmity, which, however, abated considerably in the course of the evening's potations; and after predicting that the morrow would be a sort of Bartholomew's day to the grouse, he retired to his room in a most unwonted state of hilarity.

Next morning the party of impatient sportsmen assembled in good time round the breakfast-table, and marvellous was the demolition of substantial viands, including hot meat and potatoes, that ensued. At length the host, laying down his knife and fork, exclaimed—"Where's Murphy this morning? I'm sure I hope the fellow won't mistake any of us for grouse, and pepper our faces by chance."

"Not he," rejoined one of the guests—"even if he did fire at one of us, he'd be sure to miss. I was out with him one day, and I give you my word, he couldn't shoot a hay-stack flying—the very dogs were laughing at him!"

Just then the individual in question entered the room, and took his seat at the table in solemn silence. A sadder, if not a wiser man, he certainly looked than on the previous evening; and his cadaverous paleness of visage caused his host to exclaim—

"Why, Murphy, what's the matter with you, man; you look as if you had seen a ghost?"

A deep groan prefaced the reply.

"Ah, don't be talking to me, but give me a cup of green tea to keep the life in me, until I make the best of my way home out of this terrible place."

Every one's attention was now of course excited; a torrent of questions was poured on the poor

man, who at length, when fortified by the desired beverage, seasoned with "a small taste of whiskey," began his tale as follows :—

"When I went up stairs last night I wasn't long turning into bed, but I didn t put out my candle, for I remembered hearing that the old lady used *to walk*, and I thought to myself, 'twould be just as pleasant as not to have the light in the room till I went to sleep. Well, somehow I couldn't do *that* as fast as I thought, so I lay awake turning one thing and another over in my mind, till the house was all hushed, and there was a big long snuff on the candle. Suddenly I heard a sound on the lobby; tap, tap, tap, it went, till it came to the door. 'Merciful Moses!' says I to myself, ''tis the high-heeled shoes of the old woman, and here she is!' The door opened slowly, and sure enough in walked the old lady. Though all my limbs were shaking, I had sense enough to pretend to be asleep, and I kept the corner of my eye open. She was dressed in red satin, with high-heeled shoes on her feet, and a brass candlestick in her hand; and she had a mighty fierce look with her, that went through and through me, as she first looked at me, and then walked towards the table. She took up my candlestick, quenched the candle with her finger, and walked out of the room, giving a look as good as a process at me, before she shut the door. Oh, indeed, 'tis truth," he added, seeing incredulity strongly depicted in the faces of his auditors. "Sure the housemaid can tell you there was no candlestick in my room this morning. I didn't close an eye all night with the fright I got, and I would not spend another hour,

in this house if I got the fee-simple of Munster by it!"

So saying, the ghost-seer arose, took a rueful farewell of the company, and despite all remonstrances and conjectural explanations, set out for town the moment his horse was saddled.

The Hicksons and their guests had no faith in apparitions, yet they could not help saying to each other, that it certainly was a queer business, and that Murphy, goose as he was, must have seen *something*. Various remarks and conjectures were offered, until Mr. Hickson jumped up from table, saying—

"Come, boys, 'tis high time we were on the mountains. Peace be with my old grandmother! Who knows but she saved some of us from being shot, by frightening Murphy back to town!"

About an hour after breakfast, when the sportsmen had all departed, Mrs. Hickson betook herself to the upper regions, there to commune with Mrs. Mahoney, ostensibly touching domestic regulations, but in reality to gain some information respecting Mr. Murphy's adventure. The lady, however, resolved to introduce the matter cautiously, and, if possible, not allow the ghost-story to transpire. She therefore commenced—

"That Mr. Murphy is a strange man, nurse; he went away quite suddenly after breakfast."

"Oh, then, I'm sure, ma'am," rejoined the faithful domestic, "he's small loss any way. 'Twas well we weren't all burnt alive in our beds last night through his means."

"How was that, nurse?"

"I'll tell you then, ma'am. I always take a round of the house every night to see that all is

right before I go to bed; and last night, as I was passing the state-room, what should I see but a light shining under the door. 'Oh,' says I, 'this will never do. I'll engage this town-agent made a baste of himself with the whisky-punch, and tumbled into bed without quenching his candle; ('twas a tallow-dip too, by the same token, that Kitty gave him), and I'm afeard of my life the snuff will fall over and set fire to the place.' So in I went, and there was my gentleman lying quite fast asleep, and the candle burning away. I outed it and carried it off, and shut the door asy, right glad that I chanced to go in."

Mrs. Hickson gave a hearty laugh, and then, to nurse's immeasurable delight, described the mental sufferings which had been so unconsciously inflicted on the unlucky agent.

Such was the *dénouement* of Mr. Murphy's ghost story; and somewhat similar, I believe, would be the true explanation of all the so-called "well-attested narratives of apparitions" on record.

After a few years, the Hicksons' mansion was rebuilt, and the "old mistress's room" became classed among the things that "have been and are not." But to the end of Nurse Mahoney's life she took the utmost pride and pleasure in telling how she frightened the agent, and made him as good as swear that her brown merino was a red satin, and that the old slippers that the mistress gave her were a pair of high-heeled shoes!"

THE SAILOR PRELATE.

It was in the year 1580 that Sir Francis Drake returned in triumph to his native land, after a successful expedition against the Spaniards in the South Seas. He anchored at Deptford, and Queen Elizabeth honoured the brave admiral by dining on board his ship. After the banquet, her majesty conferred the honour of knighthood on her entertainer, and inquired of him whether he wished to name any captain in his fleet, as peculiarly distinguished for valour.

"So please your majesty," said Drake, "many there are in every ship who have borne themselves right bravely, as the subjects of their gracious mistress should; but one there is who merits praise above all, for by his steady daring alone three goodly galleons were taken. He stood himself at the guns until victory was declared, although a finger of his right hand was shot off, and he had received various grievous wounds. His name is William Lyon, commander of the Albion."

"Let him be introduced into our presence," said the queen; "we love to look on a brave man."

Sir Francis bowed, gave the necessary directions, and after a brief delay Captain Lyon was ushered

into the royal presence. He was a good-featured, finely-formed man, with the blunt, frank bearing of a British sailor; in the present instance slightly dashed by a consciousness of his position. Her majesty received him with that kindly manner which she knew so well how to combine with dignity—a species of "king-craft" which seldom fails to secure for sovereigns the warm love of their people. She asked him several questions touching the late expedition, which he answered in a sensible, respectful manner; and the queen dismissed him, saying, "You deserve to rise, Captain Lyon; and we now pledge our royal word that you shall have the first vacancy that offers." She then gave him her hand to kiss, and the gallant seaman retired.

About three months afterwards, as the queen on a state day was giving audience to her nobles, Captain William Lyon presented himself, and craved an interview with her majesty. Good Queen Bess, among whose faults indifference to the wants and wishes of her subjects could not be classed, willingly granted his request, and smiled as she asked him to make known his wishes.

"Please your majesty, I come," he said, "to remind you of your gracious promise. You said I should have the first vacancy that offered; and I have just heard that the see of Cork, in the south of Ireland, is vacant by the demise of the bishop; therefore I hope your majesty will give it me, and so fulfil your royal word."

"Gramercy," said the queen, "this is taking us at our word with a witness! How say you, my lord," she continued, turning to the Earl of Essex, who stood beside the throne, "would a brave

sailor, think you, answer for a bishop in our troublous kingdom of Ireland?"

"If Captain Lyon's clerkly skill, please your majesty, be equal to so grave a charge, his worth and valour (of which I have heard much) will, I doubt not, render him worthy of your Grace's favour."

"Besides," chimed in the captain, as undauntedly as if he stood upon his own quarter-deck, "her majesty *promised me the first vacancy;* and God forbid she should be the first of her royal house who was worse than the word of their lips!"

A less absolute sovereign than Elizabeth might probably have been offended at these blunt words, and have dismissed the unlucky speaker with scant ceremony; but, thoroughly secure in power, she liked to reign in her people's hearts, and besides, she had the rough old Tudor love for words of truth and deeds of boldness: therefore, a right royal burst of laughter proceeded from the throne, echoed by the attendant courtiers; and when the queen's merriment had subsided, she graciously dismissed Captain Lyon, with the assurance that his request should meet with due attention. An inquiry into the seaman's qualifications was accordingly instituted, and the result as to his moral character being perfectly satisfactory, and the fact of his having received a tolerable literary education being established, the queen was graciously pleased to grant his request; and William Lyon was duly consecrated Bishop of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross.

Elizabeth said to him on the occasion, "I trust,

Master Lyon, you will take as good care of the church as you have done of the state;" and indeed, contrary to all reasonable expectation, he did make a most excellent prelate—carefully extending his patronage to the most exemplary men, and labouring with unwearied zeal to promote the interests of the diocese. He built the present episcopal palace, situated near the cathedral; and over the mantel-piece in the dining-room hangs his portrait, very finely painted. He is represented in his naval uniform, and his right hand is minus the fourth finger.

Bishop Lyon enjoyed his elevation for twenty-five years, with reputation to himself and benefit to his diocese. He never attempted to preach but once—on the occasion of the queen's death. When that melancholy event occurred, he thought it his duty to pay the last honours to his royal mistress, and accordingly ascended the pulpit in Christ-Church, in the city of Cork. After giving a good discourse on the uncertainty of life, and the great and amiable qualities of the queen, he concluded in the following characteristic manner:—"Let those who feel this loss deplore with me on the melancholy occasion; but if there be any that hear me (as perhaps there may be) who have secretly longed for this event, they have now got their wish, and the devil do them good with it!"

The remains of Bishop Lyon have recently been discovered by some workmen employed in repairing the palace. In a corner of the lawn are the ruins of what was once the chapel; and when some stones and earth were removed, a tombstone was discovered, with an inscription in old English

raised characters, stating that the tomb was erected for " Willian Lion, an Englis man born, bishop of Corke, Clon, and Ross, in the happi raigne of Queen Elizabet, defender of the ancent apostolike faithe."

THE BOG-OAK SHAMROCKS.

CHARLES and Ellen Murphy were the children of a small farmer in the west of Ireland. Their father and mother died of fever within a few days of each other, when the boy was fourteen, and his sister twelve years old. Their only near relative was a cousin, who lived in a neighbouring village, and who, on the Murphys' death, came over to arrange their affairs. He found that when the stock, crops, and furniture were sold, and the rent and other debts paid, five pounds and a tolerable supply of clothes were all that remained for the orphans. Tom Handley was a good-natured man, but his own circumstances were far from flourishing, and he had a wife and family to maintain. He therefore felt rather embarrassed as to what could be done with his young cousins; and calling Charles to him on the morning that the farm was surrendered, he said, "Well, Charley, boy, what do you think would be best for you and Nelly to do?"

The boy sighed deeply. "I'd like to work, and try to support her if I knew how—if you'd put me in the way of doing it."

"'Tis little you'd earn for a good while yet,

I'm thinking," replied Tom. "You're a slight young fellow, not over strong; and I believe you were brought up more to the book-learning than to anything else."

"Yes; my poor father was giving me a good education, thinking I'd be fit for a clerk in a counting-house, in case the bad times would oblige him to give up farming: or 'at anyrate,' he would say, 'learning is no burthen to any one.' But now that's all over, and I know I have nothing to look to but my own work to support myself and Nelly."

"Well," said Tom, after a pause, "you and your little sister can come home with me. I know *herself*, (his wife) will be willing to give ye both the run of the house. I'll put your five pounds into the savings' bank, and we'll find you something to do in the fields, and Ellen might make herself useful minding the young infant."

Charles thanked his cousin; and then with hearts full of grief for the kind parents they had lost, he and his sister accompanied Tom Handley to his home, about six miles distant.

It was a long low thatched cabin, with a potato field at the back, a cabbage garden at one side, a pigsty at the other, and in front the filthy, green, stagnant pool, which impedes the entrance to many an Irish tenement. In it and about it were disporting themselves a motley crew of quadrupeds and bipeds; the former consisting of pigs and dogs, the latter including ducks, geese, and children. At the door stood Mrs. Handley, holding a wooden *piggin* filled with bruised potatoes and bran, and busily engaged in feeding a goodly company of cocks, hens, and chickens. Her eldest son, a fine

rosy, dirty boy of eight, stood armed with a furze faggot, lustily repelling the unlawful incursions of the before-named denizens of the pool, who, with the exception of the children, seemed to think that their favoured rivals of the roost were getting far more than their share of the good things of this life; and that it was really worth risking something for a portion in the mess of hot potatoes delicately mingled with bran.

"Here we are, Kitty," said Tom, "come home to you, thank goodness, safe and sound! I hope the praties are nearly boiled, for I'm sure Nelly and Charley must be starving hungry."

"They'll be ready in less than no time, Tom; and I have a fine bowl of buttermilk and a fresh egg for you into the bargin. You're welcome, children," she continued, "kindly welcome: only I wish I had a better place for you." And wiping her hands on her checked apron, she gave them both a hearty salutation, and led them into the cabin. Although their home had been humble, and their clothing coarse, Charles and Ellen had always been accustomed to strict cleanliness in both; they therefore felt shocked at the first view of their future dwelling. The mud floor was damp, dirty, and worn into ruts; the wooden furniture, although sufficiently abundant and substantial, looked as if it were rarely scoured; and whenever the half-door happened to be left open, the living creatures before enumerated were sure to rush in, bearing with them no small portion of the lacustrine deposits at the door. Charles perceived the painful expression on his sister's face, and drawing her hand within his, he whispered, "We ought to

be thankful to be here, Nelly, and not in the work-house."

After supper, they were taken into a very small room, a sort of den partitioned off the kitchen, containing two good soft-looking beds. In one of these Ellen was to sleep with two of her little cousins—the other was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Handley and their youngest child. An old stuff curtain was drawn between the two bedsteads—a piece of delicate refinement very uncommon in an Irish cabin. For Charles and the eldest boy a straw-bed was made in a *settle* in the kitchen. Despite the novelty of their situation, both brother and sister slept soundly, and awoke next morning with hearts though sad, yet grateful to God for giving them even *this* shelter.

After breakfast, Tom Handley said, "Now, Charley, come out to the field, and drive the cows into the lower inch. You can stop there and watch them; and mind, don't let them get into the meadow."

"Here, Ellen," said Mrs. Handley, "take this child from me, and good-luck to you: he won't let me do a ha'porth but dandling him all day: 'twill be a fine thing for me if you can mind him."

Both brother and sister expressed their readiness, to do whatever they could to assist their cousins, for they had been well instructed, and knew that they ought not to eat the bread of idleness. Yet they could not help feeling their situation irksome, for beside the physical discomforts of their abode, Ellen was kept all day in attendance on a cross child, which was also so fat and heavy, that the slender growing girl became bowed beneath its weight. Charles, too, was shut out from that

mental cultivation of which he had begun to taste the sweets, with the painful consciousness that the few pence he earned by herding cows for a neighbouring farmer were quite insufficient to pay for his own and Ellen's support. After some time, the Handleys, always poor, became exceedingly distressed. A violent distemper broke out among cattle, and carried off their only cow. No more milk for the children—no firkin of butter towards paying the rent. Then the season was wet, and the potatoes partly failed; and to crown all, poor Tom himself was seized with fever, and lay for many days between life and death.

One morning, when he was beginning to recover, his wife called Charles, and giving him her solitary Sunday gown, a much-prized garment of blue and yellow chintz, said, "Here, *ma boughal*, carry this to T——; take it to the pawnbroker's, and borrow as much on it as he'll give you, and then buy two ounces of tea and a quarter of sugar for poor Tom, and a stone of meal for ourselves."

"No, ma'am, begging your pardon, I won't do that; but do you think you could get me the savings' bank-book that Tom has?"

"What for, child?—that's an empty book. Sure we had no money in the bank this many a day."

"Oh, ma'am, I mean *my* book: there's five pounds in it, and I'll draw it out for you to-day."

"No, boy, no," said Kitty, applying the corner of her apron to her eyes; "I wouldn't rob the orphans that way: what luck could I expect for my own if I did? Keep your little penny, *aleah*: I am as much obliged to you as if I took it."

"Ma'am," said Charles earnestly, "if you please

you *must* take it. Aren't you and poor Tom like parents to Nelly and me?—don't you share every bit and sup with us, though you want it so badly yourselves?—how, then, could I have the heart to see you and the children want while I have it?"

"Well, Charley, you're a good boy, and I will take it from you as a loan. Please God, when *himself* is well, we'll soon be able to put it back; and indeed I think he'd a'most murder me for touching it at all."

The book was produced, Charles took it to the town, drew out his money, and having purchased some necessaries for the family, returned cheerfully home. He gave the money to Mrs. Handley; but she, although a kind-hearted, honest creature, was, truth to tell, a bad manager, so that the sum did not last as long as it should have done. One day, when Handley was just able to go out, his eldest little girl, a fine intelligent child of seven years old, her father's special favourite, fell off a wall over which she was climbing, and injured her knee severely. The hurt was at first neglected, and then carelessly looked at by an ignorant village apothecary, who pronounced that it required nothing but rest; and the consequence was, that the joint stiffened, and the poor child seemed condemned to a life-long lameness. Misfortunes, is is said, seldom come alone. At this last stroke, Tom Handley, as he said, "fairly lost all heart." He surrendered his little farm, removed into a small cabin, and engaged as day-labourer with a neighbouring farmer. Workmen at this time were very plenty, and money very scarce, so that the united earnings of Tom and Charles scarcely sufficed, in Irish phrase, "to keep soul and body together."

The children and Ellen grew pale and thin, and poor Mrs. Handley almost heart-broken. "Ah, Nelly," she would say, as she gave her the youngest child to hold, "the darling isn't heavy *now* to carry; God help my little Tommy, he's wasting away like a snow-drift on the hill. May our Heavenly Father look down on us all!"

From long confinement, poor little Mary became very fretful; and as Ellen was completely occupied in minding the youngest child, which was cutting its teeth, and Mr. Handley had, as she often declared, "fifty things to do at once," there was seldom any one at leisure to attend to her. But when Charles came in after his day's work, her pale face used to brighten, for the boy took pleasure in amusing his little sick cousin, and had many playful devices for that purpose. Tom Handley used to sigh when he saw his poor child unable to eat the coarse porridge, which, in very scanty measure, was all he could procure for his family; and once Charles heard him murmur, "Ah, then, *aleah*, if I could get you the white bread, and the new milk, and the drop of broth, you'd soon be well, and strong, and jumping on my lap as you used long ago!"

One day, as Charles was driving the cows through a turf bog, he saw a fine solid piece of the black oak which in Ireland abounds beneath the peat-moss, and is used by the peasantry for firewood. He carelessly picked it up, thinking it would serve to make the fire blaze that evening; and afterwards, when he sat down beside a rock, watching his charge, he took out an old penknife, and began idly to chip the edges of the wood. Suddenly he remembered a toy which he had seen

and greatly admired years before; it was a cup and ball; and it occurred to him, that if he could carve one ever so rudely, it would afford great amusement to little Mary. He accordingly commenced; and although the wood was hard, the knife blunt, and his hand unpractised, yet he had made some progress before evening. After supper, he sat next Mary, and while telling her some little long-remembered tale, he continued carving and rubbing his slip of bog-oak. In two days the cup and spike were finished; then came the ball, and this, without a lathe, was no easy matter to accomplish. However, perseverance is a wonderful thing; with it a new world was discovered; without it the most trifling enterprise will rarely succeed. So Charles worked hard at his ball, and after many failures, made one so round and smooth, that his delighted little cousin, after some practice, seldom failed to catch it on the cup, and even now and then, with the utmost triumph, displayed it sticking on the spike.

It happened about this time that the farmer, whose cows Charles herded, had occasion for a messenger to the county town, to bring home some groceries which could not be procured in the village. He told Charles he would send him, and giving him sixpence to procure his breakfast in the town, desired him to start before dawn, as he would have a distance of fourteen miles to walk, but could return with his purchases in a neighbour's cart.

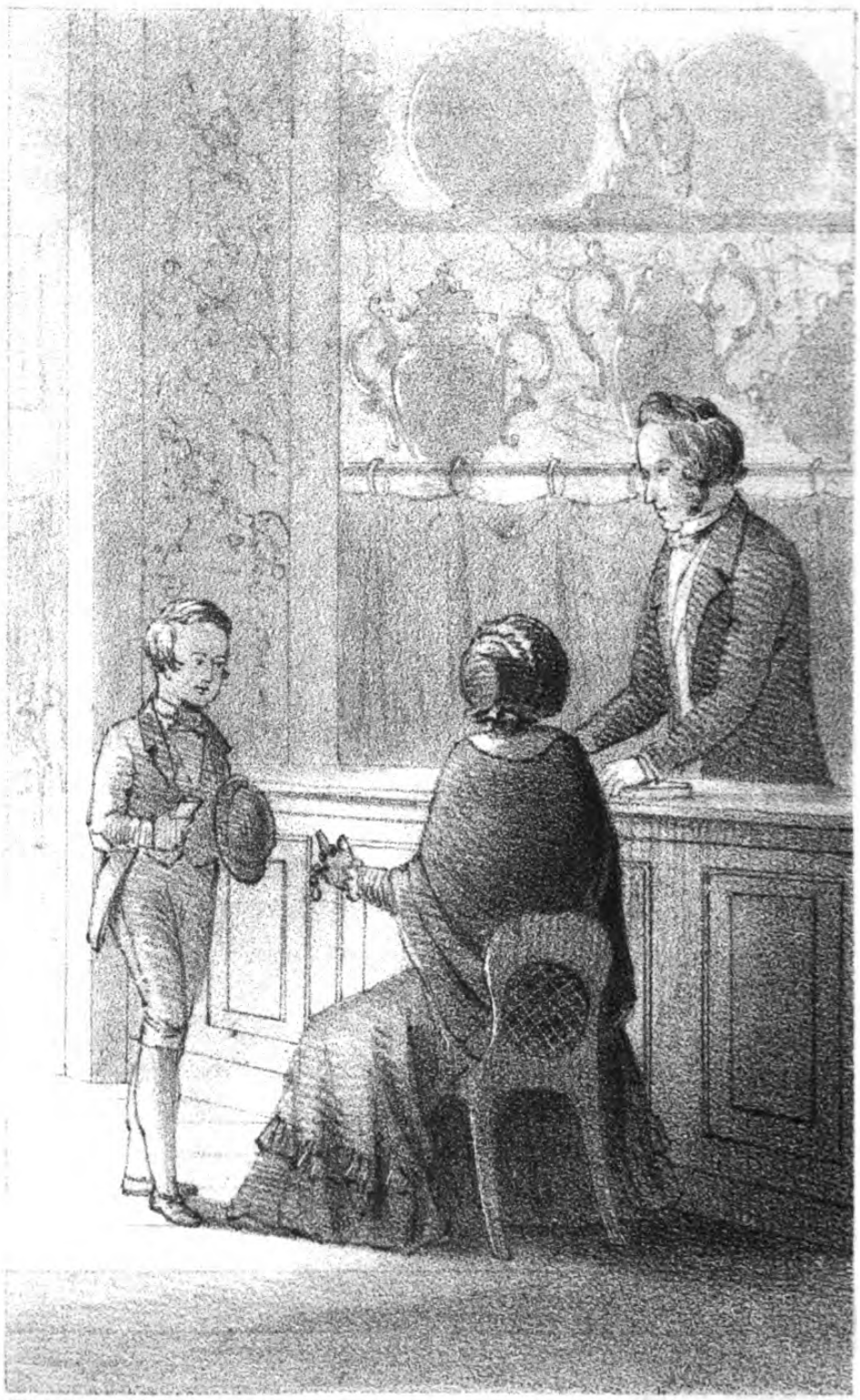
In due time Charles reached the town, executed his commissions, and saw them safely stowed away under the care of the man with whom he was to return, before he thought of refreshing

himself. He then took his silver sixpence, saying to himself as he looked at it, "I can't go home without eating something: I'll get a penny bun, and half a pint of milk; then I'll have fourpence-halfpenny left. Ellen wants a thimble: I saw her poor finger quite red and sore from trying to work without one—that will cost another penny. I'll take a nice white twopenny loaf to little Mary, and the three-halfpence over I'll put by towards mending Ellen's shoes."

The boy had finished his scanty breakfast, and was thinking that but for the dear ones at home he would very much like to buy another piece of bread, when his foot struck against something that arrested his attention. The street was very muddy, and when he stooped, he saw a small paper parcel almost covered by the gutter. He picked it up, opened it, and found wrapped up in three papers an old battered-looking gold coin. He turned it round, and on examining the envelop in which it was folded, perceived written on it the name of Mr. Martin, a jeweller in the town.

To his shop Charles hastened, anxious to restore the coin; for the idea of retaining it never once occurred to his honest mind. When he entered, he found Mr. Martin engaged in conversation with a lady, who held some dark ornaments in her hand; so, drawing back, he waited until the jeweller should be disengaged.

"Can you tell me," said the lady, "where I could get some shamrocks carved to match these?" And she showed a bracelet very tastefully formed of shamrocks carved in black oak, and fastened on an elastic string.



W. Monkhouse, Lith. York.

CHARLES IN THE JEWELLER'S SHOP. Page 181

"I really do not know, madam," replied Mr. Martin. "I have sometimes seen ornaments similar to these made by amateurs; but I am not aware that any regular workman could be found to do it."

The young lady looked disappointed.

"This bracelet," she said, "was made for me by my brother, who is now in India; and for his sake I prize it most highly. By accident two of the shamrocks were broken yesterday, and I am most anxious to have them replaced. I would gladly pay highly for having it done."

With heightened colour and sparkling eyes Charles stepped forward. "If you please, ma'am," —he began, and then hesitated.

"Well, my boy," said the lady kindly, "what do you wish to say?"

"I think, ma'am, I could carve shamrocks. I have a nice piece of bog-oak at home, and I'd be proud to try and do my best."

"Did you ever learn to carve oak?"

"No, ma'am: I only tried by myself to make a cup and ball to please our little Mary."

"Is it to sell anything you are waiting here?"

"No, ma'am," replied Charles; and handing the gold coin to the jeweller, he continued, "I wanted, sir, to ask you if you know who owns this, as your name is on the paper? I found it just now in the street."

Mr. Martin examined the coin, and exclaimed, "Miss Elwyn, this is the very antique piece I sold your uncle yesterday! Did he lose it?"

"Ah, yes. I heard him say last night that he missed a curious coin he had just purchased, and feared he must have dropped it."

"My honest little fellow," said the jeweller to Charles, "I am sure Mr. Elwyn will be much obliged to you, and will give you some reward for your trouble."

"I have had no trouble, sir," said Charles, a little proudly, "and I don't want to be rewarded for doing what is only right."

"But," said the soft voice of Miss Elwyn, "I want to know more about the oak carving. I dare say Mr. Martin will let me sit in his parlour while you tell me all about yourself and 'little Mary.'"

The lady's gentle manner and sweet countenance soon won the confidence of Charles; and he gave her an artless account of his history, ending by saying, "I think carving wood would soon come easy to me, only my knife is so very blunt. Will you please, ma'am, to let me look at the shamrocks you showed Mr. Martin?"

He examined them minutely, and then looked up with a beaming smile: "I think, ma'am, I'm *sure* I could carve leaves like these, if I had the pattern for a few days."

"Then," said Miss Elwyn, "you shall take the bracelet home with you: I know you are an honest boy, whom I may trust. Mr. Martin," she continued, "will you show me one of the best and strongest penknives you have got, and allow this boy to select one?"

"Oh, thank you, ma'am—thank you!" said Charles. "I will take great care of the knife and the bracelet, and bring them both back to you as soon as I have the shamrocks finished."

"The knife I mean to make you a present of:

but on what day do you think you can meet me here with the bracelet?"

Charles considered, saying half to himself in an under-tone, "To-morrow there will be the master's horse to go to the forge, and the bawn-fields to be ploughed the rest of the week; and then after that the turf to be drawn—altogether, I won't have much time, I'm afraid. This day fortnight, ma'am," he continued aloud, "please God, I'll try to be here, and bring you the best shamrocks I can make. I know you won't be angry if they're not nice enough, because, indeed, I'll do my very best."

Miss Elwyn and Mr. Martin were both amused at the boy's earnest, artless manner, and bade him a friendly good-bye.

Charles kept his promise, and did, indeed, "do his very best" to fashion his rude piece of oak into the delicate form of Erin's emblematic leaf. Early in the morning, late at night, and at every spare moment during the day, he practised his task perseveringly. Sometimes his patience was sorely tried. He found the fine even veining of the leaves most difficult to imitate, and giving the slender curling stem its proper form cost him the spoiling of several half-finished shamrocks. But what will not patient perseverance accomplish?—Encouraged by the wish to perform his promise, and by the real pleasure which he took in the work, Charles, on the evening before the expiration of the fortnight, displayed to the admiring eyes of Ellen and little Mary two beautiful shamrocks, in size and form closely imitating the natural leaf.—Having obtained permission from his master, he set out next morning, after a very scanty breakfast, to

walk to town, carrying the bracelet and his own precious shamrocks in his waistcoat pocket.

He entered Mr. Martin's shop. Miss Elwyn had not yet arrived; but Charles, longing to display his workmanship to the good-natured jeweller, put his hand in his pocket. Out came the bracelet, then the penknife, but no shamrocks. In terror he searched again: no sign of them, but what, alas! explained their disappearance—a small hole in the worn lining, which Ellen had forgotten to mend.

The boy burst into tears—he could not help it. "After all my trouble!" he exclaimed; "and indeed they were very nice! I'm thankful anyway," he continued, after a pause, during which the sympathising jeweller tried to comfort him, "that it was not the lady's bracelet I lost. Will you ask her, sir, to trust me for one week longer? Please God I'll make two more, and maybe better ones."

Mr. Martin promised to do as he wished; and then, with a firm, though sad heart, Charles returned to his poor home. I shall not dwell upon the various expressions of disappointment with which his hungry relatives greeted him, nor describe how poor Ellen reproached herself for not having mended "that nasty hole." Suffice it to say, that Charles set resolutely to work, and, by the end of the week, had carved two shamrocks superior in finish to the former ones.

Again he went to Mr Martin's, and now no sorrow awaited him. Miss Elwyn came, and was greatly delighted with the little ornaments—they were indeed exact facsimiles of her own. Her uncle, a benevolent-looking old gentleman, was with her. He watched the sparkling eyes and pale intelligent

countenance of Charles, while his niece expressed her approbation of the carving.

"Well, my boy," he said, "we are indebted to you for two favours—the restoration of my gold coin, and the mending of my niece's bracelet.—Here is a pound-note for your shamrocks; I won't offer you money for your honesty—*that* is a commodity which cannot and ought not to be purchased; but I give you my confidence and approbation, which perhaps may be worth something."

For a moment Charles could not speak. "Oh, sir," he said, "'tis too much; I couldn't take such a sum for two little leaves."

His objections, however, were soon overruled; and then, with a thankful heart, he pictured to himself the joy and plenty which he would carry home that night.

"Now," said Mr. Elwyn, "it is evident, my lad, that you have a decided talent for carving wood, and, what is better, a disposition to persevere. Would you like to learn to be an architect, and have to do with erecting stone buildings and oaken carvings on a large scale?"

"Oh, yes, sir, indeed I would."

"Then I have a friend, a good man, and a first-rate builder, with whom I shall place you as a pupil; and it will be your own fault, not mine or his, if you don't prosper. My niece tells me you have a sister and a sick little cousin; we must do something for them also."

The boy could not find words to express his gratitude, but his speaking countenance and tearful eyes were sufficiently eloquent. The next day Mr. and Miss Elwyn, accompanied by their friend,

Mr. Davis, the architect, paid a visit to Tom Handley's cabin. Greatly moved by the poverty he witnessed, Mr. Elwyn not only supplied the family's present necessities, but placed them in a small farm of his own, which had just fallen out of lease, at the same time strongly impressing on Tom and his wife the necessity for economy and order as well as industry. Taught by their late sufferings, the lesson was not lost; and after the lapse of a few years, they became quite rich for persons in their class of life. But this is anticipating.

Good surgical assistance was procured for little Mary, which, with nourishment and warm clothing, under the blessing of God, quite restored her limb; so that ere long Miss Elwyn was able to place her, with her cousin Ellen, in an excellent institution provided for the education of girls.

Years passed on, happily and industriously spent; and now, at the time I write, Charles Murphy is a rising architect, well known and respected for his talents and probity. He lives near the city, in a neat house: and few could recognise in the fair young wife whom he has brought home, the sickly "little Mary," for whose amusement long ago he fashioned the cup and ball.

When I last heard of them, Ellen was about to be married to a physician in good practice, and Charles was actively engaged in promoting, by his influence and exertions, an extensive manufactory of bog-oak ornaments, which promises to give employment to many a poor boy as friendless as he was on the day when he first tried to carve a Bog-Oak Shamrock.

THE QUACK DOCTOR.

"WHAT o'clock is it, Teddy?" said Mr. Thomas Stubbs, stretching himself, and rubbing his eyes, one fine morning, as his servant entered his room and unclosed the shutters.

"Just struck nine, sir, three quarters agone," answered the man—a long, shambling, untidy-looking Irishman, whose national appellation of Taddy had been smartened into Teddy, by his good-humoured English master. Mr. Stubbs had picked him up no one knew where, and retained him as a servant no one knew why—for poor Teddy was certainly as deficient in the cardinal virtues of activity and order as any Hibernian that ever picked a potato.

Mr. Stubbs was a rich, retired haberdasher, who, while he was busy measuring silks, and unrolling ribbons, had never felt an hour's illness; but now he had become rich and fat, idle and dyspeptic—and his suburban box, which he styled Herculaneum, but which some waggish acquaintance designated Sarsenet Villa, bade fair to become a rendezvous for quack doctors, and its master's stomach a receptacle for their pernicious drugs. For a time, hydropathy found favour in his eyes: but his

outer man speedily rebelled against the early matutinal wet sheet—while his interior came to the conclusion, that milk, water, and cocoa, were but sorry substitutes for a bottle of generous Port, or Guiness's XXX—an article which Mr. Stubbs favoured as much as he did that other Irish product, Mr. Taddy.

"Why, then, master," said that quondam denizen of the green isle, "'tis a quare thing to be thrating a Christian like a piece of handle-cloth, that never looks clane, nor feels supple, till it gets plenty of bathing in a running strame. I'm not saying but could wather's a good thing in it's place; but I'm certain sure *that* was never intended to be the stomach of a gentleman." So the system of Priessnitz was abandoned, and Mr. Stubbs applied himself to the deglution of Homœopathic atoms which, as his faithful attendant remarked, "if they did no good, could do no harm; for 'twas out of the nature of things, that physic that would stand on the point of a pin could either kill or cure a fine, portly gentleman, like the master."

Mr. Stubbs himself soon came to the same conclusion; and on the morning when our tale opens, he had finally forsaken "the theory of atoms." However, as to living without patronising some system of quackery, that was totally out of the question; and the poor rich gentleman seemed likely, from sheer idleness, to shine forth in print as distinguished and indefatigable a swallower of puffed patent drugs as the Earl of Aldborough himself.

By half-past ten o'clock his toilet was completed, and he descended to the parlour, where a luxurious

breakfast awaited him; his orders on the previous evening, touching an unlimited supply of fresh salmon, Westphalia ham, hot muffins, and tea—strong and green, and fragrant as ever scented the air of Cathay—having been dictated by a natura. wish to make himself amends for his former self-denying fast. Indeed, as Thady remarked confidently to the cook, "'Twas as good as a play to see the master ating away for the bare life, and looking for all the world like a friar on an Easter Sunday, that wants to make up for a black Lent. That I mightn't," continued he, "but I'd rather see him tossing off his sixth cup of tay, than see Father Matthew with his mouth to the bung-hole of a whiskey cask, though that same would be a sight worth looking at."

Breakfast ended, Mr. Stubbs stretched himself on a soft sofa near the window, and began to read the newspaper. He skipped the leading article, and all the political news—these were perplexing subjects, ill suited to promote digestion—railway accidents, police reports, and "shocking occurrences," neither excited his curiosity, nor invited his perusal: but his eye strayed almost involuntarily to an announcement in the advertising sheet, headed thus,—"Life prolonged and death prevented." It set forth the marvellous cures in the cases of sundry illustrious individuals, afflicted with divers unheard of diseases, effected by Signor Giovanni Cartini: the nearer the patient approached dissolution—so the advertisement stated—"the more did the transcendant and ineffable skill of Signor Cartini shine forth, in rescuing him from the jaws of the grave."

"Teddy," said Mr. Stuhbs, looking up from the

paper, and addressing his attendant, who was engaged in dusting some nick-nacks on the chimney-piece, "I've a great mind to call on this man—he must be an Italian from his name—and after all the wonderful cures he says he has performed, I dare say he will be able to relieve the distressing sensations of fulness and tightness that I labour under at present; and the lowness of spirits, and disposition to yawn which I suffer from continually."

"Just, as your honour plases. I suppose, as the day is so fine, you'd like to walk; and the warm sunshine might rise your honour's sperrits a bit."

"Do you really think, Teddy, I should be equal to the exertion of taking so long a walk?"

"I think that if your honour isn't, I'd never trust to a gentleman's ating a good breakfast again."

Mr. Stubbs smiled, then sighed, and with as sentimental an air as a portly, rubicund gentleman of fifty-six could be expected to assume, said, as they sallied forth,—

"Ah, Teddy, don't build on that; a good appetite is often a sign of disease."

The quarter of the city where Signor Giovanni Cartini resided, was, certainly, far from aristocratic; and his intended patient did really feel somewhat fatigued ere he found himself and Thady, as the latter expressed it, "tete-a-tete with the doctor."

The room into which they were shown by a slip-shod servant maid, was dark and low—the furniture mean and scanty—and altogether, judging by appearances, it would seem that the various illustrious patients cured by the Signor had been more lavish of their praise than of their pounds.

The doctor was seated at a table covered with printed papers, phials, and pill-boxes. He was a stout, middle-sized man, with sandy hair, grey eyes, and a somewhat *retrousse* nose, while his rather wide mouth was set off by a range of white and even teeth—and his whole countenance was rendered far from unpleasing by a good-humoured smile which played on his lips, and seemed rather at variance with the professional gravity which he tried to assume. Certainly his *tout ensemble* was as little like that of an Italian as can well be imagined; and so Mr. Thady thought; for, when Signor Cartini rose, and invited Mr. Stubbs to be "sated in the arm-cheer," he muttered half aloud,—"As sure as I'm an Irishman, he's one too." He then took up his position behind his master's chair, and listened attentively to the conversation that ensued. It consisted of various oracular sentences, pronounced in a husky voice by the physician, in reply to the multiplied complaints of his patient, who ended by saying, "Now, doctor, please to look at my tongue attentively, in a good light, and I'm much mistaken if you don't discover indications of serious stomachic disease."

In order to comply to the letter with this request, Signor Cartini walked with Mr. Stubbs towards the window, and raised the dark holland blind, which had hitherto obscured the light. A dusky sunbeam entered and illumined at the same moment the face of the professor and the memory of Thady; for the latter jumped forward, shouted—

"Jack Carty! Man alive, is it you that's there?"

"Thady Malone! how is every bit of you?"

cried the poor medico, all sense of detection vanishing in his joy at recognizing a friend and countryman.

For some moments neither spoke collectively, but interchanged questions without waiting for answers in a style that astonished Mr. Stubbs. At length that gentleman succeeded in obtaining the following explanation.

The soi-disant Italian and Thady Malone were brothers-in-law, Jack Carty having some twelve years since married the sister of the latter. Possessing a mercurial disposition, very decidedly averse to steady industry, combined with considerable talent and as much "larning" as the village schoolmaster could impart, he shortly after set out with his young wife to seek their fortune—a species of seeking which seldom involves finding. It certainly did not in this instance. After passing through many strange vicissitudes with a young and increasing family, poor Carty could discover no better way of turning his talent to account, than the disreputable one of Italianizing his name, and setting up as a quack doctor. A hard struggle for bread ensued, and the miserable deceptions he was obliged to practice soon destroyed his self-respect, and made him look back with bitter regret to the days when he was peacefully digging in his native fields. His children were often hungry, yet whither to turn for help he knew not: he had long lost sight of his Irish friends, and they of him. Thady had come over to London about two years previous to this meeting, on the same errand, but without encumbrance, and with a resolution to turn his hand to anything. He had been so fortunate as to enter Mr. Stubbs's service, and now in

this strange manner encountered his relative. Poor Jack, his assumed voice and airs of quackery thrown aside, told his story as only an Irishman could tell it; and finished by saying—

"I despise myself for the sort of life I'm leading: I'm ashamed to look an honest man or even the blessed sunshine of heaven in the face; and still, how can I let my wife and children starve entirely?"

He had no unsympathising auditors. "Oh, then, Jack," cried Thady, "where's Judy and the young ones. I think 'tis a hundred years till I hear the voice, and feel the warm breath of one belonging to me!"

Meantime Mr. Stubbs, his dyspeptic symptoms all forgotten, viewed the scene with benevolent interest; and when Judy and the children, running into the room, met poor Thady's affectionate embrace, his master's eyes were dimmed, and the late huskiness of the Italian physician seemed to have fallen on his voice as he said—

"Tell me, my friend, are you willing to abandon your present deceptive mode of life, and earn your bread by honest industry?"

"Indeed, indeed sir, I am. I don't care how hard I work, nor how poorly I live, provided I'm able once more to hold up my head as an honest man."

"Well," said Mr. Stubbs, handing him some money, "I will try you, and here is a trifle for your present necessities. I'll allow Thady to remain with you to-night, and come with him in the morning. We'll see then what can be done."

So saying, Mr. Stubbs departed, followed by the thanks and blessings of the grateful family. His

mind was so much occupied by the scene he had witnessed that he totally forgot he was an invalid, and felt no fatigue from his unusually long walk. He sat down to dinner with an excellent appetite; and although the soup was burnt, and the mutton overdone, he forgot to chide, and enjoyed the repast exceedingly. For the first time "the luxury of doing good" was felt by him to afford a purer pleasure than aught of a selfish nature could do.

"There is a nice little farm to be let about two miles from this," thought he. "If I were to take it, I might establish Thady's friend there, and going out to oversee it, would give me air and exercise, which I believe, after all, I want more than medicine."

This plan was acted on. Jack Carty, made wise by experience and directed by his faithful brother-in-law, sobered down into a steady, industrious farmer; rendering Mr. Stubbs a fair return for his land, and a bowl of new milk every day, which that gentleman declared he found agree better with his constitution than the most vaunted medicines. A good deal of his increased health and strength was no doubt owing to the daily walk and the country air which he now enjoyed, as well as the occupation which the farm afforded; though, as Thady used to remark, "the master, at first, scarce knew a horse, and couldn't tell from Adam what time the praties should be set; though, indeed, to do him justice, every day he improved wonderful."

He certainly did, and in matters more important than agricultural knowledge. The selfish man had become benevolent, the idle man active; he sought out distress and relieved it, while his kindness

was experienced by every member of Jack Carty's family.

"Oh, then, master," said Thady one evening, as he stroked the fair head of his sister's youngest child, "there's nothing, after all, makes a man relish his food like sharing it with them that are dying of hunger; and 'tis I that am proud this blessed minute to see your honour strong and hearty, doing good to every one that comes in your way—*barring the apothecary.*"

THE BRETHREN OF THE PUPS.

AN IRISH SKETCH OF THE OLDEN TIME.

Long, long ago, strange people lived, and strange things were done, in the south of Ireland. To almost every locality there, wild legends concerning the "ould ancient people" are attached: often mingling truth with fiction in so ingenious a manner, that it is difficult in the present day to draw the boundary line between them. Nearly all the families who can boast an ancient descent, have some curious tale belonging to and explaining the origin of their respective names, the purport of which is usually conveyed in the Irish appellation. A singular instance of this was recently related to me. A gentleman, residing in the county of Cork, was one day conversing with an intelligent man, named Simon Collins, or in Irish, *Sheemon na Cuillane*, who belonged to the class of small farmers. Simon possessed an amount of *larning* beyond his rank, coupled with no small degree of family pride; and on this occasion the conversation between him and my friend happened to turn on the origin of various families in the neighbourhood. Many of them Simon named with contempt, as

being "upstarts, people that came over with Cromwell, upsetting sassenachs, without a drop of pure Irish blood in their veins." "Well," said my friend, at length, "I don't see, after all, Simon, that *you* have much right to disparage Saxon blood, as it flows pretty freely in your own veins; Collins is certainly an English name."

"I beg your honour's pardon; Collins may be English, and I don't doubt but what it is; but *Cuillane Uinthir na Cuillane* is Irish, and a very fine old name it is! Your honour can turn your tongue finely to the Irish, so I needn't make you sensible that it manes "the Brethren of the Pups."

"That's a strange title, Collins; I wish you would tell me what it is derived from."

"With all the pleasure in life, sir," said Simon. And he proceeded to relate a tale, which I will now repeat for the amusement of my English readers.

More years ago than could be easily counted, there dwelt in the wildest part of the county Cork, a chieftain equally famed for his valour and his riches. His castle gate stood open day and night to admit travellers and guests of every rank and degree. A stream, unexhausted by summer's heat, uncongealed by winter's cold, flowed without cessation from the portly whiskey cask which stood within the hospitable precincts of the kitchen; whose huge open fire-place presented a goodly array of spits and jacks groaning under joints of meat, of a size and fatness which we seldom see in our degenerate days. But all this plenty and unlimited hospitality existed during the chief's bachelorhood. He married a rich heiress from "the black north," and lo! ere the honey-moon

was well over, plans of domestic retrenchment began to be suggested by the bride, and were most unwillingly acted on by the bridegroom. The number of retainers was diminished, the *gossoons* who lingered about the house and offices, "getting their bit and sup" were banished, and an active system of regular surveillance established to "the heavy loss and great discouragement" of the sometime lady paramount in the culinary regions. The beggars too! those never-failing visitants to Erin's huts and halls, were sent to the right about with small show of courtesy; and this latter innovation on Irish usages was regarded with marked disapprobation by the denizens of the castle. To this day it is considered in the rural districts a most unlucky thing to dismiss a beggar without giving him alms; and the curse of a *boccough* is most anxiously deprecated. "What good does the poor-law do us?" asked a small farmer in the county Cork. "Sure though we're paying ever so much for keeping up the workhouse, and feeding the people that are in it; and though 'tis tight enough with ourselves these bad times, still we darn't refuse the bit and sup to any crathur that's travelling about to ask for it; for luck nor grace never attends them that have the bad word of the poor hanging over them." Until the bitter advent of the years 1846-7, this principle was fully acted on, by even the most miserable cottagers in the country. But that season of famine, whose iron gripe loosed the bonds of even maternal love, and caused the mother to snatch the scanty morsel from the thin white lip of her dying child, naturally and necessarily sealed the fountain of reciprocal charity among the poor, and sent forth

crowds of beggars to perish in the fields. Although a digression, I cannot forbear recording an affecting incident that took place in the south, during the spring of 1847. A poor family, consisting of a father, mother, and several children, were reduced by starvation to the last extremity; three or four boys and girls died; the father was unable to stand from exhaustion; but the eldest son, a fine lad of eighteen, kept up his strength, and continued to labour on the roads, and draw the wretched pittance which, when converted into Indian meal, scarcely afforded them enough to drag on existence. A benevolent visitor entered the cabin one morning, and there discovered how the youth's strength, on which depended the wretched existence of his family, was kept up. His mother "forgot her sucking child" in order that she might have compassion on the son of her womb." The miserable pallid infant was cast by to cry unheeded, while its elder brother drew milk from the mother's bosom. This is a matter of fact: does it not rival the inventions of fiction?

But to return to our tale of the olden times—the "good old times," as they are often called.

Ominous were the threatenings of evil which the lady's attendants failed not to predict would follow her deficiency in alms-giving; but if she heard, she did not heed them, and continued to manage the domestic affairs of the castle with a close hand and a hard heart.

One fine morning the lady happened to be standing at the kitchen door superintending the feeding of her pigs and poultry, when a miserable-looking beggar-woman, followed by five children,

as wretched-looking as herself, approached and asked for alms.

"Go away," exclaimed the mistress of the castle, "go away; we have nothing to bestow on idle strollers."

"If you have no pity on me," replied the woman, "at least have some compassion on my five poor children that are starving before your eyes."

"What business have you," rejoined the lady, "or any poor woman like you, to have such a set of children without the means of providing for them. Get you gone; you'll find no alms here. Beggars have no right to have large families."

A bitter smile passed over the mendicant's withered features. She turned to depart, called her children to follow her, and as she reached the outside gate, she looked steadfastly at the lady, and pointing significantly to her offspring, said aloud:

"May you never die until you have as many children yourself *all in one day !*"

She then departed and was seen no more.

The lady of the castle retired to her own apartment with a sick and heavy heart: the words of the beggar woman had been heard and noted by her domestics, and they weighed on her spirit, why, she could hardly tell.

Months passed on, and the lord of the castle rejoiced at the prospect of his lady's bringing him an heir. Grand preparations were made to celebrate the expected event; but it so happened that the day before it took place, the chieftain had occasion to visit part of his domains, which lay at some distance from the castle, and remained there, not knowing of his lady's illness.

The tradition goes, that to the dismay of the lady and her attendants, she was safely confined of *five* fine living children. Here was the fulfilment of the mendicant's malediction; and now the mother, filled with horror and remorse, thought only how she might best conceal the unnatural occurrence, and get rid of the unhappy infants. No touch of maternal feeling softened her hard and cruel heart, as she summoned to her bed-side an old woman who had been her attendant from her infancy, and whose inhumanity rivalled that of her mistress.

"Shelah," said the lady, "look at these wretched children; they were born under a curse, and I feel certain they will never come to any good. Help me to get rid of them, and tell me how it can be done."

"Nothing more easy, lady," replied the old crone, "my lord is away, and knows nothing yet of their birth; we can persuade him, and every one else in the castle, that the brats died within an hour of their birth; and we can make the tale true, too, for the waters of *Loch na brach darrig* will tell no tales."

The lady spoke not, but looked on with a cold unglistening eye, as Shelah produced a large, covered basket, and placing the hapless infants in it, covered herself and it with a dark mantle, and left the room. She went out unobserved, and took the road that led towards the wild mountain lake she had mentioned. When about four miles from the castle she was startled at hearing the cry of dogs, the merry shouts of boys, and all the joyous sounds that usually proceed from a hunting party.

"My lord is coming," thought she, "and what will become of me if he finds out what I'm about —I must only put a bold face on it, and try to pass on."

In a few moments the chieftain was in sight; he had lingered behind his train to look at a field of barley which the mowers had just commenced cutting, and he was standing by the fence when Shelah came up.

"God save you, my lord," said she, passing on.

"God save you kindly, Shelah; but what have you got there under your cloak?"

"Oh, nothing, my lord, but a few pups I'm going to drown."

"And by whose orders would you attempt to drown pups, without my having seen them?"

"'Twas my lady ordered it," said the old woman boldly; "and I'm sure 'twould be a hard case if she could not do that much in her own castle without being called to account about it."

Now, if there was one point that the chieftain was more sensitive about than another, it was with respect to the breed and beauty of his dogs; he was, therefore, amazed at the hag's audacity, first in carrying away the puppies, and then in trying so boldly to justify herself.

"If all the ladies in the country ordered it," said he, "not a puppy shall be drowned without my commands; and I advise you, old woman, to attend to your spinning and knitting in future, and not undertake commissions that may chance to cost you a speedy dismissal from the castle."

"I humbly ask your lordship's pardon a thousand times," said the crone, who now perceived that taking a high tone would not answer. "And

the mistress nor I would never have thought of such a thing as drowning any dogs that were worth a straw; but indeed these are ugly things belonging to a turnspit, that your lordship would never like to hear yelping about the place."

"Ugly or not," said the chieftain, "not a puppy shall be drowned by you this blessed day, until I have seen them." And so saying, with a firm hand, he seized the basket, and raising the top, discovered his own five infants! Finding all hope of concealment at an end, Shelah now disclosed the intended crime, throwing all the blame on her mistress.

Her indignant lord bade her depart, and never set foot in the country more; an injunction she was glad to obey, thinking herself happy to escape with her life. The chieftain's first care was then to despatch his retainers into various parts of the district, and assemble five nurses, to each of whom he confided a child, enjoining them to tend his infants carefully.

He then sent a message to his cruel wife, telling her he could never bear to see her more, and bidding her depart from the castle as soon as her health should be sufficiently restored to permit her to travel. "I will show her more mercy," he said, "than she had on her little children: I will make an ample provision for her support, that she may return to her own friends, and live amongst them in as much comfort as her conscience will permit her to enjoy."

The lady retired to the north, and died there after the lapse of a few years, penitent, it is said, for her heartless conduct.

In the meantime, the chieftain's sons and

daughters grew and flourished, and were the comfort of his old age. They all married, and had families; so their father, before his death, saw himself surrounded by a numerous colony of grandchildren.

In allusion to the strange means of their preservation, they were always called by their neighbours — "*Uinthir na Cuillane*," — "The Brethren of the Pups," a designation which, translated by the English patronymic *Collins*, even in the present day attaches to their lineal descendants.

A SKETCH OF FAMINE.*

IRELAND—the Green Isle—our poor famine-stricken country!—it would be difficult to give an idea of her sorrows to those who do not witness them; but amply are they realized by those whose lot it is to sojourn in the midst of the perishing people. The peasantry, once so gay, so full of native fun and humour, that the phrase "a light-hearted Irishman," has become proverbial, now bowed down by famine and nakedness, gaunt and haggard, faint and spirit-worn, are but the shadows of their former selves. *The food of the land is destroyed.* These are words easily spoken, and perhaps excite no adequate idea of their fearful import; well is their significancy felt in our country. In a parish of the south-west, there was lately seen a fainting mother, bending her tottering steps towards the churchyard, and bearing in her arms two infants, one dead, the other scarcely alive. She laid them on the sod, while with her hands she scooped a shallow grave, and placed in it the little form which, a few days since, was drawing life and nourishment from her bosom.

* Written in 1847.

She uttered no cry, no word of sorrow, but calmly seated herself beside the open hollow that held the uncoffined limbs of her youngest born, and taking her last remaining child on her feeble knees, waited helpless and hopeless of succour till the moment when the gasping breath should cease, the convulsive sob be stilled, and Death, in his now kindly visiting, should come for ever to assuage the fierce pangs of hunger.

"I waited," she said, "to bury them both in one grave; I had nothing to give my darling, no strength to carry him away—better to stop and put him alongside his brother in the holy ground, than lay him down in the field for the rats to devour."

She survived her children but a day or two; her husband had died the week before by the side of the road where he was working. This is no isolated occurrence; while I write, such things, and worse, if possible, are happening throughout our land.

Much has been done for our perishing people, much is doing still; and yet, in the remote districts, hundreds are dying: the columns of the local newspapers teem with incidents of horror, the least of which would in a work of fiction be deemed exaggerated. "*Death from starvation*," is now the usual finding at the wholesale coroners' inquests held in some places; for in the worst districts deaths are so numerous, that they excite neither surprise nor inquiry. "Death from starvation!" Let any one try to picture what it is. The darkly glowing pen of Dante has described it; but the horrors of his Ugolino's dungeon fade into nothingness before the every-day tragedies of our Irish cabins.

Hundreds, I have said, are dying; they would be thousands but for the liberality of our English brethren, who thus nobly silence the demagogue's senseless cry, and prove that the Saxon is Erin's best friend. Honour, too, to the Society of Friends! well do they merit their gentle name. Large has been their liberality, great and untiring their personal exertions. Their peaceful, persevering industry, and laudable attachment to business, which have often drawn down the idle sneer of the proud and dissipated, now enable them to succour their fellow-creatures in the hour of need; while even the necessary calls of that business, and the wonted routine of that industry, are readily disregarded when the voice of charity calls them to visit the hungry and naked in their dwellings.

In my own city, I know Quaker shopkeepers, who, at serious loss and inconvenience, leave their homes to visit remote districts, and dispense their society's bounty.

Often may a nicely-brushed brown coat or a spotless dove-coloured dress be seen entering the squalid abodes of wretchedness, where the filth and offensive odours would seem well-fitted to disgust those whose personal habits are the perfection of cleanliness and purity. But the spirit of Elizabeth Fry still survives amongst her gentle sisters, she "being dead, yet speaketh." The heroic benevolence which impelled her to travel like a ministering angel of mercy through the length and breadth of the land, may now be throbbing in the bosom of many a fair Friend, who cheerfully denies herself all worldly luxuries that she may feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

From some of the touching incidents which have

lately come to my knowledge, let me relate the following :—

Near the village of L——, in the south-west, there lived last year a widow named Sullivan, and her children. Her husband had been dead a year. He was a very honest, industrious man, and possessed a small cabin and potato garden, the rent of which he paid in labour, giving his master, "a strong farmer," four days' work in the week, and having the remaining days at his own disposal.—Returning one evening from the fields, he got a severe wetting, which brought on a "smothering of a cold." This, according to the custom of the country, he thought to expel by repeated draughts of strong whiskey punch ; a beverage regarded by the Irish peasants as an unfailing panacea in all inflammatory diseases. Its effect, however, was to convert his illness into a raging fever, which shortly after ended in death.

His widow, feeling the weight of care now thrown on her, laboured hard with her eldest child, a pretty, intelligent girl of twelve, to avert the fate which seemed to threaten them, of entering the dreaded workhouse. So the widow rose early, and lay down late, and nerved by the strong affections of her heart, worked with such energy, that she managed, as she said, "to keep the roof over their heads," and had at least two meals a day of potatoes and salt—seldom, indeed, accompanied by a bowl of thick milk. The two younger children regularly attended school, and the elder boy and girl were always busy ; sometimes assisting their mother in making turf, a small quantity of which she had leave to cut in a neighbouring bog ; sometimes collecting manure on the roads, and bringing it

home to spread on the potato garden. Whilst the eldest girl, who had learned to knit very neatly, made some profit by selling the gloves and socks which she manufactured in the winter evenings.

But this scène of humble peaceful industry was soon interrupted. The long bright days of August, 1846, were darkened through our land by the shadow of approaching famine. The blight which had fallen the preceding year on the potato crop had caused much distress and consternation; but the buoyant hopefulness of the Irish nature prevailed, and a general impression seemed to exist that the potato harvest of 1846 would be abundant. Accordingly the roots were planted in the usual quantity, and in most places they sprang up with luxuriant promise. In the beginning of July, the fields were green and flourishing, and the peasant's eye, as he looked on them, sparkled with joy. Before the end of the month, a mysterious blight fell on them, in some places like a sudden stroke; the stalks drooped, the leaves were blackened, and the tubers ceased to grow. In August scarcely an uninjured plant was to be seen.

"What state, Jack, are your potatoes in?" said a gentleman to a poor man, about the middle of that month.

"Indeed, your honour, they're rotten and black, and there's none of them there. God Almighty help us: for unless He looks down upon us we'll all have to die."

"Indeed, ma'am," said a poor woman to me one day, showing a small heap of waxy potatoes about the size of walnuts, which she had just dug, "you'd be along time looking at them when they're boiled, before you'd bring yourself to ate

now you're down in the dust, Aileen, never
your eyes again to the face that was brighter
than the sun, and more gentle than the moo
on the river. Oh that I could buy back
with my own; but this world and the n
shut up from me in darkness for ever!"

This mental conflict did not last long. T
happy man one day set off for the nearest t
order to surrender himself to justice, and w
the way, was suddenly surprised and seized
officers of police, who were in quest of him
a moment the instinct of self-preservation
to make a show of defence, but all regu
termination to oppose the demands of the l
gone; and the feeling, that whatever sho
fal him, could not be worse than the fea
morse in which he was plunged, caus
speedily to submit to his fate. He was l
the county jail, and in due time brought
He made no defence, confessed his crim
sought no mercy. The fearful sentence
law was passed on him, and he was rema
his cell. During his imprisonment, and
the brief interval that remained until the fa
he was constantly visited by the prison c
and the priest of own parish, a kind good
who had known him from his childhood.
mained apparently unmoved by their pi
monitions, always saying there was no
him either in this world or the next.
morning of his execution, as he was leav
cell, he turned to his old friend, and said
my mother. I forgive her; and may she
Make forgive me!"

These were the last words he uttered.

them." At length even this miserable resource failed; the gardens were exhausted, and the state of the poor became worse daily. As the season advanced, their sufferings from want of food were greatly aggravated by cold and nakedness.

No class of persons suffer more severely than widows and orphans; at all times more helpless than their neighbours, they were now ready to perish, finding themselves without their "provider," as the head of a family is often called in Ireland, to labour for them on the roads. Poor Mrs. Sullivan and her children now often went to bed without having broken their fast all day. One by one their little articles of furniture, and then their clothes, were parted with "to keep the life in them;" and one evening last December, when literally nothing was left in the house save a bundle of straw and a few sods of turf, they crouched round the hearth, foodless and almost naked, to try and warm their shivering limbs by the flame of a small fire. The eldest boy was not among them, but presently he came in holding a small paper in his hand.

"Look, mother," he said, "what I got. I went among all the neighbours to try for a taste of turnip or cabbage for ye all, but no one had anything to give me—they're dying of the hunger as well as ourselves—till at last old Paddy Kelly said he'd share a grain of black pepper with me that he had for himself; and he tould me to mix it in hot water and drink it lying down, and 'twould be a fine thing agen the starvation."

This was accordingly done, and the hot mixture was divided among the family as their sole supper.

"Mother," said the eldest, "I heard some peo-

ple saying to-day that there's fine sea-weed on the shore at Bantry. 'Tis no more than thirty miles off, and wouldn't it be better for us to go there and get some, than to die here; we could bile it and ate it, and it might keep us alive."

The mother sighed deeply. "God help us! 'tis all we have to do," said she. "In His name we'll set off to-morrow morning." They did so, their cabin was completely empty, and their blighted garden useless, so they had nothing to leave behind or to take with them. Slow and tottering were their steps, and often would they have fallen dead on the way, but for the occasional donations of bread and soup which they received at the few gentlemen's houses scattered through the country. The workhouse was no longer open; it held already more than double the number of inmates for which it was designed, and the deaths had daily increased to a frightful number.

At length they reached the sea-shore, and addressed themselves to collecting sea-weed. This, when boiled, becomes a sort of glutinous substance, on which it is possible to sustain life for a time. Oh! if our English brethren could only have seen the famishing eagerness with which they devoured this wretched substitute for food, having obtained leave from a kind cottager to boil it on his fire, they would not wonder at the importunate cries for help which reach their ears from starving Ireland.

We will not follow the miserable family through their wanderings during the bitter season of mid-winter. Before the end of January the two younger children were dead, and their mother, as she dug their graves, had scarcely power to weep.

"Ye're happy now, darlins," she said, "though the father that's before ye in heaven will hardly know the pale faces that looked so bright when he took the last look at ye."

"Mother," said Mary, "who knows but the angels will put their own beauty upon them while they're on the road with them to where father is. I don't think the little children's faces ever look pale in heaven."

In a day or two afterwards the mother was struck with fever, and the same disease began to gleam in the hollow eyes of her remaining children. They were travelling along a lonesome road, and just when their failing limbs refused to carry them further, they espied near them a half-ruined empty cabin. They crawled into it, and lay down together on the wet mud floor. There they remained in a burning fever, without strength to rise, or procure even a draught of water. After three days, the benevolent clergyman of the parish, whose purse, time, and energies were devoted to the task of rescuing from death the perishing population around him, was passing by. No sound proceeded from the cabin, yet he entered it, and what a spectacle met his eye! The mother and daughter lay dead on the ground, and a colony of rats had commenced their loathsome banquet on the flesh of both. The boy was yet alive, but in a state of stupor, and already the horrid animals were preparing to prey on him also; the clergyman drove them away, and raising the boy's head, poured some drops of cordial down his throat. He revived, and his kind visitor, regardless of personal risk, bore him from the pestilential hole where he lay. With some difficulty he induced a neighbouring

farmer to afford him shelter, and send a man to bury the dead. Mr. —— took care to supply him with nourishment, and the boy is now recovering; but heart-rending were his tears and lamentations when he found himself alone in the world—all who had loved him gone!

This is but a feeble outline of scenes which are now daily passing. "The mirth of the land is gone;" and even the proverbial kindness of the peasantry begins to fail. When some of the inhabitants of a crowded district were asked lately, why they had suffered several fellow-creatures to perish among them without making any effort for their relief, "Sure," they replied, turning their despairing eyes towards the speaker, "it will be our own turn next." May God in His Infinite mercy withdraw the chastisement which threatens thus to swallow up our miserable country!

THE YOUNG PAINTER.

In a carpenter's workshop adjoining a small house situated in a suburb of the city of Cork, a lad of fourteen was standing one day about sixty years ago. He was tall for his age, and slightly made, with handsome features and bright quick-glancing eyes, that seemed to turn in scorn from the instruments of homely industry that surrounded him, and to fix with a gaze of longing love on the waving branches of a fine old elm-tree, that chequered with their greenness the laughing blue of a summer sky. He stood lost in contemplation, till his reverie was broken by a rough voice behind him.

"What, Nat! idling as usual, and staring out of the window instead of finishing the table for Mr. Wilson. You know it must go home to-morrow, and it is not half made."

The boy sighed deeply, and without replying, took up a piece of wood and a chisel which were lying upon the ground, and walked slowly towards the working bench. The person who addressed him was his father, an honest, hard-working mechanic, who, after watching for a while his son's listless resumption of his task, sighed in his turn,

and said—"Well, Nat, if you don't wear out many tools by hard work, at least you don't spare the chalk. I'm afraid all the furniture you have made, or ever will make, won't pay me for all the lumps of it you use in scrawling on the walls and timber. You're now no longer a child: and tell me, in the name of common sense, how do you ever expect to earn a livelihood by wasting your time in such folly?" The boy cast a mournful glance round the walls of the workshop, which were flourished over with designs of figures and landscapes. Though drawn with common chalk on the stained plaster, they displayed a freedom of touch and beauty of expression quite marvellous for an artist so young and so untaught. Every picturesque form of inanimate nature or grotesque living figure that met the eye of Nathaniel Grogan, was immediately treasured in his mind, and his hand proceeded to trace it visibly with the sole rude materials within his reach, impelled by an impulse of genius as irresistible as that which filled the birks and braes of Scotland with the untutored and undying melodies of Burns. The youth we speak of is still remembered in his native land as an artist of no common order. Many exquisite engravings and original paintings remain to attest his skill. Had he lived under more favourable circumstances, he might have achieved a European reputation; as it is, we are still proud to class him among the gifted artists whom our city has produced. Some passages in his life deserve to be noticed, and with these we will proceed.

The boy loved his parents, and yet he was thoroughly unhappy: he felt wild longings and

aspirations that carried his thoughts far beyond his father's workshop, even while he was chained to unsuitable labour. He was wont to despatch his daily task as speedily as possible, and then, with a few rude materials which he possessed, pursue his darling studies. One fine summer evening he was sent by his father on an errand, which led him for some distance along the river banks. The varied loveliness of the scene filled the boy's ardent mind with rapture, while the peaceful calm of sunset tended to soothe the repining emotions which were ever ready to arise when he thought of his humble lot. He had long contemplated leaving home, and pushing his fortune in a foreign land: the thought recurred now as he watched his own bright Lee gliding on towards the ocean. But how could he leave his parents?—how tell them that he must forsake the humble occupation to which they had destined him? An opportunity offered sooner than he had expected. An American vessel was in the harbour, and the captain, who was ready to sail for New York, wanted some additional hands. He happened this evening to be taking a stroll by the river side, and remarked young Grogan gazing wistfully on the waters.

"Holloa! youngster," cried he; "would you like to take a trip across the Atlantic this fine weather?"

The youth started, and looked up. We do not know what reply he made, but it certainly was not in the negative, for before two days had passed, Nathaniel Grogan was shipped on board the Ajax; and his weeping parents, after giving him their parting embrace and blessing, watched with

anguish the swelling sails that bore away their only boy.

Ten years passed on, and the Grogans heard nothing of their absent son; they believed him to be dead, and mourned for him as only parents can mourn; but woes of another kind came on them. The father, one day, in cleaving a piece of timber, cut his hand severely; he did not at first attend to it properly, and the pain and inflammation in a few days became so great, that a fever ensued, and his life was in danger. After a long illness, he began slowly to recover, but continued for some time unable to work. All his savings were expended, and he found himself and his wife reduced to the utmost poverty. Sometimes the poor invalid, when eating his scanty meal of potatoes, so ill-suited to restore his wasted strength, would say, with tears in his eyes, "Ah, if our poor Nat could only have contented himself at home, what a help and comfort he might be to us now!" Then his wife would turn her weeping eyes towards a landscape hanging on the wall, which her son had placed there the day before he sailed, and say, "God is good, James; let us try and be resigned to His holy will."

One day when Grogan was nearly recovered, he was sent for by a rich and benevolent gentleman residing in the neighbourhood to execute some trifling jobs in his house. The carpenter's clothes were so old and worn, that he felt almost ashamed to present himself at the door of a handsome dwelling. His employer, however, received him most kindly, and ordered refreshments for him before he proceeded to work. After the poor man

had partaken of a hearty repast, Mr. —— called him, and said, "I want to bespeak some deal tables and chairs from you, Grogan; but first come into the drawing-room—one of the window frames is strained, and I want to have it settled." The carpenter of course obeyed, and taking off his shoes at the threshold, entered a more splendid apartment than he had ever seen before.

"Wait there for a moment," said Mr. ——; "I will come directly, and show you what to do."

Left alone in the drawing-room, Grogan had leisure to look about him. At first he felt bewildered by the splendour of the furniture and richness of the hangings that surrounded him. He also remarked several paintings; but one in particular arrested his attention. It was placed leaning against the wall in an excellent light, and the old man started when he gazed at it. There he saw his own likeness standing in his workshop, everything in it drawn with the utmost fidelity, as it appeared on the well-remembered evening when he bade his son farewell. The figure of the boy appeared in the foreground, but his face was not seen; for it rested on his mother's shoulder, in whose arms he was locked, and whose meek countenance of woe was portrayed with matchless fidelity. With clasped hands and parted lips the old man gazed; he did not speak or stir till Mr. ——, who had entered the room unperceived, touched his arm and said, "Does that picture, Grogan, remind you of any one?"

"Oh, sir, my boy—my boy!" It was all he could say. His chest heaved, and tears, such as poverty and sickness failed to draw, streamed down his cheeks. A side-door opened and a man

rushed in. Who would have recognized the slight pale-faced stripling in that tall handsome figure? But the father knew the soft-toned voice that now, with touching gentleness, besought his pardon; and the father felt the quick bright glance of that eye meeting his, whose beams he had mourned as for ever quenched. It was indeed his long-lost son, returned to comfort him and his wife in their old age.

Since we lost sight of Nathaniel Grogan he had passed through many vicissitudes. He had experienced in the new world all the varied chances of a wandering life, and suffered many and bitter privations, so that often, in utter weariness of spirit and hopelessness of heart, he felt almost ready to lie down and die. How did he mourn over the wayward temperament which led him to forsake his parents and his country: yet he shrank from returning to them a penniless outcast. He vowed to himself that he would achieve honour and competence ere he again trod the green fields of Erin. That vow, through his own persevering endeavours, and the disinterested kindness of some rich countrymen whom he met in America, he was enabled to keep. Having realised some money by the sale of pictures in the United States, he came over to his native city, recommended to the kind and powerful patronage of Mr ——. During the voyage, the vessel was for some time becalmed, and Grogan occupied the tedious hours in committing to canvass that parting scene, which the lapse of years had failed to efface from his memory. Like the patriarch of old, his heart was bursting with the question, "Doth my father yet live?" and, like him, when the sight of that father once more

gladdened his eyes, "he fell upon his neck and kissed him;" and then "he nourished his father and his father's house with bread."

The subsequent career of Nathaniel Grogan was respectable and tolerably prosperous. He taught drawing with success for many years in his native city, where, however, his talent failed to be appreciated as fully as it deserved. Some of his paintings still adorn the collections of the gentry in the south of Ireland.

DANIEL LEARY.

In the year 1840, there lived in a remote mountain district of the south-west of Ireland, a poor labourer, named John Leary. He earned a livelihood by working four days in the week for a "strong farmer," who, in return, gave him a cabin, a potato garden, and grass for a few sheep. He managed to fatten a pig, which he generally sold to good advantage, and his wife reared fowls which furnished her with eggs and chickens for market. She also had a little spot of ground under flax, and the sheep supplied them with wool; so that by continual industry, or as Kitty Leary expressed it, "by never letting the grass grow under her feet," they managed to live in, what an Irish peasant considers, great comfort, hough an Englishman would hardly apply the term to a condition in which they never tasted bread or meat, except perhaps a loaf and a bit of bacon at Christmas and Easter. Five of their six children, however, though reared on potatoes and salt, with an occasional "piggin," or wooden bowl of thick milk, were as rosy and healthy as if fed on roast beef and wheaten bread; while their red sturdy feet, guiltless of shoe or stock-

ing, paddled merrily, not exactly "in the burn," but through the somewhat less pure and poetical green pool before the door, disputing its possession with a flourishing colony of ducks and goslings. The eldest son, however, seldom joined in the boisterous sports of the others. He was about fourteen years old when our tale commences, and from infancy had possessed a slight delicate frame, and a mind endued with sensitive feeling and quick perception far beyond his years and station. There was a hedge-school near his father's cabin which he had attended for some years; the National School for the district was distant several miles, too far for a delicate boy like Daniel to walk twice a day, so he was fain to content himself with the teaching of Mister Dionysius O'Hegarty, Philomath, whose high-sounding professions touching the amount of intellectual culture bestowed on his pupils, certainly far exceeded the performance. It was very amusing to visit his seminary, and listen to "brave pyet words" with which he managed, often successfully, to mask his own and his scholars' palpable ignorance. Indeed the Irish country schoolmasters, now fast disappearing from the land, formed a class to themselves; sometimes possessing considerable classical and mathematical attainments, sometimes being destitute of even elementary knowledge; but in all cases furnished with a learned string of pedantic polysyllables, perfect jaw-breakers, which were sure to descend in a gentle fertilizing stream on the ears of an humbly admiring auditor, but to pour with the fury of an Alpine torrent on the devoted head of any visitor disposed to cavil or to criticise.

What Mr. O'Hegarty's learning wanted in pro-

fundity, was abundantly made up by its extent of superficies, and amusing scenes used occasionally to take place when any stranger visited his seminary. Daniel Leary was invariably his show pupil: indeed, so great was the boy's thirst for knowledge, and anxiety to avail himself of every opportunity of adding to his stock, that his attainments might fairly be pronounced extraordinary.

One fine morning, towards the end of August, 1840, an English gentleman, taking a pedestrian tour through Ireland, happened to find himself in the vicinity of Mr. O'Hegarty's school. He was fond of botany, and was then busily engaged in searching for some rare plants which he had heard were to be found in the district. Daniel Leary was passing, on his way to school, just as Mr. Forrest had plucked a bit of moss, and was inspecting it through a powerful microscope. The boy stopped involuntarily and fixed his eyes on the gentleman. When the latter looked up he met Daniel's earnest gaze.

"Well, my little fellow," said he, smiling kindly, "did you ever look through a microscope?

"No, plase your honour, but I read about one."

"In what book?"

"I don't rightly know the name of it, for 'twas all torn with the string being caught in the big elm tree at Casey's; but I read all about the powers of the concave and convex lenses, and how you'd see a hair of your head thicker than your body."

"But what do you mean by saying that the book was torn in an elm tree?"

"Not at all, your honour, but the kite was, and the tail and all, before I got it. Jemmy Casey's

mother keeps a huckster's shop, and she brought home the soap, and candles, and tobacco, wrapt up in the leaves of a book: she gave some of them to Jemmy to make a kite, and when he was flying it, it caught in the elm tree, and 'twas all tattered to bits before we could get it down. He was going to throw it away, but I noticed printed words on the bits that were twisted for the tail, and I axed him for them. 'Take the whole of it, Dan, and welcome,' says he; so by opening them and putting them together, I made out a good dale about the microscope, and I think I understand how 'tis made."

"Then you are fond of books," said Mr. Forrest.

"Sir," answered Daniel, "'tis little mate and drink I'd ax, if I had enough of them; but 'tis seldom with us here to see a book."

His mingled simplicity and intelligence pleased Mr. Forrest, and after indulging him with a prolonged view of the microscope, the kind Englishman sent him on to school, promising to visit him there in the course of the day. Accordingly, about one o'clock, Mr. Forrest found himself in front of the temple of learning which owned Mr. O'Hegarty's sway. It was a low thatched cabin, from whose smoky recess issued a deep monotonous hum, occasionally interrupted by the sharp scream of some luckless wight undergoing the merciless discipline which, in such seminaries, and in some, too, of a higher character, has often made a smarting urchin wonder whether the birch could possibly be figured as the tree of knowledge; and if so, whether its metaphorical fruit can be much more pleasant to the taste, than is to the touch its tangible tingling branch.

"Good morning, sir," said Mr. Forrest, stooping to enter the door, as much to protect his head from injury, as in deference to the *genius loci*, "I have taken the liberty to visit your school, as I feel an interest in the cause of education."

Mr. O'Hegarty rose and made a profound bow, taking occasion with the backward scrape of his left foot to bestow an admonitory kick on the bare mottled shins of a restless urchin behind him. "Sir," he said, "you are welcome, in our national and vernacular phrase, I would add, a hundred thousand times welcome. My school is open to every gentleman of literary acquirements to inspect. Look for yourself, and examine the profundity of my research—test the radiance of my abilities. To be sure, the dazzling lights which have caught the fire of erudition from me have been scatttered upon the terrestrial hemisphere. This is the time when the worship of Ceres calls them to the harvest field, and, with a few exceptions the dog stars alone remain. The mackerel and butterflies are sent away, and all I have left are the sprats and grasshoppers. Not a good fish or soaring creature (save one named Daniel Leary) remains in my academy. Oh! if you had been here three months ago, instead of an individual who came calling himself a visiting inspector of education. Respect for his office made me endure him, but he had no soul for the delectable. I drew up my boys—they were then Solons in intellect. I threw them into the geography of the world—I thrashed them through the rivers, the seas, the counties, the metropolises, the towns, the great oceans, the burning mountains, the torrids and the frigids. He looked amazed—he lost utterance—

he was astounded. When he recovered, he said he did not like so much mental information—such profound learning. His theme was all literature, and yet he declared my adopted system of education not orthodox!"

Mr. Forrest was rather, as a sailor would say, "taken aback" by this burst of high-flown eloquence, which the smoky den where it was uttered, and the scarecrow costume of both master and pupils, rendered yet more ridiculous. He managed, however, to ask a few common-place questions touching the routine of instruction, and was at length permitted by the Philomath to examine his head class. This, in its present diminished state, consisted of Daniel and three other boys, who were vastly his inferiors in arithmetical knowledge, the only branch in which Mr. Forrest examined them. Their mode of working out answers to the questions proposed was odd and roundabout, yet the results were usually correct; and Daniel appeared to enter into the rationale of the process in a manner that delighted his examiner. Mr. Forrest then took a courteous leave of the school-master, and distributed a few presents among the boys, who in return honoured his exit with three deafening cheers, and shouts of "Long may you reign!" He afterwards proceeded towards the house of the rector of the parish, beneath whose hospitable roof he had promised to spend a few days. He walked leisurely, often stopping on the way to botanize, and sketch the bold outlines of the surrounding mountains.

Mr. Forrest was a rich and benevolent man, residing on his property in one of the midland counties of England. His time was agreeably and

usefully spent in the pursuit of literature and science, and in the yet more noble occupation of benefiting the minds and bodies of his poor neighbours. He usually made an excursion during the summer; and this year he was induced to visit Ireland. Before leaving home, he had been looking out for a trustworthy young man whom he might treat more as a friend than a servant, and employ as his clerk and almoner. After his visit to Mr. O'Hegarty, it occurred to him that Daniel Leary, notwithstanding his Irish accent, extreme youth, and low birth, would be likely to answer his purpose; provided the boy's moral character should bear investigation. In the evening he broached the subject to his friend the rector, whose report of Daniel was most satisfactory; and Mr. Forrest retired to rest, purposing to visit John Leary's cabin on the morrow. The next day, just as breakfast was ended at the Glebe, the servant came in to say that a boy at the door wanted Mr. Forrest: he went out, and found Daniel with doffed cap waiting for him.

"Well, my good boy, what do you want?"

"Plase your honour, as I was going home from school yesterday, I took a short cut through the field where that white heath was growing, that you showed me a bit of through the microscope, and down I stooped to look at it again, thinking of all the beauty that was in it, and trying to find out why 'twas put there, where our eyes can't see it; and just then I saw glittering on the ground this thing, that I remarked in your honour's hand." So saying, he produced a gold pencil case, which Mr. Forrest had dropped, but had not missed till then.

"Thank you, my boy," said he. "I should have been sorry to lose this: and now, tell me what reward shall I give you for finding it?"

Daniel's cheek reddened. "Nothing at all, your honour—indeed, I wasn't looking for a reward when I brought it."

Mr. Forrest paused for a few moments. "Tell me, Daniel, would you like to go with me to England, and learn there how to become a useful and intelligent man?"

"Ah, then, sir, 'tis I that would, only for the one thing."

"And what is that?"

"My heart would be lonely away from them at home; and many a tear my mother would cry to have the salt sea rolling between herself and me."

"But if your parents consent, have you any objection yourself to what will be so much for your benefit?"

"Sir," said Daniel, earnestly, "I have not. 'Twas always the wish of my heart to get knowledge, and to rise in the world. May be 'twas wrong and foolish, but in spite of me the thought would come, that as God made my body weaker than my brothers', He might give power to my mind to make up for it; and sure, 'tis thankful I ought to be to you for thinking of me."

"Well, Daniel," said Mr. Forrest, "I will walk with you to your home, and try what your parents will say to my proposal."

They set off together, and a pleasant walk of three miles brought them to John Leary's cabin. At the door they found Kitty seated at her spinning-wheel, surrounded by her rosy, laughing, dirty children, two of whom were amusing them-

selves by trying to ride on the pig, an attempt which that animal, who seemed fully impressed with a sense of his own dignity, contrived to render fruitless, by bearing his young riders into the deepest and most odoriferous portion of his territorial puddle, and there quietly depositing them on their backs; thus making their essay in pigmanship, if a safe, by no means an elegant exploit.

"Good morning, Mrs. Leary," said her visitor. "I have called to speak a few words about your son Daniel."

"God save you kindly, sir—won't you sit down inside?"

The fresh open air, however, appeared so much preferable to the smoky atmosphere of the cabin, that Mr. Forrest declined going in, and seated himself outside the door, on a chair, which Kitty first wiped with her apron. He then entered on the object of his visit, which he stated in a few words; and having asked Mrs. Leary whether she and her husband would consent to Daniel's going to England, waited quietly for her reply. The poor woman for a time was silent, and when at length she spoke, her voice trembled, and her eyes filled with tears.

"May God bless you, sir, for your kindness; and sure 'twould be a fine thing for my boy to get his 'nough of the larning that he thinks more of than his mate and drink. So, if the father consints, I won't say agin it, though 'twill pull sore at my heart to part from the first one that ever I pressed to it, and to sit lonely without the sound of the voice that first called me mother. Oh, *ma boughal dhas!*" she continued, clasping

Daniel in her arms. "Sure, you won't forget your own, when you're in the land of the stranger."

The boy was greatly affected as he returned his mother's embrace, and said in a trembling voice—"Mother, mother, sure your own Daniel will never love you if there's a thought in your heart rising against it."

Just then his father came in; but it would lengthen our narrative too much to detail the conversation that ensued. It ended, however, in Daniel, with his parents' full approbation, promising to accompany his kind patron. It was arranged they were to leave the next week for the town of C—, and thence set out for England. Poor Daniel's heart felt heavy, as standing on the deck of the steamer, he gave a last look at the green shores of his country, and thought how much might happen ere he could hope again to see the "faces that looked on his childhood." But the spirits of youth are elastic and hopeful, and the many strange sights around soon attracted his attention, and caused him to forget his grief. The first grand view of the open ocean filled him with astonishment; and Mr. Forrest was much amused at his spell-bound appearance, as he stood gazing over the bow. Soon, however, the physical evil of sea-sickness put romance and regret equally out of his head; and the vessel had reached the English shore, ere he was able again to come on deck.

When they landed at Bristol, Daniel expressed his surprise at seeing the country and the people so little different from home and its inhabitants; though, as he remarked—"Sure enough, they must be rolling in money, or they couldn't all put

shoes on their feet, and hats and bonnets on their heads." During their journey to Mr. Forrest's residence, that gentleman was frequently amused at the simple yet acute remarks of the untutored Irish boy, whose national prejudices were sometimes sorely shocked at the necessity of complying with English customs. He and his master stopped one day to dine at the hotel at Reading, and Daniel was comfortably seated in the neat kitchen, when a pretty, tidy servant-maid placed before him a smoking plate of beef and greens, flanked by a dish of potatoes and a glass of ale. The first named viands poor Daniel knew little of from personal experience, yet there was something so grateful to his olfactory nerves in the savoury steam ascending from them, that without delay he applied himself to their demolition; but the accompanying esculents remained an untasted puzzle.

"Are them things white turnips:" he asked, at length, pointing to the skin-denuded potatoes.

"Bless your heart, boy, no," replied the cook—"they be 'tatoes."

"What?" asked Daniel.

"'Tatoes," repeated she — "I thought you Hirish were main fond o' them."

"Why, then, if they're praties, what happened their skins?"

"Of course they were peeled before being boiled," rejoined the lady of the spit. "We have no dirty Hirish ways here, Paddy."

"True for you, ma'am," replied the boy. "I suppose 'tis a dirty *English* way to spake uncivil of the finest country that the sun shines on, where they'd scorn to call a stranger out of his name, or to strip them darlings of their coats before they'd

feel the boiling water. I don't think you can know what a praty is, or you wouldn't trate it that way."

The bystanders laughed heartily at Daniel's speech, and one of them said, in a good-humoured tone—"I'd advise you, boy, not to waste time, but eat your dinner as it is, or else the coach will start without you." Daniel did so; but he had travelled for some miles before his indignation at the treatment bestowed on his national food found time to subside.

Time passed on, and under the kind care of Mr. Forrest, Daniel's improvement became manifest and rapid. Already he was able in many ways to make himself useful to his master, and he felt happy in thus proving the gratitude of his warm Irish heart. Yet he did not forget "his own country and his father's house." How used his cheek flush, and his eye brighten with joy, when a soiled ill-folded letter was put into his hand, which, badly spelled, and redolent of turf smoke as it was, yet breathed of home—of a father's love and a mother's tenderness. His replies were constant and affectionate, often accompanied by presents which his master's liberality and his own personal economy enabled him to send. We will transcribe one written three years after his arrival in England:

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER—Your last letter gave me more pleasure than I can express, for it told that you were all well, and the young ones coming on at their learning. I am as well and happy as you could wish me to be, except for the one thing—that I am far away from you all; and

strangers, however good and kind they may be, can never feel like one's own. I long for a sight of you and of Ireland's own green fields, just as a man in a fever longs for a drink of cold spring water. Some time or other I hope we shall meet again, as my master often speaks of crossing the channel, and then I am sure he will allow me to go and see you. I hope you got the last letter I sent you safe, and that you never cease to pray for and to love

Your ever affectionate son,

DANIEL LEARY.

The visit to Ireland, so fondly anticipated by Daniel, was not destined to take place for three years longer. Mr. Forrest's health became impaired, and his physicians ordered him to travel on the continent. He went, accompanied by his faithful servant, for whom he had by this time conceived an ardent attachment. Together they visited the principal cities of southern Europe; and greatly would Daniel have enjoyed the tour, but for the difficulty and uncertainty of hearing from his Irish home. Towards the end of 1846, they returned to England, and Mr. Forrest's health was so much restored, that when he found some business connected with the affairs of a recently deceased friend would make a visit to Ireland necessary, he did not hesitate to set out in winter for that country, accompanied by the joyful, yet anxious Daniel. He, poor fellow, found no letter awaiting his return. It was now ten months since he had heard any tidings of his family, and his solicitude about them became intense. His master

was going to the house of a friend who resided about eighty miles from Daniel's native village; and immediately on their arrival, Mr. Forrest gave him leave of absence to visit his parents.

We will now look back a little, and trace the events that had occurred during his six years absence. Until the autumn of 1846, John Leary and his family had pursued their course of quiet, peaceful industry without variation. Their cabin was small and smoky, their clothing scanty, their food coarse and unvaried; but they were no worse off than their neighbours, or than their fathers had been before them, so they lived in happy contentment. Besides, they indulged a pardonable pride in displaying the presents and affectionate letters sent them by "the darlin' boy beyant the say, that all the finery and grandeur in the three kingdoms couldn't make forget his own."

But the fearful potatoe blight came and desolated our unhappy land. John and his family struggled like their neighbours—sometimes being able to procure food, often going to rest fasting—till at length fever came, and carried off two of the children. At the same time their miserable resources utterly failed: John, indeed, had work at the nominal wages of eightpence per day; but this pittance, which at the enormous price of food would scarcely support *one* individual, was not even paid regularly to the family depending on it. John saw his wife fainting before his eyes; his three surviving children perishing from hunger; and almost in despair he said to them one morning —"In the name of God, let us go travel: we can't be worse off than we are; and who knows but we may get relief from some kind Christians?"

Poor Kitty sighed bitterly. "Let us go, avourneen," she said: "who knows but God will be good to us, and our poor little hungry crathurs. Oh! if our own Daniel could see us now, we wouldn't be this way! But he's far off, where our cry can't reach him."

We will not follow the weak and wayworn travellers through their toilsome pilgrimage of famine. The sufferings they endured were those which thousands of our poor sustained, and are still undergoing. We will rather return to Daniel, as with an agitated heart he approached his father's cabin one cold day in January. The first glance showed him that it was shut up and empty. The thatch had already begun to fall in, and the garden was desolate. The young man gave the door a slight push; the rusty fastenings gave way, and he entered. No trace of those he sought was there: nothing remained but a little damp straw scattered on the clay floor. Daniel felt his head grow giddy; and staggering into the open air, he leaned for awhile against the wall. At length he roused himself, and addressed an old woman who was passing by, carrying a small portion of meal tied up in her apron. He recollected her as being the wife of a neighbour; but the six years which had matured the delicate boy into a stout young man, seemed to have weighed heavily on her head.

"Can you tell me," he asked, "where my—where John Leary and his family are gone?"

"Wisha, they're gone, like many another to travel through the desolate country. They buried a boy and a girl; and themselves and the rest were dropping with hunger when they went away."

A deep groan burst from Daniel's lips. "Oh, my father and my mother! will I never see you again!"

The woman looked at him earnestly. "Why then," said she, "sure you that I took for a grand gentleman can't be Daniel Leary that left this six years ago?"

"Yes, Molly, I am indeed. But tell me, where will I get any trace of my parents?"

She could not tell, she said; and the same unsatisfactory reply was all the anxious son could obtain after diligent inquiry throughout the neighbourhood. A sort of dull apathy seemed to possess the people: those who recognised him were too much absorbed in their own wants and sorrows to care greatly for the woes of others; and at length, almost heartbroken, he set out to retrace his steps, intending to ask Mr. Forrest's advice as to how he might best succeeed in discovering his parents. Towards the close of the second day he found himself within three miles of the handsome mansion where his master was staying. He had travelled part of the way on a coach, but had walked for the last hour. The brief daylight of January was fading away, when passing quickly by a ruined shed, he was arrested by a sound of low moaning proceeding from it. The youth turned and looked in. There, extended on a bed of straw, lay three children and a woman—hollow-eyed, fever-stricken skeletons; while a man, whose appearance was equally wretched, tried to wet their lips with some water contained in a broken bottle.

Daniel looked earnestly at the miserable group: a sort of giddy vision passed before his eyes.

"Are you," he gasped, "are you John Leary?" "I am," said the man; "and whoever you are, for the love of the God that made us all, give me something for them dying crathurs! Nothing but a sup of cold water has passed the lips of any of us for two days."

Regardless of infection, Daniel flung himself on his mother's breast. What he said he knew not, nor will I attempt to describe the scene that followed. Suffice it to say, that effectual help was speedily procured, and the family removed to a comfortable outhouse on the estate of Mr. Forrest's friend; where, by good care and nourishment, they all recovered. Daniel's kind master has taken the whole family with him to England, and established them in a cottage on his estate, where they are provided with constant employment, and can see almost daily the good and dutiful son, who was made under Providence the means of saving their lives.

FINIS.

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