Phelim Otoole's Courtship and Other Stories eBook

Phelim Otoole's Courtship and Other Stories by William Carleton

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PHELIM O'TOOLE'S COURTSHIP.

Phelim O'Toole, who had the honor of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the Sassenah at the point of his reaping-hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of "spalpeens," in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country, with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarah, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labor as a cotter. On this he resided until death, after which event he was succeeded by his son, Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married near seven years without the happiness of a family. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melancholy from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning, a miserable stillness prevailed around them; young voices were not heard—laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other—half, or wholly naked among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no; there was none of this.

Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne: noon arrived, but the dismal dreary sense of childlessness hung upon the house and their hearts; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years, they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burthen of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, "to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, "and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided they had a son to inherit the "half acre." This was the burthen of his wishes, for in all their altercations, his closing observation usually was—"well, but what's to become of the half acre?"

“What’s to become of the half acre? Arrah what do I care for the half acre? It’s not that you ought to be thinkin’ of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a *single pastiah* (* child) in it from year’s end to year’s end.”

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“Well, Sheelah?—”

“Well, yourself, Larry? To the diouol I pitch your half acre, man.”

“To the diouol you—pitch—What do you fly at me for?”

“Who’s flyin’ at you? They’d have little tow on their rock that ’ud fly at you.”

“You are flyin’ at me; an’ only you have a hard face, you wouldn’t do it.”

“A hard face! Indeed it’s well come over wid us, to be tould that by the likes o’ you! ha!”

“No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an’ a civil one, in the mane time. Why did the divil timpt you to take a fancy to me at all?”

“That’s it. Throw the *grah* an’ love I *once* had for you in my teeth, now. It’s a manly thing for you to do, an’ you may be proud, of it. Dear knows, it would be betther for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours.”

“I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn’t be as I am to-day. There’s that half acre—”

“To the diouol, I say, I pitch yourself an’ your half acre! Why do you be comin’ acrass me wid your half acre? Eh?—why do you?”

“Come now; don’t be puttin’ your hands agin your sides, an waggin’ your impty head at me, like a rockin’ stone.”

“An’ why do you be aggravatin’ at me wid your half acre?”

“Bekase I have a good right to do it. What’ll become of it when I d—”

“——That for you an’ it, you poor excuse!”

“When I di—”

“——That for you an’ it, I say! That for you an’ it, you atomy!”

“What’ll become of my half acre when I die? Did you hear that?”

“You ought to think of what’ll become of yourself, when you die; that’s what you ought to think of; but little it throubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure the neighbors despises you.”

“That’s falsity; but they know the life I lade wid you. The edge of your tongue’s well known. They pity me, for bein’ joined to the likes of you. Your bad tongue’s all you’re good for.”

“Aren’t you afeard to be flyin’ in the face o’ Providence the way you are? An’ to be ladin’ me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?”

“It’s your own story you’re tellin’. Sure I haven’t a day’s pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an’ if I’m spared, I’ll go to England. Whin I do, I’ve a consate in my head, that you’ll never see my face agin.”

“Oh, you know that’s an’ ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore. Who knows but you’d be dhrowned on your way, an’ thin we’d get another husband.”

“An’ be these blessed tongs, I’ll do it afore I’m much oulder!”

“An’ lave me here to starve an’ sthruggle by myself! Desart me like a villain, to poverty an’ hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I’m the ill-thrated, an’ ill-used poor crathur, by a man that I don’t, an’ never did, desarve it from! An’ all in regard that that ‘half acre’ must go to strangers! Och! oh!”

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“Ay! now take to the cryin’, do; rock yourself over the ashes, an’ wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but, I say agin, *what’s to become of the half acre?*”

“Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That’s the worst I say to you, you poor half-dead blaguard!”

“Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?”

“Go. an—go an. I won’t make you an answer, you atomy! That’s what I’ll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an’ heart burnin’, sweet Queen o’ Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin’ to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blaguard!”

“You’re betther than you desarve to be!”

To this, Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical; indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by viva voce argument; for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer: but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute, whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with—

“Here, take a blast o’ this, maybe it’ll settle you.”

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared, as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself, drew his breath in a grave composed manner, laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah’s mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was not right, than as direct assertions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was “as good a husband as ever broke the world’s bread;” and Sheelah “was as good a poor man’s wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders.” Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind; their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had,

was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes, most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober, he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbors, with reference to the state of his own domestic inquietude, and their want of children.

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One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland, when any person of that description appears during meal times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the boccagh—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb, than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be concluded. In the mean time, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the simple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

“Well good people,” said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, “don’t be cast down, sure, whether or not. There’s a Holy Well that I can direct yez to in the county—. Any one, wid trust in the Saint that’s over it, who’ll make a pilgrimage to it on the Patthern day, won’t be the worse for it. When you go there,” he added, “jist turn to a Lucky Stone that’s at the side of the well, say a Rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you’re to go round the well nine times, upon your bare knees, sayin’ your Pathers and Avers all the time. When that’s over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin’ by way of an offerin’, thin go into a tent an’ refresh yourselves, an’ for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an’ trust to the holy saint for the rest.”

A gleam of newly awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt that natural yearning of the, heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the Patron Saint; and when it arrived, none certainly who attended it, felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called Pattern or Patron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a Pilgrimage, or more commonly a Station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest, as an act of penance; and sometimes undertaken voluntarily, as a devotional, work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or five thousand people.

These Stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain top; or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of probably a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these gray, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of bygone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land. It is for this reason, probably, that patrons are countenanced; for if there be not a political object in keeping

them up, it is beyond human ingenuity to conceive how either religion or morals can be improved by debauchery, drunkenness, and bloodshed.

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Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bottom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the “Holy Well,” out of which issued a slender stream, that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which grew out of the crag-cliffs around it, might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original color, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property; poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river’s bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance, which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a Patron.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men and their wives who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the boccagh, together with every other description of impostors, remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the boreens, or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to this great scene of fun and religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished from the country folks by their Pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes; for the Stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet: most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention, or cure, of the diseases incident to them. This is not to be wondered at, when it is known that in their religion every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf. When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whiskey and refreshments might be had in abundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper; many two of them. From the top of the pole that ran up from the roof of each tent, was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf; there a shillelah; in a third place a shoe, in a fourth place a whisp of hay, in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

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The tents stood at a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far as to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbors' shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think—-could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs."

"My blessin' an you, young man, an' don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sherry orth a rogarah ruah!** what do you mane? Is it my back you're brakin'?"

* Eternal perdition on you, you red rogue.

"Hell pershue you, you ould sinner, can't you keep the spike of your crutch out o' my stomach! If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as that!"

"I'm a pilgrim, an' don't brake my leg upon the rock, an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher sheery! my poor child'll be smothered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're trampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll soon be undhermost!"

"'Och, 'twas on a Christmas mornin'
That Jeroosillim was born in
The Holy Land'——'

"Oh, my neck's broke!—the curse——Oh! I'm kilt fairly, so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away—

'The Holy Land adornin'
All by the Baltic Say.
The angels on a Station,
Wor takin' raycrayation,
All in deep meditation,
All by the'——

contints o' the book if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go on wid my *rann* it'll be worse force for you!—

'Wor takin' raycraytion,
All by the Baltic Say!"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' Patriots pray for us!—St. Abraham——go to the divil, you bosthoon; is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham pray for us! St. Isinglass, pray for us! St. Jonathan,——musha, I wisht you wor in America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a gad f— St. Jonathan, pray for us; Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day. Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Chrystyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of Timptation an' Solitude, through the improvement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbdyl! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in remimbrance of us having made this holy Station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

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Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed, on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity, there were visible, however, many instances of piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively: though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as Were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part' of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought home for the benefit of such members of the family as could not attend in person.

Whilst all this went forward at the well, scenes of a different kind were enacted lower down among the tents. No sooner had the penitents got the difficult rites of the Station over, than they were off to the whiskey; and decidedly, after the grinding of their bare knees upon the hard rock—after the pushing, crushing, and exhaustion of bodily strength which they had been forced to undergo—we say, that the comforts and refreshments to be had in the tents were very seasonable. Here the dancing, shouting, singing, courting, drinking, and fighting, formed one wild uproar of noise, that was perfectly astounding. The leading boys and the prettiest girls of the parish were all present, partaking in the rustic revelry. Tipsy men were staggering in every direction; fiddles were playing, pipes were squeaking, men were rushing in detached bodies to some fight, women were doctoring the heads of such as had been beaten, and factions were collecting their friends for a fresh battle. Here you might see a grove of shillelahs up, and hear the crash of the onset; and in another place, the heads of the dancing parties bobbing up and down in brisk motion among the crowd that surrounded them.

The pilgrim, having now gone through his Station, stood hemmed in by a circle of those who wanted to purchase his beads or his scapulars. The ballad-singer had his own mob, from among whom his voice might be heard rising in its purest tones to the praise of—

> "Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
> An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

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As evening approached, the whiskey brought out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party, for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply, and often very good-humoredly, invited to assert, that “black is the white of his enemy’s eye;” or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until, probably, a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled, by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their station. We, for our parts, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but, surely, customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O’Toole and Sheelah complied with every rite of the Station. To kiss the “Lucky Stone,” however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardor of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and, in somewhat less than a year from that period, found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the patron of the “Lucky Stone.”

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere.

From the moment of his birth, Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness, it would have mattered not a *crona baun*. Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both, his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, “wid the outs an’ ins, the ups an’ downs of his face, the darlin’ swaddy!”

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For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without more antiquarian loire than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish, or a quagmire in the neighborhood, but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of his life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's nether garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one, who saw another, who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his knee-pans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause—a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to-a moulting fowl, with scanty feathers, running before a gale in the farm yard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years being, in a great measure, the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hibernians in his rank of life, deserves a still more, particular notice. His infancy we pass over; but from the period at which he did not enter into small clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion, with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible, that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This, or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-colored shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen among the lower Irish; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner, that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

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This, with but little variation, was Phelim's dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts; the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him; the cow, which the family always intended to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams; the two goats which they actually did buy, treated him like I one of themselves. Among the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life; for as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope, and a more unsavory pool than usual, for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of it size and kind to be seen; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient, that he could lay himself down at the hearth, and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs, with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days, was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit-trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or, probably, the result of abstraction, which, as every one knows, proves what is termed "the Absence of Genius." In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he bitterly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add, that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been often seen to contemplate with deep interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provident regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings, distended like a Boa-Constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighboring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distention took place. Wo mention these things after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure an enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess; fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distention, so that it was impossible he could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighboring orchards. In addition to this, we would beg modestly to add, that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too

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ignorant of those little eccentricities which, had they known them, would have opened up a correct view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which, probably, were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of a breeches to his pocket; for such was the wayward energy of his disposition, that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the Son of his father and mother at all. Had he been a second Melchizedec, and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendor of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His penchant for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whiskey lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year, he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage ground. Along with other small matters which he was in the habit of picking up, might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, except through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other-articles of domestic use, were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were, of course, restored to their owners, the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks turned upon Phelim, and many spirited prophecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture, was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents; we say one, for there were at least, a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons, with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbors' windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pin-holes; took great delight in calling home the neighboring farmers' workingmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was in fact a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character, ere he reached his twelfth year.

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Now, it was about this period that the small-pox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents, lest he among others might become a victim to it. Vaccination, had not then surmounted the prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie women." Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a Gospel, and worn as a kind of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper, on which are written by the priest the few first verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the small-pox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it. Accordingly she borrowed a neighbor's ass, drove it home with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity, shoved him three times under it, and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth, until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savory morsel to Phelim, as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the small-pox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the Gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut into nine parts, she hung from the roof tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched, until the disease has passed from the neighborhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten asses' halters from her neighbors, who, on hearing that they were for Phelim's use, felt particular pleasure in obliging her. Having procured these, she pointed them one by one at Phelim's neck, until the number nine was completed. The tenth, she put on him, and with the end of it in her hand, led him like an ass, nine mornings, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, which he was obliged to cross. On doing this, two conditions were to be fulfilled on the part of Phelim; he was bound, in the first place, to keep his mouth filled, during the ceremony, with a certain fluid which must be nameless: in the next, to be silent from the moment he left home until his return.

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Sheelah having satisfied herself that everything calculated to save her darling from the small-pox was done, felt considerably relieved, and hoped that whoever might be infected, Phelim would escape. On the morning when the last journey to the river had been completed, she despatched him home with the halters. Phelim, however, wended his way to a little hazel copse, below the house, where he deliberately twined the halters together, and erected a swing-swang, with which he amused himself till hunger brought him to his dinner.

“Phelim, you idle thief, what kep you away till now?”

“Oh; mudher, mudher, gi’ me a piece o’ arran? (* bread.)

“Why, here’s the praties done for your dinner. What kep you?”

“Oh, be gorra, it’s well you ever seen me at all, so it is!”

“Why,” said his father, “what happened you?”

“Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out. As I was crassin’ Dunroe Hill, I thramped on hungry grass. First, I didn’t know what kem over me, I got so wake; an’ every step I wint, ‘twas waker an’ waker I was growin’, till at long last, down I dhrops, an’ couldn’t move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don’t; but anyhow, who should be *sthreelin*’ acrass the hill, but an old *baccagh*.

“‘My *bouchaleen dhas*,’ says he—’my beautiful boy,’ says he—’you’re in a bad state I find. You’ve thramped upon Dunroe *hungry grass*, an’ only for somethin’ it’s a *prabeen* you’d be, afore ever you’d see home. Can you spake at all?’ says he.

“‘Oh, murdher,’ says I,’ I b’lieve not.’

“‘Well here,’ says the baccagh, ‘open your purty gub, an’ take in a thrifle of this male, an’ you’ll soon be stout enough.’ Well, to be sure, it bates the world! I had hardly tasted the male, whin I found myself as well as ever; bekase you know, mudher, that’s the cure for it. ‘Now,’ says the baccagh, ’this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry grass, an’ so you’ll know it agin when you see it. What’s your name?’ says he.

“‘Phelim O’Toole,’ says I.

“‘Well,’ says he, ‘go home an’ tell your father an’ mother to offer up a prayer to St. Phelim, your namesake, in regard that only for him you’d be a corp before any relief would a come near you; or, at any rate, wid the fairies.’”

The father and mother, although with a thousand proofs before them that Phelim, so long as he could at all contrive a lie, would never speak truth, yet were so blind to his well-known propensity, that they always believed the lie to be truth, until they discovered

it to be a falsehood. When he related a story, for instance, which carried not only improbability, but impossibility on the face of it, they never questioned his veracity. The neighbors, to be sure, were vexed and nettled at the obstinacy of their credulity; especially on reflecting that they were as sceptical in giving credence to the narrative of any other person, as all rational people ought to be. The manner of training up Phelim, and Phelim's method of governing them, had become a by-word in the village. "Take a sthraw to him, like Sheelah O'Toole," was often ironically said to mothers remarkable for mischievous indulgence to their children.

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The following day proved that no charm could protect Phelim from the small-pox. Every symptom of that disease became quite evident; and the grief of his doting parents amounted to distraction. Neither of them could be declared perfectly sane; they knew not how to proceed—what regimen to adopt for him, nor what remedies to use. A week elapsed, but each succeeding day found him in a more dangerous state. At length, by the advice of some of the neighbors, an old crone, called “Sonsy Mary,” was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful, three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers; to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearth-stone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim’s malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence, were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen, whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the “fairy man,” to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character, they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man’s residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy Rath, against the cabin, which stood endwise; within a mile there was no other building; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave that was said to communicate under ground with the rath. A ridge of high-Peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the rath, without obscuring its precincts. It lay south; and, such was the power of superstition, that during summer, the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light decidedly supernatural. In spring, it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn the last. Nay, in winter itself, the rath and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green, these circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land; but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

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When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common, a tall thin pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown great-coat that fell far short of his knees; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes; on his legs were drawn gray woollen stockings, rolled up about six inches over his small-clothes; his head was covered by a bay bob-wig, on which was a little round, hat, with the edge of the leaf turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow; his chin peaked; his nose small and turned up. If we add to this, a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat; two fiery ferret-eyes; and a long small holly wand, higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

“God save you, nabor,” said Larry.

“Save you, save you, neighbor,” he replied, without pronouncing the name of the deity.

“This is a thryin’ time,” said Larry, “to them that has childhre.”

The fairy-man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him, with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

“So you venthured to come to the fairy-man?”

“It is about our son, an’ he all we ha—”

“Whisht!” said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air. “Whisht; I wish you wor out o’ this, for it’s a bad time to be here. Listen! Listen! Do you hear nothing?”

Larry changed color. “I do,” he replied—“The Lord protect me: Is that them?”

“What did you hear?” said the man.

“Why,” returned the other, “I heard the bushes of the rath all movin’, jist as if a blast o’ wind came among them!”

“Whisht,” said the fairy-man, “they’re here; you mustn’t open your lips while you’re in the house. I know what you want, an’ will see your son. Do you hear anything more? If you do, lay your forefinger along your nose; but don’t spake.”

Larry heard with astonishment, the music of a pair of bagpipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan; it is called: “Go to the Devil and shake yourself.” To our own knowledge, the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened too by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable of the cabin, which stood against the side of the rath, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired; and this appearing to satisfy the fairy-man, he waved his hand to the door, thus intimating that his visitor should depart; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

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"*Banaght dhea orrin!*" he exclaimed, starting back; "the blessing of God be upon us! Is it here before me you are?"

"Hould your tongue, man," said the other, with a smile of mysterious triumph. "Is it that you wondher at? Ha, ha! That's little of it!"

"But how did you know my name? or who I was? or where I lived at all? Heaven protect us! it's beyant belief, clane out."

"Hould your tongue," replied the man; "don't be axin' me any thing o' the kind. Clear out, both of ye, till I begin my pisthrogues wid the sick child. Clear out, I say."

With some degree of apprehension, Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the Fairy-man having pulled out a flask of poteen, administered a dose of it to Phelim; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish. He licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

"Be Gorra," said he, "that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle?"

"No," said the Fairy-man, "but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

"Ay do," replied Phelim; "the divil a fear o' me, if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The Fairy-man kept his word; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bed-clothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs; but, alas! his complexion though not changed to deformity, was wofully out of joint. His principal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by his complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eyelid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered, he claimed a pair of "leather crackers," * a hare-skin cap, and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude, until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

* Breeches made of sheep's skin, so called from the noise they make in walking or running.

"It's well we have him at all," said his mother; "sure if we hadn't him, we'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin' if it 'ud plase God to send him back to us, that we'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

“They say it breaks their strinth, too,” replied his father, “to be crubbin’ them in too much, an’ snappin’ at thim for every hand’s turn, an’ I’m sure it does too.”

“Doesn’t he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?” said the mdther.

“Become!” said the father; “but doesn’t the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!”

“Ay,” observed the mother, “an’ how the crathur went round among all the neighbors to show them the ‘leather crackers!’ To see his little pride out o’ the hare-skin cap, too, wid the hare’s ears stickin’ out of his temples. That an’ the droopin: eye undher them makes him look so cunnin’ an’ ginteel, that one can’t help havin’ their heart fixed upon him.”

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“He’d look betther still if that ould coat wasn’t sweepin’ the ground behind him; an’ what ‘ud you think to put a pair o’ *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles! He might go anywhere thin.”

“Throth he might; but Larry, what in the world wide could be in the Fairy-man’s bottle that Phelim took sich a likin’ for it. He tould me this mornin’ that he’d suffer to have the pock agin, set in case he was cured wid the same bottle.”

“Well, the Heaven be praised, any how, that we have a son for the half-acre, Sheelah.’

“Amin! An’ let us take good care of him, now that he’s spared to us.”

Phelim’s appetite, after his recovery, was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal times; for wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game, and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the, parish; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung, and hares started. No hunt was without him; such was his wind and speed of foot, that to follow a chase and keep up with the horsemen was to him only a matter of sport. When daylight passed, night presented him with amusements suitable to itself. No wake, for instance, could escape him; a dance without young Phelim O’Toole would have been a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cooks tied to a stake; foot-ball and hurling never occurred without him. Bull-baiting—for it was common in his youth—was luxury to him; and, ere he reached fourteen, every one knew Phelim O’Toole as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whiskey was put up in a shebeen house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoil’d five, Phelim always took a hand and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity; but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen—a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents’ anxiety that he should grow strong, prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion; and wherever a knot of idlers was to be found, there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never worn a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheepskin small-clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hare-skin cap,

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the ears as usual sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight; and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye; for in Ireland, he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the people say, usually "gets enough an' lavins of it." Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty; but, by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent happened to be kept in what is called an inside Kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' outhouses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread a winnow-cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot, that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it, because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school he presented himself with a black eye; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time, he had gained the nick-name of "Blessed Phelim," and "Bouncing," epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint, and his own habits.

"So, Blessed Phelim," said the master, "you are comin' to school!!! Well, well! I only say that miracles will never cease. Arrah, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah—I beg your pardon; I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie."

"You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. "I'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

"Bravo! By the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you're comin' wid a black eye to prove it! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat of arms; and to do you justice, you are seldom widout your crest."

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For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with a hope of being able to excite a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated the barn-floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, any rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees, that he might give him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

"Phelim," said the master, "I'll invert you a scarecrow for dunces. I'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up like a forked carrot."

"But how will you manage that?" said Phelim. "What 'ud I be doin' in the mane time?"

"I'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

"To put my head down an' my heels up, is it?" inquired Phelim.

"You've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

"If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, "I'll show you;" getting his shoulder under the master's leg, and pitching him heels over his head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap, and ran out of the school, highly delighted at his feat; leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was dangerously hurt, for in addition to a broken arm, he received half a dozen severe contusions on the head, and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighboring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen, he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labor; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labor a week or fortnight with some neighboring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred

within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a horn-pipe

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on a door or a table; no man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed it was said that he could dance “Moll Roe” upon the end of a five-gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim, The former, when he found him grown up, and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow, if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humored, dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care a traneen whether he drank with you as a friend or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! “Why, faix,” as the fair ones often said of him, “before Phelim speaks at all, one laughs at what he says.” This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking match, was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humor exceedingly; for say what you will, laughter is to wit what air is to fire—the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a superficial fellow would defend it Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavorable surface than Phelim’s. His face resembled the rough side of a cullender, or, as he was often told in raillery, “you might grate potatoes on it.” The lid of his left eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the right, it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world, and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind; in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favor. “Phelim,” they would say, “is not purty, but he’s very comely. Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether, wid his winnin’ ways.” And so he would, too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father’s.

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From nineteen until the close of his minority, Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but, unfortunately, he seldom knew on the morning of the fair-day the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight. This was merely a matter of priority; for whoever happened to give him the first treat uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was, that Phelim being every person's friend, by his good nature, was nobody's foe, except for the day. He fought for fun and for whiskey. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused, them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system, his eyes were wonderfully opened to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants he looked upon as I gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered as the result of Protestant Ascendancy—cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons, he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much warmer country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the county as Phelim at an alibi. Just give him the outline —a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for, as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflicted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, tooth-aches, and colics seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has a tooth-ache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice; and a colic been guilty of misprision of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at variance with the laws: nor are our births much better; for although more legitimate than those of our English neighbors, yet they are in general more illegal. Phelim, in proving his alibis, proved all these positions. On one occasion, "he slep at the prisoner's house, and couldn't close his eye with a thief of a tooth-ache that parsecuted him the whole night;" so, that in consequence of having the tooth-ache, it was impossible that the prisoner could leave the house without his knowledge.

Again, the prisoner at the bar could not possibly have shot the deceased, "bekase Mickey slept that very night at Phelim's, an' Phelim, bein' ill o' the colic, never slep at all durin' the whole night; an', by the vartue of his oath, the poor boy couldn't go out o' the house unknownst to him. If he had, Phelim would a seen him, sure."

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Again, “Paddy Cummisky’s wife tuck ill of a young one, an’ Phelim was sent for to bring the midwife; but afore he kem to Paddy’s, or hard o’ the thing at all, the prisoner, airly in the night, comin’ to sit awhile wid Paddy, went for the midwife instead o’ Phelim, an’ thin they sot up an’ had a sup in regard of the ‘casion; an’ the prisoner never left them at all that night until the next mornin’. An’ by the same token, he remimbered Paddy Cummisky barrin’ the door, an’ shuttin’ the windies, bekase it’s not lucky to have them open, for fraid that the fairies ’ud throw their *pishthrogues* upon the young one, an’ it not christened.”

Phelim was certainly an accomplished youth. As an alibist, however, his career was, like that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

“What is the noble gintleman sayin’?” he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained, he would inquire, “what is that?” then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures, in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted; lest a real approver, or some one earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the alibi and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the government—for it was mostly in government prosecutions he adventured this—believed they had ample grounds for conviction in his disclosures, it little suspected that the whole matter was a plan to defeat itself. In accordance with his design, he gave such evidence upon the table as rendered conviction hopeless. His great object was to damn his own character as a witness, and to make such blunders, premeditated slips, and admissions, as just left him within an inch of a prosecution for perjury. Having succeeded in acquitting his friends, he was content to withdraw amid a volley of pretended execrations, leaving the Attorney-General, with all his legal knowledge, outwitted and foiled.

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All Phelim's accomplishments, however, were nothing when compared to his gallantry. With personal disadvantages which would condemn any other man to old bachelorship, he was nevertheless the whiteheaded boy among the girls. He himself was conscious of this, and made his attacks upon their hearts indiscriminately. If he met an unmarried female only for five minutes, be she old or ugly, young or handsome, he devoted at least four minutes and three-quarters to the tender passion; made love to her with an earnestness that would deceive a saint; backed all his protestations with a superfluity of round oaths; and drew such a picture of her beauty as might suit the Houries of Mahomet's paradise.

Phelim and his father were great associates. No two agreed better. They went to fairs and markets together; got drunk together; and returned home with their arms about each other's neck in the most loving and affectionate manner. Larry, as if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He descanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand, was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half a dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favor.

But it is time the action of our story should commence. When Phelim had reached his twenty-fifth year, the father thought it was high time for him to marry. The good man had, of course, his own motives for this. In the first place, Phelim, with all his gallantry and cleverness, had never contributed a shilling, either toward his own support or that of the family. In the second place, he was never likely to do so. In the third place, the father found him a bad companion; for, in good truth, he had corrupted the good man's morals so evidently, that his character was now little better than that of his son. In the fourth place, he never thought of Phelim, that he did not see a gallows in the distance; and matrimony, he thought, might save him from hanging, as one poison neutralizes another. In the fifth place, the half-acre Was but a shabby patch to meet the exigencies of the family, since Phelim grew up. "Bouncing Phelim," as he was called for more reasons than one, had the gift of a good digestion, along with his other accomplishments; and with such energy was it exercised, that the "half-acre" was frequently in hazard of leaving the family altogether. The father, therefore, felt quite willing, if Phelim married, to leave him the inheritance, and seek a new settlement for himself. Or, if Phelim preferred leaving him, he agreed to give him one-half of it, together with an equal division of all his earthly goods; to wit—two goats, of which Phelim was to get one; six hens and a cock, of which Phelim was to get three hens, and the chance of a toss-up for the cock; four stools, of which Phelim was to

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get two; two pots—a large one and a small one—the former to go with Phelim; three horn spoons, of which Phelim was to get one, and the chance of a toss-up for a third. Phelim was to bring his own bed, provided he did not prefer getting a bottle of fresh straw as a connubial luxury. The blanket was a tender subject; for having been fourteen years in employment, it entangled the father and Phelim, touching the prudence of the latter claiming it all. The son was at length compelled to give it up, at least in the character of an appendage to his marriage property. He feared that the wife, should he not be able to replace it by a new one, or should she herself not be able to bring him one, as part of her dowry, would find the honeymoon rather lively. Phelim's bedstead admitted of no dispute, the floor of the cabin having served him in that capacity ever since he began to sleep in a separate bed. His pillow was his small clothes, and his quilt his own coat, under which he slept snugly enough.

The father having proposed, and the son acceded to these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son, one evening, at their own fireside, in the presence of Sheelah.

"Now, Phelim," said the father, "look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighborhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you'd like for your daughter-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly, I'll delude her. That's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your comedher an Gracey Dalton, you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that as it is, you know. But would you wish me to put my comedher on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

"To be sure I would."

"Ay," observed the mother, "or what 'ud you think of Miss Pattherson? That 'ud be the girl. She has a fine farm, an' five hundre pounds. She's a Protestant, but Phelim could make a Christian of her."

"To be sure I could," said Phelim, "have her thumpin' her breast, and countin' her Padareens in no time. Would you wish me to have her, mudher?"

"Throth an' I would, avick."

"That 'ud never do," observed the father. "Sure you don't think she'd ever think of the likes o' Phelim?"

“Don’t make a goose of yourself, ould man,” observed Phelim. “Do you think if I set about it, that I’d not manufacture her senses as asy as I’d peel a piatee?”

“Well, well,” replied the father, “in the name o’ Goodness make up to her. Faith it ud’ be somethin’ to have a jauntin’ car in the family!”

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“Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o’ clo’es?” observed Phelim. “I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o’ this ould coat, bad luck to it! An’ as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it’s a sin to call what I’m wearin’ a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive, sure I can’t go to her barefooted, an’ I dunna but it ’ud be dacenter to do that same, than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An’ in regard o’ the stockins’, why, I’ve pulled them down, strivin’ to look dacent, till one ‘ud think the balls o’ my legs is at my heels.”

“The sorra word’s in that but thruth, any how,” observed the father; “but what’s to be done? For we have no way of gettin’ them.”

“Faith, I don’t know that,” said Phelim. “What if we’d borry? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an’ a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat, an’ a pair of stockings. Barny Buckram-back, the pinsioner, ‘ud lend me his pumps; an’ we want nothing now but a hat.”

“Nothin’ under a Caroline ‘ud do, goin’ there,” observed the father.

“I think Father O’Hara ‘ud oblige me wid the loan o’ one for a day or two;” said Phelim; “he has two or three o’ them, all as good as ever.”

“But, Phelim,” said the father, “before we go to all this trouble, are you sure you could put your comedher on Miss Pattherson?”

“None o’ your nonsense,” said Phelim, “don’t you know I could? I hate a man to be puttin’ questions to me, when he knows them himself. It’s a fashion you have got, an’ you ought to dhrop it.”

“Well thin,” said the father, “let us set about it to-morrow. If we can borry the clo’es, thry your luck.”

Phelim and the father, the next morning, set out each in a different direction, to see how far they could succeed on the borrowing system. The father was to make a descent on Dudley Dwire for the breeches, and appeal to the generosity of Sam Appleton for the coat. Phelim himself was to lay his case before the priest, and to assail Buckram-back, the pensioner, on his way home, for the brogues.

When Phelim arrived at the priest’s house, he found none of the family up but the housekeeper. After bidding her good morrow, and being desired to sit down, he entered into conversation with the good woman, who felt anxious to know the scandal of the whole parish.

“Aren’t you a son of Larry Toole’s, young man?”

“I am, indeed, Mrs. Doran. I’m Phelim O’Toole, my mother says.”

“I hope you’re comin’ to spake to the priest about your duty.”

“Why, then, be gorra, I’m glad you axed me, so I am—for only you seen the pinance in my face, you’d never suppose sich a thing. I want to make my confishion to him, wid the help o’ Goodness.”

“Is there any news goin’, Phelim?”

“Divil a much, barrin’ what you hard yourself, I suppose, about Frank Fogarty, that went mad yesterday, for risin’ the meal on the poor, an’ ate the ears off himself afore anybody could see him.”

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"*Vick na hoiah*, Phelim; do you tell me so?"

"Why man o' Moses, is it possible you did not hear it, ma'am?"

"Oh, worra, man alive, not a syllable! Ate the ears off of himself! Phelim, acushla, see what it is to be hard an the poor!"

"Oh, he was ever an' always the biggest nagar livin', ma'am. Ay, an' when he was tied up, till a blessed priest 'ud be brought to maliwgue the divil out of him, he got a scythe an' cut his own two hands off."

"No thin, Phelim!"

"Faitha, ma'am, sure enough. I suppose, ma'am, you hard about Biddy Duignan?"

"Who is she, Phelim?"

"Why the misfortunate crathurs a daughter of her father's, ould Mick Duignan, of Tavenimore."

"An' what about her, Phehm! What happened her?"

"Faix, ma'am, a bit of a mistake she met wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three Stations to Lough Dergh for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duiguan, or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years! Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing."

"Why, ma'am, sure he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why the desateful ould—hut, Phelim, I can't give into it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

"Is it me, Phelim? Why, you're beside yourself."

"Beside myself, am I? Faith, an' if I am, what I said's thruth, anyhow. I'd give more nor I'll name, to have so red a pair of cheeks as you have. Sowl, they're thumpers."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, that I mayn't sin, but that's a good joke! An ould woman near sixty!"

“Now, Mrs. Doran, that’s nonsense, an’ nothing else. Near sixty! Oh, by my purty, that’s runnin’ away wid the story entirely—No, nor thirty. Faith, I know them that’s not more nor five or six-an’-twenty, that ’ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o’ lie in that.”

“No, no, Phelim, aroon, I seen the day; but that’s past. I remimber when the people did say I was worth lookin’ at. Won’t you sit near the fire? You’re in the dhraft there.”

“Thank you kindly, ma’am; faith, you have the name, far an’ near, for bein’ the civilest woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an’ say that you’re not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I’d dispute it wid you; an’ say it was nothin’ else than a bounce.”

“Arrah, Phelim, darlin, how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father’s well, Phelim, an’ your honest mother.”

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“Divil a fear o’ them. Now, I’d hould nine to one that the purtiest o’ them hasn’t a sweeter mout’ than you have. By dad, you have a pair o’ lips, God bless them that—-well, well—”

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful.

“Phelim, you’re losin’ the little sense you had.”

“Faix, an’ it’s you that’s taken them out o’ me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o’ me. Divil a word o’ lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma’am, you have a chin o’ your own! Well, well! Oh, be Gorra, I wish I hadn’t come out this mornin’ any how!”

“Arrah, why, Phelim? In throth, it’s you that’s the quare Phelim!”

“Why, ma’am—Oh bedad it’s a folly to talk. I can’t go widout tastin’ them. Sich a pair o’ timptations as your lips, barrin’ your eyes, I didn’t see this many a day.”

“Tastin’ what, you mad crathur?”

“Why, I’ll show you what I’d like to be afther tastin’. Oh! bedad, I’ll have no refusin’; a purty woman always makes a foo——”

“Keep away, Phelim; keep off; bad end to you; what do you mane? Don’t you see Fool Art lyin’ in the corner there undher the sacks? I don’t think he’s asleep.”

“Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure he hasn’t sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma’am the truth is, that a purty woman always makes a ——”

“Throth an’ you won’t,” said she struggling.

“Throth an’ I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we’ll see whose strongest!”

A good-humored struggle took place between the housekeeper and Phelim, who found her, in point of personal strength, very near a match for him. She laughed heartily, but Phelim attempted to salute her with a face of mock gravity as nearly resembling that of a serious man as he could assume. In the meantime, chairs were overturned, and wooden dishes trundled about; a crash was heard here, and another there. Phelim drove her to the hob, and from the hob they both bounced into the fire, the embers and ashes of which were kicked up into a cloud about them.

“Phelim, spare your strinth,” said the funny housekeeper, “it won’t do. Be asy now, or I’ll get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art.”

“To the divil wid Fool Art an’ the priest, too,” said Phelim, “who cares abuckey about the priest when a purty woman like you is consarn—

“What’s this?” said the priest, stepping down from the parlor—“What’s the matter? Oh, ho, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good, indeed! Under my own roof, too! An’ pray, ma’am, who is the gallant? Turn round young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better! Bouncing Phelim O’Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O’Toole, that when you come a courting, you ought to consider it worth your while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion.”

“Why sure enough,” replied Phelim, without a moment’s hesitation; “your Reverence has found us out.”

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“Found you out! Why, is that the tone you speak in?”

“Faith, sir, thruth’s best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn’t. Howsomever, it’s still time enough.—Hem! The thruth, sir, is, that Mrs. Doran an’ I is goin’ to get the words said as soon as we can; so, sir, wid the help o’ Goodness, I came to see if your Reverence ’ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin’.”

Mrs. Doran had, for at least a dozen round years before this, been in a state-of hopelessness upon the subject of matrimony; nothing in the shape of a proposal having in the course of that period come in her way. Now we have Addison’s authority for affirming, that an old woman who permits the thoughts of love to get into her head, becomes a very odd kind of animal. Mrs. Doran, to do her justice, had not thought of it for nearly three lustres, for this reason, that she had so far overcome her vanity as to deem it possible that a proposal could be ever made to her. It is difficult, however, to know what a day may bring forth. Here was an offer, dropping like a ripe plum into her mouth. She turned the matter over in her mind with a quickness equal to that of Phelim himself. One leading thought struck her forcibly: if she refused to close with this offer, she would never get another.

“Is it come to this, Mrs. Doran?” inquired the priest.

“Oh, bedad, sir, she knows it is,” replied Phelim, giving her a wink with the safe eye.

Now, Mrs. Doran began to have her suspicions. The wink she considered as decidedly ominous. Phelim, she concluded with all the sagacity of a woman thinking upon that subject, had winked at her to assent only for the purpose of getting themselves out of the scrape for the present. She feared that Phelim would be apt to break off the match, and take some opportunity, before Sunday should arrive, of preventing the priest from calling them. Her decision, however, was soon made. She resolved, if possible to pin down Phelim to his own proposal.

“Is this true, Mrs. Doran?” inquired the priest, a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She accordingly applied her apron to her eyes, and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the meantime, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran’s tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

“Then,” said the priest, “it is to be understood that I’m to call you both on Sunday.”

“There’s no use in keepin’ it back from you,” replied Mrs. Doran. “I know it’s foolish of me; but we have all our failins, and to be fond of Phelim there, is mine. Your Reverence is to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can’t tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o’ the world!”

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Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's Haunch of Venison, "a subject for painters to study." His eyes projected like a hare's until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up, as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at least to years of discretion. Indeed, many persons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the meantime your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately, with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clo'es? Faith, I'd like to appear dacent in the thing, anyhow."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your Reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye, an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of a pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Be gorra, sir, she put her comedher an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I'll be the flower of a husband to her anyhow. I hope your Reverence 'll come to the christ'nin'? But about the clo'es; —bad luck saize the tack I have to put to my back, but what you see an me, if we wor to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, aroon," said Mrs. Doran, "his Reverence here has my little pences o' money in his hands, an' the best way is for you to get the price of a suit from him. You must get clo'es, an' good ones, too, Phelim, sooner nor any stop should be put to our marriage."

"Augh, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, ogling her from the safe eye, with a tender suavity of manner that did honor to his heart; "be gorra, ma'am, you've played the puck entirely wid me. Faith, I'm gettin' fonder an' fonder of her every minute, your Reverence."

He set his eye, as he uttered this, so sweetly and significantly upon the old house-keeper, that the priest thought it a transgression of decorum in his presence.

“I think,” said he, “you had better keep your melting looks to yourself, Phelim. Restrain your gallantry, if you please, at least until I withdraw.”

“Why, blood alive! sir, when people’s fond of one another, it’s hard to keep the love down. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Faith, you’ve rendhored my heart like a lump o’ tallow.”

“Follow me to the parlor,” said the priest, “and let me know, Bridget, what sum I am to give to this melting gallant of yours.”

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“I may as well get what’ll do the weddin’ at wanst,” observed Phelim. “It’ll save throuble, in the first place; an’ sackinly, it’ll save time; for, plase Goodness, I’ll have everything ready for houldin’ the weddin’ the Monday afther the last call. By the hole o’ my coat, the minute I get the clo’es we’ll be spliced, an’ thin for the honeymoon!”

“How much money shall I give him?” said the priest.

“Indeed, sir, I think you ought to know that; I’m ignorant o’ what ’ud make a dacent weddin’. We don’t intend to get married undher a hedge; we’ve frinds an both sides, an’ of course, we must have them about us, plase Goodness.”

“Be gorra, sir, it’s no wondher I’m fond of her, the darlin’? Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all?”

“Bridget,” said the priest, “I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours?”

“Why, your Reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an’ plinty, an’ dacency, at the weddin’.”

“Not forgetting the thatch for me, in the mane time,” said Phelim. “Nothin’ less will sarve us, plase your Reverence. Maybe, sir, you’d think ‘of comin’ to the weddin’ yourself?”

“There are in my hands,” observed the priest, “one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to your wedding! No! don’t suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes, because I heartily despise you both; but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim.”

“God bless you, sir!” said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. “In regard o’ the acknowledgment, sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write.”

“Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent.”

“Surely, your Reverence; I’ll never go back of it.”

“Now, Phelim,” said the priest, “you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible.”

“I’ll give you my oath,” said Phelim; “an’ be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there, I’ll not lose a day in gettin’ myself spliced. Isn’t she the tendher-hearted sowl, your Reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!”

“Leave my place,” said the priest. “I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman.”

“Ould woman! Oh, thin, I’m sure I don’t desarve this from your Reverence!” exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes: “if I’m a little seasoned now, you know I wasn’t always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant, I was that, an’ managed your house and place as honestly as I’ll manage my own, plase Goodness.”

As they left the parlor, Phelim became the consoler.

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“Whisht, you darlin’!” he exclaimed. “Sure you’ll have Bouncin’ Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I’d take it as a piece o’ civility if you’d open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin’ him, or how? Are you—hem—do you undherstand me, Mrs. Doran?”

“What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain.”

“Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose. But in the mane time, might one axe, out o’ mere curiosity, if you’re in airnest?”

“In airnest! Arrah, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me.”

“A bad what?”

“I say, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me. I’m afeard, Phelim, that I’ll be too foolish about you—that I’ll be too fond of you.”

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied—“Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to Him to avoid all folly, an’ above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it’s a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea—hem—a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are.”

“When will the weddin’ take place, Phelim?”

“The what?” said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay.

“Why, the weddin’, acushla. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call ’ud be the best time. We wouldn’t lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel.”

Phelim gave her another look.

“The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don’t long half as much for your last call as I do.”

“Arrah, Phoilim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin’ awhile agone? Throth, myself disremimbers.”

“Ay, around dozen o’ them. How can you forget it?”

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

“Throth, an’ I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you’ll not go till you take a cup o’ tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim darlin’, jewel.”

Phelim’s face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

“Phelim, darlin’, what ails you?” inquired the tender old nymph. “Wurrah, man alive, aren’t you well?”

“Oh, be the vestment,” said Phelim, “what’s this at all? Murdher, sheery, what’ll I do! Oh, I’m very bad! At death’s door, so I am! Be gorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off.”

“Wurrah, Phelim dear, won’t you stop till we settle everything?”

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“Oh, purshuin’ to the ha’p’orth I can settle till I recover o’ this murdherin’ colic! All’s asthray wid me in the inside. I’ll see you—I’ll see you—*Hanim an dioul!* what’s this?—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher sheery?—but—but—I’ll see you to-morrow. In the mane time, I’m—I’m—for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin’ me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I’m a gone man!—for lendin’ me the loan of the ten guineas—Oh, I’m gone!”

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides on passing out of the house were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man laboring under pain. In fact, he never looked behind him until one-half the distance between the priest’s house and his father’s cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim’s blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motive to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any other woman, young or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home, he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a “Great Match,"* generously lent him coat, waistcoat, hat, and small-clothes.

> * When a country girl is said to have a large fortune, the peasantry, when speaking of her in reference to matrimony, say she’s a “Great Match.”

When Phelim presented himself at home, he scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin, that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

“Phelim,” said the mother, “did you take anything while you wor away?”

“Did I take anything! is it? Arrah, be asy, ould woman! Did I take anything! Faith you may say that!”

“Let us know, anyhow, what’s the matther wid you?’ asked the father.

“Tare-an’-ounze!” exclaimed the son, “what is this for, at all at all? It’s too killin’ I am, so it is.”

“You’re not lookin’ at Sam Appleton’s clo’es,” said the father, “that he lent you the loan of, hat an’ all?”

“Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an’ his clo’es! When I wants clo’es I’ll buy them wid my own money!’

“Larry,” observed the mother, “there’s yourself all over—as proud as a payoock when the sup’s in your head, an’ ’ud spake as big widout the sign o’ money in your pocket, as if you had the rint of an estate.”

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“What do you say about the sign o’ money?” exclaimed Phelim, with a swagger. “Maybe you’ll call that the sign o’ money!” he added, producing the ten guineas in gold. The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

“Phelim!” said the father, solemnly. “Phelim!” said the mother, awfully; and both shook their heads again.

“You wor never over-scrupulous,” the father proceeded, “an’ you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of pickin’ up what didn’t belong to yourself. I think, too, you’re not the same boy you wor afore you tuck to swearin’ the alibies.

“Faith, an’ I doubt I’ll haye to get some one to swear an alibi for myself soon,” Phelim replied.

“Why, blessed hour!” said Larry, “didn’t I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin’ matther?”

“If this is not a hangin’ matther,” said Phelim, “it’s something nearly as bad: it’s a marryin’ matther. Sure I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o’ lie in it. I was clane fell in love wid this mornin’ about seven o’clock.”

“But how did you get the money, Phelim?”

“Why, from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure we’re to be ‘called’ in the Chapel on Sunday next.”

“Why thin now, Phelim! An’ who is the young crathur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!”

“Murdher!” exclaimed Phelim, “what’s this for! Was ever any one done as I am? Who is she! Why she’s—oh, murdher, oh!—she’s no other than—hem—divil a one else than Father O’Hara’s housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!”

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

“Death alive; ould man! but you’re very merry,” said Phelim. “If you wor my age, an’ in such an’ amplush, you’d laugh on the wrong side o’ your mouth. Maybe you’ll tarn your tune when you hear that she has a hundhre and twenty guineas.”

“An’ you’ll be rich, too,” said the father. “The sprig an’ you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!”

“An’ the family they’ll have!” said the mother, in convulsions.

“Why, in regard o’ that,” said Phelim, rather nettled, “if all fails us, sure we can do as my father and you did: kiss the Lucky Stone, an’ make a Station.”

“Phelim, aroon,” said the mother, seriously, “put it out o’ your head. Sure you wouldn’t go to bring me a daughter-in-law oulder nor myself?”

“I’d as soon go over,” (* be transported) said Phelim; “or swing itself, before I’d marry sich a piece o’ desate. Hard feelin’ to her! how she did me to my face!”

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O’Hara’s, dwelling bitterly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

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“However,” he concluded, “she’d be a sharp one if she’d do me altogether. We’re not married yet; an’ I’ve a consate of my own, that she’s done for the ten guineas, any how!”

A family council was immediately held upon Phelim’s matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim’s powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one. Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim’s bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general, were considerably abated. It was therefore resolved that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton’s clothes, until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligations to Phelim’s silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

“Not,” added Phelim, “but I’m as much, an’ maybe more in his power, than he is in mine.”

When breakfast was over, Phelim and the father, after having determined to “drink a bottle” that night in the family of an humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the meantime, Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because in fact we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform them, that in a little shed in the lower end of the village, lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodie Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim’s own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races; by handing, breeding, and feeding cocks; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes; and finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking; and it so happened, that he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery’s house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father; and, if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodie’s assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be “light-handed;” an imputation which caused the young men of her acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

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“Sally, achora,” said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, “what’s the fun? Where’s your father?”

“Oh, Phelim,” she replied, bursting into tears, “long runs the fox, but he’s cotch at last. My father’s in gaol.”

Phelim’s jaw dropped. “In gaol! *Chorp an diouol*, no!”

“It’s thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business, I wish it never had come into the counthry at all.”

“Sally, I must see him; you know I must. But tell me how it happened? Was it at home he was taken?”

“No; he was taken this mornin’ in the market. I was wid him sellin’ some chickens. What’ll you and Sam Appleton do, Phelim?”

“Uz! Why, what danger is there to either Sim or me, you darlin’?”

“I’m sure, Phelim, I don’t know; but he tould me, that if I was provided for, he’d be firm, an’ take chance of his thrial. But, he says, poor man, that it ‘ud break his heart to be thransported, lavin’ me behind him wid’ nobody to take care o’ me.—He says, too, if anything ’ud make him stag, it’s fear of the thrial goin’ against himself; for, as he said to me, what ’ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?”

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim’s face, which was certainly destined to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

“Sally, you insinivator, I’ll hould a thousand guineas you’d never guess what brought me here to-day?”

“Arrah, how could I, Phelim? To plan some thin’ wid my fadher, maybe.”

“No, but to plan somethin’ wid yourself, you coaxin’ jewel you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow, they call Bouncin’ Phelim?”

“Phelim, don’t be gettin’ an wid your fun now, an’ me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn’t throw yourself away upon a poor girl like me, that has nothin’ but a good pair of hands to live by.”

“Be me sowl, an’ you live by them. Well, but set in case—supposin’—that same Bouncin’ Phelim was willing to make you mistress of the Half Acre, what ’ud you be sayin’?”

“Phelim, if a body thought you worn’t jokin’ them—ah, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—-this is more o’ your thricks—but if it was thruth you wor spakin’, Phelim?”

“It is thruth,” said Phelim; “be the vestment, it’s nothin’ else. Now, say yes or no; for if it’s a thing that it’s to be a match, you must go an’ tell him that I’ll marry you, an’ he must be as firm as a rock. But see, Sally, by thim five crasses it’s not bekase your father’s in I’m marryin’ you at all. Sure I’m in love wid you, acushla! Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?”

“Well—throth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now are you downright in airnest?”

“Be the stool I’m sittin’ on!”

“Well, in the name o’ Goodness, I’ll go to my father, an’ let him know it. Poor man, it’ll take the fear out of his heart. Now can he depind on you, Phelim?”

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“Why, all I can say is, that we’ll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send some one to autorise the priest to call us. An’ now that’s all settled, don’t I desarve somethin’? Oh, be gorra, surely.”

“Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there you’ve tuck it—och, the curse o’ the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too. Troth, you’re a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won’t be goin’ on this way wid the girls, when you get married.”

“Is it me you coaxer? No, faith, I’ll wear a pair of winkers, for fraid o’ lookin’ at them at all! Oh be gorra, no, bally, I’ll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ they make at all.”

“Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready, an’ set out to my father. But, Phelim, never breathe a word about him bein’ in goal. No one knows it but ourselves—that is, none o’ the neighbors.”

“I’ll sing dumb,” said Phelim. “Well, *binaght lath, a rogarah!** Tell him the thruth—to be game, an’ he’ll find you an’ me sweeled together whin he comes out, plase Goodness.”

* My blessing be with you, you rogue!

Phelim was but a few minutes gone, when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bed-room, which a wicker wall, plastered with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

“Is he gone?” said Art.

“You may come out, Art,” said she, “he’s gone.”

“Ha!” said Art, triumphantly, “I often tould him, when he vexed me an’ pelted me wid snow-balls, that I’d come along sides wid him yet. An’ it’s not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he’s not asleep, an’ see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!”

“But, Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?”

“Hi the colic, the colic!
An’ ho the colic for Phelim!”

“Then you think he won’t, Art?”

“Hi the colic, the colic!
An’ ho the colic for Phelim!”

“Now, Art, don’t say a word about my father not bein’ in gaol. He’s to be back from my grandfather’s in a short time, an’ if we manage well, you’ll see what you’ll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art.”

“Art has the lane for Phelim, but it’s not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art!”

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer; here was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodie Flattery’s disclosures, should he take it into his head to ’peach upon his brother Whiteboys. Indeed, Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week, and lodged in one of his majesty’s boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates;

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and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure, upon the same grounds, either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former it was often said, that "he'd die where the bird flies"—between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation, and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whiskey on credit; for it had been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas until they should have ascertained how the matchmaking would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself, an' put on Sam's clo'es: you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them, so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "Wid all my heart; I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to night," said Larry; "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is, for such a spree. Now, Fadher, you must lie like the ould diouol tonight. Back everything I say, an' there's no fear of us. But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why you must put them in your pocket for fraid they be wantin' to get off wid layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think we have a rap; an' if they propose it we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a purty boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yez?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim?" replied the father.

“Maybe you soodhered another ould woman,” said the mother.

“Be asy,” replied Phelim. “No, but the five crasses, I deluded a young one since! I went out!”

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The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful; but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths, that they believed him. Nothing, however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact, he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery, as the person whom he had "deluded," would constitute, on his part, a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief—which Sally was strongly suspected to be—except some worthy fellow, who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday, as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third. There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention, only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat, in case the priest himself had refused him. He was consequently not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here again the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required—a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His marriage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her, on the Sunday following, would neutralize his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from him. Bouncing Phelim was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday, would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined

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him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals; but still it exhibited the claim of three women upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a courting, and of course they brought the whiskey with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side, and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part, to give a slip of a pig, or a pair of blankets, or a year-old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they are of importance to those who, perhaps, have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world. The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the-humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof; it was curtained with straw mats, with the exception of an opening about a foot and a half wide on the side next the fire, through which those who slept in it passed. A little below the foot of the bed were ranged a few shelves of deal, supported by pins of wood driven into the wall. These constituted the dresser. In the lower end of the house stood a potato-bin, made up of stakes driven into the floor, and wrought with strong wicker-work. Tied to another stake beside this bin stood a cow, whose hinder part projected so close to the door, that those who entered the cabin were compelled to push her over out of their way. This, indeed, was effected without much difficulty, for the animal became so habituated to the necessity of moving aside, that it was only necessary to lay the hand upon her. Above the door in the inside, almost touching the roof, was the hen-roost, made also of wicker-work; and opposite the bed, on the other side of the fire, stood a meal-chest.

Its lid on a level with the little pane of glass which served as a window. An old straw chair, a few stools, a couple of pots, some wooden vessels and crockery, completed the furniture of the house. The pig to which Sheolah alluded was not kept within the cabin, that filthy custom being now less common than formerly.

This catalogue of cottage furniture may appear to our English readers very miserable. We beg them to believe, however, that if every cabin in Ireland were equally comfortable, the country would be comparatively happy. Still it is to be remembered, that the *dramatis personae* of our story are of the humblest class.

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When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire; the father at one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clean; the floor swept; the ashes removed from the hearth; the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty, nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced of course by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot, that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous;—

> "A sailor coorted a farmer's daughter
> That lived contagious to the Isle of Man,
> A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
> Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
> At linth he saize, 'My own dearest darlint,
> Will you consint for to be my bride?'"

"An' so she did consint, the darlin', but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, avourneen, I'm glad to hear that you're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh? Ah, be gorra, fadher, here's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith you're the daisey!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Haven't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in troth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear, how are you? But I'm sure, I needn't be axin when I look at you! In troth, Phelim, she is somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

“Thank you kindly, Molly,” replied Phelim; “but I’ll do no sich thing.. Arrah, do you think, now, that I’d begin to gosther wid an ould woman, while I have the likes o’ Peggy, the darlin’, beside me? I’m up to a thrick worth nine of it. No, no; this chest ’ll do. Sure you know, I must help the ‘duck of diamonds’ here to count her stitches.”

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“Paddy,” said Larry, in a friendly whisper, “put this whiskey past for a while, barrin’ this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton’s to come up afther us an’, I suppose, some o’ your own cleavens ’ll be here afther a while.”

“Thrue for you,” said Donovan. “Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o’ whiskey was lashins; my Goodness, what’ll we be doin’ wid a whole gallon?”

“Dacency or nothin’, Paddy; if it was my last I’d show sperit, an’ why not? Who’d be for the shabby thing?”

“Well, well, Larry, I can’t say but you’re right afther all! Maybe I’d do the same thing myself, for all I’m spakin’ aginst it.”

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the meantime, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clew; all which she bore with great good-humor. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whiskey was formally produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum. When Phelim’s prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company, as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whiskey-bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweetheart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be

industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

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“Phelim, you thief,” said the father, “what’s all that noise for?”

“*Chrosh orrin!*” (* The cross be about us!) said Molly Donovan, “is that tundher?”

“Devil carry these piatees,” exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, “if there’s any sittin’ at all upon them! I’m levellin’ them to prevint Peggy, the darlin’, from slidderin’ an’ to give us time to be talkin’, somethin’ lovin’ to one another. The curse o’ Cromwell an them! One might as well dhrink a glass o’ whiskey wid his sweetheart, or spake a tinder word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they’re as level as you plase, acushla! Sit down, you jewel you, an’ give me the egg-shell, till we have our Sup o’ the crathur in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin’ down in the world?”

Phelim and Peggy having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire; Phelim’s arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

“Now, Peggy, you darlin’ o’ the world—bad cess to me but I’m as glad as two ten-pennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin’ an them. Eh, avourneen?”

“Why, we’re comfortable now, anyhow, Phelim!”

“Faith, you may say that—(a loving squeeze). Now, Peggy, begin an’ tell us all about your bachelors.”

“The sarra one ever I had, Phelim.”

“Oh, murdher sheery, what a bounce! Bad cess to me, if you can spake a word o’ thruth afther that, you common desaver! Worn’t you an’ Paddy Moran pullin’ a coard?”

“No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin’ ever passed betune us but common civility. He thrated my father an’ mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them; but he never broke discoorse wid me barrin’, as I sed, in civility an’ friendship.”

“An’ do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all?”

“The nerra one.”

“Oh, you thief! Wid two sich lips o’ your own, an’ two sich eyes o’ your own, an’ two sich cheeks o’ your own! Oh,—, by the tarn, that won’t pass.”

“Well, an’ supposin’ I had—behave Phelim—supposin’ I had, where’s the harm? Sure it’s well known all the sweethearts, you had, an’ have yet, I suppose.”

“Be gorra, an’ that’s thruth; an’ the more the merrier, you jewel you, till, one get’s married. I had enough of them, in my day, but you’re the flower o’ them all, that I’d like to spend my life wid”—(a squeeze.)

“The sorra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o’ them as well as to me. Stop Phelim—it’s well known that what you say to the colleens is no gospel. You know what they christened you ‘Bouncin’ Phelim!”

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“Betune you an’ me, Peggy, I’ll tell you a sacret; I was the boy for deludin them. It’s very well known the matches I might a got; but you see, you little shaver, it was waitin’ for yourself I was.”

“For me! A purty story indeed I’m sure it was! Oh, afther that! Why, Phelim, how can you——Well, well, did any one ever hear the likes?”

“Be the vestments, it’s thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin’ till I’d get together as much money as ud’ set us up in the world dacently. Give me that egg-shell agin. Talkin’s dhruthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarah!* (* This to you you rogue) an’ a pleasant honeymoon to us!”

“Wait till we’re married first, Phelim; thin it’ll be time enough to dhrink that.”

“Come, acushla, it’s your turn now; taste the shell, an’ you’ll see how lovin’ it’ll make us. Mother’s milk’s a thrifle to it.”

“Well, if I take this, Phelim, I’ll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the mane time here’s whatever’s best for us! Whoo! Oh, my! but that’s strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!”

“Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an’ that it’s worth havin’ a regard for, jist like yourself an’ me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an likin’ I have for you, an’ ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, mavourneen, an’—an’—about the lips—”

“Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you’re the tazin’ Phelim! —Throth the girls may be glad when you’re married,” exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

“Bad cess to the bit, if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb’s a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I’ll love you in great style. Whin we’re marrid it’s I that’ll soodher you up. I won’t let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin’, too. All I’ll ax you to do will be to nurse the childhre; an’ that same will keep you busy enough, plase Goodness.”

“Upon my faix, Phelim, you’re the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy now? I’ll engage when you’re married, it’ll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you’d care little about us thin!”

“Be the vestments, I’m spakin’ pure gospel, so I am. Sure you don’t know that to be good husbands runs in our family. Every one of them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there’s that ould cock, my fadher, an’ if you’d see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it ’ud make your heart warm to any man o’ the family.”

“Ould an’ young was ever an’ always the same to you, Phelim. Sure the ouldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, couldn’t miss of your blarney. It’s reported you’re goin’ to be marrid to an ould woman.’

“He——hem—ahem! Bad luck to this cowld I have! it’s stickin’ in my throath entirely, so it is!—hem!—to a what?”

“Why to an ould woman, wid a great deal of the hard goold!”

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Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

"Would you oblage one wid her name?"

"You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

"To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women. God be praised that the night's line, anyhow! Hand me the shell, an' we'll take a *gauliogue* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

"You're takin' too much o' the whiskey, Phelim. Oh, for Goodness' sake!—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me, that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves, *acushla machree!* Now thry another *gauliogue*, an' you'll see how deludin' it'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"Arrah, nonsense! Be the vestment, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, alanna. Come now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, anyhow!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind, if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't brake my oath for all the whiskey in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is, that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that hasn't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us! Now, Peggy,—sit closer to me acushla!—-Now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you! Sure you know all the girls is fond of you. Aren't you the boy for deludin' them?—ha, ha, ha?"

“Come, come, you shaver; that won’t do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart’s warmin’ to you this minute, you’d fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it. Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called Bouncin’ Phelim?”

“To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say,”—

“Faith, it won’t pass, avourneen. That’s not the voice for it. Don’t you hear me, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin’ into your ear, *acushla machree?* Now turn about, like a purty entisin’ girl, as you are, an’ put your sweet bill to my ear the same way, an’ whisper what you know into it? That’s a darlin’! Will you, achora?”

“An’ maybe all this time you’re promised to another?”

“Be the vestments, I’m not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!”

“You’ll say that, anyhow!”

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“Do you see my hands acrass? Be thim five crasses, I’m not promised to a girl livin’, so I’m not, nor wouldn’t, bekase I had you in my eye. Now will you tell me what I’m wantin’ you? The grace o’ Heaven light down an you, an’ be a good, coaxin darlin’ for wanst. Be this an’ be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doin’s an’ times as we’ll have when we’re marrid. Now the weeny whisper, a colleen dhas.”

“It’s time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an’ be-----Why thin is it at the bottle agin you are? Now don’t dhrink so much, Phelim, or it’ll get into your head. I was sayin’ that if you behave yourself, an’ be a good boy, I may tell you somethin’ soon.”

“Somethin’ soon! Live horse, an’ you’ll get grass! Peggy, if that’s the way wid you, the love’s all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin’ to marry me, anyhow?”

“I’m willin’ to do whatsomever my father an’ mother wishes.”

“I’m for havin’ the weddin’ off-hand; an’ of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An’ I’ll tell you what, avourneen—be the holy vestments, if I was to be ‘called’ to fifty on the same Sunday, you’re the darlin’ I’d marry.”

“Phelim, it’s time for us to go up to the fire; we’re long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me.”

“Why, if you’re tired o’ me, Peggy, I don’t want you to stop. I wouldn’t force myself on the best girl that ever stepped.”

“Sure you have tould me all you want to say, an’ there’s no use in us stayin’ here. You know, Phelim, there’s not a girl in the Parish ’ud believe a word that ‘ud come but o’ your lips. Sure there’s none o’ them but you coorted one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you’d be here to-night at all or not.”

“Answer me this, Peggy. What do you! think your father ‘ud be willin’ to give you? Not that I care a *cron abaun* about it, for I’d marry you wid an inch of candle.”

“You know my father’s but a poor man, Phelim, an’ can give little or nothing. Them that won’t marry me as I am, needn’t come here to look for a fortune.”

“I know that, Peggy, an’ be the same token, I want no fortune at all wid you but yourself, darlin’. In the mane time, to show you that I could get a fortune—*Dhera Lorha Heena*, I could have a wife wid a hundre an’ twenty guineas!”

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Larry and Sheelah had received it. Her mirth was absolutely boisterous for at least ten minutes. Indeed, so loud had it been, that Larry and her father could not help asking:—

“Arrah, what’s the fun, Peggy, achora?”

“Oh, nothin’,” she replied, “but one o’ Phelim’s bounces.”

“Now,” said Phelim, “you won’t believe me? Be all the books—”

Peggy’s mirth prevented his oaths from being heard. In vain he declared, protested, and swore. On this occasion, he was compelled to experience the fate peculiar to all liars. Even truth, from his lips, was looked upon as falsehood.

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Phelim, on finding that he could neither extort from Peggy an acknowledgment of love, nor make himself credible upon the subject of the large fortune, saw that he had nothing for it now, in order to produce an impression, but the pathetic.

“Well,” said he, “you may lave me, Peggy achora, if you like; but out o’ this I’ll not budge, wid a blessing, till I cry my skinful, so I won’t. Saize the toe I’ll move, now, till I’m sick wid cryin’! Oh, murdher alive, this night! Isn’t it a poor case entirely, that the girl I’d suffer myself to be turned inside out for, won’t say that she cares about a hair o’ my head! Oh, thin, but I’m the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, oh! Peggy, achora, you’ll break my heart! Hand me that shell, acushla—for I’m in the height of affliction!”

Peggy could neither withhold it, nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

“It is makin’ fun o’ me you are, you thief, eh?—Is it laughin’ at my grief you are?” exclaimed Phelim. “Be the tarn’ o’ wor, I’ll punish you for that.”

Peggy attempted to escape, but Phelim succeeded, ere she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which was finally entered into and debated, pro and con.

“Now, Paddy Donovan, that we’re altogether, let me tell you one thing: there’s not a betther natur’d boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish, than my Phelim. He’ll make your daughther as good, a husband as ever broke bread!”

“I’m not sayin’ against that, Larry. He is a good-nathur’d boy: but I tell you, Larry Toole, that my daughter’s his fill of a wife any day. An’ I’ll put this to the back o’ that—she’s a hard-workin’ girl, that ates no idle bread.”

“Very right,” said Sam Appleton. “Phelim’s a hairo, an’ she’s a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, *abouchal*, why don’t you—oh, I see you are. Why, I was goin’ to bid you make up to her.”

“Give no gosther, Sam,” replied Phelim, “but sind round the bottle, an’ don’t forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night.”

“Oh, Phelim!” exclaimed Peggy.

“Whisht!” said Phelim, “there’s no use in lettin’ the ould fellows be committin’ sin. Why, they’re hearty (* Tipsy) as it is, the sinners.”

“Come, nabors,” said Burn, “I’m the boy that’s for close work. How does the match stand? You’re both my friends, an’ may this be poison to me, but I’ll spake like an honest man, for the one as well as for the other.

“Well, then,” said Donovan, “how is Phelim to support my daughther, Larry? Sure that’s a fair questin’, any way.”

“Wiry, Paddy,” replied Larry, “when Phelim gets her, he’ll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There’s that ‘half-acre,’ and a betther piece o’ land isn’t in Europe!”

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“Well, but what plenishin’ are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre’s but a poor look up.”

“I’d as soon you’d not make little of it, in the mane time,” replied Larry, rather warmly. “As good a couple as ever they wor lived on that half acre; along wid what they earned by hard work otherwise.”

“I’m not disparagin’ it, Larry; I’d be long sorry; but about the furniture? What are they to begin the world wid?”

“Hut,” said Devlin, “go to the sarra wid yez!—What ’ud they want, no more nor other young people like them, to begin the world wid? Are you goin’ to make English or Scotch of them, that never marries till they’re able to buy a farm an’ stock it, the nagurs. By the staff in my hand, an Irish man ‘ud lash a dozen o’ them, wid all then prudence! Hasn’t Phelim an’ Peggy health and hands, what most new-married couples in Ireland begins the world wid? Sure they’re not worse nor a thousand others?”

“Success, Antony,” said Phelim. “Here’s your health for that!”

“God be thanked they have health and hands,” said Donovan. “Still, Antony, I’d like that they’d have somethin’ more.”

“Well, then, Paddy, spake up for yourself,” observed Larry. “What will you put to the fore for the colleen? Don’t take both flesh an’ bone!”

“I’ll not spake up, till I know all that Phelim’s to expect,” said Donovan. “I don’t think he has a right to be axin’ anything wid sich a girl as my Peggy.”

“Hut, tut, Paddy! She’s a good colleen enough; but do you think she’s above any one that carries the name of O’Toole upon him? Still, it’s but raisonable for you to wish the girl well settled. My Phelim will have one half o’ my worldly goods, at all evints.”

“Name them, Larry, if you plase.”

“Why, he’ll have one o’ the goats—the gray one, for she’s the best o’ the two, in throth. He’ll have two stools; three hens, an’ a toss-up for the cock. The biggest o’ the two pots; two good crocks; three good wooden trenchers, an’—hem—he’ll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin’ to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I’m givin’ you, *a veehonee?—his own bed!* An’ there’s all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy.”

“I’m to have my own bedstead too,” said Phelim, “an’ bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. It’s as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone.”

“Paddy Donovan, spake up,” said Larry.

“Spake up!” said Paddy, contemptuously. “Is it for three crowns’ worth I’d spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Bedhu husth*, (* hold your tongue) man!”

“Put round the bottle,” said Phelim, “we’re dhry here.”

“Thrue enough, Phelim,” said the father. “Paddy, here’s towarst you an’ yours—nabors—all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won’t put between us.”

“Throth, it won’t, Larry—an’ I’m thankful to you. Your health, Larry, an’ all your healths! Phelim an’ Peggy, success to yez, whether or not! An’ now, in regard o’ your civility, I will spake up. My proposal is this:—I’ll put down guinea for guinea wid you.”

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Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

“I’ll do that same, Paddy,” said Larry; “but I’ll lave it to the present company, if you’re not bound to put down the first guinea. Nabors, amn’t I right?”

“You are right, Larry,” said Burn; “it’s but fair that Paddy should put down the first.”

“Molly, achora,” said Donovan to the wife, who, by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—“Molly, achora, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket.”

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

“Come, Larry,” said he, laying down a guinea-note, “cover that like a man.”

“Phelim carries my purse,” observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house—The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father’s alusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

“Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an’ I, doubt he finds it a light burdyeen.”

Phelim approached in all his glory.

“What am I to do?” he inquired, with a swagger.

“You’re to cover that guinea-note wid a guinea, if you can,” said Donovan.

“Whether ’ud you prefar goold or notes,” said Phelim, looking pompously about him; “that’s the talk.”

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

“Oh, goold—goold by all manes!” replied Donovan.

“Here goes the goold, my worthy,” said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bona fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good, he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralized, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

“Come, Paddy,” said Larry, “go an!—ha, ha, ha!”

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chase, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

“Come, Phelim!” said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

“Good agin!” said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

“You’ll find it good,” said Larry. “I wish we had a sackful o’ them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man, who’s afeard?”

“Sowl, I’m done,” said Donovan, throwing down the purse with a hearty laugh—“give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure these two guineas is for my rint, an’ we mustn’t let them come atween us at all.”

“Now,” said Larry, “to let you see that my son’s not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shill out the rest o’ the yallow boys.”

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“Faix, you ought to dhrink the ould woman’s health for this,” said Phelim. “Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was savin’ up these for me. It’s my mother I’m speakin’ about.”

“An’ we will, too,” said the father; “here’s Sheelah’s health, neighbors! The best poor man’s wife that ever threwn a gown over her shouldhers.”

This was drank with all the honors, and the negotiation proceeded.

“Now,” said Appleton, “what’s to be done? Paddy, say what you’ll do for the girl.”

“Money’s all talk,” said Donovan; “I’ll give the girl the two-year ould heifer—an’ that’s worth double what his father has promised Phelim; I’ll give her a stone o’ flax, a dacent suit o’ clo’es, my blessin’—an’ there’s her fortune.”

“Has she neither bed nor beddin’?” inquired Larry.

“Why, don’t you say that Phelim’s to have his own bed?” observed Donovan. “Sure one bed ’ill be plinty for them.”

“I don’t care a damn about fortune,” said Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain—“so long as I get the darlin’ herself. But I think there ‘ud be no harm in havin’ a spare pair o’ blankets—an’, for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body.”

“I don’t much mind givin’ you a brother to the bedstead you have, Phelim,” replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim’s bedstead.

“I’ll tell you what you must do,” said Larry, “otherwise I’ll not stand it. Give the colleen a chaff bed, blankets an’ all other parts complate, along wid that slip of a pig. If you don’t do this, Paddy Donovan, why we’ll finish the whiskey an’ part friends—but it’s no match.”

“I’ll never do it, Larry. The bed an’ beddin’ I’ll give; but the pig I’ll by no manner o’ manes part wid.”

“Put round the bottle,” said Phelim, “we’re gettin’ dhry agin—sayin’ nothin’ is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!”

“Come, Paddy Donnovan,” wid Devlin, “dang it, let out a little, considher he has ten guineas; and I give it as my downright maxim an opinion, that he’s fairly entitled to the pig.”

“You’re welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an’ I’m welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. My daughter’s wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled.”

“An’ my son,” said Larry, “is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin’ little, at the same time, of either you or her.”

“Paddy,” said Burn, “there’s no use in spakin’ that way. I agree wid Antony, that you ought to throw in the ‘slip.’”

“Is it what I have to pay my next gale o’ rint wid? No, no! If he won’t marry her widout it, she’ll get as good that will.”

“Saize the ‘slip,” said Phelim, “the darlin’ herself here is all the slip I want.”

“But I’m not so,” said Larry, “the ‘slip’ must go in, or it’s a brake off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o’ root. Did you hear that, Paddy Donovan?”

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“I hear it,” said Paddy, “but I’ll b’lieve as much of it as I like.”

Phelim apprehended that as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

“Ould man,” said he “have sinse, an’ pass that over, if you have any regard for Phelim.”

“I’d not be brow-bate into anything,” observed Donovan.

“Sowl, you would not,” said Phelim; “for my part, Paddy, I’m ready to marry your daughther (a squeeze to Peggy) widout a ha’p’orth at all, barrin’ herself. It’s the girl I want, an’ not the slip.”

“Thin, be the book, you’ll get both, Phelim, for your dacency,” said Donovan; “but, you see I wouldn’t be bullied into’ puttin’ one foot past the other, for the best man that ever stepped on black leather.”

“Whish!” said Appleton, “that’s the go! Success ould heart! Give us your hand, Paddy, —here’s your good health, an’ may you never button an empty pocket!”

“Is all settled?” inquired Molly.

“All, but about the weddin’ an’ the calls,” replied her husband. “How are we to do about that, Larry?”

“Why, in the name o’ Goodness, to save time,” he replied, “let them be called on Sunday next, the two Sundays afther, an thin marrid, wid a blessin’.”

“I agree wid that entirely,” observed Molly; “an’ now Phelim, clear away, you an’ Peggy, off o’ that chist, till we have our bit o’ supper in comfort.”

“Phelim,” said Larry, “when the suppers done, you must slip over to Roche’s for a couple o’ bottles more o’ whiskey. We’ll make a night of it.”

“There’s two bottles in the house,” said Donovan; “an’, be the saikerment, the first man that talks of bringin’ in more, till these is dhrunk, is ondacent.”

This was decisive. In the meantime, the chest was turned into a table, the supper laid, and the attack commenced. All was pleasure, fun, and friendship. The reader may be assured that Phelim, during the negotiation, had not misspent the time with Peggy, Their conversation, however, was in a tone too low to be heard by those who were themselves talking loudly.

One thing, however, Phelim understood from his friend Sam Appleton, which was, that some clue had been discovered to an outrage in which he (Appleton) had been

concerned. Above all other subjects, that was one on which Phelim was but a poor comforter. He himself found circumspection necessary; and he told Appleton, that if ever danger approached him, he had resolved either to enlist, or go to America, if he could command the money.

“You ought to do that immediately,” added Phelim.

“Where’s the money?” replied the other. “I don’t know,” said Phelim; “but if I was bent on goin’, the want of money wouldn’t stop me as long as it could be found in the counthry. We had to do as bad for others, an’ it can’t be a greater sin to do that much for ourselves.”

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“I’ll think of it,” said Appleton. “Any rate, it’s in for a penny, in for a pound, wid me.”

When supper was over, they resumed their drinking, sang songs, and told anecdotes with great glee and hilarity. Phelim and Peggy danced jigs and reels, whilst Appleton sang for them, and the bottle also did its duty.

On separating about two o’clock, there was not a sober man among them but Appleton. He declined drinking, and was backed in his abstemiousness by Phelim, who knew that sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim, therefore, drank for them both, and that to such excess, that Larry, by Appleton’s advice, left him at his father’s in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry’s grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son’s absence, by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow as he went along, about “Ma Phelim.” When he reached home, his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl, that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery, When he had fatigued himself, he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o’clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an aching head, the result of the last night’s proceedings. Everything he assured her was settled: Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

“Where’s Phelim?” said the wife; “an’ why didn’t he come home wid you last night?”

“Where is Phelim? Why, Sheelah, woman sure he did come home wid me last night.”

“*Ghrush orrin*, Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an’ in regard of his bein’ abroad so often at night, myself didn’t think it sthrange.”

Phelim’s absence astounded them both, particularly the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night, after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan’s to inquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own tender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

“No fear of him,” said the father, “here’s himself. Arrah, Phelim, what became of you last night? Where wor you?”

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

“I suppose you’re sick too, Phelim,” said the father. “My head’s goin’ round like a top.”

“Ate your breakfast,” said his mother; it’s the best thing for you.”

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“Where wor you last night, Phelim?” inquired the father.

“What are you sayin’, ould man?”

“Who wor you wid last night?”

“Do, Phelim,” said the mother, “tell us, aroon. I hope it wasn’t out you wor. Tell us, avourneen?”

“Ould woman, what are you talking about?”

Phelim whistled “*ulican dim oh*,” or, “the song of sorrow.” At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice:—“*Ma chuirp an diouol!* ould couple, but I’m robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton!”

“Robbed by Sam Appleton! Heavens above!” exclaimed the father.

“Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree*, Phelim! no, you aren’t!” exclaimed the mother.

“*Gra machree* yourself! but I say I am,” replied Phelim; “robbed clane of every penny of it!”

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton’s connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding, that while he was in a state of intoxication, he had been stripped of Appleton’s clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning, he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own, he found, to his misery, that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had “left the neighborhood for a while, till the throuble he was in ’ud pass over.”

“But I know where he’s gone,” said Phelim, “an’ may the divil’s luck go wid him, an’ God’s curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! ’Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an’ now I’d give the town land we’re in to be fairly out of it.”

“*Hanim an diouol!*” said the father, “is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where’s the villain, Phelim?”

“He’s gone to America,” replied the son* “The divil tare the tongue out o’ myself,’ too! I should be puttin’ him up to go there, an’ to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly.”

“Well, but how are we to manage?” inquired Larry. “What’s to be done?”

“Why,” said the other, “to bear it an say nothin’. Even if he was in his father’s house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power, that I couldn’t say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!”

That day was a very miserable one to Phelim and the father. The loss of the ten guineas, and the feverish sickness produced from their debauch, rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters, too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially

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upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to wear on his wedding-day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbors in the village, who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure, if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all we have to get is the whiskey, the marriage money, an' some other thrifies."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they're married than whin they're single. I'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse luck I can't have, if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

* This is another absurd opinion peculiar to the Irish, and certainly one of the most pernicious that prevail among them. Indeed, I believe there is no country in which so many absurd maxims exist.

"I'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's, an' send him to the priest's to dive in your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the curate: if you go near Father O'Hara, it 'ud knock a plan on the head that I've invinted. I'm in the notion that I'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I'll squeeze as much out of her as I'll bring me to America, for I'm not overly safe here; or, if all fails, I'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It 'ud bring us all across."

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time, was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity, where the fair sex was concerned, had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that should he even escape the three, the *eclat*, resulting from so celebrated a transaction would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodie Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest, to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis, Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humor, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honors with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable, but that he should have the effrontery to make him the instrument of such an affair, he thought a little too bad.

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“Now,” said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night. “it is quite evident that this scapegrace reckons upon our refusal to call him with any of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two.”

“How do you intend to act, sir?” inquired the curate.

“Why,” said Mr. O’Hara, “certainly to call him to each: it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him.”

“I don’t know as to the punishment,” replied the curate. “If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke.”

“Very possible,” observed his superior, “but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who certainly would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America.”

“It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him,” said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation.

“We will have a scene, at all events,” said Mr. O’Hara; “for I’m resolved to expose him. No blame can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it.” It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light.

He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcase the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large; one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teernarogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:—

“I would not,” said he, “upon any other occasion of this kind, think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly unique, and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors, to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a

patriarch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish Patriarch is? Why, no other than bouncing Phelim O'Toole!"

This was received precisely as the priest anticipated: loud were the snouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He wouldn't be himself, or he'd kick up a dust some way."

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“Blessed Phelim! Just like him! Faith, he couldn’t be marrid in the common coorse!”

“Arrah, whisht till we hear the name o’ the happy crathur that’s to be blisthered with Phelim! The darlin’s in luck, whoever she is, an’ has gained a blessed prize in the ‘Bouncer.’”

“This bouncing patriarch,” continued the priest, “has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world;—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim’s house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself, is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for surely she who has given such convincing proof of discretion, must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher.”

“Blood alive! Isn’t that fine language?”

“You may say that! Begad, it’s himself can discoorse! What’s the Protestants to that?”

“The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man’s daughter, will certainly bring property to Phelim. There is also an aptness in this selection, which does credit to the ‘Patriarch.’ Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment with which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed: although we certainly do read that a light heel was of little service to Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a ‘light hand;’ (* Intimating theft) it is, therefore, but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider as of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country, is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes than here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the ‘Patriarch’ and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouch-saving to bear their expenses.”

“Divil a lie in that, anyhow! If ever any one crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can’t his Reverence be funny whin he plases?”

“Many a time it was prophecized for him: an’ his Reverence knows best.”

“Begad, Phelim’s gettin’ over the coals. But sure it’s all the way the father an’ mother reared him.”

“Tunder-an’-trff, is he goin’ to be called to a pair o’ them?”

“Faix, so it seems.”

“Oh, the divil’s clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out.”

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“The third damsel is by no means so, well adapted for Phelim as either of the other two. What she could have seen in him is another problem much more difficult than the one I have mentioned. I would advise her to reconsider the subject, and let Phelim have the full benefit of the attention she may bestow upon it. If she finds the ‘Patriarch’ possessed of any one virtue, except necessity, I will admit that it is pretty certain that she will soon discover the longitude, and that has puzzled the most learned men of the world. If she marries this ‘Patriarch’, I think the angels who may visit him will come in the shape of policemen; and that Phelim, so long as he can find a cudgel, will give them anything but a patriarchal reception, is another thing of which we may rest pretty certain.

“I. now publish the bans of matrimony between Phelim O’Toole of Teernarogarah, and Bridget Doran of Dernascobe. If any person knows of any impediment why these two should not be joined in wedlock, they are bound to declare it.

“This Bridget Doran, my friends, is no other than my old housekeeper; but when, where, or how, Phelim could have won upon her juvenile affections is one of those mysteries which is never to be explained. I dare say, the match was brought about by despair on her side, and necessity on his. She despaired of getting a husband, and he had a necessity for the money. In point of age I admit she would make a very fit wife for any ‘Patriarch.’”

Language could not describe the effect which this disclosure produced upon the congregation. The fancy of every one present was tickled at the idea of a union between Phelim and the old woman. It was followed by roars of laughter which lasted several minutes.

“Oh, thin, the curse o’ the crows upon him, was he only able to butther up the ould woman! Oh, *Ghe dldven!* that flogs. Why, it’s a wondher he didn’t stale the ould slip, an’ make a run-away match of it—ha, ha, ha! Musha, bad scran to her, but she had young notions of her own! A purty bird she picked up in Phelim!—ha, ha, ha!”

“I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O’Toole of Teernarogarah and Sally Flattery of the same place. If any of you knows of any impediment why they should not be joined in wedlock you are bound to declare it.”

The mirth rose again, loud and general. Poodle Flattery, whose character was so well known, appeared so proper a father-in-law for Phelim, that his selection in this instance delighted them highly.

“Betther an’ betther, Phelim! More power to you! You’re fixed at last. Poodle Flattery’s daughter—a known thief! Well, what harm? Phelim himself has pitch on his fingers—or had, anyhow, when he was growin’ up—for many a thing stuck to them. Oh, bedad, now we know what his Reverence was at when he talked about the ’Sizes, bad luck to

them! Betune her an' the ould woman, Phelim 'ud be in Paradise! Foodie Flattery's daughter! Begad, she'll 'bring him property' sure enough, as his Reverence says."

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“I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O’Toole—whom we must in future call the ’Patriarch’—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you knows any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it.”

“Bravo! Phelim acushla. ’Tis you that’s the blessed youth. Tundher-an’-whiskey, did ever any body hear of sich desate? To do three o’ them. Be sure the Bouncer has some schame in this. Well, one would suppose Paddy Donovan an’ his daughter had more sinse nor to think of sich a runagate as Bouncin’ Phelim.”

“No, but the Pathriark! Sure his Reverence sez that we musn’t call him anything agin but the Pathriark! Oh, be gorra, that’s the name!—ha, ha, ha!”

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided, and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

“Now, my friends, here is such a piece of profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O’Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman—and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making me an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half-dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part, I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan’s daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O’Toole. I trust that this day’s proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether.”

Phelim’s fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed. On the contrary, had Phelim’s courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say, that the “giving out” or “calling” of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that Sunday. Every one had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. Now circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personae* brought in—all with great felicity, and quite suitable to Phelim’s character.

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Strongly contrasted with the amusement of the parishioners in general, was the indignation felt by the three damsels and their friends. The old housekeeper was perfectly furious; so much so, indeed, that the priest gave some dark hints at the necessity of sending for a strait waistcoat. Her fellow-servants took the liberty of breaking some strong jests upon her, in return for which she took the liberty of breaking two strong churnstaves upon them. Being a remarkably stout woman for her years, she put forth her strength to such purpose that few of them went to bed without sore bones. The priest was seriously annoyed at it, for he found that his house was a scene of battle during the remainder of the day.

Sally Flattery's uncle, in the absence of her father, indignantly espoused the cause of his niece. He and Donovan each went among their friends to excite in them a proper resentment, and to form a faction for the purpose of chastising Phelim. Their chagrin was bitter on finding that their most wrathful representations of the insult sustained by their families, were received with no other spirit than one of the most extravagant mirth. In vain did they rage and fume, and swear; they could get no one to take a serious view of it. Phelim O'Toole was the author of all, and from him it was precisely what they had expected.

Phelim himself, and the father, on hearing of the occurrence after mass, were as merry as any other two in the parish. At first the father was disposed to lose his temper; but on Phelim telling him he would bear no "gosther" on the subject, he thought proper to take it in good humor. About this time they had not more than a week's provision in the house, and only three shillings of capital. The joke of the three calls was too good a one to pass off as an ordinary affair; they had three shillings, and although it was their last, neither of them could permit the matter to escape as a dry joke. They accordingly repaired to the little public-house of the village, where they laughed at the world, got drunk, hugged each other, despised all mankind, and staggered home, Fagged and merry, poor and hearty, their arms about each other's necks, perfect models of filial duty and paternal affection.

The reader is aware that the history of Phelim's abrupt engagement with the housekeeper, was conveyed by Fool Art to Sally Flattery. Her thievish character rendered marriage as hopeless to her as length of days did to Bridget Doran. No one knew the plan she had laid for Phelim, but this fool, and, in order to secure his silence, she had promised him a shirt on the Monday after the first call. Now Art, as was evident by his endless habit of shrugging, felt the necessity of a shirt very strongly.

About ton o'clock on Monday he presented himself to Sally, and claimed his recompense.

"Art," said Sally, "the shirt I intended for you is upon Squire Nugent's hedge beside their garden. You know the family's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they're gettin'

their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let any one see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

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Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitered the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides his accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles—sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft. "Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a line white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply.

"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened that the Squire himself, who was a humorist, and also a justice of the peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the "Big House," as an Irish country gentleman's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields, he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

"Well, Art, where now?"

"To the crass roads, your honor."

"Art, is not this a fine place of mine? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William E-----'s?"

Sir William was Art's favorite patron.

"Sir William, your honor, has all this at his place."

"But I think my views are finer."

"They're fine enough," replied Art; "but where's the lake afore the door?"

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

“Art,” he continued, “would you carry a letter from me to M-----?”

“I’ll be wantin’ somethin’ to dhrink on the way,” said Art.

“You shall get something to eat and drink before you go,” said the Squire, “and half-a-crown for your trouble.”

“Augh,” exclaimed Art, “be dodda, sir, you’re nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor.” This was always Art’s compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a *letter of mittimus* to the county jailor, authorizing him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

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Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but, on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big house, he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's head did he resolve to transfer the revenge which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed he made way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting' on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the gay deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery, in tears, and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humor. When one of them attacked him, he winked at the other two when either of the other two came on, he Winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper; "but it's asy known I'm an unprojected woman, or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we'd pay you on the bones for bringin' me to shame and scandal, as you have done."

"Upon my sanies, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your situation, so I do," said Phelim. You've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you'd be a guard an' a projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it 'ud keep us, if you'd only see what's good for you. You blarnied an' palavered me, you villain, till you gained my infections an' thin you tuck the cholic as an excuse to lave me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughter. He should lay down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain! —an' him had no notion of it aither."

“An’ he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate,” said Nick Flattery; “an’ him had no notion of it aither.”

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“Sure he sent us all there,” exclaimed Donovan.

“He did,” said the old woman.

“Not a doubt of it,” observed Flattery.

“Ten guineas!” said the housekeeper. “An’ so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren’t you a right profligate?”

“Yes,” said Donovan, “aren’t you a right profligate?”

“Answer the dacent people,” said Mattery, “aren’t you a right profligate?”

“Take the world asy, all of ye,” replied Phelim. “Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do you hear me? Be the vestmints, I intinded to marry only one of you; an’ that I’ll do still, except I’m vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you’re all flyin’ at me, as if I had three heads or three tails upon me.”

“Maybe the poor boy’s not so much to blame,” said Mrs. Doran. “There’s hussies in this world,” and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, “that ’ud give a man no pace till he’d promise to marry them.”

“Why did he promise to them that didn’t want him thin?” exclaimed Donovan. “I’m not angry that he didn’t marry my daughther—for I wouldn’t give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her.”

“Paddy Donovan, did you hear what I said jist now?” replied Phelim, “I wish to Jamini some people ’ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I knew thim I intinded to marry, as well as I do where I’m standin’. That’s plain talk, Paddy. I’m sure the world’s not passed yet, I hope”—(a wink at Paddy Donovan.)

“An’ wasn’t he a big rascal to make little of my brother’s daughter as he did?” said Flattery; “but he’ll rub his heels together for the same act.”

“Nick Flathery, do you think I could marry three wives? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flathery, you didn’t thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick, an’ you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day.”

“Well, but what do you intind to do Phelim, avourn—you profligate?” said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge. “Why, I intind to marry one of you,” said Phelim. “I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass—be thim five crasses I’ll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside.”

“Then be an honest man,” said Flattery, “an’ tell us which o’ them you will marry.”

“Nick, don’t you know I always regarded your family. If I didn’t that I may never do an ill turn! Now! But some people can’t see anything. Arrah, fandher-an’-whiskey, man, would you expect me to tell out before all that’s here, who I’ll marry—to be hurtin’ the feelin’s of the rest. Faith, I’ll never do a shabby thing.”

“What rekimpinse will you make my daughter for bringin’ down her name afore the whole parish, along wid them she oughtn’t to be named in the one day wid?” said Donovan.

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“An’ who is that, Paddy Donovan?” said the housekeeper, with a face of flame.

“None of your broad hints, Paddy,” said Nick. “If it’s a collusion to Sally Flattery you mane, take care I don’t make you ate your words.”

“Paddy,” exclaimed Phelim, “you oughtn’t to be hurtin’ their feelin’s!”—(a friendly wink to Paddy.)

“If you mane me,” said the housekeeper, “by the crook on the fire, I’d lave you a mark.”

“I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me,” replied Donovan.

“For one, is it?” said Nick; “an’ who’s the other, i’ you plase?”

“Your brother’s daughter,” he replied. “Do you think I’d even (* compare) my daughter to a thief?”

“Be gorra,” observed Phelim, “that’s too provokin’, an’ what I wouldn’t bear. Will ye keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to Mrs Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?”

“To be sure you can,” she replied; “I’d give you fair play, if the diouol was in you.”

Phelim, accordingly, brought her out, and thus accosted her,—

“Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?” said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before? “Be the contints o’ that book, as sure as you’re beside me, it’s you I intind to marry. These other two—the curse o’ the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is bothyrin’ for love o’ me, an’ I surely did promise to get myself called to them. They wanted it to be a promise of marriage; but, says I, ’sure if we’re called together it’s the same, for whin it comes to that, all’s right,’—an’ so I tould both o’ them, unknownst to one another. Arra, be me sowl, you’d make two like them, so you would; an’ if you hadn’t a penny, I’d marry you afore aither o’ them to-morrow. Now, there’s the whole sacret, an’ don’t be onaisy about it. Tell Father O’Hara how it is, whin you go home, an’ that he must call the three o’ you to me agin on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase Goodness; jist that I may keep my promise to them. You know I couldn’t have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me.”

“My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a, burdyeen off o’ me! Faix, you’ll see how happy we’ll be.”

“To be sure we will! But I’m tould you’re sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you must promise to be kind an’ lovin’ to the childre, or be the vestment, I’ll break off the match yet.”

“Och, an’ why wouldn’t I, Phelim, acushla? Sure that’s but rason.”

“Well, take this book an’ swear it. Be gorra, your word won’t do, for it’s a thing my mind’s made up on. It’s I that’ll be fond o’ the childre.”

“An’ how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet.”

“Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o’ this book,”

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“Be the contints o’ this book,”

“I’ll be kind an’ motherly, an’ boistherous,”

“I’ll be kind, an’ motherly, an boistherous,”

“To my own childhre,”

“To my own childhre,”

“An’ never bate or abuse thim,”

“An’ never bate or abuse thim,”

“Barrin’ whin they desarve it;”

“Barrin’ whin they desarve it;”

“An’ this I swear,”

“An’ this I swear,”

“In the presence of St. Phelim,”

“In the presence of St. Phelim,” “Amin!”

“Amin!”

“Now, Mrs. Doran, acushla, if you could jist know how asy my conscience is about the childhre, poor crathurs, you’d be in mighty fine spirits. There won’t be sich a lovin’ husband, begad, in Europe. It’s I that’ll coax you, an’ butther you up like a new pair o’ brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar-candy to me. Won’t you, darlin’?”

“Be the crass, Phelim, darlin’, jewel, I’ll be as kind a wife as ever breathed. Arrah, Phelim, won’t you come down to-morrow evenin’? There’ll be no one at home but myself, an’—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin’ rogue! But, Phelim, you musn’t be—Oh, you’re a rogue! I see you laughin’! Will you come darlin?”

“Surely. But, death alive! I was near for-gettin’; sure, bad luck to the penny o’ the ten guineas but I paid away.”

“Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?”

“Your ten guineas, darlin’; an’ right well I managed it. Didn’t I secure Pat Hanratty’s farm by it? Sam Appleton’s uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the

ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, avourneen? Eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you Bridget for the future! It's sweeter an' more lovin'."

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it: but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o'heaven upon you, but you are the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice, an' go home without comin' in. I'm wantin' to get this other pair off o' my hands, as well as I can, an' our best way is to do it all widout noise. Isn't it, darlin'?"

"It is, Phelim, jewel; an' I'll go."

"Faith, Bridget, you've dealt in thracle afore now, you're so sweet. Now, acushla, farewell: an' take care of yourself till tomorrow evenin'!"

Phelim, on re-entering his father's cabin, found Larry and Peggy Donovan placed between her father and Flattery, each struggling to keep them asunder. Phelim at first had been anxious to set them by the ears, but his interview with the old woman changed his plan of operations altogether. With some difficulty he succeeded in repressing their tendency to single combat, which, having effected, he brought out Flattery and his niece, both of whom he thus addressed:—

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“Be the vestment, Sally, only that my regard an’ love for you is uncommon, I’d break off the affair altogether, so I would.”

“An’ why would you do so, Phelim O’Toole?” inquired the uncle.

“Bekase,” replied Phelim, “you came here an’ made a show of me, when I wished to have no *bruliagh*, at all at all. In regard of Peggy Donovan, I never spoke a word to the girl about marriage since I was christened. Saize the syllable! My father brought me down there to gosther awhile, the other night, an’ Paddy sent away for whiskey. An’ the curse o’ Cromwell on myself! I should get tossicated. So while I was half-saes over, the two ould rip set to makin’ the match—planned to have us called—an’ me knowin’ nothin’ about it, good, bad, or indifferent. That’s the thruth, be the sky above us.”

“An’ what have you to say about the housekeeper, Phelim?”

“Why I don’t know yet, who done me there. I was about takin’ a farm, an’ my father borried ten guineas from her. Somebody heard it—I suspect Sam Appleton—an’ gave in our names to the priest, to be called, makin’ a good joke of it. All sorts o’ luck to them, barrin’ good luck, that did it; but they put me in a purty state! But never heed! I’ll find them out yet. Now go home, both o’ you, an’ I’ll slip down in half an hour, with a bottle o’ whiskey in my pocket. We’ll talk over what’s to be done. Sure Sally here, knows that it’s my own intherest to marry her and no one else.”

“If my father thought you would, Phelim, he’d not stag, even if he was to cras the wather!”

“Go home, Sally darlin’ till I get this mad Donovan an’ his daughter away. Be all that’s beautiful I’ll be apt to give him a taste o’ my shillely, if he doesn’t behave himself! Half an hour I’ll be clownin—wid the bottle; an’ don’t you go, Nick, till you see me.”

“Phelim,” said the uncle, “you know how the case is. You must aither marry the girl, or take a long voyage, abouchal. We’ll have no bouncin’ or palaver.”

“Bedad, Mick, I’ve great patience wid you,” said Phelim, smiling: “go off, I say, both of you.”

They proceeded homewards, and Phelim returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together; a promise which they knew by the state of their finances, it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of a “booze,” however, tranquillized Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or the father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity, when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

“In regard to me,” she observed, “you may save yourself the throuble o’ comin’. I wouldn’t marry Phelim, afther what the priest said yistherday, if he had the riches o’ the townland we’re spakin’ in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an’ it was only to plase my father an’ mother, that I consinted to be called to him at all. I’ll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!”

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Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry, to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat with the intention of compelling her to return and retract, in their presence, what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake her, where, backed by her mother, she maintained her resolution, and succeeded, ere long, in bringing the father over to her opinion.

During this whole scene in Larry's, Fool Art sat in that wild abstraction which characterizes the unhappy class to which he belonged. He muttered to himself, laughed—or rather chuckled—shrugged his shoulders, and appeared to be as unconscious of what had taken place as an automaton. When the coast was clear he rose up and plucking Phelim's skirt, beckoned him towards the door.

"Phelim," said he, when they had got out, "would you like to airn a crown?"

"Tell me how, Art?" said Phelim.

"A letther from, the Square to the jailer of M------ jail. If you bring back an answer, you'll get a crown, your dinner, an' a quart o' strong beer."

"But why don't you bring it yourself, Art?"

"Why I'm afeard. Sure they'd keep ma in jail, I'm tould, if they'd catch me in it. Aha! Bo dodda, I won't go near them: sure they'd hang me for shootin' Bonypart.—Aha!"

"Must the answer be brought back today, Art?"

"Oh! It wouldn't do to-morrow, at all. Be dodda, no! Five shillins, your dinner, an' a quart of sthrong beer!—Aha! But you must give me a shillin' or two, to buy a sword; for the Square's goin' to make me a captain: thin I'll be grand! an' I'll make you a sargin'."

This seemed a windfall to Phelim. The unpleasant dilemma in which Sally Flattery had placed him, by the fabricated account of her father's imprisonment, made him extremely anxious to see Foodie himself, and to ascertain the precise outrage for which he had been secured. Here then was an opportunity of an interview with him, and of earning five shillings, a good dinner, and a quart of strong beer, as already specified.

"Art," said he, "give me the letther, an' I'm the boy that'll soon do the job. Long life to you, Art! Be the contints o' the book, Art, I'll never pelt you or vex you agin, my worthy; an' I'll always call you captain!" Phelim immediately commenced his journey to M------,

which was only five miles distant, and in a very short time reached the jail, saw the jailer, and presented his letter.

The latter, on perusing it, surveyed him with the scrutiny of a man whose eye was practised in scanning offenders.

Phelim, whilst the jailer examined him, surveyed the strong and massy bolts with which every door and hatchway was secured. Their appearance produced rather an uncomfortable sensation in him; so much so, that when the jailer asked him his name, he thought it more prudent, in consequence of a touch of conscience he had, to personate Art for the present, inasmuch as he felt it impossible to assume any name more safe than that of an idiot.

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“My name is Art Maguire,” said he in reply to the jailer. “I’m messenger to Square S ——, the one he had was discharged on Friday last. I expect soon to be made groom, too.”

“Come this way,” said the jailer, “and you shall have an answer.”

He brought Phelim into the prison-yard, where he remained for about twenty minutes, laboring under impressions which he felt becoming gradually more unpleasant. His anxiety was not lessened on perceiving twenty or thirty culprits, under the management of the turnkeys, enter the yard, where they were drawn up in a line, like a file of soldiers.

“What’s your name?” said one of the turnkeys.

“Art Maguire,” replied Phelim.

“Stand here,” said the other, shoving him among the prisoners. “Keep your head up, you villain, an’ don’t be ashamed to look your friends in the face. It won’t be hard to identify you, at any rate, you scoundrel. A glimpse of that phiz, even by starlight, would do you, you dog. Jack, tell Mr. S. to bring in the gintlemen—they’re all ready.”

Phelim’s dismay on finding himself under drill with such a villainous crew was indescribable. He attempted to parley with the turnkey, but was near feeling the weight of his heavy keys for daring to approach a man placed in authority.

While thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, three gentlemen, accompanied by the jailer, entered the yard, and walked backward and forward in front of the prisoners, whose faces and persons they examined with great care. For a considerable time they could not recognize any of them; but just as they were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed,

“Here, jailer, this man I identify. I can-not be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What’s his’ name?”

“He gives his name, sir, as Arthur Maguire.”

“Arthur what, sir?” said another of the turnkeys, looking earnestly at Phelim. “Why, sir, this is the fellow that swore the alibis for the Kellys—ay, an’ for the Delaneys, an’ for the O’Briens. His name is Phelim O’Toole; an’ a purty boy he is, by all report.”

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

“Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—be gorra, I’d take it as a convanience—I mane, as a favor—-if you’d believe me that there’s a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S. wid a letter to Mr. S-----t, an’ he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O’Toole, if you mane the rascal that swears the alibis, faith, I can’t deny but I’m as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his ‘dhroop,’ any how; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble--ha, ha, ha! Mr. S------t, what answer have you for the Square, sir? Bedad, I’m afeard I’ll be late.”

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“That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or whatever your name is, authorizes me to detain you as a prisoner, until I hear further from Mr. S.”

“I identify him distinctly,” said the gentleman, once more. “I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge information against him immediately.”

“Sir,” said Phelim to the jailer, “the Square couldn’t mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letter to, for to bring to you, the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Be gorra, you’re playin’ your thrieks upon sthrangers now, I suppose.”

“Why, you lying rascal,” said the jailer, “have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? That you are Mr. S.’s messenger, and expect to be made his groom. And now you deny all this.”

“He’s Phelim O’Toole,” said the turnkey, “I’ll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute, I’ll soon prove it.”

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict, whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernarogarah: and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was any one among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied, “Whethen, divil a one, barrin’ bouncin’ Phelim O’Toole.”

The turnkey brought him down to the yard, where he immediately recognized Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

“Bad luck to you,” said Phelim in Irish, “is this a place to welcome your friends to!”

“There is some mystery here,” said the jailer. “I suppose the fact is, that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S., and that that accounts for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter.”

All Phelim’s attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression. The jailer desired him to be locked up.

“Divil fire you all, you villains!” exclaimed Phelim, “is it goin’ to put me in crib ye are for no rason in life? Doesn’t the whole parish know that I was never off o’ my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, until widin two or three days agone!”

“There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib,” said the jailer; “but if you can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey.”

“No, tarenation to the fut I’ll go,” said Phelim, “till I’m carried.”

“Doesn’t the gintleman identify you, you villain,” replied one of the turnkeys; “an’ isn’t the Square’s letther in your favor?”

“Villain, is id!” exclaimed Phelim. “An’ from a hangman’s cousin, too, we’re to bear this! —eh? Take that, anyhow, an’ maybe you’ll get more when you don’t expect it. Whoo! Success, Phelim! There’s blood in you still, abouchal!”

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He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In a moment, however, he was secured, for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

“To the devil’s warmin’ pan wid ye all,” he continued, “you may do your worst. I defy you. Ha! by the heavens above me, you’ll suffer for this, my fine gintleman. What can ye do but hang or thransport me, you villains? I tell ye, if a man’s sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off ’ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait! Did ye ever hear of a man they call Dan O’Connell? Be my sowl, he’ll make yez rub your heels together, for keepin’ an innocent boy in jail, that there’s no law or no warrant out for. This is the way we’re thrated by thim that’s ridin’ rough shod over us. But have a taste o’ patience, ye scoundrels! It won’t last, I can tell yez. Our day will soon come, an’ thin I’d recommend yez to thravel for your health. Hell saize the day’s pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country, till laws, an’ judges, an’ Jries, an’ jails, an’ jailers, an’ turnkeys, an’ hangmen is all swep out of it. Saize the day. An’ along wid them goes the parsons, procthors, tithes an’ taxes, all to the devil together. That day’s not very far off, d——d villains! An’ now I tell ye, that if a hair o’ my head’s touched—ay, if I was hanged to-morrow—I’d lave them behind me that ‘ud put a bullet, wid the help an’ blessin’ O Grod, through any one that’ll injure me! So lay that to your conscience, an’ do your best. Be the crass, O’Connell I’ll make you look nine ways at wanst for this! He’s the boy can put the pin in your noses! He’s the boy can make yez thrimble, one an’ all o’ yez—like a dog in a wet sack! An’, wid the blessin’ o’ God, he’ll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!”

“That’s a prudent speech,” observed the jailer; “it will serve you very much.”

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

“Bring the ruffian off” added the jailer; “put him in solitary confinement.”

“Put me wid Foodie Flattery,” said Phelim; “you’ve got him here, an’ I’ll go nowhere else. Faith, you’ll suffer for givin’ me false imprisonment. Doesn’t O’Connell’s name make you shake? Put me wid Foodie Flattery, I say.”

“Foodie Flattery! There is no such man here. Have you got such a person here?” inquired the jailer of the turnkey.

“Not at present,” said the turnkey; “but I know Foodie well. We’ve had him here twice. Come away, Phelim; follow me; you’re goin’ to be put where you’ll have an opportunity of sayin’ your prayers.”

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He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was clearly convinced that until jails, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys," like himself, at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day, and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection. Whilst thus dispensing his execrations, the jailer and the three gentlemen, having been struck with his allusion to Foodie Flattery, and remembering that Foodie was of indifferent morals, came to the unanimous opinion that it would be a good plan to secure him; and by informing him that Phelim was in prison upon a capital charge, endeavor to work upon his fears, by representing his companion as disposed to turn approver. The state of the country, and Foodie's character, justified his apprehension on suspicion. He was accordingly taken, and when certified of Phelim's situation, acted precisely as had been expected. With very little hesitation, he made a full disclosure of the names of several persons concerned in burnings, waylayings, and robbery of arms. The two first names on the list were those of Phelim and Appleton, with several besides, some of whom bore an excellent, and others an execrable, character in the country.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire; but by no means lessened his bitterness against him, for the prank he had intended to play upon him. With great simplicity, he presented himself at the Big House, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised at seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the jailer's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honor," replied Art. "Did you yourself give it into his hands, as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodda, would your honor think Art 'ud tell a lie? Sure he read it. Aha!"

"An' what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense. You for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

“No, sir. He said,” added the fool, with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel, in which the Squire’s character had not come off with flying colors—“he said, sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick agin for threepence to the poticarry.”

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This having been the manner in which the Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject prevented him from being received at the Big House in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship. We will, however, go so far beyond our original plan, as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in jail, under a charge of felony, Sally Mattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that he might hould up his head wid any o' them. Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her, to pay the lawyers for defending him; not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon fund, and the Irish reader cannot forget the eloquent and pathetic, appeal made by his counsel to the jury, on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The appeal, however, was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter—we mean that in which it was stated, "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to the wall at last." The other, though not literally accomplished, was touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging. We,cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he remained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him, touching his religion? knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated; nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with Revelation.

Immediately after his transportation, Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life, the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah! Larry," she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God, becase He didn't give us childhre. An' when it plased Him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to 've spoiled him by over-indulgence, an' by lettin' him have his own head in everythin' as we did. If we had sint him to school, an' larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehavior, and his oaths, as if they wor sport—ay,

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an abusin' the nabors when they'd complain of him, or tell us what he was—ay!—if we had, it's a credit an' a comfort he'd be to us now, an' not a shame an' a disgrace, an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An' God help us! We made his bed too, poor boy, an' a hard one it is. God forgive us! but, anyhow, my heart a breakin', for bad as he was, sure we havn't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still he was game an' cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him beyant, poor fellow. But sure the boys' kep their word to him, anyhow, in regard of shootin' Foodie Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life, than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

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We have attempted to draw Phelim O'Toole as closely as possible to the character of that class, whose ignorance, want of education and absence of all moral principle, constitute them the shame and reproach of the country. By such men the peace of Ireland is destroyed, illegal combinations formed, blood shed, and nightly outrages committed. There is nothing more certain than this plain truth, that if proper religious and moral knowledge were impressed upon the early principles of persons like Phelim, a conscience would be created capable of revolting from crime. Whatever the grievances of a people may be, whether real or imaginary, one thing is clear, that neither murder nor illegal violence of any description, can be the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the background, because its details could excite only aversion, and preferred exhibiting his utter ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable.

WILDGOOSE LODGE

I had read the anonymous summons, but from its general import I believed it to be one of those special meetings convened for some purpose affecting the usual objects and proceedings of the body; at least the terms in which it was conveyed to me had nothing extraordinary or mysterious in them, beyond the simple fact, that it was not to be a general but a select meeting: this mark of confidence flattered me, and I determined to attend punctually. I was, it is true, desired to keep the circumstances entirely to myself, but there was nothing startling in this, for I had often received summonses of a similar nature. I therefore resolved to attend, according to the letter of my instructions, "on the next night, at the solemn hour of midnight, to deliberate and act upon such matters as should then and there be submitted to my consideration." The morning after I received

this message, I arose and resumed my usual occupations; but, from whatever cause it may have proceeded, I felt a sense of approaching evil hang heavily upon

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me; the beats of my pulse were languid, and an undefinable feeling of anxiety pervaded my whole spirit; even my face was pale, and my eye so heavy, that my father and brothers concluded me to be ill; an opinion which I thought at the time to be correct, for I felt exactly that kind of depression which precedes a severe fever. I could not understand what I experienced, nor can I yet, except by supposing that there is in human nature some mysterious faculty, by which, in coming calamities, the dread of some fearful evil is anticipated, and that it is possible to catch a dark presentiment of the sensations which they subsequently produce. For my part I can neither analyze nor define it; but on that day I knew it by painful experience, and so have a thousand others in similar circumstances.

It was about the middle of winter. The day was gloomy and tempestuous, almost beyond any other I remember; dark clouds rolled over the hills about me, and a close sleet-like rain fell in slanting drifts that chased each other rapidly towards the earth on the course of the blast. The outlying cattle sought the closest and calmest corners of the fields for shelter; the trees and young groves were tossed about, for the wind was so unusually high that it swept in hollow gusts through them, with that hoarse murmur which deepens so powerfully on the mind the sense of dreariness and desolation.

As the shades of night fell, the storm, if possible, increased. The moon was half gone, and only a few stars were visible by glimpses, as a rush of wind left a temporary opening in the sky. I had determined, if the storm should not abate, to incur any penalty rather than attend the meeting; but the appointed hour was distant, and I resolved to be decided by the future state of the night.

Ten o’clock came, but still there was no change: eleven passed, and on opening the door to observe if there were any likelihood of its clearing up, a blast of wind, mingled with rain, nearly blew me off my feet. At length it was approaching to the hour of midnight; and on examining it a third time, I found it had calmed a little, and no longer rained.

I instantly got my oak stick, muffled myself in my great coat, strapped my hat about my ears, and, as the place of meeting was only a quarter of a mile distant, I presently set out.

The appearance of the heavens was lowering and angry, particularly in that point where the light of the moon fell against the clouds, from a seeming chasm in them, through which alone she was visible. The edges of this chasm were faintly bronzed, but the dense body of the masses that hung piled on each side of her, was black and inpenetrable to sight. In no other point of the heavens was there any part of the sky visible; a deep veil of clouds overhung the whole horizon, yet was the light sufficient to

give occasional glimpses of the rapid shifting which took place in this dark canopy, and of the tempestuous agitation with which the midnight storm swept to and fro beneath it.

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At length I arrived at a long slated house, situated in a solitary part of the neighborhood; a little below it ran a small stream, which was now swollen above its banks, and rushing with mimic roar over the flat meadows beside it. The appearance of the bare slated building in such a night was particularly sombre, and to those, like me, who knew the purpose to which it was usually devoted, it was or ought to have been peculiarly so. There it stood, silent and gloomy, without any appearance of human life or enjoyment about or within it. As I approached, the moon once more had broken out of the clouds, and shone dimly upon the wet, glittering slates and windows, with a death-like lustre, that gradually faded away as I left the point of observation, and entered the folding-door. It was the parish chapel.

The scene which presented itself here was in keeping not only with the external appearance of the house, but with the darkness, the storm, and the hour, which was now a little after midnight. About forty persons were sitting in dead silence upon the circular steps of the altar. They did not seem to move; and as I entered and advanced, the echo of my footsteps rang through the building with a lonely distinctness, which added to the solemnity and mystery of the circumstances about me. The windows were secured with shutters on the inside, and on the altar a candle was lighted, which burned dimly amid the surrounding darkness, and lengthened the shadow of the altar itself, and those of six or seven persons who stood on its upper steps, until they mingled in the obscurity which shrouded the lower end of the chapel. The faces of the men who sat on the altar steps were not distinctly visible, yet their prominent and more characteristic features were in sufficient relief, and I observed, that some of the most malignant and reckless spirits in the parish were assembled. In the eyes of those who stood at the altar, and those whom I knew to be invested with authority over the others, I could perceive gleams of some latent and ferocious purpose, kindled, as I soon observed, into a fiercer expression of vengeance, by the additional excitement of ardent spirits, with which they had stimulated themselves to a point of determination that mocked at the apprehension of all future responsibility, either in this world or the next.

The welcome which I received on joining them was far different from the boisterous good-humor that used to mark our greetings on other occasions; just a nod of the head from this or that person, on the part of those who sat, with a *dhud dhemur tha fhu?* (* How are you?) in a suppressed voice, even below a common whisper: but from the standing group, who were evidently the projectors of the enterprise, I received a convulsive grasp of the hand, accompanied by a fierce and desperate look, that seemed to search my eye and countenance, to try if I were a person likely to shrink from whatever they had resolved to

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execute. It is surprising to think of the powerful expression which a moment of intense interest or great danger is capable of giving to the eye, the features and the slightest actions, especially in those whose station in society does not require them to constrain nature, by the force of social courtesies, into habits that conceal their natural emotions. None of the standing group spoke; but as each of them wrung my hand in silence, his eye was fixed on mine, with an expression of drunken confidence and secrecy, and an insolent determination not to be gainsaid without peril. If looks could be translated with certainty, they seemed to say, “We are bound upon a project of vengeance, and if you do not join us, remember we can revenge.” Along with this grasp, they did not forget to remind me of the common bond by which we were united, for each man gave me the secret grip of Ribbonism in a manner that made the joints of my fingers ache for some minutes afterwards.

There was one present, however—the highest in authority—whose actions and demeanor were calm and unexcited. He seemed to labor under no unusual influence whatever, but evinced a serenity so placid and philosophical, that I attributed the silence of the sitting group, and the restraint which curbed in the outbreaking passions of those who stood, entirely to his presence. He was a schoolmaster, who taught his daily school in that chapel, and acted also on Sunday, in the capacity of clerk to the priest—-an excellent and amiable old man, who knew little of his illegal connections and atrocious conduct.

When the ceremonies of brotherly recognition and friendship were past, the Captain (by which title I shall designate the last-mentioned person) stooped, and, raising a jar of whiskey on the corner of the altar, held a wineglass to its neck, which he filled, and with a calm nod handed it to me to drink. I shrank back, with an instinctive horror, at the profaneness of such an act, in the house, and on the altar of God, and peremptorily refused to taste the proffered I draught. He smiled mildly at what he considered my superstition, and added quietly, and in a low voice, “You’ll be wantin’ it I’m thinkin’, afther the wettin’ you got.”

“Wet or dry,” said I—

“Stop, man!” he replied, in the same tone; “spake low. But why wouldn’t you take the whiskey? Sure there’s as holy people to the fore as you: didn’t they all take it? An’ I wish we may never do worse nor dhrink a harmless glass o’ whiskey, to keep the cowld out, any way.”

“Well,” said I, “I’ll jist trust to God and the consequences, for the cowld, Paddy, ma bouchal; but a blessed dhrop of it won’t be crossin’ my lips, avick; so no more ghostlier about it;—dhrink it yourself if you like. Maybe you want it as much as I do; wherein I’ve

the patthern of a good big-coat upon me, so thick, your sowl, that if it was rainin' bullocks, a dhrop wouldn't get undher the nap of it."

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He gave me a calm, but keen glance as I spoke.

“Well, Jim,” said he, “it’s a good comrade you’ve got for the weather that’s in it; but, in the manetime, to set you a dacent patthern, I’ll just take this myself,”—saying which, with the jar still upon its side, and the fore-finger of his left hand in his neck, he swallowed the spirits—“It’s the first I dhrank to-night,” he added, “nor would I dhrink it now, only to show you that I’ve heart an’ spirit to do the thing that we’re all bound an’ sworn to, when the proper time comes;” after which he laid down the glass, and turned up the jar, with much coolness, upon the altar.

During our conversation, those who had been summoned to this mysterious meeting were pouring in fast; and as each person approached the altar, he received from one to two or three glasses of whiskey, according as he chose to limit himself; but, to do them justice, there were not a few of those present, who, in despite of their own desire, and the Captain’s express invitation, refused to taste it in the house of God’s worship. Such, however, as were scrupulous he afterwards recommended to take it on the outside of the chapel door, which they did, as, by that means, the sacrilege of the act was supposed to be evaded.

About one o’clock they were all assembled except six: at least so the Captain asserted, on looking at a written paper.

“Now, boys,” said he in the same low voice, “we are all present except the thraitors, whose names I am goin’ to read to you; not that we are to count thim thraitors, till we know whether or not it was in their power to come. Any how, the night’s terrible—but, boys, you’re to know, that neither fire nor wather is to prevint you, when duly summoned to attind a meeting—particularly whin the summons is widout a name, as you have been told that there is always something of consequence to be done thin.”

He then read out the names of those who were absent, in order that the real cause of their absence might be ascertained, declaring that they would be dealt with accordingly. |

After this, with his usual caution, he shut and bolted the door, and having put the key in his pocket, ascended the steps of the altar, and for some time traversed the little platform from which the priest usually addresses the congregation.

Until this night I had never contemplated the man’s countenance with any particular interest; but as he walked the platform, I had an opportunity of observing him more closely. He was slight in person, apparently not thirty; and, on a first view, appeared to have nothing remarkable in his dress or features. I, however, was not the only person whose eyes were fixed upon him at that moment; in fact, every one present observed him with equal interest, for hitherto he had kept the object of the meeting perfectly

secret, and of course we all felt anxious to know it. It was while he traversed the platform that I scrutinized

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his features with a hope, if possible, to glean from them some evidence of what was passing within him. I could, however, mark but little, and that little was at first rather from the intelligence which seemed to subsist between him and those whom I have already mentioned as standing against the altar, than from any indication of his own. Their gleaming eyes were fixed upon him with an intensity of savage and demon-like hope, which blazed out in flashes of malignant triumph, as upon turning, he threw a cool but rapid glance at them, to intimate the progress he was making in the subject to which he devoted the undivided energies of his mind. But in the course of his meditation, I could observe, on one or two occasions, a dark shade come over his countenance, that contracted his brow into a deep furrow, and it was then, for the first time, that I saw the satanic expression of which his face, by a very slight motion of its muscles, was capable. His hands, during this silence, closed and opened convulsively; his eyes shot out two or three baleful glances, first to his confederates, and afterwards vacantly into the deep gloom of the lower part of the chapel; his teeth ground against each other, like those of a man whose revenge burns to reach a distant enemy, and finally, after having wound himself up to a certain determination, his features relapsed into their original calm and undisturbed expression.

At this moment a loud laugh, having something supernatural in it, rang out wildly from the darkness of the chapel; he stopped, and putting his open hand over his brows, peered down into the gloom, and said calmly in Irish, "*Bee dhu husth; ha nih anam inh*: —hold your tongue, it is not yet time."

Every eye was now directed to the same spot, but, in consequence of its distance from the dim light on the altar, none could perceive the person from whom the laugh proceeded. It was, by this time, near two o'clock in the morning.

He now stood for a few moments on the platform, and his chest heaved with a depth of anxiety equal to the difficulty of the design he wished to accomplish.

"Brothers," said he—"for we are all brothers—sworn upon all that's blessed an' holy, to obey whatever them that's over us, manin' among ourselves, wishes us to do—are you now ready, in the name of God, upon whose althar I stand, to fulfil yer oaths?"

The words were scarcely uttered, when those who had stood beside the altar during the night, sprang from their places, and descending its steps rapidly turned round, and raising their arms, exclaimed, "By all that's good an' holy we're willin'."

In the meantime, those who sat upon the steps of the altar, instantly rose, and following the example of those who had just spoken, exclaimed after them, "To be sure—by all that's sacred an' holy we're willin'."

“Now, boys,” said the Captain, “ar’n’t ye big fools for your pains? an’ one of ye doesn’t know what I mane.”

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“You’re our Captain,” said one of those who had stood at the altar, “an’ has yer ordhers from higher quarthers; of coorse, whatever ye command upon us we’re bound to obey you in.”

“Well,” said he, smiling, “I only wanted to thry yez; an’ by the oath ye tuck, there’s not a captain in the county has as good a right to be proud of his min as I have. Well, ye won’t rue it, maybe, when the right time comes; and for that same rason every one of ye must have a glass from the jar; thim that won’t dhrink it in the chapel can dhrink it widout; an’ here goes to open the door for thim.”

He then distributed another glass to every one who would accept it, and brought the jar afterwards to the chapel door, to satisfy the scruples of those who would not drink within. When this was performed, and all duly excited, he proceeded:—

“Now, brothers, you are solemnly sworn to obay me, and I’m sure there’s no thraithur here that ’ud parjure himself for a thrifle; but I’m sworn to obay them that’s above me, manin’ still among ourselves; an’ to show that I don’t scruple to do it, here goes!”

He then turned round, and taking the Missal between his hands placed it upon the altar. Hitherto every word was uttered in a low precautionary tone; but on grasping the book he again turned round, and looking upon his confederates with the same satanic expression which marked his countenance before, he exclaimed, in a voice of deep determination, first kissing the book!

[Illustration: PAGE WG939— By this sacred an’ holy book of God]

“By this sacred an’ holy book of God, I will perform the action which we have met this night to accomplish, be that what it may; an’ this I swear upon God’s book, and God’s althar!”

On concluding, he struck the book violently with his open hand, thereby occasioning a very loud report.

At this moment the candle which burned before him went suddenly out, and the chapel was wrapped in pitchy darkness; the sound as if of rushing wings fell upon our ears, and fifty voices dwelt upon the last words of his oath with wild and supernatural tones, that seemed to echo and to mock what he had sworn. There was a pause, and an exclamation of horror from all present; but the Captain was too cool and steady to be disconcerted. He immediately groped about until he got the candle, and proceeding calmly to a remote corner of the chapel, took up a half-burned peat which lay there, and after some trouble succeeded in lighting it again. He then explained what had taken place; which indeed was easily done, as the candle happened to be extinguished by a pigeon which sat directly above it. The chapel, I should have observed, was at this time, like many country chapels, unfinished inside, and the pigeons of a neighboring

dove-cot had built nests among the rafters of the unceiled roof; which circumstance also explained the rushing of the wings, for the birds had been affrighted by the sudden loudness of the noise. The mocking voices were nothing but the echoes, rendered naturally more awful by the scene, the mysterious object of the meeting, and the solemn hour of the night.

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When the candle was again lighted, and these startling circumstances accounted for, the persons whose vengeance had been deepening more and more during the night, rushed to the altar in a body, where each, in a voice trembling with passionate eagerness, repeated the oath, and as every word was pronounced, the same echoes heightened the wildness of the horrible ceremony, by their long and unearthly tones. The countenances of these human tigers were livid with suppressed rage; their knit brows, compressed lips, and kindled eyes, fell under the dim light of the taper, with an expression calculated to sicken any heart not absolutely diabolical.

As soon as this dreadful rite was completed, we were again startled by several loud bursts of laughter, which proceeded from the lower darkness of the chapel; and the Captain, on hearing them, turned to the place, and reflecting for a moment, said in Irish, "*Gutsho nish, avohenee*—come hither now, boys."

A rush immediately took place from the corner in which they had secreted themselves all the night; and seven men appeared, whom we instantly recognized as brothers and cousins of certain persons who had been convicted, some time before, for breaking into the house of an honest poor man in the neighborhood, from whom, after having treated him with barbarous violence, they took away such fire-arms as he kept for his own protection.

It was evidently not the Captain's intention to have produced these persons until the oath should have been generally taken, but the exulting mirth with which they enjoyed the success of his scheme betrayed them, and put him to the necessity of bringing them forward somewhat before the concerted moment.

The scene which now took place was beyond all power of description; peals of wild, fiendlike yells rang through the chapel, as the party which stood on the altar and that which had crouched in the darkness met; wringing of hands, leaping in triumph, striking of sticks and fire-arms against the ground and the altar itself, dancing and cracking of fingers, marked the triumph of some hellish determination. Even the Captain for a time was unable to restrain their fury; but, at length, he mounted the platform before the altar once more, and with a stamp of his foot, recalled their attention to himself and the matter in hand.

"Boys," said he, "enough of this, and too much; an' well for us it is that the chapel is in a lonely place, or our foolish noise might do us no good. Let thim that swore so manfully jist now, stand a one side, till the rest kiss the book one by one."

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The proceedings, however, had by this time taken too fearful a shape for even the Captain to compel them to a blindfold oath; the first man he called flatly refused to answer, until he should hear the nature of the service that was required. This was echoed by the remainder, who, taking courage from the firmness of this person, declared generally that, until they first knew the business they were to execute, none of them would take the oath. The Captain's lip quivered slightly, and his brow again became knit with the same hellish expression, which I have remarked gave him so much the appearance of an, embodied fiend; but this speedily passed away, and was succeeded by a malignant sneer, in which lurked, if there ever did in a sneer, "a laughing devil," calmly, determinedly atrocious.

"It wasn't worth yer whiles to refuse the oath," said he, mildly, "for the truth is, I had next to nothing for yez to do. Not a hand, maybe, would have to rise, only jist to look on, an' if any resistance would be made, to show yourselves; yer numbers would soon make them see that resistance would be, no use whatever in the present case. At all, evints, the oath of secrecy must be taken, or woe be to him that will refuse that; he won't know the day, nor the hour, nor the minute, when he'll be made a spatch-cock of."

He then turned round, and, placing his right hand on the Missal, swore, "In the presence of God, and before his holy altar, that whatever might take place that night he would keep secret, from man or mortal, except the priest, and that neither bribery, nor imprisonment, nor death, would wring it from his heart."

Having done this, he again struck the book violently, as if to confirm the energy with which he swore, and then calmly descending the steps, stood with a serene countenance, like a man conscious of having performed a good action. As this oath did not pledge those who refused to take the other to the perpetration of any specific crime, it was readily taken by all present. Preparations were then made to execute what was intended: the half burned turf was placed in a little pot; another glass of whiskey was distributed; and the door being locked by the Captain, who kept the key as parish clerk and schoolmaster, the crowd departed silently from the chapel.

The moment those who lay in the darkness, during the night, made their appearance at the altar, we knew at once the persons we were to visit; for, as I said before, they were related to the miscreants whom one of those persons had convicted, in consequences of their midnight attack upon himself and his family. The Captain's object in keeping them unseen was, that those present, not being aware of the duty about to be imposed on them, might have less hesitation about swearing to its fulfilment. Our conjectures were correct; for on leaving the chapel we directed our steps to the house in which this devoted man resided.

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The night was still stormy, but without rain: it was rather dark, too, though not so as to prevent us from seeing the clouds careering swiftly through the air. The dense curtain which had overhung and obscured the horizon was now broken, and large sections of the sky were clear, and thinly studded with stars that looked dim and watery, as did indeed the whole firmament; for in some places black clouds were still visible, threatening a continuance of tempestuous weather. The road appeared washed and gravelly; every dike was full of yellow water; and every little rivulet and larger stream dashed its hoarse murmur into our ears; every blast, too, was cold, fierce, and wintry, sometimes driving us back to a standstill, and again, when a turn in the road would bring it in our backs, whirling us along for a few steps with involuntary rapidity. At length the fated dwelling became visible, and a short consultation was held in a sheltered place, between the Captain and the two parties who seemed so eager for its destruction. Their fire-arms were now loaded, and their bayonets and short pikes, the latter shod and pointed with iron, were also got ready. The live coal which was brought in the small pot had become extinguished; but to remedy this, two or three persons from a remote part of the county entered a cabin on the wayside, and, under pretence of lighting their own and their comrades' pipes, procured a coal of fire, for so they called a lighted turf. From the time we left the chapel until this moment a profound silence had been maintained, a circumstance which, when I considered the number of persons present, and the mysterious and dreaded object of their journey, had a most appalling effect upon my spirits.

At length we arrived within fifty perches of the house, walking in a compact body, and with as little noise as possible; but it seemed as if the very elements had conspired to frustrate our design, for on advancing within the shade of the farm-hedge, two or three persons found themselves up to the middle in water, and on stooping to ascertain more accurately the state of the place, we could see nothing but one immense sheet of it—-spread like a lake over the meadows which surrounded the spot we wished to reach.

Fatal night! The very recollection of it, when associated with the fearful tempests of elements, grows, if that were possible, yet more wild and revolting. Had we been engaged in any innocent or benevolent enterprise, there was something in our situation just then that had a touch of interest in it to a mind imbued with a relish for the savage beauties of nature. There we stood, about a hundred and thirty in number, our dark forms bent forward, peering into the dusky expanse of water, with its dim gleams of reflected light, broken by the weltering of the mimic waves into ten thousand fragments, whilst the few stars that overhung it in the firmament appeared to shoot through it in broken lines, and to be multiplied fifty-fold in the gloomy mirror on which we gazed.

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Over us was a stormy sky, and around us; a darkness through which we could only distinguish, in outline, the nearest objects, whilst the wild wind swept strongly and dismally upon us. When it was discovered that the common pathway to the house was inundated, we were about to abandon our object and return home. The Captain, however, stooped down low for a moment, and, almost closing his eyes, looked along the surface of the waters; and then, rising himself very calmly, said, in his usually quiet tone, “Ye needn’t go back, boys, I’ve found a way; jist follow me.”

He immediately took a more circuitous direction, by which we reached a causeway that had been raised for the purpose of giving a free passage to and from the house, during such inundations as the present. Along this we had advanced more than half way, when we discovered a breach in it, which, as afterwards appeared, had that night been made by the strength of the flood. This, by means of our sticks and pikes, we found to be about three feet deep, and eight yards broad. Again we were at a loss how to proceed, when the fertile brain of the Captain devised a method of crossing it.

“Boys,” said he, “of coorse you’ve all played at leap-frog; very well, strip and go in, a dozen of you, lean one upon the back of another from this to the opposite bank, where one must stand facing the outside man, both their shoulders agin one another, that the outside man may be supported. Then we can creep over you, an’ a dacent bridge you’ll be, any way.”

This was the work of only a few minutes, and in less than ten we were all safely over.

Merciful Heaven! how I sicken at the recollection of what is to follow! On reaching the dry bank, we proceeded instantly, and in profound silence, to the house; the Captain divided us into companies, and then assigned to each division its proper station. The two parties who had been so vindictive all the night, he kept about himself; for of those who were present, they only were in his confidence, and knew his nefarious purpose; their number was about fifteen. Having made these dispositions, he, at the head of about five of them, approached the house on the windy side, for the fiend possessed a coolness which enabled him to seize upon every possible advantage. That he had combustibles about him was evident, for in less than fifteen minutes nearly one-half of the house was enveloped in flames. On seeing this, the others rushed over to the spot where he and his gang were standing, and remonstrated earnestly, but in vain; the flames now burst forth with renewed violence, and as they flung their strong light upon the faces of the foremost group, I think hell itself could hardly present anything more satanic than their countenances, now worked up into a paroxysm of infernal triumph at their own revenge. The Captain’s look had lost all its calmness, every feature started out into distinct malignity, the curve in his brow was

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deep, and ran up,to the root of the hair, dividing his face into two segments, that did not seem to have been designed for each other. His lips were half open, and the corners of his mouth a little brought back on each side, like those of a man expressing intense hatred and triumph over an enemy who is in the death-struggle under his grasp. His eyes blazed from beneath his knit eyebrows with a fire that seemed to be lighted up in the infernal pit itself. It is unnecessary, and only painful, to describe the rest of his gang; demons might have been proud of such horrible visages as they exhibited; for they worked under all the power of hatred, revenge, and joy; and these passions blended into one terrible scowl, enough almost to blast any human eye that would venture to look upon it.

When the others attempted to intercede for the lives of the inmates, there were at least fifteen guns and pistols levelled at them.

“Another word,” said the Captain, “an’ you’re a corpse where you stand, or the first man who will dare to spake for them; no, no, it wasn’t to spare them we came here. ‘No mercy’ is the pass-word for the night, an’ by the sacred oath I swore beyant in the chapel, any one among yez that will attempt to show it, will find none at my hand. Surround the house, boys, I tell ye, I hear them stirring. ‘No quarter—no mercy,’ is the ordher of the night.”

Such was his command over these misguided creatures, that in an instant there was a ring round the house to prevent the escape of the unhappy inmates, should the raging element give them time to attempt it; for none present durst withdraw themselves from the scene, not only from an apprehension of the Captain’s present vengeance, or that of his gang, but because they knew that even had they then escaped, an early and certain death awaited them from a quarter against which they had no means of defence. The hour now was about half-past two! o’clock. Scarcely had the last words escaped from the Captain’s lips, when one of the windows of the house was broken, and a human head, having the hair in a blaze, was descried, apparently a woman’s, if one might judge by the profusion of burning tresses, and the softness of the tones, notwithstanding that it called, or rather shrieked aloud for help and mercy. The only reply to this was the whoop from the Captain and his gang, of “No mercy—no mercy!” and that instant the former, and one of the latter, rushed to the spot, and ere the action could be perceived, the head was transfixed with a bayonet and a pike, both having entered it together. The word “mercy” was divided in her mouth; a short silence ensued, the head hung down on the window, but was instantly tossed back into the flames.

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This action occasioned a cry of horror from all present, except the gang and their leader, which startled and enraged the latter so much, that he ran towards one of them, and had his bayonet, now reeking with the blood of its innocent victim, raised to plunge it in his body, when, dropping the point, he said in a piercing whisper, that hissed in the ears of all: "It's no use now, you know; if one's to hang, all will hang; so our safest way, you persave, is to lave none of them to tell the story. Ye may go now, if you wish; but it won't save a hair of your heads. You cowardly set! I knew if I had tould yez the sport, that none of you, except my own boys, would come, so I jist played a thrick upon you; but remimber what you are sworn to, and stand to the oath ye tuck."

Unhappily, notwithstanding the wetness of the preceding weather, the materials of the house were extremely combustible; the whole dwelling was now one body of glowing flame, yet the shouts and shrieks within rose awfully above its crackling and the voice of the storm, for the wind once more blew in gusts, and with great violence. The doors and windows were all torn open, and such of those within as had escaped the flames rushed towards them, for the purpose of further escape, and of claiming mercy at the hands of their destroyers; but whenever they appeared, the unearthly cry of "no mercy" rang upon their ears for a moment, and for a moment only, for they were flung back at the points of the weapons which the demons had brought with them to make the work of vengeance more certain.

As yet there were many persons in the house, whose cry for life was strong as despair, and who clung to it with all the awakened powers of reason and instinct. The ear of man could hear nothing so strongly calculated to stifle the demon of cruelty and revenge within him, as the long and wailing shrieks which rose beyond the elements, in tones that were carried off rapidly upon the blast, until they died away in the darkness that lay behind the surrounding hills. Had not the house been in a solitary situation, and the hour the dead of night, any person sleeping within a moderate distance must have heard them, for such a cry of sorrow rising into a yell of despair was almost sufficient to have awakened, the dead. It was lost, however, upon the hearts and ears that heard it: to them, though in justice be it said, to only comparatively a few of them, it appeared as delightful as the tones of soft and entrancing music.

The claims of the surviving sufferers were now modified; they supplicated merely to suffer death by the weapons of their enemies; they were willing to bear that, provided they should be allowed to escape from the flames; but no—the horrors of the conflagration were calmly and malignantly gloried in by their merciless assassins, who deliberately flung them back into all their tortures. In the course of a few minutes a man appeared upon the side-wall of the house, nearly

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naked; his figure, as he stood against the sky in horrible relief, was so finished a picture of woebegone agony and supplication, that it is yet as distinct in my memory as if I were again present at the scene. Every muscle, now in motion by the powerful agitation of his sufferings, stood out upon his limbs and neck, giving him an appearance of desperate strength, to which by this time he must have been wrought up; the perspiration poured from his frame, and the veins and arteries of his neck were inflated to a surprising thickness. Every moment he looked down into the flames which were rising to where he stood; and as he looked, the indescribable horror which flitted over his features might have worked upon the devil himself to relent. His words were few:—

“My child,” said he, “is still safe, she is an infant, a young crathur that never harmed you, or any one—she is still safe. Your mothers, your wives, have young innocent childhre like it. Oh, spare her, think for a moment that it’s one of your own; spare it, as you hope to meet a just God, or if you don’t, in mercy shoot me first—put an end to me, before I see her burned!”

The Captain approached him coolly and deliberately. “You’ll prosecute no one now, you bloody informer,” said he: “you’ll convict no more boys for takin’ an ould gun an’ pistol from you, or for givin’ you a neighborly knock or two into the bargain.”

Just then, from a window opposite him, proceeded the shrieks of a woman, who appeared at it with the infant, in her arms. She herself was almost scorched to death; but, with the presence of mind and humanity of her sex, she was about to put the little babe out of the window. The Captain noticed this, and, with characteristic atrocity, thrust, with a sharp bayonet, the little innocent, along with the person who endeavored to rescue it, into the red flames, where they both perished. This was the work of an instant. Again he approached the man: “Your child is a coal now,” said he, with deliberate mockery; “I pitched it in myself, on the point of this,”—showing the weapon—-“an’ now is your turn,”—saying which, he clambered up, by the assistance of his gang, who stood with a front of pikes and bayonets bristling to receive the wretched man, should he attempt, in his despair, to throw himself from the wall. The Captain got up, and placing the point of his bayonet against his shoulder, flung him into the fiery element that raged behind him. He uttered one wild and terrific cry, as he fell back, and no more. After this nothing was heard but the crackling of the fire, and the rushing of the blast; all that had possessed life within were consumed, amounting either to eight or eleven persons.

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When this was accomplished, those who took an active part in the murder, stood for some time about the conflagration; and as it threw its red light upon their fierce faces and rough persons, soiled as they now were with smoke and black streaks of ashes, the scene seemed to be changed to hell, the murderers to spirits of the damned, rejoicing over the arrival and the torture of some guilty soul. The faces of those who kept aloof from the slaughter were blanched to the whiteness of death: some of them fainted, and others were in such agitation that they were compelled to lean on their comrades. They became actually powerless with horror: yet to such a scene were they brought by the pernicious influence of Ribbonism.

It was only when the last victim went down, that the conflagration shot up into the air with most unbounded fury. The house was large, deeply thatched, and well furnished; and the broad red pyramid rose up with fearful magnificence towards the sky. Abstractedly it had sublimity, but now it was associated with nothing in my mind but blood and terror. It was not, however, without a purpose that the Captain and his gang stood to contemplate its effect. “Boys,” said he, “we had betther be sartin that all’s safe; who knows but there might be some of the sarpents crouchin’ under a hape o’ rubbish, to come out an’ gibbet us to-morrow or next day: we had betther wait a while, anyhow, if it was only to see the blaze.”

Just then the flames rose majestically to a surprising height. Our eyes followed their direction; and we perceived, for the first time, that the dark clouds above, together with the intermediate air, appeared to reflect back, or rather to have caught the red hue of the fire. The hills and country about us appeared with an alarming distinctness; but the most picturesque part of it was the effect of reflection of the blaze on the floods that spread over the surrounding plains. These, in fact, appeared to be one broad mass of liquid copper, for the motion of the breaking-waters caught from the blaze of the high waving column, as reflected in them, a glaring light, which eddied, and rose, and fluctuated, as if the flood itself had been a lake of molten fire.

Fire, however, destroys rapidly. In a short time the flames sank—became weak and flickering—by and by, they shot out only in fits—the crackling of the timbers died away—the surrounding darkness deepened—and, ere long, the faint light was overpowered by the thick volumes of smoke that rose from the ruins of the house and its murdered inhabitants.

“Now, boys,” said the Captain, “all is safe—we may go. Remember, every man of you, what you’ve sworn this night, on the book an’ altar of God—not on a heretic Bible. If you perjure yourselves, you may hang us; but let me tell you, for your comfort, that if you do, there is them livin’ that will take care the lease of your own lives will be but short.”

After this we dispersed every man to his own home.

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Reader,—not many months elapsed ere I saw the bodies of this Captain, whose name was Patrick Devann, and all those who were actively concerned in the perpetration of this deed of horror, withering in the wind, where they hung gibbeted, near the scene of their nefarious villany; and while I inwardly thanked Heaven for my own narrow and almost undeserved escape, I thought in my heart how seldom, even in this world, justice fails to overtake the murder, and to enforce the righteous judgment of God—that “whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.”

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This tale of terror is, unfortunately, too true. The scene of hellish murder detailed in it lies at Wildgoose Lodge, in the county of Louth, within about four miles of Carrickmacross, and nine of Dundalk. No such multitudinous murder has occurred, under similar circumstances, except the burning of the Sheas, in the county of Tipperary. The name of the family burned in Wildgoose Lodge was Lynch. One of them had, shortly before this fatal night, prosecuted and convicted some of the neighboring Ribbonmen, who visited him with severe marks of their displeasure, in consequence of his having refused to enrol himself as a member of their body. The language of the story is partly fictitious; but the facts are pretty closely such as were developed during the trial of the murderers. Both parties were Roman Catholics, and either twenty-five or twenty-eight of those who took an active part in the burning, were hanged and gibbeted in different parts of the county of Louth. Devann, the ringleader, hung for some months in chains, within about a hundred yards of his own house, and about half a mile from Wildgoose Lodge. His mother could neither go into nor out of her cabin without seeing his body swinging from the gibbet. Her usual exclamation on looking at him was—“God be good to the sowl of my poor marthyr!” The peasantry, too, frequently exclaimed, on seeing him, “Poor Paddy!” A gloomy fact that speaks volumes!

TUBBER DERG; Or, THE RED WELL.

The following story owes nothing to any coloring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when, as he said to himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of

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that species then remaining in the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a land of angle, with opening, enough at their termination to form a vista, through which its white walls glistened with beautiful effect in the calm splendor of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and studded with gray rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley whose green foliage was gilded by the sun-beams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house another little hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed, by a single rock some thirty feet, high, over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate spa arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot-mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten pathway that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M’Carthy, for so was the man called who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so clear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the Maygowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow.

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Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak, was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my future wife.* Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "hirken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the "Trouglia". in his native Irish; whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long-line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed; themselves to be, and probably were, a branch of the MacCarthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be attributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others: in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighborhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbor with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in addition to a strong feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

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* Such is the superstition; and, as I can tell,
faithfully is it believed.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of the past to which my memory extends. He was then a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious, inoffensive small farmer, beloved, respected, and honored. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbors to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that he could still serve a deserving neighbor; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for a half year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—-here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no, avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave, boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen dear, it's not that bad wid me yet. I hope

we'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. 'Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin' the sack when he was bringin' home our last *meldhre*
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from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back; for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he's gettin' betther wid me!" and the poor creature's eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large potful of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all's cleared off we'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!" and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

* Meldhre—whatever quantity of grain is brought to the mill to be ground on one occasion.

Owen, without evincing the slightest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a muscle of his face was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you ate out your dinner?"

"I'm done," he replied, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other

depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple; but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they'll rise up a frind for you. Musha, Owen, ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

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“Finish your own,” said her husband, “an’ never heed me; jist let me alone. Don’t you see that if I wanted it, I’d ate it, an’ what more would you have about!”

“Well, acushla, it’s your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An’ Rosha, whisper, ahagur, what can Owen or I do for you? Throth, it would be a bad day we’d see you at a *deshort* * for a friend, for you never wor nothin’ else nor a civil, oblagin’ neighbor yourself; an’ him that’s gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight.”

* That is at a loss; or more properly speaking, taken short, which it means.

“Ah! when I had him!” exclaimed the distracted widow, “I never had occasion to trouble aither friend or neighbor; but he s gone an’ now it’s otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an’ has no other frind to go to—but somehow I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I’d put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn’t do for it, an’ sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I’d give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oates it is, an’ a betther shouldhered or fuller-lookin’ grain never went undher a harrow—-indeed it’s it that’s the beauty, all out, if it’s good seed you want.”

“What is it for, woman alive?” inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way.”

“What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin’, sure my two brave cows is lavin’ me. Owen M’Murt, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an’ has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Cheehoney*, that knows my voice, an’ would come to me from the fardest corner o’ the field, an’ nothin’ will we have—nothin’ will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of them being lost to us for rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!”

“Me!” said Owen, as if astonished. “Phoo, that’s quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha,—hut, hut, woman alive! Come, boys, you’re all done; out wid you to your spades, an’ finish that *meerin* (* a marsh ditch, a boundary) before night. Me!—hut, tut!”

“I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an’ for the sake of him that’s in his grave—an’ that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you”—

“An’ what would you want me to do, Rosha? Fitther for you to sit down an’ finish your dinner, when it’s before you. I’m goin’ to get an ould glove that’s somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin’,” and, as he spoke he passed into another room, as if he had altogether forgotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

“Owen, avick!—an’ the blessin’ of the fatherless be upon you, sure, an’ many a one o’ them you have, any how, Owen!”

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“Well, Rosha—well?”

“Och, och, Owen, it’s low days wid me to be depindin’ upon the sthranger? little thim that reared me ever thought it ’ud come to this. You know I’m a dacent father’s child, an’ I have stooped to you, Owen M’Carthy—what I’d scorn to do to any other but yourself—poor an’ friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre; but the father of the fatherless will support thim an’ me. Och, but it’s well for the O’Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn’t know where to find mine, if one sight of him ‘ud save me an’ my childre from the grave! The Agent even, he lives in Dublin, an’ how could I lave my sick boy, an’ small girshas by themselves, to go a hundre miles, an’ maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I’d have from him, even if I did; he’s paid for gatherin’ in his rents; but it’s well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an’ of them that’s honest in their intintions.”

“I’ll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use,” replied Owen, composedly; “come, I’ll go an’ spake to Frank M’Murt.”

“The sorra blame I blame him, Owen,” replied Rosha, “his bread’s depindin’ upon the likes of sich doins, an’ he can’t get over it; but a word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M’Carthy?”

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a puddle before the door. In the meantime, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute: every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver’s grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the rejoicing urchins numberless punches of tongs, potato-washers, and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

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As one of the little ones ran out to fill his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

“Oh mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don’t come in yet; don’t come in, Owen, till Jimmy un’ huz, an’ the Denisses, gets the bailie drownded. We’ll soon have the *bot* (* tub) full; but Paddy an’ Jack Denis have the eyes a’most pucked out of him; an’ Katty’s takin’ the rapin’ hook from, behind the *cuppet*, to get it about his neck.”

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Frank’s head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

“Is it goin’ to murdher him ye are?” said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; “hould back ye pack of young divils, an’ let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor at yourself, an’ in full strinth, that you’d have the man’s blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it.”

“There, let me,” replied the lad, his eyes glowing and his veins swollen with passion; “I don’t care if I did. It would be no sin, an’ no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, ’tanny rate.”

In the meantime the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The widow’s anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen’s severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man shook himself and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

“Frank M’Murt,” said the widow, “I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an’ I wouldn’t for the best cow I have that sich a *brieuliagh* (* squabble) happened. *Dher charp agusmanim*, (** by my soul and body) Jimmy, but I’ll make you suffer for drawin’ down this upon my head, and me had enough over it afore.”

“I don’t care,” replied Jemmy; “whoever comes to take our property from us, an’ us willin’ to work will suffer for it. Do you think I’d see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an’ our cows standin’ in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin’ to me, but I’ll split to the skull the first man that takes them; an’ all I’m sorry for is, that it’s not the vagabone Landlord himself that’s near me. That’s our thanks for paying many a good pound, in honesty and dacency, to him an’ his; lavin’ us to a schamin’ agent, an’ not even to that same, but to his undher-strap-pers, that’s robbin’ us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him, for a landlord! You

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may tell him this, Frank,—that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the counthry. Sure, it's a gambler he is, they say; an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany! But wait a bit; maybe there's a good time comin', when we'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's limb of an agent. He had need, anyhow, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it's for the right," he added—for his mind was evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress, which the habits of the country, and the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It's well that Frank's one of ourselves," replied Owen, coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you up by the heels. As for you, Frank, you must look over this. The boy's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted afther all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an' renumbers that you wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure, I can't go back widout either thim or the rint?" said Frank, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons who then came in; "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I druv them off of the estate; an' now take them, if you dar! It's conthrairy to law," said the urchin; "an' if you'd touch them, I'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattitat* or *fiery-flashes*."

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who, began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—"Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why, but you work like another!—ha, you'll get it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance at him.

"Whist wid ye," said Jemmy to the little ones; "let him alone, he got enough. There's the cows for you; an keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, and upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that's the best we wish you!"

"Frank," said Owen to the bailiff, "is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neighbors of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut tut! no, man alive—no sich thing! There's not a man in the parish, wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut,—no!"

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As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

"Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: "Owen, if I was well it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed it would not; but—may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you'll be paid; may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

"Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings; "phoo, man alive! hut—hem!—why, sure it's nothin' at all, at all; anybody would do it—only a bare five an' twenty shillins [it was five pound]: any neighbor—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Pether M'Cullagh, would do it.—Come, Frank, step out; the money's to the fore. Rosha, put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the agint, or clerk, or whatsomever he is—-sure, that makes no maxin anyhow;—I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you're pale, poor bouchal; and, childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from ye this bout.—Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see-everything rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally benevolent and Christian part. Poor fellow! he was, ere long, brought low; but, to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depression in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements, which adequate capital would have enabled, him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state, resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points—inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances,ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash;

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it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look, like its master. The thatch became black and rotten upon its roof; the chimneys sloped to opposite points; the windows were less neat, and ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail. The neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less abundant; his haggarts neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the poor and working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbor fled as to a friend, now required friendship at a moment when the widespread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

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On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body, reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half-year's term nearer! Oh, ye who riot on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! To vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess—that of rank in society—come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark, cheerless future! Is it to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary, or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people; by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactors, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinion.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger, direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well-known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans for the future, with as much judgment as any man could display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I'm goin' to mention, I don't know what well do, nor what'll become of these poor crathurs that's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know—and maybe that same's some comfort—the hardships that's before them. Poor crathurs! see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it; but, acushla, your color's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, a *colleen machree* (* girl of my heart) and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely preceptible, but it passed away; and, after kissing her, he proceeded:

"Ay, ye crathurs—you and I, Kathleen, could earn our bread for ourselves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that's a blessin' we've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

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“Ay, poor things, it’s well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I’d rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them.”

“Beg: that ’ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I’d work—I’d live on next to nothing all the year round; but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to that, I couldn’t bear it, Kathleen—’twould break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and besides, to see a M’Carthy beggin’ his bread in the country where his name was once great—The M’Carthy More, that was their title-no, acushla, I love them as I do the blood in my own veins; but I’d rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down dacently with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M’Carthy was seen beggin’ on the highway.”

“But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that ’ud put us in the way of comin’ round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out for two or three year, would soon be able to help us.”

“They would—they would. I’m thinkin’ this day or two of a plan: but I’m doubtful whether it ’ud come to anything.”

“What is it, acushla? Sure we can’t be worse nor we are, any way.”

“I’m goin’ to go to Dublin. I’m tould that the landlord’s come home from France, and that he’s there now; and if I didn’t see him, sure I could see the agent. Now, Kathleen, my intintion ’ud be to lay our case before the head landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen, that I could show at home to some of the nabors, who knows but I could borry what ’ud set us up agin! I think many of them ’ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?”

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed, too much so for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

“Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into your heart, Owen!”

“I’ll set off,” replied her husband, who was a man of decision; “I’ll set off on other morrow mornin’; and as nobody knows anything about it, so let there not be a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I have success, well and good; but if not, why, nobody need be the wiser.”

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The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness threw a melancholy gloom around his hearth. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure, he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed—when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feelings. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and, should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rushlight was placed in a wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat, but could not; Kathleen sat at the meal, but could taste nothing; the children ate, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

“Kathleen,” said he, at length, “in the name of God I’ll go; and may his blessin’ be about you, asthore machree, and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yez.”

Kathleen’s faithful heart could bear no more; she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen’s tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

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“Owen!” she exclaimed; “Owen, *a-suilish mahuil agus machree!* (* light of my eyes and of my heart) I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin’ of this journey. How can you, mavourneen, walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly with that sickness, and the bad feedin’ both before and since? Och, give it up, achree, and stay wid us, let what will happen. You’re not able for sich a journey, indeed you’re not. Stay wid me and the childher, Owen; sure we’d be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe.”

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

“Kathleen, asthore,” he replied, in those terms of endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people; “sure whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that’s gone long ago—och, don’t ax me to stop. Isn’t your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that ’ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen, I can’t, indeed I can’t, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you’re in.”

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. “Father, don’t lave us—we’ll be lonesome if you go, and if my mother ’ud get unwell, who’d be to take care of her? Father, don’t lave your own ‘weeny crathurs’ (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal ’ud be eat out before you’d come back; or maybe something ’ud happen you in that strange place.”

“Indeed, there’s truth in what they say, Owen,” said, the wife; “do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don’t take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn’t see him—sure the nabors will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!”

“Kathleen,” said Owen, “when this is past you’ll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it’s only the tindher feelin’ of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it does cut me to the heart to lave yez the way yez are in, even for a while; but it’s far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin’ it in my power to do anything for yez.”

He then kissed them again, one by one; and pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which, she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. “Father,

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kiss me again," said she. He stooped down, and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle-road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's viaticum was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and ten miles, in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not one of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis. One evening, about half past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid! mansion in Mountjoy Square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached a certain one—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw back the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen, availing himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against his breast; and, as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I'm his tenant; and I know he's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate, father and son, for upwards of three hundred years. My name's Owen ------"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M------, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a tenant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back; who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell,—received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps; and, by order of the

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gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about, that one of Mr. S------'s tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his skull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and, by the means of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S------.

Owen looked about him rather vacantly; but soon collected himself, and implied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I'm one of your honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor--that is, if you be Mr. S------."

"And pray, what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard to my bit of farm. I, and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason—God knows how they axe."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent. Go to him—he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the ------ Dispensary, to get his head dressed, I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase, your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whatsomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and, when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out, God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed! and it would be well, both for your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, sir. Your honor ought to know, sir, more about us, and how we're thrated. I'm an honest man, sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before, and heard the last observation of M'Carthy—"pray how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M------," said Owen, "we're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', sir, will make me say anything in your favor that you don't desarve. You've broken the half of them by severity; you've turned the tenants aginst yourself and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people. Look at these resates, your honor; they'll show you, sir,—"

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I entrust the management of my property; of course, I refer the matter solely to him. I can do nothing in it."

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“Kathleen, avourneen!” claimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven; “and ye, poor darlins of my heart! is this the news I’m to have for yez whin I go home? —As you hope for mercy, sir, don’t turn away your ear from my petition, that I’d humbly make to yourself. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship, are at home before me, yer honor. If you’d be plased to look at these resates, you’d see that I always paid my rint; and ’twas sickness and the hard times—”

“And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct,” said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. “Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry much longer.—Sir, you have heard the fellow’s admission. It is an implied threat he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honor.”

“Sir,” said a servant, “dinner is on the table.”

“Sinclair,” said his landlord, “give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more.” Saying; which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, and knew not whether the house-steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the Agent’s diabolical falsehood, entered like barbed arrows into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonizing thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering—the wind stormy—and, as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children; and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent, but simply state, that, on the second week after this, a man, with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently laboring under a severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone, with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendor which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible.

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The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen; and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading-light'. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain-head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam, of hope that opened upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached home his heart sank; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle-way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that, he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It's too dark, maybe, for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha* (* the welcome). Kathleen, avourneen machree! how my heart beats wid longin' to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left them to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of thy door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this!—But, wait, let me rap agin. Kathleen, Kathleen!—are you widin, avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't ye widin, childhre? Alley, sure I'm come back to you all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house;—all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more to his little favorite; "I'm come home wid something for you, asthore! I didn't forget you, alanna!—I brought it from Dublin, all the way. Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbor who was passing.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I haven't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech.

“Frank,” said he, and he wrung his hand, “What—what? was death among them? For the sake of heaven, spake!”

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shoot, of paralysis to his heart.

“Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yez, and may the Almighty pity and support yez! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favorite Alley, is gone. Yestherday she was berrid; and dacently the nabors attinded the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you’ve heard it; trust in God, an’ be a man.”

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A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. “Gone!—the fair-haired one!—-Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys—! Oh, my darlin’, my darlin’! gone from my eyes for ever!—God of glory; won’t you support me this night of sorrow and misery!”

With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—“I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an’ I put myself an’ my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght* (* my poor children) into your hands. I thank you, O God, for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—-och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes, and the pulse of my broken heart, but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an’ we can’t be angry wid you for so doin’! Still if you had spared her—if—if—O, blessed Father, my heart was in the very one you took—but I thank you, O God! May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!”

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

“Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear,” said he, “I’m weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an’ can it be that she’s gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin’ home, an’ had kissed them all—’twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an’ held up her mouth, sayin’, ’Kiss me agin, father;’ an’ this was afther herself an’ all of them had kissed me afore. But, och! oh! blessed Mother! Frank, where’s my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?”

“Owen, I tould you awhile agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an’ what’s to come doesn’t signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you could:—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint; your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin’ a thrifle. No,—bad manners to it! no,—you’re not widout a home anyway. The family’s in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and, while the same barn’s to the fore, never say you want a home.”

“God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me; if you’re not rewarded for it here you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I’m fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and, indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all: still, let God’s will be done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she’ll break her heart; for I know how she loved the golden-haired darlin’ that’s gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?”

“Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn’t strong enough to bear up aginst the last attack; but it’s one comfort that you know she’s happy.”

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Owen stood for a moment, and, looking solemnly in his neighbor's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice, "Frank!"

"What are you goin' to say, Owen?"

"The heart widin me's broke—broke!"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—"Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and delight. In the meantime Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief, now revived by the presence of her husband, with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself, on once more looking among the little ones, on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes—and remembering the affectionate manner in which, as with a presentiment of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss—he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then, putting his hands on his face, bent his head upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow.

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbors could, do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the Agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

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We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland, there is much blame justly attached to landlords, for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants: there is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He who lives—as, perhaps, his forefathers have done—upon any man's property, and fails from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a light to assistance from the landlord as if the amount of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled on for his family, without success; his firm spirit was broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labor. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmuring and tears and, finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at day-break out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed-clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand, of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached—entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

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“Farewell!” said he, “and may the blessing of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We’re goin’ at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know the happy days we passed widin your walls! We must lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin’ wid a clear conscience; we took no revenge into our own hands, but left everything to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don’t cry, Kathleen—don’t cry, childher; there is still a good god above who can and may do something for us yet, glory be to his holy name!”

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made in all, eight paupers, being an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years’ rent, would if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M’Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every Pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants one-half. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the face of their relations. But now it is not so: the mendicant sets out to beg, and in most instances commences his new mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed, it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and of course they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination

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to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these: In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neglected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the resident gentry never in any case assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his honor's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported, and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes directly the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice: but it is not true. Though the cost of supporting such an incredible number of the idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet, by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

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Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

Mendicant.—“We’re axin your charity for God’s sake!”

Poor Tenant.—“Why thin for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it’s not for you widin the four corners of the house. It ‘ud be well for us if we had now all we gave away in charity durin’ the Whole year; we wouldn’t have to be buyin’ for ourselves at three prices. Why don’t you go up to the Big House? They’re rich and can afford it.”

Mendicant, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—“Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me an’ the childhre here, to be torn to pieces wid the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o’ the sarvints? No, no, avourneen!” (with a hopeless shake of the head.) “That ’ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin’.”

Poor Tenant.—“Then, indeed, we haven’t it to help you, now, poor man. We’re buyin’ ourselves.”

Mendicant.—“Thin, throth, that’s lucky, so it is! I’ve as purty a grain o’ male here, as you’d wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o’ tobaccy, along wid a pair o’ new bades an’ scapular for myself. I’m suspicious that there’s about a stone ov it, altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I’m frettin’ at not havin’ the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an’ the childhre a bit an’ sup some way else—glory to his name!—beside a lock of praties in the corner o’ the bag here, that’ll do us for this day, any way.”

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to bo thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to assist them, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity?

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Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or at home; to whip our paupers from his carriage; or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burden of their support, in addition to their other burdens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine-spun and unintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in printing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the meantime the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances, connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscriminate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder overnight, will the next day endeavor to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors. The second point, in connection with pauperism, is the immoral influence that I proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated,

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and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are also the most numerous. There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favor, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Buonaparte directed the eyes and the hopes of the Irish people towards him, as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colors. Pastorini also gave such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. "The miller with the two thumbs was then living," said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly such as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the fierce old Milesian chiefs, who along with their armies lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name one in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse—well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before daylight: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Bath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand, upon a sleeping soldier, who immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, 'Wuil anam inh?' 'Is the time in it? Is the time arrived?' To which the horse-dealer of the Bath replied, '*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht*.' 'No: go to sleep again.' Upon this the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave." The influence on the warm imaginations of an ignorant people, of such fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants, is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, besides being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

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These mendicants consequently pander, for their own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or, in other words, to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of “Black Militia” was to appear; the police, then, are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day they carry falsehood, and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no trifling one, would, by the introduction of poor-laws, be utterly abolished, the people would not only be more easily improved, but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view, the confirmed and hackneyed mendicants of Ireland are a great evil to the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor-laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of impostors, were Owen M’Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment: and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little ones. He became a pauper, therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms, in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night, but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M’Carthy; he therefore sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

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In the meantime hunger pressed deeply upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamor of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge which inclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognized, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round, he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said when we came out this mornin', there's a good God above us, that can still turn over the good lafe for us, if we put our hopes in him."

"Owen," said his sinking wife, "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this that I'm cryin'; no, indeed."

"Thin what ails you, Kathleen darlin'?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length, upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied,

"Owen, since you must know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, it's wid hunger—wid hunger! I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, a'most! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beginnin', dear; but as my Heavenly Father's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house of the province widout you! Hould up, avour-neen, for a while. Come on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char—, their assistance. Come on, darlins, and all of yees. Why my heart's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies anything so long as she's left to us?"

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they bent their steps to a decent farmhouse that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered, as he said—"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No, acushla, you won't; I'll ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

“Husht, avillish! We’ll thry, then, in the name o’ God.”

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband entered, to beg, for the first time in their lives, a morsel of food. Yes! timidly—with a blush, of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

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For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen himself stood back, uncovered, his fine, but much changed features overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance, at him, as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had his remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen: when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen, sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them, unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a goivpen, or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

"What's this? Why there's something wrong wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honor of God."

"May the blessin' of the same *Man** rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or anything to hould it."

* God is sometimes thus termed in Ireland. By "Man" here is meant person or being. He is also called the "Man above;" although this must have been intended for, and often is applied to, Christ only.

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out in! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you have a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves. Och,

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oh! but it's a thousand pities to see sich fine childre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of ye. Brian, ludher them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that. *Eiree suas, a wadhee bradagh, agus go mah a shin!*—be off wid yez, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man." Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May He that is plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so; an' sure we can't complain widout committin' sin. All we ax now, is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner, nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failings, an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about you all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where ye are today: you can't bring out the childre under the teem of rain an' sleet that's in it. Wurrah dheelish, but it's the bitther day all out! Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that's gone to Bally-boulteen to sell some cattle, an' he'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he'll have sinse to go into some house, when he's done, an' dhry himself well, anyhow, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't, think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we're glad to stay undher your roof; for poor things, they're badly able to thravel sich a day—these childre."

"Musha, ye ate no breakfast, maybe?" Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; "an' I may say hardly anything yestherday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down, the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be livin' *manim an diouol*, woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presarve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the crass, Katty, if you're not alive, I'll give you a douse o' the churnstaff that'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

“I do hear you, an’ did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin’ wouldn’t do. You think there’s no places in the world but your own, I b’lieve. Faix, indeed! it’s well come up wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!”

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“Is it givin’ back talk, you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I’ll lave you a mark to remimber me by. What woman ’ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn’t to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; and be the crass above us, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I’ll give you the weight o’ the churnstaff. Is it bekase they’re poor people that it plased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin’ anything to sarve them? There’s not wather enough there, I say—put in more what signifies all the stirabout that ’ud make? Put plinty in: it’s betther always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you’ll want a male’s meat an’ a night’s lodgin’ afore you die, if you don’t mend your manners.”

“Och, musha, the poor girl is doin’ her best,” observed Kathleen; “an’ I’m sure she wouldn’t be guilty of usin’ pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon.”

“She had betther not, while I’m to the fore,” said her mistress. “What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it’s neither a sin nor a shame.”

“Thanks be to God, no,” said Owen: “it’s neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name, an’ a clear conscience, we can’t ever say that our case is hard.”

After some further conversation, a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome, and an abundance of that which they much wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day’s leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen’s needle and scissors were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer’s wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

Wife—“Now, good people, you’re takin’ the world on your heads—”

Farmer—“Ay, good people, you’re takin’ the world on your heads—”

Wife—“Hould your tongue, Brian, an’ suck your dhudeen. It’s me that’s spakin’ to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I’m done, an’ then you may prache till Tib’s Eve, an’ that’s neither before Christmas nor afther it.”

Farmer—“Sure I’m sayin’ nothin’, Elveen, barrin’ houldin’ my tongue, a shuchar” (* my sugar).

Wife—“Your takin’ the world on yez, an’ God knows ’tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs.”

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Farmer—“A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it’s that.”

Wife—“Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You’ll be puttin’ in your gab, an’ me spakin’? How-an-iver, as I was sayin’, our house was the first ye came to, an’ they say there’s a great blessin’ to thim that gives, the first charity to a poor man or woman settin’ out to look for their bit.”

Farmer—“Throgs, ay! Whin they set out; to look for their bit.”

Wife—“By the crass, Brian, you’d vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittiogue*? * Hould your whisht now, an’ suck your dhudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o’ tobaccy a week, an’ what right have you to be puttin’ in your gosther when other people’s spakin’?”

* Untranslatable—but means a womanly man a poor, effeminate creature.

Farmer—“Go an.”

Wife—“So, you see, the long an’ the short of it is that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to us. You know the ould sayin’—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin’, an’ when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much, meal as will last yez a day or two; an’ God he sees you’re heartily welcome to all ye got?”

Farmer—“God he sees you’re heartily welcome—”

Wife—“*Chorp an diouol*, Brian, hould your tongue, Or I’ll turn you out o’ the kitchen. One can’t hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin’ dhrone. By the crass, I’ll—eh? Will you whisht, now?”

Farmer—“Go an. Amn’t I dhrawin’ my pipe?”

Wife—“Well dhraw it; but don’t dhraw me down upon you, barrin—. Do you hear me? an’ the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an’ bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin’ wid us; for it’s a good thing to have the blessin’ of the poor?”

“The Lord bless you, an yours!” said Owen, fervently. “May you and them never—oh, may you never—never suffer what we’ve suffered; nor know what it is to want a male’s mate, or a night’s lodgin’!”

“Amin!” exclaimed Kathleen; “may the world flow upon you! for your good, kind heart desarves it.”

Farmer—“An’ whisper; I wish you’d offer up a prayer for the rulin’ o’ the tongue. The Lord might hear you, but there’s no great hopes that ever he’ll hear me; though I’ve prayed for it almost ever since I was married, night an’ day, winther and summer; but no use, she’s as bad as ever.”

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited by their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

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It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it: neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitterness, was—"Kathleen, dar-lin', it's thrue we have enough to ate an' to dhrink; but we have no home—no home!" to a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was our own, wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—-never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind, was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperiences as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?"

"You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a, year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the girshas to somethin' else in the farmers' house. What do you think, asthore?"

"For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you'll relieve the heart that loves them. It's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

“It is darlin’—it is; we’ll hire out the three eldest—Brian, an’ Owen, an’ Pether, to herd cows; an’ we may get Peggy into some farmer’s house to do loose jobs an’ run of messages. Then we’d have only little Kathleen an’ poor Ned along wid us. I’ll try any way, an’ if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I’ll tell you, thin.”

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“Arrah, what is it, Owen, jewel. Sure if I know it, maybe when I’m sorrowful, that thinkin’ of it, an’ lookin’ forrid to it will make me happier. An’ I’m sure, acushla, you would like that.”

“But maybe, Kathleen, if it wouldn’t come to pass, that the disappointment ’ud be heavy on you?”

“How could it, Owen? Sure we can’t be worse nor we are, whatever happens?”

“Thrue enough, indeed, I forgot that; an’ yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we’d be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health.”

“God forgive me thin, for what I said! We might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?”

“Why, when we got the childhre places, I’ll sthrive to take a little house, an’ work as a cottar. Then, Kathleen, we’d have a home of our own. I’d work from light to light; I’d work before hours an’ afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we’d be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an’ hard pressed too; but then, as I said, we’d have our own home, an’ our own hearth; our morsel, if it ’ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labor.”

“Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?”

“Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I’ll thry the other plan, for it’s good to thry anything that could take us out of this disgraceful life.”

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid coloring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry, and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his: this was, that Kathleen

should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of their children's service should expire; and in the meantime, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings and that of his children might remain untouched, so that in half a year he calculated upon being able to

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furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cotter, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined, on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting, for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily laborer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he, found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato-ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed, from an acquaintance, compost from the neighboring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed, it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and with the money gained by the sale was enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital produces only poverty and ruin. Owen, after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was the means of making more manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this, in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world: after buying the best “slip” of a pig he could find, a sty was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This, department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity and employment. Owen’s children, during the period of his struggles and improvements,

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were, by his advice, multiplying their little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as laboring servants in the neighborhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers. The boys bought each a pair of two-year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighboring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the laborer. On the contrary, “they laid their shoulders together,” as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen’s situation in life now was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles an a farmer. It was much more favorable, and far better calculated to develop successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land which, during the last war, might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not now pay more than one pound, or, at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next; whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant’s hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor, struggling tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected that such men will labor with spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? crops which the landlord may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

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I have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cotter than he did when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt the peculiarly unfavorable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the meantime, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men? A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; application is to be made before such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or the land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest, bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new-married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding-suit, and his blackthorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale-day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until he takes it out of the land. Perhaps he runs away—makes a moonlight flitting—and, by the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

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In calamity we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success, we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realize two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neighbors, that they might at length know that Owen McCarthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying-place of the M'Carthys, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden-haired" Alley. With them—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other graveyard could he reconcile it to himself to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of his own dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; Ids wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, whin we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not going merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere near Tubber Derg. I'm unasy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me; if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?"

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“The child’s in my heart still,” said Owen, suppressing his emotion; “thinkin’ of the unfortunate mornin’ I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I see her standin’, wid her fair pale face—pale—oh, my God!—wid hunger an’ sickness—her little thin clo’es, an’ her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an’ the smile, that she once had, on her face—houldin’ up her mouth, an’ sayin’ ‘Kiss me agin, father;’ as if she knew, somehow, that I’d never see her, nor her me, any more. An’ whin I looked back, as I was turnin’ the corner, there she stood, strainin’ her eyes after her father, that she was then takin’ the last sight of until the judgment-day.”

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

“It’s sthrange,” he added, with more firmness, “how she’s so often in my mind!”

“But, Owen, dear,” replied Kathleen, “sure it was the will of God that she should lave us. She’s now a bright angel in heaven, an’ I dunna if it’s right—indeed, I doubt it’s sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin’ inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o’ God! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an’ that made our strugglin’ an’ our laborin’ turn out so lucky.”

The idea of being lucky or unlucky is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the superstition of Kathleen’s affections; something that touched the heart and its! dearest associations.

“It’s very true, Kathleen,” replied her husband; “but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an’ do everything in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may thry them for awhile, but sooner or later good, intintions and honest labor will be rewarded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name!”

“But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen!”

“In the beginnin’ of the next week. An’, Kathleen, ahagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin’ we came upon the world—but we’ll not be spakin’ of that now. I don’t like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we’re settled among our ould friends, I’ll mintion it.”

“Well, the Lord bliss your endayvors, anyhow! Och, Owen, do thry an’ get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn’t answer me about Alley, Owen?”

“Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an’ that may be aisily done, for our buryin’-ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won’t call us

till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!”

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“Amin! amin! It’s not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one’s own childhre.”

“People may love their childhre as much as they plase, Kathleen, if they don’t let their *grah* for them spoil the crathurs, by givin’ them their own will, till they become headstrong an’ overbearin’. Now, let my linen be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo’es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days.”

“An’ so you will, too, avillish. Throth, Owen, it’s you that’ll be the proud man, steppin’ in to them in all your grandeur! Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o’ the M’Carthys is in you still, Owen.”

“Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin’; it is, indeed; an’ I’d be sarry it wasn’t. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son, Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet?—that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre’s grown up now, an’ able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an’ have everything ready. I’ll stay away a week or so, at the most, an’ afther that I’ll have news for you about all o’ them.”

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

“Now, Kathleen,” said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, “I’m, thinkin’ of what they’ll say, when they see, me so smooth an’ warm-lookin’. I’ll engage they’ll be axin’ one another, ’Musha, how, did Owen M’Carthy get an, at all, to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin’ on his ould farm?’”

“Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them.”

“Throth, I do that. But there is one thing they’ll never get out o’ me, any way.”

“You won’t tell that to any o’ them, Owen?”

“Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I’d never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an’ yet it ’ud be a hard struggle with me too—but I think I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, ’there’s where Owen M’Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king’s highway. There he lies, the

descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin nor a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin, fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

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“Well, it’s one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes, won’t ever breathe it; so that it’s likely the sacret ’ll be berrid wid us.”

“I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shouldhers? I feel it catch me a little.”

“The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar. Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it’s a beauty; an’ I think I have good right to be proud of it, for it’s every thread my own spinnin’.”

“How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now.”

“Throth, you’re twenty years younger; the never a day less.”

“I think I needn’t be ashamed to go afore my ould friends in it, any way. Now bring me my staff, from undher the bed above; an’, in the name o’ God, I’ll set out.”

“Which o’ them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?”

“The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It’s it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an’ that I had while we wor a shaughran. Divil a one o’ me but ’ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You’ll get it atween the foot o’ the bed an’ the wall.”

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—“Now darlin’, in the name o’ God, I’ll go. Husht, avillish machree, don’t be cryin’; sure I’ll be back to you in a week.”

“Och! I can’t help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you wor ever away from me more nor a day; an’ I’m thinkin’ of what happened both to you an’ me, the first time you wint. Owen, acushla, I feel that if anything happened you, I’d break my heart.”

“Arrah, what ‘ud happen me, darlin’, wid God to protect me? Now, God be wid you, Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I’m not goin’ in sickness an’ misery, as I wint afore, to see a man that wouldn’t hear my appale to him; an’ I’m lavin’ you comfortable, agrah, an’ wantin’ for nothin’. Sure it’s only about five-an’-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an’ take care of you, my darlin’ wife, till I come home to you!”

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to

contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So it was with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

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Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: “Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin’; but don’t come back a step, for fraid o’ bad luck."*

* When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky: as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

“Did I forget anything, Kathleen?” he inquired. “Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an’ my tobaccy box, an’ my two clane shirts an’ handkerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?”

“I needn’t be axin’ you, for I know you wouldn’t forget it; but for ’fraid you might—Owen, whin you’re at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley’s grave, an’ look at it; an’ bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there’s weeds or anything growin’ upon it; an’ Owen, would you bring me a bit o’ the clay, tied up in your pocket. Whin you’re there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin’ mother that bid you, an’ say anything that you think might keep her asy, an’ give her pleasure. Tell her we’re not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don’t feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; an’ that nothin’ is a throuble to us, barrin’ that we miss her—ay, even yet—*a suillish machree* (* light of my heart), that she was—that we miss her fair face an’ goolden hair from among us. Tell her this; an’ tell her it was the lovin’ mother that said it, an’ that sint the message to her.”

“I’ll do it all, Kathleen; I’ll do it all—all, An’ now go in, darlin’, an’ don’t be frettin’. Maybe we’ll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often.”

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not, actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the meantime he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been daylight, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank’s residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend’s wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

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Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

“Musha, good people, can ye tell me is Frank Farrell at home?”

“Why, thin, he’s not jist widin now, but he’ll be here in no time entirely,” replied one of his daughters. “Won’t you sit down, honest man, an’ we’ll sind for him.”

“I’m thankful to you,” said Owen. “I’ll sit, sure enough, till he comes in.”

“Why thin!—eh! it must—it can be no other!” exclaimed Farrell’s wife, bringing! over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; “sure I’d know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M’Carthy,—Owen M’Carthy, is it your four quarthers that’s livin’ an’ well? Queen o’ heaven, Owen M’Carthy darlin’, you’re welcome!” the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—-welcome a thousand an’ a thousand times! *Vick ne hoiah!* Owen dear, an’ are you livin’ at all? An’ Kathleen, Owen, an’ the childhre, an’ all of yez—an’ how are they?”

“Throth, we’re livin’ an’ well, Bridget; never was betther, thanks be to God an’ you, in our lives.”

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell’s children as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

“Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget,” said he, “are these the little bouchaleens an’ colleens that were runnin’ about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An’ is this Atty?”

“No: but this is Atty, Owen; faix, Brian outgrew him; an’ here’s Mary, an’ this is Bridget Oge.”

“Well!—well! But where did these two; young shoots come from? this boy an’ the colleen here? They worn’t to the fore, in my time, Bridget.”

“This is Owen, called afther yourself,—an’ this is Kathleen. I needn’t tell you who she was called afther.”

“*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me,” said Owen to his little namesake; “an’ sure I can’t forget the little woman here; *gutsho, a colleen*, and kiss: me too.”

Owen took her on his knee, and kissed her twice.

“Och, but poor Kathleen,” said he, “will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that.”

“Arrah! what’s comin’ over me!” said Mrs. Farrell. “Brian, run up to Micky Lowrie’s for your father, An’ see, Brian, don’t say who’s wantin’ him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla,” she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—“take these two bottles an’ fly up to Peggy Finigan’s for the full o’ them o’ whiskey. Now be back before you’re there, or if you don’t, that I mightn’t, but you’ll see what you’ll get. Fly, aroon, an’ don’t let the grass grow undher your feet. An’ Owen, darlin’—but first sit over to the fire: —here get over to this side, it’s the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an’ sure I dunna what to ax you first. You’re all well? all to the fore?”

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“All well, Bridget, an’ thanks be to heaven, all to the fore.”

“Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart to hear it. An’ the childre’s all up finely, boys an’ girls?”

“Throth, they are, Bridget, as good-lookin’ a family o’ childre as you’d wish to see. An’ what is betther, they’re as good as they’re good-lookin’.”

“Throth, they couldn’t but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an’ mother. Bridget, aroon, rub the pan betther—an’ lay the knife down, I’ll cut the bacon myself, but go an’ get a dozen o’ the freshest eggs;—an’ Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand it as well as yourself?”

“As young as ever you seen her. God help her!—a thousand degrees betther nor whin you seen her last.”

“An’ well to do, Owen?—now tell the truth? Och, musha, I forget who I’m spakin’ to, or I wouldn’t disremimber the ould sayin’ that’s abroad this many a year:—’who ever knew a M’Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress.’ But, Owen, you’re well to do in’ the world?”

“We’re as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us.”

“God be praised again? Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for ’fraid Frank ’ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he’ll know you? Och, to be sure he will; I needn’t ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day.”

“Know me! Indeed Frank ’ud know my shadow. He’ll know me wid half a look.”

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognize him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here mention, because it produces, in a great degree, the want of anything like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great many of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who, after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while anything remained in their hands, to seek a country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates, the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of

becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent, substantial yoemen, who

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might stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society —the wealthy and the wretched, If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is; but, on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes, being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to their hopes, we enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied, "General, I am now an independent man; send some poor devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his abscence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man, who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank; "it was but a short time in the new agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg, now?"

"Why, thin, a son of ould Rousin' Redhead's of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red an' double as big, even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit ould Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Red-head's hat, either upon the half-bushel pot or a five-gallon keg of whiskey. 'Talkin' of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther o' that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard dhrinker—' the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—-ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Redhead another day: 'Arrah, Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a pot, man alive? Sure that's the rason that you're so fond o' poteen.' A quare mad crathur was Dick, an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his skull broke in a scrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlons; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought you, above all men dead and gone, would be the death o' me.' Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher, but instead o' that he got pacified himself."

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“An’ how is young Con doin’, Frank?”

“Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an’ he’s the fifth. It’s hard to say how he’ll do; but I believe he’s the best o’ thim, for so far. That may be owin’ to the landlord. The rent’s let down to him; an’ I think he’ll be able to take bread, an’ good bread too, out of it.”

“God send, poor man!”

“Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?”

“I can’t say that. I love the place, but I suffered too much in it. No; but I’ll tell you, Frank, if there was e’er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I’d take it.”

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. “Ma chuirp!—do you say so, Owen?”

“Indeed, I do.”

“Thin upon my song, thats the luckiest thing I ever knew. There’s, this blessed minute, a farm o’ sixteen acres, that the Lacys is lavin’—goin’ to America—an’ it’s to be set. They’ll go the week afther next, an’ the house needn’t be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they Live it.”

“Well,” said Owen, “I’m glad of that. Will you come wid me to-morrow, an’ we’ll see about it?”

“To be sure I will; an’ what’s betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson’s, a man that knows you, an’ the history o’ them you came from, well. An’, another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin it’s abroad that you want to take the farm, there’s not a man in the parish will bid agin you. You may know that yourself.”

“I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise,” replied Owen; “an’, in the name o’ God, we’ll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, ’ud spake to his son for me; so that I’ll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o’ mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?”

“Widow Murray. Poor woman, she’s happy.”

“You don’t mane she’s dead?”

“She’s dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years.”

“God be good to her sowl! An’ are the childhre in her place still? It’s she that was the dacent woman.”

“Throth, they are; an’ sorrow a betther doin’ family in the parish than they are. It’s they that’ll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin’ down the tears, whin she used to be spakin’ of you, or mintion how often you sarved her; espeshially, about some way or other that you privinted her cows from bein’ canted for the rint. She’s dead now, an’ God he knows, an honest hard-workin’ woman she ever was.”

“Dear me, Frank, isn’t it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There’s Widow Murray, one o’ my ouldest frinds, an’ Pether M’Mahon, an’ Barny Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin’ Red-head—all taken away! Well!—Well! Sure it’s the will o’ God! We can’t be here always.”

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After much conversation; enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night.

The gray dawn of a calm, beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with an intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him. "No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look over the counthry while it's asleep. When I'm musin' this a-way I don't like anybody to be along wid me. I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll jist crush the head o' my pipe agin' one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Afther our breakfast we'll go-an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet, thoughtful way for which he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sunrise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he would not have known, except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable-and a cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at booh sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily, beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence, about it; on the contrary, everything betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a change for the worse. The warmth of coloring which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon everything, he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect, but they

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were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard, where his child lay buried. On his way to this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-colored walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles, which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ay!" said he in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else a'most but's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in the thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly any thing changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never change; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of childhood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He turned from it with pain, and his eye rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his-golden-haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow, with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the

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charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avour-neen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that you wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness and affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now, that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the graveyard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and tracery, gray with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of Death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has dared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys—upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend to prev—eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for this bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it! Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows:—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbor, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over the grave,—-"thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honor in the grave of

her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honored the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remimbered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belonging to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness?"

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He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once such a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed in Irish, "Alley, *nhien machree*, your father that loved you more nor he loved any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's the time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel: nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favor an' compassion? Farewell, Alley asthore! May you slelp in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in Heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

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Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still, the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been a land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance, were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim gray distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, every thing seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendor upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the valleys between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and laborers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain-sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil, realizing the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman:

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By-and-by the songs of the early workmen were heard; nature had awoke, and Owen, whose heart was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe," after having risen; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the thruth, I'm not half plased wid you this mornin'. I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that?"

"Why, you said nothin' about widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kept me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin', in the grave-yard beyant."

“Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn’t my fau’t, nor any of our fau’ts; for, to tell you the thruth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never sthruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that put it first in my head, afther you wint out, an’ thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heaven’s be her bed.”

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“Frank, if any one of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn’t lick my blood, I’d only give them back good for evil afther that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden-haired darlin’, for the sake of the little thrifles I sarved thim in! Well! may none belongin’ to her ever know poverty or hardship! but if they do, an’ that I have it——How-an’-iver, no matther. God bless thim! God bless thim! Wait till Kathleen hears it!”

“An’ the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you think too much about that child. Let us talk about something else. You’ve seen Tubber Derg wanst more?”

“I did; an’ I love it still, in spite of the state it’s in.”

“Ah! it’s different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin’ to Bridget about the farm, an’ she advises us to go, widout losin’ a minute, an’ take it if we can.”

“It’s near this place I’ll die, Frank. I’d not rest in my grave if I wasn’t berrid among my own; so we’ll take the farm if possible.”

“Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avourneen; an’ in the name o’ goodness, we’ll set out, an’ clinch the business this very day.”

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M’Carthys, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

“Jack,” said the old gentleman, “you don’t probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M’Carthys so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M’Carthy; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M’Carthy.”

“Sir,” replied Owen, “I’m thankful to you; I’m grateful to you. But I wouldn’t take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an’ to lay in all that’s wantin’ to work it well. It ’ud be useless for me to take it—to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an’ thin run away out of it. No, no; I have what’ll put me upon it wid dacency an’ comfort.”

“Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M’Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall get leases prepared, and the business completed in a few days; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt for one of them, who was harshly ejected

about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now; but it was only out o' part of the lands, sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

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“It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him,” said Frank; “but if security was wantin, sir, Id not be willin’ to let anybody but myself back him. I’d go all I’m worth in the world—an’ by my sowl, double as much—for the same man.”

“I know that, Frank, an’ I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson’s hands, here, if it was wanted. Good-mornin’ an’ thank you both, gintleman. To tell yez the thruth,” he added, with a smile, “I long to be among my ould friends—manin’ the people, an’ the hills, an’ the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin; an’ thanks be to goodness, sure I will soon.”

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrel’s was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days, he went among his old “cronies;” and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house intimated, than the neighbors all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and widow Murray’s children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them; and young Murray remembered with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow’s eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen’s unparalleled affection for his favorite child been known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

“Poor Owen, he’s dead,” they used to say; “the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin’ blow. It broke his heart.”

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrel; who, tying it up along with his own, secured it in the “black chest.” Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon as the Lacy’s should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbors, in order to transfer Owen’s family and furniture to his new dwelling. Everything therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her.

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If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his' Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved Owen precisely as he loved Kathleen. Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble life. It is in humble life, where the Springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil knowledge, that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return now with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about eighteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick?"

"The blessed child was not neglected—no, but she was honored in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there purtily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childher's doin' well. May God bless an' prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child, was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination

had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

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There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful, as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbors, with their carts and cars, arrived; and before the day was closed on which Owen removed to his new residence, he found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside the door, singing with a happy heart his favorite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo*." It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and, in spite of the national depression, still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childher," said the father, "didn't I tell yez the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that there was a 'good God above who might do somethin' for us yet?' I never did give up may trust in Him, an' I never will. You see, afther all our little troubles, He has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to His name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being-called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-gray locks, with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of his thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

NEAL MALONE.

There never was a greater souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet; four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Lot none dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach has been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear, that Neal Malone was more than the ninth part of a man!

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Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and, perhaps, we might venture to assert, that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great was a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalized themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all fighting men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind," never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain; his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whiskey, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their laurels. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he deplored the degeneracy of the times, and thought it hard that the descendant of such a fighting family should be doomed to pass through life peaceably, while so many excellent rows and riots took place around him. It was a calamity to see every man's head broken but his own; a dismal thing to observe his neighbors go about with their bones in bandages, yet his untouched; and his friends beat black and blue, whilst his own cuticle remained undiscolored.

"Blur-an'-agers!" exclaimed Neal one day, when half-tipsy in the fair, "am I never to get a bit of fightin'? Is there no cowardly spalpeen to stand afore Neal Malone? Be this an' be that, I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'! I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin'! Will none o' ye fight me aither for love, money, or whiskey—frind or inimy, an' bad luck to ye? I don't care a traneen which, only out o' pure frindship, let us have a morsel o' the rale kick-up, 'tany rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me; sure that makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

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This excellent heroism was all wasted; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets, one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back, until his bones were nearly dislocated in his body; and his hand shaken, until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half a week afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter business—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive, was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive, could procure him a single foe. In vain did lie insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villany he could think of; he lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon, would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people, as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were only his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! There is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingencies? or knit his brows and shook his kipjoeen at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition the a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

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It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character; for what hero ever bore a state, of tranquillity with courage? It affected his cutting out! It produced what Burton calls “a windie melancholie,” which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can without indignity be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he nourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms alarmed, his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy them; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopoeia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended bloodletting; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it: he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it; which was giving the character of a hero at a single touch. His blood was not to be thrown away in this manner; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, “I’m blue-mowlded for want of a batin’!” They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped in heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day after day passed, and no appearance of action presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword-blade too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang, when he thought of the spirit rusting within him: he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own bram, and to commit more grievous oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat, with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and despatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers.

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Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before, and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cut-purses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

“Don’t bo cast down, Neal,” said they, “your friends feel for you, poor fellow.”

“Divil carry my frinds,” replied Neal, “sure there’s not one o’ yez frindly enough to be my inimy. Tare-an’-ounze! what’ll I do? I’m blue-rhowlded for want of a batin’!”

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skiomachia* as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with considerable antipathy at his own shadow for several nights; and it is not to be questioned, but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten; but there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villanous cloud happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

“It’s aisy known,” said Neal, “you haven’t the blood in you, or you’d come up to the scratch like a man.”

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garment.

God knows it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal’s was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world, was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert, that more men have risen in the world by the injury of their enemies, than have

risen by the kindness of their friends. You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like, it is still immutably and immovably true.

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One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington-street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just setting, and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendor, athwart the tailor's"——the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor, himself, was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient, subdued kind of expression in his face, which indicated a very full-portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and, after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his half handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said—"Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; "but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, it's not your inexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor; "but where's the use of carryin' it, whin I can get no one to fight wid. Sure I'm disgracing my relations by the life I'm leadin'. I'll go to my grave widout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself; that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life; so that I'm fairly blue-mowlded for want of a batin'. But if you have patience——"

"Patience!" said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of the head, that was perfectly disastrous even to look at; "patience, did you say, Neal?"

“Ay,” said Neal, “an’, be my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I’ll break your head!”

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“Ah, Neal,” returned the other, “I don’t deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics, every day in my life, yet I’m learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal; I have forgotten to deny anything. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting. That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority—but I suffered for it.”

“Well,” said Neal, “if you have patience, I’ll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin’ to endin’.”

“I will have patience,” said Mr. O’Connor, and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

“You have told me that fifty times over,” said Mr. O’Connor, after hearing the story. “Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. Marry a wife. For twenty-five years I have given instructions in three branches, *viz*.—philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion, that, if you marry a wife, you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting.”

“Do you mean to say that any woman would make me afeard?” said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel. “I’ll thank you merely to go over the words agin till I thrash you widin an inch o’ your life. That’s all.”

“Neal,” said the schoolmaster, meekly, “I won’t fight; I have been too often subdued ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated: I am like one, of your own shreds, a mere selvage. Do you not know how much my habiliments have shrunk in, even within the last five years? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, blue-moulded for want of a beating, and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, marry a wife. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, for they are wanted, you understand. Farewell!”

Mr. O’Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed, and Neal stood, with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection, strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

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Many a man has happiness within his reach if he but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardor of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart, as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this, would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He, therefore, very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valor, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with, him. If he could have left it, as a legacy, to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why, the case would be altered; but this was impossible—and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as everybody knew, were certainly to break out; and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or, perhaps, a general, that might astonish the world.

The change visible in Neal, after the schoolmaster's last visit, absolutely thunder-struck all who knew him. The clothes, which he had rashly taken in to fit his shrivelled limbs, were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valor; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he got desperately gallant; but, somehow, he could not afford to act the hero and lover both at the same time. This, perhaps, would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honor of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he won gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey;" and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan, for vanquishing an army, into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man, whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host, could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present and return to the tailor.

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No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony, than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had ratted from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The fiercer virtues had played the devil with him; every word was thunder, every look lightning; but now all that had passed away;—-before, he was the Jortiter in re, at present he was the suaviter in modo. His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart; a genial warmth was diffused over him; his soul got green within him; every day was serene; and if a cloud happened to be come visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, “why the dickens, Neal, don’t you marry a wife?”

Neal could not resist the afflatus which descended on him; an ethereal light dwelled, he thought, upon the face of nature; the color of the cloth, which he cut out from day to day, was to his enraptured eye like the color of Cupid’s wings—all purple; his visions were worth their weight in gold; his dreams, a credit to the bed he slept on; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world, for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled; no dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself, than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valor; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love;—nothing else could distend him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens, when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matrimony. Labor ceased to be a trouble to him; he sang and sewed from morning to night; his hot goose no longer burned him, for his heart was as hot as his goose; the vibrations of his head, at each successive stitch, were no longer sad and melancholy. There was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honor be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamored of her. No such thing, he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made up as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was falling in love in the abstract, and let no man condemn it without a trial; for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

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Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul—he waited on that melancholy and gentleman-like man, and in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

"In love, Neal!" said the schoolmaster. "May I inquire with whom?"

"Wid nobody in particular, yet," replied Neal; "but of late I'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

"Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal," observed Mr. O'Connor, "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of contrast; but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head, the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense—for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there, and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however ably translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

“How could I nurse and mind my business?” replied the tailor. I’ll never nurse so long as I’ll have the wife; and as for imagination it depends upon the grain of it, whether I can stretch it or not. I don’t know that I ever made a coat of it in my life.”

“You don’t understand me, Neal,” said the schoolmaster. “In recommending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that, if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife, you would get heroic again?—that is, would you, take once more to the love of fighting?”

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“There is no doubt but I would,” said the tailor: “If I miss the wife, I’ll kick up such a dust as never was seen in the parish, an’ you’re the first man that I’ll lick. But now that I’m in love,” he continued, “sure, I ought to look out for the wife.”

“Ah! Neal,” said the schoolmaster, “you are tempting destiny: your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head.”

“Come,” said the tailor, “it wasn’t to hear you groaning to the tune of ‘Dhrimmind-hoo,’ or ‘The ould woman rockin’ her cradle,’ that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin’ out the wife. That’s the discoorse.”

“Look at me, Neal,” said the schoolmaster, solemnly; “I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living caveto against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men: they were all fat and had double chins; and, Neal, I tell you, that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man; before it gets through the strong outworks, of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth; just like a sincere ecclesiastic, who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success, that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often; to be laid under the table, Look at me Neal, how wasted, fleshless, and miserable, I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you: otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself.”

“I don’t care what I become,” said the tailor; “I can’t think that you’d be so: unsonable as to expect that any of the Malones; should pass out of the world widout either bein’ bate or marrid. Have rason, Mr. O’Connor, an’ if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time—for nothin’.”

“Well, then,” said Mr. O’Connor, “what-would you think of the butcher’s daughter, Biddy Neil? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever become sanguinary again. ’Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid; and heaven preserve those bachelors, whom I wish well, from a small wife: ’tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands with a rod of iron.”

“Say no more, Mr. O’Connor,” replied the tailor, “she’s the very girl I’m in love wid, an’ never fear, but I’ll overcome her heart if I it can be done by man. Now, step over the way to my house, an’ we’ll have a sup on the head of it. Who’s that calling?”

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“Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there’s a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Farewell! I must depart; you have heard the proverb, ’those who are bound must obey.’ Young Jack, I presume, is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous heart I often sing, ’Begone dull care,’ the ‘Rakes of Newcastle,’ or ‘Peas upon a Trencher.’ Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!”

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward; he had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil’s heart with a degree of skill and valor which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognizant of the tailor’s triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded—as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been displayed only within the limited range of domestic life; but should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers, and sisters, every one of whom she had successively subdued, that she must undoubtedly distinguish herself. There was certainly one difficulty which the tailor had not to encounter in the progress of his courtship; the field was his own; he had not a rival to dispute his claim. Neither was there any opposition given by her friends; they were, on the contrary, all anxious for the match; and when the arrangements were concluded, Neal felt his hand squeezed by them in succession, with an expression more resembling condolence than joy. Neal, however, had been bred to tailoring, and not to metaphysics; he could cut out a coat very well, but we do not say that he could trace a principle—as what tailor, except Jeremy Taylor, could?

There was nothing particular in the wedding. Mr. O’Connor was asked by Neal to be present at it: but he shook his head, and told him that he had not courage to attend it, or inclination to witness any man’s sorrows but his own. He met the wedding party by accident, and was heard to exclaim with a sigh, as they flaunted past him in gay exuberance of spirits—“Ah, poor Neal! he is going like one of her father’s cattle to the shambles! Woe is me for having suggested matrimony to the tailor! He will not long-be under the necessity of saying that he ’is blue-moulded for want of a beating.’ The butcheress will fell him like a Kerry ox, and I may have his blood to answer for, and his discomfiture to feel for, in addition to my own miseries.”

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On the evening of the wedding-day, about the hour of ten o'clock, Neal—whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bride's maid; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty; and it is said, too, that he whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry. The tete-a-tete continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception; but that exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bride's maid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all-fours to the floor; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm as one would a lap dog, and with stately step marched him away to the connubial, apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently entreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain; for, as he shook his own during the moment of observation, he concluded that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or perhaps the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description, over the remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony, Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that, the moment this event should take place, he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—-nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life—a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic penchant lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

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On the first week after his marriage, there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of shillelahs, in order to select the best; the wife inquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for love or money. "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house, "the thruth is, that I've done the whole of yez—I'm as *blue-mowlded* as ever for want of a batin'."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I will go," said Neal, with vehemence; "I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair!

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in, upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution; but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the mean time, we say this much—let those who cannot make it out, carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good a right to understand it—except, perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony, Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest bridelike reluctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation, thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me, am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal, one day, near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook

his head after the manner of Mr. O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it over-folded him.

Well, thought he, with a sigh—this waistcoat certainly did fit me to a T: but it's wondherful to think how—cloth stretches.

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“Neal,” said the wife, on perceiving him dressed, “where are you bound for?”

“Faith, for life,” replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; “and I’d as soon, if it had been the will of Provid—”

He paused.

“Where are you going?” asked the wife, a second time.

“Why,” he answered, “only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly’s; I’ll be back early.”

“Don’t go,” said the wife. “I’ll go,” said Neal, “if the whole counthry was to prevent me. Thunder an’ lightnin,’ woman, who am I?” he exclaimed, in a loud but rather infirm voice; “arn’t I Neal Malone, that never met a man who’d fight him! Neal Malone, that was never beat by man! Why, tare-an-ounze, woman! Whoo! I’ll get enraged some time, an’ play the divil? Who’s afeard, I say?”

“Don’t go,” added the wife a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

In about another half-hour, Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the dance!

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy; that is to say—he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle; but there was no getting at the bottle, except through the wife; and it so happened that by the time it reached him, there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this, Neal, one evening, met Mr. O’Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two individuals could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both, on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O’Connor.

“Neal,” said the schoolmaster, “by all the household gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live!”

The ghost of a blush crossed the churchyard visage of the tailor.

“Oh!” he exclaimed, “why the devil did you tempt me to marry a wife.”

“Neal,” said his friend, “answer me in the most solemn manner possible—throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for the question is, indeed, a trying-one which I am about to put. Are you still ‘blue-moulded for want of beating?’”

The tailor collected himself to make a reply; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used to show in triumph to his friend; but, alas, how dwindled! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on its hind legs. He then raised himself up on his tip toes, and, in an awful whisper, replied, “No!!! the devil a bit I’m blue-mowlded for want of a batin.”

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The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner; but, alas! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement—a delicacy of shake in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes; and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathized together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart and in spirit; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if he wished to wage a universal battle with mankind. He was now a married man.—Sneakingiy, and with a cowardly crawl did he creep along as if every step brought him nearer to the gallows. The schoolmaster's march of misery was far slower than Neal's: the latter distanced him. Before three years passed, he had shrunk up so much, that he could not walk abroad of a windy day without carrying weights in his pockets to keep him firm on the earth, which he once trod with the step of a giant. He again sought the schoolmaster, with whom indeed he associated as much as possible. Here he felt certain of receiving sympathy; nor was he disappointed. That worthy, but miserable, man and Neal, often retired beyond the hearing of their respective wives, and supported each other by every argument in their power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us both be unhappy together;" which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor, on one of those occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called 'The Afflicted Man's Companion;' try if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, "I'm forever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had 'The Afflicted Man's Companion' too long, and divil an atom of consolation I can get out of it. I have one o' them I tell you; but, be me sowl, I'll not undhertake a pair o' them. The very name's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitae* must have been powerful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow; a circumstance which was of great inconvenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his; and one man was near, paying it five and sixpence for making a pair of smallclothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble; but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry

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home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt; it is true he bore it as long as he could; but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of “making his own quietus with his bare bodkin.” After many deliberations and afflictions, he ultimately made the attempt; but, alas! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So he solved the phenomenon; although the truth was, that his blood was not “i’ the vein” for’t; none was to be had. What then was to be done? He resolved to get rid of life by some process; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop; but here another disappintment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity, that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink; all the elements,—all his own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction, and failed in all, he felt like a man doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in the course of time he became so attenuated, that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was, to all intents and purposes, imperceptible. He could now only be heard; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox el praiterea nihil*. It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualized by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By and by Neal’s voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not of course die; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O’Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.

ART MAGUIRE;

OR, THE BROKEN PLEDGE.

PREFACE.

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In proposing to write a series of “Tales for the Irish People,” the author feels perfectly conscious of the many difficulties by which he is surrounded, and by which he may be still met in his endeavors to accomplish that important task. In order, however, to make everything as clear and intelligible as possible, he deems it necessary, in the first place, to state what his object is in undertaking it: that object is simply to improve their physical and social condition—generally; and through the medium of vivid and striking, but unobjectionable narratives, to inculcate such principles as may enable Irishmen to think more clearly, reason more correctly, and act more earnestly upon the general duties, which, from their position in life, they are called upon to perform. With regard to those who feel apprehensive that anything calculated to injure the doctrinal convictions of the Catholic people may be suffered to creep into these Tales, the author has only to assure them—that such an object comes within the scope neither of his plan or inclinations. It is not his intention to make these productions the vehicles of Theology or Polemics; but studiously to avoid anything and everything that even approaches the sphere of clerical duty. His object, so far from that, is the inculcation of general, not peculiar, principles—principles which neither affect nor offend any creed, but which are claimed and valued by all. In this way, by making amusement the handmaiden of instruction, the author believes it possible to let into the cabin, the farm-house, and even the landlord’s drawing-room, a light by which each and all of them may read many beneficial lessons—lessons that will, it is hoped, abide with them, settle down in their hearts, and by giving them a, clearer sense of their respective duties, aid in improving and regenerating their condition.

To send to the poor man’s fireside, through the medium of Tales that will teach his heart and purify his affections, those simple lessons which may enable him to understand his own value—that will generate self-respect, independence, industry, love of truth, hatred of deceit and falsehood, habits of cleanliness, order, and punctuality—together with all those lesser virtues which help to create a proper sense of personal and domestic comfort—to assist in working out these healthful purposes is the Author’s anxious wish—a task in which any man may feel proud to engage.

Self-reliance, manly confidence in the effect of their own virtues, respect for the virtues that ought to adorn rank, rather than for rank itself, and a spurning of that vile servility which is only the hereditary remnant of bygone oppression, will be taught the people in such a way as to make them feel how far up in society a high moral condition can and ought to place them. Nor is this all;—the darker page of Irish life shall be laid open before them—in which they will be taught, by examples that they can easily understand, the fearful details of misery, destitution, banishment, and death, which the commission of a single crime may draw down, not only upon the criminal himself, but upon those innocent and beloved connections whom he actually punishes by his guilt.

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It is, indeed, with fear and trembling that the Author undertakes such a great and important task as this. If he fail, however, he may well say—

"*Quem si non tenuifc, tamon magnis excidit ausis*."

Still he is willing to hope that, through the aid of truthful fiction, operating upon the feelings of his countrymen, and on their knowledge of peasant life, he may furnish them with such a pleasing Encyclopedia of social duty—now lit up with their mirth, and again made tender with their sorrow—as will force them to look upon him as a benefactor—to forget his former errors—and to cherish his name with affection, when he himself shall be freed forever from those cares and trials of life which have hitherto been his portion.

In the following simple narrative of "The Broken Pledge," it was his aim, without leading his readers out of the plain paths of every-day life or into the improbable creations of Romance, to detail the character of such an individual as almost every man must have often seen and noticed within the society by which he is surrounded. He trusts that the moral, as regards both husband and wife, is wholesome and good, and calculated to warn those who would follow in the footsteps of "Art Maguire."

Dubin, July 4, 1845.

It has been often observed, and as frequently inculcated, through the medium of both press and pulpit, that there is scarcely any human being who, how striking soever his virtues, or how numerous his good qualities may be, does not carry in his moral constitution some particular weakness or failing, or perhaps vice, to which he is especially subject, and which may, if not properly watched and restrained, exercise an injurious and evil influence over his whole life. Neither have the admonitions of press or pulpit ended in merely laying down this obvious and undeniable truth, but, on the contrary, very properly proceeded to add, that one of the most pressing duties of man is to examine his own heart, in order to ascertain what this particular vice or failing in his case may be, in order that, when discovered, suitable means be taken to remove or overcome it.

The man whose history we are about to detail for the reader's instruction, was, especially during the latter years of his life, a touching, but melancholy illustration of this indisputable truth; in other words, he possessed the weakness or the vice, as the reader may consider it, and found, when too late, that a yielding resolution, or, to use a phrase perhaps better understood, a good intention, was but a feeble and inefficient instrument with which to attempt its subjection. Having made these few preliminary observations, as being suitable, in our opinion, to the character of the incidents which follow, we proceed at once to commence our narrative.

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Arthur, or, as he was more familiarly called by the people, Art Maguire, was the son of parents who felt and knew that they were descended from higher and purer blood than could be boasted of by many of the families in their neighborhood. Art's father was a small farmer, who held about ten acres of land, and having a family of six children—-three sons, and as many daughters—he determined upon putting one or two of the former to a trade, so soon as they should be sufficiently grown up for that purpose. This, under his circumstances was a proper and provident resolution to make. His farm was too small to be parceled out, as is too frequently the case, into small miserable patches, upon each of which a young and inconsiderate couple are contented to sit down, with the prospect of rearing up and supporting a numerous family with wofully inadequate means; for although it is generally a matter of certainty that the families of these young persons will increase, yet it is a perfectly well-known fact that the little holding will not, and the consequence is, that families keep subdividing on the one hand, and increasing on the other, until there is no more room left for them. Poverty then ensues, and as poverty in such cases begets competition, and competition crime, so we repeat that Condy Maguire's intention, as being one calculated to avoid such a painful state of things, was a proof of his own good sense and forethought.

Arthur's brother, Frank, was a boy not particularly remarkable for any peculiar brilliancy of intellect, or any great vivacity of disposition. When at school he was never in a quarrel, nor engaged in any of those wild freaks which are sore annoyances to a village schoolmaster, and daring outrages against his authority. He was consequently a favorite not only with the master, but with all the sober, well-behaved boys of the school, and many a time has Teague Rooney, with whom he was educated, exclaimed, as he addressed him:

"Go to your sate, Frank abouchal; faith, although there are boys endowed wid more brilliancy of intellect than has fallen to your lot, yet you are the very youth who understands what is due to legitimate authority, at any rate, an' that's no small gift in itself; go to your sate, sorrow taw will go to your substratum this bout, for not having your lesson; for well I know it wasn't idleness that prevented you, but the natural sobriety and slowness of intellect you are gifted wid. If you are slow, however, you are sure, and I'll pledge my reputaytion aginst that of the great O'Flaherty himself, that you and your brinoge of a brother will both live to give a beautiful illustration of the celebrated race between the hare and the tortoise yet. Go to your sate wid impunity, and tell your dacent mother I was inquiring for her."

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Such, indeed, was a tolerably correct view of Frank's character. He was quiet, inoffensive, laborious, and punctual; though not very social or communicative, yet he was both well-tempered and warm-hearted, points which could not, without considerable opportunities of knowing him, be readily perceived. Having undertaken the accomplishment of an object, he permitted no circumstance to dishearten or deter him in working out his purpose; if he said it, he did it; for his word was a sufficient guarantee that he would; his integrity was consequently respected, and his resolution, when he expressed it, was seldom disputed by his companions, who knew that in general it was inflexible. After what we have said, it is scarcely necessary to add that he was both courageous and humane.

These combinations of character frequently occur. Many a man not remarkable for those qualities of the head that impress themselves most strikingly upon the world, is nevertheless gifted with those excellent principles of the heart which, although without much show, and scarcely any noise, go to work out the most useful purposes of life. Arthur, on the contrary, was a contrast to his brother, and a strong one, too, on many points; his intellect was far superior to that of Frank's, but, on the other hand, he by no means possessed his brother's steadiness or resolution. We do not say, however, that he was remarkable for the want of either, far from it; he could form a resolution, and work it out as well as his brother, provided his course was left unobstructed: nay, more, he could overcome difficulties many and varied, provided only that he was left unassailed by, one solitary temptation—that of an easy and good-humored vanity. He was conscious of his talents, and of his excellent qualities, and being exceedingly vain, nothing gave him greater gratification than to hear himself praised for possessing them—for it is a fact, that every man who is vain of any particular gift, forgets that he did not bestow that gift upon himself, and that instead of priding himself upon the possession of it, he should only be humbly thankful to the Being who endowed him with it.

Art was social, communicative, and, although possessing what might be considered internal resources more numerous, and of a far higher order than did his brother, yet, somehow, it was clear that he had not the same self-dependence that marked the other. He always wanted, as it. were, something to lean upon, although in truth he did not at all require it, had he properly understood himself. The truth is, like thousands, he did not begin to perceive, or check in time, those early tendencies that lead a heart naturally indolent, but warm and generous, to the habit of relying first, in small things, upon external sources and objects, instead of seeking and finding within itself those materials for manly independence, with which every heart is supplied, were its possessor only aware of the fact, and properly instructed how to use them.

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Art's enjoyments, for instance, were always of a social nature, and never either solitary or useful in their tendencies; of this character was every thing he engaged in. He would not make a ship of water flaggons by himself, nor sail it by himself—he would not spin a top, nor trundle a hoop without a companion—if sent upon a message, or to dig a basket of potatoes in the field, he would rather purchase the society of a companion with all the toys or playthings he possessed than do either alone. His very lessons he would not get unless his brother Frank got his along with him. The reader may thus perceive that he acquired no early habit of self-restraint, no principle of either labor or enjoyment within, himself, and of course could acquire none at all of self-reliance. A social disposition in our amusements is not only proper, but natural, for we believe it is pretty generally known, that he who altogether prefers such amusements is found to be deficient in the best and most generous principles of our nature. Every thing, however, has its limits and its exceptions. Art, if sent to do a day's work alone, would either abandon it entirely, and bear the brunt of his father's anger, or he would, as we have said, purchase the companionship of some neighbor's son or child, for, provided he had any one to whom he could talk, he cared not, and having thus succeeded, he would finish it triumphantly.

In due time, however, his great prevailing weakness, vanity, became well known to his family, who, already aware of his peculiar aversion to any kind of employment that was not social, immediately seized upon it, and instead of taking rational steps to remove it, they nursed it into stronger life by pandering to it as a convenient means of regulating, checking, or stimulating the whole habits of his life. His family were not aware of the moral consequences which they were likely to produce by conduct such as this, nor of the pains they were ignorantly taking to lay the foundation of his future misfortune and misery.

"Art, my good boy, will you take your spade and clane out the remaindher o' that drain, between the Hannigans and us," said his father.

"Well, will Frank come?"

"Sure you know he can't; isn't he weedin' that bit of *blanther* in Crackton's park, an' afther that sure he has to cut scraws on the Pirl-hill for the new barn."

"Well, I'll help him if he helps me; isn't that fair? Let us join."

"Hut, get out o' that, avourneen; go yourself; do what you're bid, Art."

"Is it by myself? murdher alive, father, don't ax me; I'll give him my new Cammon if he comes."

"Throth you won't; the sorra hand I'd ever wish to see the same Cammon in but your own; faix, it's you that can handle it in style. Well now, Art, well becomes myself but I

thought I could play a Cammon wid the face o' clay wanst in my time, but may I never sin if ever I could match you at it; oh, sorra taste o' your Cammon you must part wid; sure I'd rather scower the drain myself."

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“Bedad I won’t part wid it then.”

“I’d rather, I tell you, scower it myself—an’ I will, too. Sure if I renew the ould cough an me I’ll thry the *Casharawan*, (* Dandelion) that did me so much good the last time.”

“Well, that’s purty! Ha, ha, ha! you to go! Oh, ay, indeed—as if I’d stand by an’ let you. Not so bad as that comes to, either—no. Is the spade an’ shovel in the shed?”

“To be sure they are. Throth, Art, you’re worth the whole o’ them—the sorra lie in it. Well, go, avillish.”

This was this fine boy’s weakness played upon by those who, it is true, were not at all conscious of the injury they were inflicting upon him at the time. He was certainly the pride of the family, and even while they humored and increased this his predominant and most dangerous foible, we are bound to say that they gratified their own affection as much as they did his vanity.

His father’s family consisted, as we have said, of three sons and three daughters. The latter were the elder, and in point of age Art, as we have said, was the youngest of them all. The education that he and his brothers received was such as the time and the neglected state of the country afforded them. They could all read and write tolerably well, and knew something of arithmetic. This was a proof that their education had not been neglected. And why should it? Were they not the descendants of the great Maguires of Fermanagh? Why, the very consciousness of their blood was felt as a proud and unanswerable argument against ignorance. The best education, therefore, that could be procured by persons in their humble sphere of life, they received. The eldest brother, whose name was Brian, did not, as is too frequently the case with the eldest sons of small farmers, receive so liberal a portion of instruction as Frank or Art. This resulted from the condition and necessities of his father, who could not spare him from his farm—and, indeed, it cost the worthy man many a sore heart. At all events, time advanced, and the two younger brothers were taken from school with a view of being apprenticed to some useful trade. The character of each was pretty well in accordance with their respective dispositions. Frank had no enemies, yet was he by no means so popular as Art, who had many. The one possessed nothing to excite envy, and never gave offence; the other, by the very superiority of his natural powers, exultingly paraded, as they were, at the expense of dulness or unsuccessful rivalry, created many vindictive maligners, who let no opportunity pass of giving him behind his back the harsh word which they durst not give him to his face. In spite of all this, his acknowledged superiority, his generosity, his candor, and utter ignorance or hatred of the low chicaneries of youthful cunning, joined to his open, intrepid, and manly character, conspired to render him popular in an extraordinary degree. Nay, his very failings added to this, and when the battle of his character was fought, all the traditionary errors of moral life were quoted in his favor.

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“Ay, ay, the boy has his faults, and who has not; I’d be glad to know? If he’s lively, it’s betther to be that, than a mosey, any day. His brother Frank is a good boy, but sure divil a squig of spunk or spirits is in him, an’, my dear, you know the ould proverb, that a standin’ pool always stinks, while the runnin’ strame is sweet and clear to the bottom. If he’s proud, he has a right to be proud, and why shouldn’t he, seein’ that it’s well known he could take up more larnin’ than half the school.”

“Well, but poor Frank’s a harmless boy, and never gave offence to mortual, which, by the same token, is more than can be said of Art the lad.”

“Very well, we know all that; and maybe it ’ud be betther for himself if he had a sharper spice of the dioual in him—but sure the poor boy hasn’t the brain for it. Offence! oh, the dickens may seize the offence poor Frank will give to man or woman, barrin’ he mends his manners, and gats a little life into him—sure he was a year and a day in the Five Common Rules, an’ three blessed weeks gettin’ the Multiplication Table.”

Such, in general, was the estimate formed of their respective characters, by those who, of course, had an opportunity of knowing them best. Whether the latter were right or wrong will appear in the sequel, but in the meantime we must protest, even in this early stage of our narrative, against those popular exhibitions of mistaken sympathy, which in early life—the most dangerous period too—are felt and expressed for those who, in association with weak points of character, give strong indications of talent. This mistaken generosity is pernicious to the individual, inasmuch as it confirms him in the very errors which he should correct, and in the process of youthful reasoning, which is most selfish, induces him not only to doubt the whisperings of his own conscience, but to substitute in their stead the promptings of the silliest vanity.

Having thus given a rapid sketch of these two brothers in their schoolboy life, we now come to that period at which their father thought proper to apprentice them. The choice of the trade he left to their own natural judgment, and as Frank was the eldest, he was allowed to choose first. He immediately selected that of a carpenter, as being clean, respectable, and within-doors; and, as he added—

“Where the wages is good—and then I’m tould that one can work afther hours, if they wish.”

“Very well,” said the father, “now let us hear, Art; come, alanna, what are you on for?”

“I’ll not take any trade,” replied Art.

“Not take any trade, Art! why, my goodness, sure you knew all along that you war for a trade. Don’t you know when you and Frank grow up, and, of course, must take the world on your heads, that it isn’t this strip of a farm that you can depend on.”

“That’s what I think of,” said Frank; “one’s not to begin the world wid empty pockets, or, any way, widout some ground to put one’s foot on.”

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“The world!” rejoined Art; “why, what the sorra puts thoughts o’ the world into your head, Frank? Isn’t it time enough for you or me to think o’ the world these ten years to come?”

“Ay,” replied Frank, “but when we come to join it isn’t the time to begin to think of it; don’t you know what the ould saying says—*ha nha la na guiha la na scuillaba*—it isn’t on the windy day that you are to look for your scollops."*

* The proverb inculcates forethought and provision. Scollop is an osier sharpened at both ends, by which the thatch of a house is fastened down to the roof. Of a windy day the thatch alone would be utterly useless, if there were no scollops to keep it firm.

“An’ what ‘ud prevent you, Art, from goin’ to larn a trade?” asked his father.

“I’d rather stay with you,” replied the affectionate boy; “I don’t like to leave you nor the family, to be goin’ among strangers.”

The unexpected and touching nature of his motive, so different from what was expected, went immediately to his father’s heart. He looked at his fine boy, and was silent for a minute, after which he wiped the moisture from his eyes. Art, on seeing his father affected, became so himself, and added—

“That’s my only raison, father, for not goin’; I wouldn’t like to lave you an’ them, if I could help it.”

“Well, acushla,” replied the father, while his eyes beamed on him with tenderness and affection, “sure we wouldn’t ax you to go, if we could any way avoid it—it’s for your own good we do it. Don’t refuse to go, Art; sure for my sake you won’t?”

“I will go, then,” he replied; “I’ll go for your sake, but I’ll miss you all.”

“An’ we’ll miss you, ahagur. God bless you, Art dear, it’s jist like you. Ay, will we in throth miss you; but, then, think what a brave fine thing it’ll be for you to have a grip of a dacent independent trade, that’ll keep your feet out o’ the dirt while you live.”

“I will go,” repeated Art, “but as for the trade, I’ll have none but Frank’s. I’ll be a carpenter, for then he and I can be together.”

In addition to the affectionate motive which Art had mentioned to his father—and which was a true one—as occasioning his reluctance to learn a trade, there was another, equally strong and equally tender. In the immediate neighborhood there lived a family named Murray, between whom and the Maguires there subsisted a very kindly intimacy. Jemmy Murray was in fact one of the wealthiest men in that part of the parish, as wealth then was considered—that is to say, he farmed about forty acres, which he held at a moderate rent, and as he was both industrious and frugal, it was only a matter of consequence that he and his were well to do in the world. It is not likely, however, that

even a passing acquaintance would ever have taken place between them, were it not for the consideration of the blood which was known

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to flow in the veins of the Fermanagh Maguires. Murray was a good deal touched with purse-pride—the most offensive and contemptible description of pride in the world—and would never have suffered an intimacy, were it not for the reason I have alleged. It is true he was not a man of such stainless integrity as Condy Maguire, because it was pretty well known that in the course of his life, while accumulating money, he was said to have stooped to practices that were, to say the least of them, highly discreditable. For instance, he always held over his meal, until there came what is unfortunately both too well known and too well felt in Ireland,—a dear year—a year of hunger, starvation, and famine. For the same reason he held over his hay, and indeed on passing his haggard you were certain to perceive three or four immense stacks, bleached by the sun and rain of two or three seasons into a tawny yellow. Go into his large kitchen or storehouse, and you saw three or four immense deal chests filled with meal, which was reserved for a season of scarcity—for, proud as Farmer Murray was, he did not disdain to fatten upon human misery. Between these two families there was, as we have said, an intimacy. It was wealth and worldly goods on the one side; integrity and old blood on the other. Be this as it may, Farmer Murray had a daughter, Margaret, the youngest of four, who was much about the age of Arthur Maguire. Margaret was a girl whom it was almost impossible to know and not to love. Though then but seventeen, her figure was full, rich, and beautifully formed. Her abundant hair was black and glossy as ebony, and her skin, which threw a lustre like ivory itself, had—not the whiteness of snow—but a whiteness a thousand times more natural—a whiteness that was fresh, radiant, and spotless. She was arch and full of spirits, but her humor—for she possessed it in abundance—was so artless, joyous, and innocent, that the heart was taken with it before one had time for reflection. Added, however, to this charming vivacity of temperament were many admirable virtues, and a fund of deep and fervent feeling, which, even at that early period of her life, had made her name beloved by every one in the parish, especially the poor and destitute. The fact is, she was her father's favorite daughter, and he could deny her nothing. The admirable girl was conscious of this, but instead of availing herself of his affection for her in a way that many—nay, we may say, most—would have done, for purposes of dress or vanity, she became an interceding angel for the poor and destitute; and closely as Murray loved money, yet it is due to him to say, that, on these occasions, she was generally successful. Indeed, he was so far from being insensible to his daughter's noble virtues, that he felt pride in reflecting that she possessed them, and gave aid ten times from that feeling for once that he did from a more exalted one. Such was Margaret Murray, and such, we are happy to say—for we know it—are thousands of the peasant girls of our country.

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It was not to be wondered at, then, that in addition to the reluctance which a heart naturally affectionate, like Art's, should feel on leaving his relations for the first time, he should experience much secret sorrow at being deprived of the society of this sweet and winning girl.

Matters now, however, were soon arranged, and the time, nay, the very day for their departure was appointed. Art, though deeply smitten with the charms of Margaret Murray, had never yet ventured to breathe to her a syllable of love, being deterred naturally enough by the distance in point of wealth which existed between the families. Not that this alone, perhaps, would have prevented him from declaring his affection for her; but, young as he was, he had not been left unimpressed by his father's hereditary sense of the decent pride, strict honesty, and independent spirit, which should always mark the conduct and feelings of any one descended from the great Fermanagh Maguires. He might, therefore, probably have spoken, but that his pride dreaded a repulse, and that he could not bear to contemplate. This, joined to the natural diffidence of youth, sufficiently accounts for his silence.

There lived, at the period of which we write, which is not a thousand years ago, at a place called "the Corner House," a celebrated carpenter named Jack M'Carroll. He was unquestionably a first-rate mechanic, kept a large establishment, and had ample and extensive business. To him had Art and Frank been apprenticed, and, indeed, a better selection could not have been made, for Jack was not only a good workman himself, but an excellent employer, and an honest man. An arrangement had been entered into with a neighboring farmer regarding their board and lodging, so that every thing was settled very much to the satisfaction of all parties.

When the day of their departure had at length arrived, Art felt his affections strongly divided, but without being diminished, between Margaret Murray and his family; while Frank, who was calm and thoughtful, addressed himself to the task of getting ready such luggage as they had been provided with.

"Frank," said Art, "don't you think we ought to go and bid farewell to a few of our nearest neighbors before we lave home?"

"Where's the use of that?" asked Frank; "not a bit, Art; the best plan is jist to bid our own people farewell, and slip away without noise or nonsense."

"You may act as you plaise, Frank," replied the other; "as for me, I'll call on Jemmy Hanlon and Tom Connolly, at all events; but hould," said he, abruptly, "ought I to do that? Isn't it their business to come to us?"

"It is," replied Frank, "and so they would too, but that they think we won't start till Thursday; for you know we didn't intend to go till then."

“Well,” said Art, “that’s a horse of another color: I will call on them. Wouldn’t they think it heartless of us to go off widout seein’ them? An’ besides, Frank, why should we steal away like thieves that had the hue and cry at their heels? No, faith, as sure as we go at all, we’ll go openly, an’ like men that have nothing to be afraid of.”

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“Very well,” replied his brother, “have it your own way, so far as you’re consarned, as for me, I look upon it all as mere nonsense.”

It is seldom that honest and manly affection fails to meet its reward, be the period soon or late. Had Art been guided by Frank’s apparent indifference—who, however, acted in this matter solely for the sake of sparing his brother’s feelings—he would have missed the opportunity of being a party to an incident which influenced his future life in all he ever afterwards enjoyed and suffered. He had gone, as he said, to bid farewell to his neighbors, and was on his return home in order to take his departure, when whom should he meet on her way to her father’s house, after having called at his father’s “to see the girls,” as she said, with a slight emphasis upon the word girls, but Margaret Murray.

As was natural, and as they had often done before under similar circumstances, each paused on meeting, but somehow on this occasion there was visible on both sides more restraint than either had ever yet shown. At length, the preliminary chat having ceased, a silence ensued, which, after a little time, was broken by Margaret, who, Art could perceive, blushed deeply as she spoke.

“So, Art, you and Frank are goin’ to lave us.”

“It’s not with my own consint I’m goin’, Margaret,” he replied. As he uttered the words he looked at her; their eyes met, but neither could stand the glance of the other; they were instantly withdrawn.

“I’ll not forget my friends, at all events,” said Art; “at least, there’s some o’ them I won’t, nor wouldn’t either, if I was to get a million o’ money for doin’ so.”

Margaret’s face and neck, on hearing this, were in one glow of crimson, and she kept her eyes still on the ground, but made no reply. At length she raised them, and their glances met again; in that glance the consciousness of his meaning was read by both, the secret was disclosed, and their love told.

The place where they stood was in one of those exquisitely wild but beautiful green country lanes that are mostly enclosed on each side by thorn hedges, and have their sides bespangled with a profusion of delicate and fragrant wild flowers, while the pathway, from the unfrequency of feet, is generally covered with short daisy-gemmed grass, with the exception of a trodden line in the middle that is made solely by foot-passengers. Such was the sweet spot in which they stood at the moment the last glance took place between them.

At length Margaret spoke, but why was it that her voice was such music to him now? Musical and sweet it always was, and he had heard it a thousand times before, but why, we ask, was it now so delicious to his ear, so ecstatic to his heart? Ah, it was that

sweet, entrancing little charm which trembled up from her young and beating heart, through its softest intonations; this low tremor it was that confirmed the tale which the divine glance of that dark, but soft and mellow eye, had just told him. But to proceed, at length she spoke—

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“Arthur,” said the innocent girl, unconscious that she was about to do an act for which many will condemn her, “before you go, and I know I will not have an opportunity of seein’ you again, will you accept of a keepsake from me?”

[Illustration: PAGE AM994— At length Margaret spoke]

“Will I? oh, Margaret, Margaret!”—he gazed at her, but could not proceed, his heart was too full.

“Take this,” said she, “and keep it for my sake.”

Ho took it out of her hand, he seized the hand itself, another glance, and they sank into each other’s arms, each trembling with an excess of happiness. Margaret wept. This gush of rapture relieved and lightened their young and innocent hearts, and Margaret having withdrawn herself from his arms, they could now speak more freely. It is not our intention, however, to detail their conversation, which may easily be conjectured by our readers. On looking at the keepsake, Art found that it was a tress of her rich and raven hair, which, we may add here, he tied about his heart that day, and on that heart, or rather the dust of that heart, it lies on this.

It was fortunate for Art that he followed! his brother’s judgment in selecting the same trade. Frank, we have said, notwithstanding his coldness of manner, was by no means deficient in feeling or affection; he possessed, however, the power of suppressing their external manifestations, a circumstance which not unfrequently occasioned it to happen that want of feeling was often imputed to him without any just cause. At all events, he was a guide, a monitor, and a friend to his brother, whom he most sincerely and affectionately loved; he kindly pointed out to him his errors, matured his judgment by sound practical advice: where it was necessary, he gave him the spur, and on other, occasions held him in. Art was extremely well-tempered, as was Frank also, so that it was impossible any two brothers could agree better, or live in more harmony than they did. In truth, he had almost succeeded in opening Art’s eyes to the weak points in his character, especially to the greatest, and most dangerous of all—his vanity, or insatiable appetite for praise. They had not been long in M’Carroll’s establishment when the young man’s foibles were soon seen through, and of course began to be played upon; Frank, however, like a guardian angel, was always at hand to advise or defend him, as the case might be, and as both, in a physical contest, were able and willing to fight their own battles, we need not say that in a short time their fellow-workmen ceased to play off their pranks upon either of them. Everything forthwith passed very smoothly; Art’s love for Margaret Murray was like an apple of gold in his heart, a secret treasure of which the world knew nothing; they saw each other at least once a month, when their vows were renewed, and, surely, we need not say, that their affection on each subsequent interview only became more tender and enduring.

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The period of Frank's and Art's apprenticeship had now nearly expired, and it is not too much to say that their conduct reflected the highest credit upon themselves. Three or four times, we believe, Art had been seduced, in the absence of his brother, by the influence of bad company, to indulge in drink, even to intoxication. This, during the greater part of a whole apprenticeship, considering his temperament, and the almost daily temptations by which he was beset, must be admitted on the whole to be a very moderate amount of error in that respect. On the morning after his last transgression, however, apprehending very naturally a strong remonstrance from his brother, he addressed him as follows, in anticipation of what he supposed Frank was about to say: —

"Now, Frank, I know you're goin' to scould me, and what is more, I know I disarve all you could say to me; but there's one thing you don't know, an' that is what I suffer for lettin' myself be made a fool of last night. Afther the advices you have so often given me, and afther what my father so often tould us to think of ourselves, and afther the solemn promises I made to you—and that I broke, I feel as if I was nothin' more or less than a disgrace to the name."

"Art," said the other, "I'm glad to hear you speak as you do; for it's a proof that repentance is in your heart. I suppose I needn't say that it's your intention not to be caught be these fellows again."

"By the sacred—"

"Whisht," said Frank, clapping his hand upon his mouth; "there's no use at all in rash oaths, Art. If your mind is made up honestly and firmly in the sight of God—and dependin' upon his assistance, that is enough —and a great deal betther, too, than a rash oath made in a sudden fit of repentance—ay, before you're properly recovered from your liquor. Now say no more, only promise me you won't do the like, again."

"Frank, listen to me—by all the—"

"Hould, Art," replied Frank, stopping him again; "I tell you once more, this rash swearin' is a bad sign—I'll hear no rash oaths; but listen you to me; if your mind is made up against drinkin' this way again, jist look me calmly and steadily in the face, and answer me simply by yes or no. Now take your time, an' don't be in a hurry—be cool—be calm —reflect upon what you're about to say; and whether it's your solemn and serious intention to abide by it. My question 'll be very short and very simple; your answer, as I said, will be merely yes or no. Will you ever allow these fellows to make you drunk again? Yes or no, an' not another word."

"No."

“That will do,” said Frank; “now give me your hand, and a single word upon what has passed you will never hear from me.”

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In large manufactories, and in workshops similar to that in which the two brothers were now serving their apprenticeship, almost every one knows that the drunken and profligate entertain an unaccountable antipathy against the moral and the sober. Art's last fit of intoxication was not only a triumph over himself, but, what was still more, a triumph over his brother, who had so often prevented him from falling into their snares and joining in their brutal excesses. It so happened, however, that about this precise period, Art had, unfortunately, contracted an intimacy with one of the class I speak of, an adroit fellow with an oily tongue, vast powers of flattery, and still greater powers of bearing liquor—for Frank could observe, that notwithstanding all their potations, he never on any occasion observed him affected by drink, a circumstance which raised him in his estimation, because he considered that he was rather an obliging, civil young fellow, who complied so far as to give these men his society, but yet had sufficient firmness to resist the temptations to drink beyond the bounds of moderation. The upshot of all this was, that Frank, not entertaining any suspicion particularly injurious to Harte, for such was his name, permitted his brother to associate with him much more frequently than he would have done, had he even guessed at his real character.

One day, about a month after the conversation which we have just detailed between the two brothers, the following conversation took place among that class of the mechanics whom we shall term the profligates:—

"So he made a solemn promise, Harte, to *Drywig*"—this was a nickname they had for Frank—"that he'd never smell liquor again."

"A most solemnious promise," said Harte ironically; "a most solemn and solemnious promise; an' only that I know he's not a Methodist, I could a'most mistake him for Paddy M'Mahon, the locality preacher, when he tould me—"

"Paddy M'Mahon!" exclaimed Skinadre, the first speaker, a little thin fellow, with white hair and red ferret eyes; "why, who the divil ever heard of a Methodist Praicher of the name of Paddy M'Mahon?"

"It's aisy known," observed a fellow named, or rather nicknamed, Jack Slanty, in consequence of a deformity in his leg, that gave him the appearance of leaning or slanting to the one side; "it's aisy known, Skinadre, that you're not long in this part of the country, or you'd not ax who Paddy M'Mahon is."

"Come, Slanty, never mind Paddy M'Mahon," said another of them; "he received the gift of grace in the shape of a purty Methodist wife and a good fortune; ay, an' a sweet love-faist he had of it; he dropped the Padereens over Solomon's Bridge, and tuck to the evenin' meetins—that's enough for you to know; and now, Harte, about Maguire?"

"Why," said Harte, "if I'm not allowed to edge in a word, I had betther cut."

“A most solemn promise, you say?”

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“A most solemn and solemnious promise, that was what I said; never again by night or day, wet or dry, high or low, in or out, up or down, here or there, to—to—get himself snimicated wid any liquorary fluid whatsomever, be the same more or less, good, bad, or indifferent, hot or could, thick or thin, black or white—”

“Have done, Harte; quit your cursed sniftherin’, an’ spake like a Christian; do you think you can manage to circumsniffle him agin?”

“Ay,” said Harte, “or any man that ever trod on neat’s leather—barrin’ one.”

“And who is that one?”

“That one, sir—that one—do you ax me who that one is?”

“Have you no ears? To be sure I do.”

“Then, Skinadre, I’ll tell you—I’ll tell you, sarra,”—we ought to add here, that Harte was a first-rate mimic, and was now doing a drunken man,—“I’ll tell you, sarra—that person was Nelson on the top of the monument in Sackville street—no—no—I’m wrong; I could make poor ould Horace drunk any time, an’ often did—an’ many a turn-tumble he got off the monument at night, and the divil’s own throuble I had in gettin’ him up on it before mornin’, bekaise you all know he’d be cashiered, or, any way, brought to coort martial for leavin’ his po-po-post.”

“Well, if Nelson’s not the man, who is?”

“*Drywig’s* his name,” replied Harte; “you all know one *Drywig*, don’t you?”

“Quit your cursed stuff, Harte,” said a new speaker, named Garvey; “if you think you can dose him, say so, and if not, let us have no more talk about it.”

“Faith, an’ it’ll be a nice card to play,” replied Harte, resuming his natural voice; “but at all events, if you will all drop into Garvey’s lodgins and mine, to-morrow evenin’, you may find him there; but don’t blame me if I fail.”

“No one’s goin’ to blame you,” said Slanty, “an’ the devil’s own pity it is that that blasted *Drywig* of a brother of his keeps him in leadin’ strings the way he does.”

“The way I’ll do is this: I’ll ask him up to look at the pattern of my new waistcoat, an’ wanst I get him in, all I have to do is to lay it on thick.”

“I doubt that,” said another, who had joined them; “when he came here first, and for a long time afther, soapin’ him might do; but I tell you his eye’s open—it’s no go—he’s wide awake now.”

“Shut your orifice,” said Harte; “lave the thing to me; ’twas I did it before, although he doesn’t think so, an’ it’s I that will do it again, although he doesn’t think so. Haven’t I been for the last mortal month guardin’ him aginst yez, you villains?”

“To-morrow evenin’?”

“Ay, to-morrow evenin’; an’ if we don’t give him a gauliogue that’ll make him dance the circumbendibus widout music—never believe that my name’s any thing else than Tom Thin, that got thick upon spring wather. Hello! there’s the bell, boys, so mind what I tould yez; we’ll give him a farewell benefit, if it was only for the sake of poor *Drywig*. Ah, poor *Drywig!* how will he live widout him? Ochone, ochone! ha, ha, ha!”

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Without at all suspecting the trap that had been set for him, Art attended his business as usual, till towards evening, when Harte took an opportunity, when he got him for a few minutes by himself, of speaking to him apparently in a careless and indifferent way.

“Art, that’s a nate patthern in your waistcoat; but any how, I dunna how it is that you contrive to have every thing about you dacenter an’ jinteeler than another.” This, by the way, was true, both of him and his brother.

“Tut, it’s but middlin’,” said Art; “it’s now but a has-been:—when it was at itself it wasn’t so bad.”

“Begad, it was lovely wanst; now; how do you account, Art, for bein’ supairior to us in all in—in every thing, I may say; ay, begad, in every thing, and in all things, for that’s a point every one allows.”

“Nonsense, Syl” (his name was Sylvester), “don’t be comin’ it soft over me; how am I betther than any other?”

“Why, you’re betther made, in the first place, than e’er a man among us; in the next place, you’re a betther workman;”—both these were true—“an’, in the third place, you’re the best lookin’ of the whole pack; an’ now deny these if you can:—eh, ha, ha, ha—my lad, I have you!”

An involuntary smile might be observed on Art’s face at the last observation, which also was true.

“Syl,” he replied, “behave yourself; what are you at now? I know you.”

“Know me!” exclaimed Syl; “why what do you know of me? Nothing that’s bad I hope, any way.”

“None of your palaver, at all events,” replied Art; “have you got any tobaccy about you?”

“Sorra taste,” replied Harte, “nor had since mornin’.”

“Well, I have then,” said Art, pulling out a piece, and throwing it to him with the air of a superior; “warm your gums wid that, for altho’ I seldom take a blast myself, I don’t forget them that do.”

“Ah, begorra,” said Harte, in an undertone that was designed to be heard, “there’s something in the ould blood still; thank you, Art, faix it’s yourself that hasn’t your heart in a trifle, nor ever had. I bought a waistcoat on Saturday last from Paddy M’Gartland, but I only tuck it on the condition of your likin’ it.”

“Me! ha, ha, ha, well, sure enough, Syl, you’re the quarest fellow alive; why, man, isn’t it yourself you have to plaise, not me.”

“No matther for that, I’m not goin’ to put my judgment in comparishment wid yours, at any rate; an’ Paddy M’Gartland himself said, ’Syl, my boy, you know what you’re about; if this patthern plaises Art Maguire, it’ll plaise anybody; see what it is,’ says he, ’to have the fine high ould blood in one’s veins.’ Begad he did; will you come up this evenin’ about seven o’clock, now, like a good fellow, an’ pass your opinion for me? Divil a dacent stitch I have, an’ I want either it, or another, made up before the ball night."*

* Country dances, or balls, in which the young men pay from ten to fifteen pence for whiskey “to trate the ladies.” We hope they will be abolished.

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“Well, upon my soundhers, Syl, I did not think you were such a fool; of coorse I’ll pass my opinion on it—about seven o’clock, you say.”

“About seven—thank you, Art; an’ now listen;—sure the boys intind to play off some prank upon you afore you lave us.”

“On me,” replied the other, reddening; “very well, Syl, let them do so; I can bear a joke, or give a blow, as well as another; so divil may care, such as they give, such as they’ll get—only this, let there be no attempt to make me drink whiskey, or else there may be harder hittin’ than some o’ them ‘ud like, an’ I think they ought to know that by this time.”

“By jing, they surely ought; well, but can you spell mum?”

“M-u-m.”

“Ha, ha, ha, take care of yourself, an’ don’t forget seven.”

“Never fear.”

“Frank,” said Art, “I’m goin’ up to Syl Harte’s lodgin’s to pass my opinion on the patthern of a waistcoat for him.”

“Very well,” said Frank, “of coorse.”

“I’ll not stop long.”

“As long or short as you like, Art, my boy.”

“I hope, Frank, you don’t imagine that there’s any danger of drink?”

“Who, me—why should I, afther what passed? Didn’t you give me your word, and isn’t your name Maguire? Not I.”

Art had seen, and approved of the pattern, and was chatting with Syl, when a knock came to the room door in which they sat; Syl rose, and opening the door, immediately closed it after him, and began in a low voice to remonstrate with some persons outside. At length Art could hear the subject of debate pretty well—

“Sorra foot yez will put inside the room this evenin’, above all evenin’s in the year.”

“Why, sure we know he won’t drink. I wish to goodness we knew he had been here; we wouldn’t ax him to drink, bekase we know he wouldn’t.

“No matther for that, sorrow foot yez’ll put acrass the thrashel this evenin’; now, I’ll toll you what, Skinadre, I wouldn’t this blessed minute, for all I’ve earned these six months,

that ye came this evenin';—I have my raisons for it; Art Maguire is a boy that we have no right to compare ourselves wid—you all know that."

"We all know it, and there's nobody denyin' it; we haven't the blood in our veins that he has, an' blood will show itself anywhere."

"Well then, boys, for his sake—an' I know you'd do any day for his sake what you wouldn't, nor what you oughtn't, for mine—for his sake, I say, go off wid yez, and bring your liquor somewhere else, or sure wait till to-morrow evenin'."

"Out of respect for Art Maguire we'll go; an' divil another boy in the province we'd pay that respect to; good-evenin', Syl!"

"Aisy, boys," said Art, coming to the door, "don't let me frighten you—come in—I'd be very sorry to be the means of spoilin' sport, although I can't drink myself; that wouldn't be generous—come in."

"Augh," said Skinadre, "by the livin' it's in him, an' I always knew it was—the rale drop."

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“Boys,” said Harte, “go off wid yez out o’ this, I say; divil a foot you’ll come in.”

“Arra go to—Jimmaiky; who cares about you, Syl, when we have Art’s liberty? Sure we didn’t know the thing ourselves half an hour ago.”

“Come, Syl, man alive,” said Art, “let the poor fellows enjoy their liquor, an’, as I can’t join yez, I’ll take my hat an’ be off.”

“I knew it, an’ bad luck to yez, how yez ’ud drive him away,” said Syl, quite angry.

“Faix, if we disturb you, Art, we’re off—that ’ud be too bad; yes, Syl, you were right, it was very thoughtless of us: Art, we ax your pardon, sorra one of us meant you any offence in life—come, boys.”

Art’s generosity was thus fairly challenged, and he was not to be outdone—

“Aisy, boys,” said he; “sit down; I’ll not go, if that’ll plaise yez; sure you’ll neither eat me nor dhrink me.”

“Well, there’s jist one word you said, Slanty, that makes me submit to it,” observed Harte, “an’ that is, that it was accident your comin’ at all;” he here looked significantly at Art, as if to remind him of their previous conversation on that day, and as he did it, his face gradually assumed a complacent expression, as much as to say, it’s now clear that this cannot be the trap they designed for you, otherwise it wouldn’t be accidental. Art understood him, and returned a look which satisfied the other that he did so.

As they warmed in their liquor, or pretended to get warm, many sly attempts to entrap him were made, every one of which was openly and indignantly opposed by Harte, who would not suffer them to offer him a drop.

It is not our intention to dwell upon these matters: at present it is sufficient to say, that after a considerable part of the evening had been spent, Harte rose up, and called upon them all to fill their glasses—

“And,” he added, “as this is a toast that ought always to bring a full glass to the mouth, and an empty one from it, I must take the liberty of axin Art himself to fill a bumper.”

The latter looked at him with a good deal of real surprise, as the others did with that which was of a very different description.

“Skinadre,” proceeded Harte, “will you hand over the cowld wather, for a bumper it must be, if it was vitriol.” He then filled Art’s glass with water, and proceeded—“Stand up, boys, and be proud, as you have a right to be; here’s the health of Frank Maguire, and the ould blood of Ireland!—hip, hip, hurra!”

“Aisy, boys,” said Art, whose heart was fired by this unexpected compliment, paid to a brother whom he loved so well, and who, indeed, so well, deserved his love; “aisy, boys,” he proceeded, “hand me the whiskey; if it was to be my last, I’ll never drink my brother’s health in cowld wather.”

“Throth an’ you will this time,” said Harte, “undher this roof spirits won’t crass; your lips, an’ you know for why.”

“I know but one thing,” replied Art, “that as you said yourself, if it was vitriol, I’d dhrink it for the best brother that ever lived; I only promised him that I wouldn’t get dhrunk, an’ sure, drinkin’ a glass o’ whiskey, or three either, wouldn’t make me dhrunk—so hand it here.”

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“Well, Art,” said Harte, “there’s one man you can’t blame for this, and that is Syl Harte.”

“No, Syl, never—but now, boys, I am ready.”

“Frank Maguire’s health! hip, hip, hurra!”

Thus was a fine, generous-minded, and affectionate young man—who possessed all the candor and absence of suspicion which characterize truth—tempted and triumphed over, partly through the very warmth of his own affections, by a set of low, cunning profligates, who felt only anxious to drag him down from the moral superiority which they felt he possessed. That he was vain, and fond of praise, they knew, and our readers may also perceive that it was that unfortunate vanity which gave them the first advantage over him, by bringing him, through its influence, among them. Late that night he was carried home on a door, in a state of unconscious intoxication.

It is utterly beyond our power to describe the harrowing state of his sensations on awakening the next morning. Abasement, repentance, remorse, all combined as they were within him, fall far short of what he felt; he was degraded in his own eyes, deprived of self-respect, and stripped of every claim to the confidence of his brother, as he was to the well-known character for integrity which had been until then inseparable from the name. That, however, which pressed upon him with the most intense bitterness was the appalling reflection that he could no longer depend upon himself, nor put any trust in his own resolutions. Of what use was he in the world without a will of his own, and the power of abiding by its decisions? None; yet what was to be done? He could not live out of the world, and wherever he went, its temptations would beset him. Then there was his beloved Margaret Murray! was he to make her the wife of a common drunkard? or did she suspect, when she pledged herself to him, that she was giving away her heart and affections to a poor unmanly sot, who had not sense or firmness to keep himself sober? He felt in a state between distraction and despair, and putting his hands over his face, he wept bitterly. To complete the picture, his veins still throbbed with the dry fever that follows intoxication, his stomach was in a state of deadly sickness and loathing, and his head felt exactly as if it would burst or fly asunder.

Alas! had his natural character been properly understood and judiciously managed; had he been early taught to understand and to control his own obvious errors; had the necessity of self-reliance, firmness, and independence been taught him; had his principles not been enfeebled by the foolish praise of his family, nor his vanity inflated by their senseless appeals to it—it is possible, nay, almost certain, that he would, even at this stage of his life, have been completely free from the failings which are beginning even now to undermine the whole strength of his moral constitution.

Frank’s interview with him on this occasion was short but significant—

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“Art,” said he, “you know I never was a man of many words; and I’m not goin’ to turn over a new lafe now. To scould you is not my intention—nor to listen to your promises. All I have to say is, that you have broken your word, and disgraced your name. As for me, I can put neither confidence nor trust in you any longer; neither will I.”

A single tear was visible on his cheek as he passed out of the room; and when he did, Art’s violent sobs were quite audible. Indeed, if truth must be told, Frank’s distress was nearly equal to his brother’s. What, however, was to be done? He was too ill to attend his business, a circumstance which only heightened his distress; for he knew that difficult as was the task of encountering his master, and those who would only enjoy his remorse, still even that was less difficult to be borne than the scourge of his own reflections. At length a thought occurred, which appeared to give him some relief; that thought he felt was all that now remained to him, for as it was clear that he could no longer depend on himself, it was necessary that he should find something else on which to depend. He accordingly sent an intimation to his master that he wished to have a few minutes’ conversation with him, if he could spare time; M’Carroll accordingly came, and found him in a state which excited the worthy man’s compassion.

“Well, Art,” said he, “what is it you wish to speak to me about? I hear you were drunk last night. Now I thought you had more sense than to let these fellows put you into such a pickle. I have a fine, well-conducted set of men in general; but there is among them a hardened, hackneyed crew, who, because they are good workmen, don’t care a curse about either you or me, or anybody else. They’re always sure of employment, if not here, at least elsewhere, or, indeed, anywhere.”

“But it wasn’t their fault,” replied Art, “it was altogether my own; they were opposed to my drinkin’ at all, especially as they knew that I promised Frank never to get drunk agin. It was when Syl Harte proposed Frank’s health, that I drank the whiskey in spite o’ them.”

“Syl Harte,” said his master with a smile, “ay, I was thinkin’ so; well, no matter, Art, have strength and resolution not to do the like again.”

“But that’s the curse, sir,” replied the young man, “I have neither the one nor the other, and it’s on that account I sent for you.”

“How is that, Art?”

“Why,” said the other, “I am goin’ to bind myself—I am goin’ to swear against it, and so to make short work of it, and for fraid any one might prevent me”—he blessed himself, and proceeded—“I now, in the presence of God, swear upon this blessed manwil (* Manual) that a drop of spirituous drink, or liquor of any kind, won’t cross my lips for the next seven years, barrin’ it may be necessary as medicine;” he then kissed the book three times, blessed himself again, and sat down considerably relieved.

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“Now,” he added, “you may tell them what I’ve done; that’s seven years’ freedom, thank God; for I wouldn’t be the slave of whiskey—the greatest of tyrants—for the wealth of Europe.”

“No, but the worst of it is, Art,” replied his m ister, who was an exceedingly shrewd man, “that whiskey makes a man his own tyrant and his own slave, both at the same time, and that’s more than the greatest tyrant that ever lived did yet. As for yourself, you’re not fit to work any this day, so I think you ought to take a stretch across the country, and walk off the consequence of your debauch with these fellows last night.”

Art now felt confidence and relief; he had obtained the very precise aid of which he stood in need. The danger was now over, and a prop placed under his own feeble resolution, on which he could depend with safety; here there could be no tampering with temptation; the matter was clear, explicit, and decisive: so far all was right, and, as we have said, his conscience felt relieved of a weighty burden.

His brother, on hearing it from his own lips, said little, yet that little was not to discourage him; he rather approved than otherwise, but avoided expressing any very decided opinion on it, one way or the other.

“It’s a pity,” said he, “that want of common resolution should drive a man to take an oath; if you had tried your own strength, a little farther, Art, who knows but you might a’ gained a victory without it, and that would be more creditable and manly than swearin’; still, the temptation to drink is great to some people, and this prevents all possibility of fallin’ into it.”

Art, who, never having dealt in any thing disingenuous himself, was slow to credit duplicity in others, did not once suspect that the profligates had played him off this trick, rather to annoy the brother than himself. It was, after all, nothing but the discreditable triumph of cunning and debased minds, over the inexperience, or vanity, if you will, of one, who, whatever his foibles might be, would himself scorn to take an ungenerous advantage of confidence reposed in him in consequence of his good opinion and friendly feeling.

The period of their apprenticeship, however, elapsed, and the day at length arrived for their departure from the Corner House. Their master, and, we may add, their friend, solicited them to stop with him still as journeymen; but, as each had a different object in view, they declined it. Art proposed to set up for himself, for it was indeed but natural that one whose affections had been now so long engaged, should wish, with as little delay as possible, to see himself possessed of a home to which he might bring his betrothed wife. Frank had not trusted to chance, or relied merely upon vague projects, like his brother; for, some time previous to the close of his apprenticeship, he had been quietly negotiating the formation of a partnership with a carpenter who wanted a steady man at the helm. The man had capital himself, and was clever enough in his way, but

then he was illiterate, and utterly without method in conducting his affairs; Frank was therefore the identical description of person he stood in need of, and, as the integrity of his family was well known—that integrity which they felt so anxious to preserve without speck—there was of course little obstruction in the way of their coming to terms.

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On the morning of the day on which they left his establishment, M'Carroll came into the workshop while they were about bidding farewell to their companions, with whom they had lived—abating the three or four pranks that were played off upon Art—on good and friendly terms, and seeing that they were about to take their departure, he addressed them as follows:—

"I need not say," he proceeded, "that I regret you are leaving me; which I do, for, without meaning any disrespect to those present, I am bound to acknowledge that two better workmen, or two honester young men, were never in my employment. Art, indeed is unsurpassed, considering his time, and that he is only closing his apprenticeship: 'tis true, he has had good opportunities—opportunities which, I am happy to say, he has never neglected. I am in the habit, as you both know, of addressing a few words of advice to my young men at the close of their apprenticeships, and when they are entering upon the world as you are now. I will therefore lay down a few simple rules for your guidance, and, perhaps, by following them, you will find yourselves neither the worse nor the poorer men.

"Let the first principle then of your life, both as mechanics, and men, be truth—truth in all you think, in all you say, and in all you do; if this should fail to procure you the approbation of the world, it will not fail to procure you your own, and, what is better, that of God. Let your next principle be industry—honest, fair, legitimate industry, to which you ought to annex punctuality—for industry without punctuality is but half a virtue. Let your third great principle be sobriety—strict and undeviating sobriety; a mechanic without sobriety, so far from being a benefit or an ornament to society, as he ought to be, is a curse and a disgrace to it; within the limits of sobriety all the rational enjoyments of life are comprised, and without them are to be found all those which desolate society with crime, indigence, sickness, and death. In maintaining sobriety in the world, and especially among persons of your own class, you will certainly have much to contend with; remember that firmness of character, when acting upon right feeling and good sense, will enable you to maintain and work out every virtuous and laudable purpose which you propose to effect. Do not, therefore, suffer yourselves to be shamed from sobriety, or, indeed, from any other moral duty, by the force of ridicule; neither, on the other hand, must you be seduced into it by flattery, or the transient gratification of social enjoyment. I have, in fact, little further to add; you are now about to become members of society, and to assume more distinctly the duties which it imposes on you. Discharge them all faithfully—do not break your words, but keep your promises, and respect yourselves, remember that self-respect is a very different thing from pride, or an empty overweening vanity—self-respect is, in fact, altogether incompatible with them, as

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they are with it; like opposite qualities, they cannot abide in the same individual. Let me impress it on you, that these are the principles by which you must honorably succeed in life, if you do succeed; while by neglecting them, you must assuredly fail. 'Tis true, knavery and dishonesty are often successful, but it is by the exercise of fraudulent practices, which I am certain you will never think of carrying into the business of life—I consequently dismiss this point altogether, as unsuitable to either of you. I have only to add, now, that I hope most sincerely you will observe the few simple truths I have laid down to you; and I trust, that ere many years pass, I may live to see you both respectable, useful, and independent members of society. Farewell, and may you be all we wish you!"

Whether this little code of useful doctrine was equally observed by both, will appear in the course of our narrative.

About a month or so before the departure of Frank and Art from the Corner House, Jemmy Murray and another man were one day in the beginning of May strolling through one of his pasture-fields. His companion was a thin, hard-visaged little fellow, with a triangular face, and dry bristly hair, very much the color of, and nearly as prickly as, a withered furze bush; both, indeed, were congenial spirits, for it is only necessary to say, that he of the furze bush was another of those charital and generous individuals whose great delight consisted, like his friend Murray, in watching the seasons, and speculating upon the failure of the crops. He had the reputation of being wealthy, and in fact was so; indeed, of the two, those who had reason to know, considered that he held the weightier purse; his name was Cooney Finigan, and the object of his visit to Murray—-their conversation, however, will sufficiently develop that. Both, we should observe, appeared to be exceedingly blank and solemn; Cooney's hard face, as he cast his eye about him, would have made one imagine that he had just buried the last of his family, and Murray looked as if he had a son about to be hanged. The whole cause of this was simply that a finer season, nor one giving ampler promise of abundance, had not come within the memory of man.

"Ah!" said Murray, with a sigh, "look, Cooney, at the distressin' growth of grass that's there—a foot high if it's an inch! If God hasn't sed it, there will be the largest and heaviest crops that ever was seen in the country; heigho!"

"Well, but one can't have good luck always," replied Cooney; "only it's the wondherful forwardness of the whate that's distressin' me."

"An' do you think that I'm sufferin' nothin' on that account?" asked his companion; "only you haven't three big stacks of hay waitin' for a failure, as I have."

“That’s bekase I have no meadow on my farm,” replied Cooney; “otherwise I would be in the hay trade as well as yourself.”

“Well, God help us, Cooney! every one has their misfortunes as well as you and I; sure enough, it’s a bitther business to see how every thing’s thrivin’—hay, oats, and whate! why they’ll be for a song: may I never get a bad shillin’, but the poor ‘ill be paid for takin’ them! that’s the bitther pass things will come to; maurone ok! but it’s a black lookout!”

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“An’ this rain, too,” said Cooney, “so soft, and even, and small, and warm, that it’s playin’ the very devil. Nothin’ could stand it. Why it ud make a rotten twig grow if it was put into the ground.”

“Divil a one o’ me would like to make the third,” said Murray, “for ’fraid I might have the misfortune to succeed. Death alive! Only think of my four arks, of meal, an’ my three stacks of hay, an’ divil a pile to come out of them for another twelve months!”

“It’s bad, too bad, I allow,” said the other; “still let us not despair, man alive; who knows but the saison may change for the worse yet. Whish!” he exclaimed, slapping the side of his thigh, “hould up your head, Jemmy, I have thought of it; I have thought of it.”

“You have thought of what, Cooney?”

“Why, death alive, man, sure there’s plenty of time, God be praised for it, for the—-murdher, why didn’t we think of it before? ha, ha, ha!”

“For the what, man? don’t keep us longin’ for it.”

“Why for the pratie crops to fail still; sure it’s only the beginning o’ May now, and who knows but we might have the happiness to see a right good general failure of the praties still? Eh? ha, ha, ha!”

“Upon my sounds, Cooney, you have taken a good deal of weight off of me. Faith we have the lookout of a bad potato crop yet, sure enough. How is the wind? Don’t you think you feel a little dry bitin’ in it, as if it came from the aist?”

“Why, then, in regard of the dead calm that’s in it, I can’t exactly say—but, let me see—-you’re right, divil a doubt of it; faith it is, sure enough; bravo, Jemmy, who knows but all may go wrong wid the crops yet.”

“At all events, let us have a glass on the head of it, and we’ll drink to the failure of the potato craps, and God prosper the aist wind, for it’s the best for you an’ me, Cooney, that’s goin’. Come up to the house above, and we’ll have a glass on the head of it.”

The fastidious reader may doubt whether any two men, no matter how griping or rapacious, could prevail upon themselves to express to each other sentiments so openly inimical to all human sympathy. In holding this dialogue, however, the men were only thinking aloud, and giving utterance to the wishes which every inhuman knave of their kind feels. In compliance, however, with the objections which maybe brought against the probability of the above dialogue, we will now give the one which did actually occur, and then appeal to our readers whether the first is not much more in keeping with the character of the speakers—which ought always to be a writer’s great object—than the second. Now, the reader already knows that each of these men had three or four large arks of meal laid past until the arrival of a failure in the crops and a

season of famine, and that Murray had three large stacks of hay in the hope of a similar failure in the meadow crop.

“Good-morrow, Jemmy.”

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“Good-morrow kindly, Cooney; isn’t this a fine saison, the Lord be praised!”

“A glorious saison, blessed be His name! I don’t think ever I remimber a finer promise of the craps.”

“Throth, nor I, the meadows is a miracle to look at.”

“Divil a thing else—but the white, an’ oats, an’ early potatoes, beat anything ever was seen.”

“Throth, the poor will have them for a song, Jemmy.”

“Ay, or for less, Cooney; they’ll be paid for takin’ them.”

“It’s enough to raise one’s heart, Jemmy, just to think of it.”

“Why then it is that, an’, for the same raison, come up to the house above, and we’ll have a sup on the head of it; sure, it’s no harm to drink success to the craps, and may God prevent a failure, any how.”

“Divil a bit.”

Now, we simply ask the reader which dialogue is in the more appropriate keeping with the characters of honest, candid Jemmy and Cooney?

“And now,” proceeded Cooney, “regard-in’ this match between your youngest daughter Margaret, and my son Toal.”

“Why, as for myself,” replied Murray, “sorra much of objection I have aginst it, barrin’ his figure; if he was about a foot and a half higher, and a little betther made—God pardon me, an’ blessed be the maker—there would, at all events, be less difficulty in the business, especially with Peggy herself.”

“But couldn’t you bring her about?”

“I did my endayvors, Cooney; you may take my word I did.”

“Well, an’ is she not softenin’ at all?”

“Upon my sounds, Cooney, I cannot say she is. If I could only get her to spake one sairious word on the subject, I might have some chance; but I cannot, Cooney; I think both you an’ little Toal had betther give it up. I doubt there’s no chance.”

“Faith an’ the more will be her loss. I tell you, Jemmy, that he’d outdo either you or me as a meal man. What more would you want?”

“He’s cute enough, I know that.”

“I tell you you don’t know the half of it. It’s the man that can make the money for her that you want.”

“But aginst that, you know, it’s Peggy an’ not me that’s to marry him. Now, you know that women often—though not always, I grant—wish to have something in the appearance of their husband that they needn’t be ashamed to look at.”

“That’s the only objection that can bo brought against him. He’s the boy can make the money; I’m a fool to him. I’ll tell you what, Jemmy Murray, may I never go home, but he’d skin a flint. Did you hear anything? Now!”

Murray, who appeared to be getting somewhat tired of this topic, replied rather hastily —

“Why, Cooney Finnigan, if he could skin the devil himself and ait him afterwards, she wouldn’t have him. She has refused some of the best looking young men in the parish, widout either rhyme or raison, an’ I’m sure she’s not goin’ to take your leprechaun of a son, that you might run a five-gallon keg between his knees. Sure, bad luck to the thing his legs resemble but a pair of raipin’ hooks, wid their backs outwards. Let us pass this subject, and come in till we drink a glass together.”

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“And so you call my son a leprechaun, and he has legs like raipin’ hooks!”

“Ha, ha, ha! Come in, man alive; never mind little Toal.”

“Like raipin’ hooks! I’ll tell you what, Jemmy, I say now in sincerity, that there is every prospect of a plentiful sayson; and that there may, I pray God this day; meadows an’ all —O above all, the meadows, for I’m not in the hay business myself.”

“So,” said Murray, laughing, “you would cut off your nose to vex your face.”

“I would any day, even if should suffer myself by it; and now good-bye, Jemmy Murray, to the dioual I pitch the whole thing! Rapin’ hooks!” And as he spoke, off went the furious little extortioner, irretrievably offended.

The subject of Margaret’s marriage, however, was on that precise period one on which her father and friends had felt and expressed much concern. Many proposals had been made for her hand during Art’s apprenticeship; but each and all not only without success, but without either hope or encouragement. Her family were surprised and grieved at this, and the more so, because they could not divine the cause of it. Upon the subject of her attachment to Maguire, she not only preserved an inviolable silence herself, but exacted a solemn promise from her lover that he should not disclose it to any human being. Her motive, she said, for keeping their affection and engagement to each other secret, was to avoid being harassed at home by her friends and family, who, being once aware of the relation in which she stood towards Art, would naturally give her little peace. She knew very well that her relations would not consent to such a union, and, in point of mere prudence and forethought, her conduct was right, for she certainly avoided much intemperate remonstrance, as afterwards proved to be the case when she mentioned it. Her father on this occasion having amused them at home by relating the tift which had taken place between Cooney Finnigan and himself, which was received with abundant mirth by them all, especially by Margaret, seriously introduced the subject of her marriage, and of a recent proposal which had been made to her.

“You are the only unmarried girl we have left now,” he said, “and surely you ought neither to be too proud nor too saucy to refuse such a match as Mark Hanratty—a young man in as thrivin’ a business as there is in all Ballykeerin; hasn’t he a good shop, good business, and a good back of friends in the country that will stand to him, an’ only see how he has thruv these last couple o’ years. What’s come over you at all? or do you ever intend to marry? you have refused every one for so far widout either rhyme or raison. Why, Peggy, what father’s timper could stand this work?”

“Ha, ha, ha! like raipin’ hooks, father—an’ so the little red rogue couldn’t bear that? well, at all events, the comparison’s a good one—sorra better; ha, ha, ha—reapin’ hooks!”

“Is that the answer you have for me?”

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“Answer!” said Margaret, feigning surprise, “what about?”

“About Mark Hanmity.”

“Well, but sure if he’s fond of me, hell have no objection to wait.”

“Ay, but if he does wait, will you have him?”

“I didn’t promise that, and, at any rate, I’d not like to be a shopkeeper’s wife.”

“Why not?”

“Why, he’d be puttin’ me behind the counter, and you know I’d be too handsome for that; sure, there’s Thogue Nugent that got the handsome wife from Dublin, and of a fair, or market-day, for one that goes in to buy anything, there goes ten in to look at her. Throth, I think he ought to put her in the windy at once, just to save trouble, and give the people room.”

“Ha, ha, ha! well, you’re the dickens of a girl, sure enough; but come, avourneen, don’t be makin’ me laugh now, but tell me what answer I’m to give Mark.”

“Tell him to go to Dublin, like Thogue; he lives in the upper part of the town, and Thogue in the lower, and then there will be a beauty in each end of it.”

“Suppose I take it into my head to lose my temper, Peggy, maybe I’d make you spake then?”

“Well, will you give me a peck o’ mail for widow Dolan?”

“No, divil a dust.”

“Sure I’ll pay you—ha, ha, ha!”

“Sure you’ll pay me! mavrone, but it’s often you’ve said that afore, and divil a cross o’ Your coin ever we seen yet; faith, it’s you that’s heavily in my debt, when I think of all ever you promised to pay me.”

“Very well, then; no meal, no answer.”

“And will you give me an answer if I give you the meal?”

“Honor bright, didn’t I say it.”

“Go an’ get it yourself then, an’ see now, don’t do as you always do, take double what you’re allowed.”

Margiret, in direct violation of this paternal injunction, did most unquestionably take near twice the stipulated quantity for the widow, and, in order that there might be no countermand on the part of her father, as sometimes happened, she sent it off with one of the servants by a back way, so that he had no opportunity of seeing how far her charity had carried her beyond the spirit and letter of her instructions.

“Well,” said he, when she returned, “now for the answer; and before you give it, think of the comfort you’ll have with him—how fine and nicely furnished his house is—he has carpets upon the rooms, ay, an’ upon my sounds, on the very stairs itself! faix it’s you that will be in state. Now, acushla, let us hear your answer.”

“It’s very short, father; I won’t have him.”

“Won’t have him! and in the name of all that’s unbiddable and undutiful, who will you have, if one may ax that, or do you intend, to have any one at all, or not?”

“Let me see,” she said, putting the side of her forefinger to her lips, “what day is this? Thursday. Well, then, on this day month, father, I’ll tell my mother who I’ll have, or, at any rate, who I’d wish to have; but, in the mean time, nobody need ask me anything further about it till then, for I won’t give any other information on the subject.”

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The father looked very seriously into the fire for a considerable time, and was silent; he then drew his breath lengthily, tapped the table a little with his fingers, and exclaimed—-"A month! well, the time will pass, and, as we must wait, why we must, that's all."

Matters lay in this state until the third day before the expiration of the appointed time, when Margaret, having received from Art secret intelligence of his return, hastened to a spot agreed upon between them, that they might consult each other upon what ought to be done under circumstances so critical.

After the usual preface to such tender discussions, Art listened with a good deal of anxiety, but without the slightest doubt of her firmness and attachment, to an account of the promise she had given her father.

"Well, but, Margaret darlin'," said he, "what will happen if they refuse?"

"Surely, you know it is too late for them to refuse now; arn't we as good as married—-didn't we pass the Hand Promise—isn't our troth plighted?"

"I know that, but suppose they should still refuse, then what's to be done? what are you and I to do?"

"I must lave that to you, Art," she replied archly.

"And it couldn't be in better hands, Margaret; if they refuse their consent, there's nothing for it but a regular runaway, and that will settle it."

"You must think I'm very fond of you," she added playfully, "and I suppose you do, too."

"Margaret," said Art, and his face became instantly overshadowed with seriousness and care, "the day may come when I'll feel how necessary you will be to guide and support me."

She looked quickly into his eyes, and saw that his mind appeared disturbed and gloomy.

"My dear Art," she asked, "what is the meaning of your words, and why is there such sadness in your face?"

"There ought not to be sadness in it," he said, "when I'm sure of you—you will be my guardian angel may be yet."

"Art, have you any particular meanin' in what you say?"

"I'll tell you all," said he, "when we are married."

Margaret was generous-minded, and, as the reader may yet acknowledge, heroic; there was all the boldness and bravery of innocence about her, and she could scarcely help attributing Art's last words to some fact connected with his feelings, or, perhaps, to circumstances which his generosity prevented him from disclosing. A thought struck her —

"Art," said she, "the sooner this is settled the better; as it is, if you'll be guided by me, we won't let the sun set upon it; walk up with me to my father's house, come in, and in the name of God, we'll leave nothing unknown to him. He is a hard man, but he has a heart, and he is better a thousand times than he is reported. I know it."

"Come," said Art, "let us go; he may be richer, but there's the blood, and the honesty, and good name of the Maguires against his wealth—"

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A gentle pressure on his arm, when he mentioned the word wealth, and he was silent.

“My darlin’ Margaret,” said he, “oh how unworthy I am of you!”

“Now,” said she, “lave me to manage this business my own way. Your good sense will tell you when to spake; but whatever my father says, trate him with respect—lave the rest to me.”

On entering, they found Murray and his wife in the little parlor—the former smoking his pipe, and the latter darning a pair of stockings.

“Father,” said Margaret, “Art Maguire convoyed me home; but, indeed, I must say, I was forced to ask him.”

“Art Maguire. Why, then, upon my sounds, Art, I’m glad to see you. An’ how are you, man alive? an’ how is Frank, eh? As grave as a jidge, as he always was—ha, ha, ha! Take a chair, Art, and be sittin’. Peggy, gluntha me, remimber, you must have Art at your weddin’. It’s now widin three days of the time I’m to know who he is; and upon my sounds, I’m like a hen on a hot griddle till I hear it.”

“You’re not within three days, father.”

“But I say I am, accordin’ to your own countin’.”

“You’re not within three hours, father;”—her face ’glowed, and her whole system became vivified with singular and startling energy as she spoke;—“no, you are not within three hours, father; not within three minutes, my dear father; for there stands the man,” she said, pointing to Art. She gave three or four loud hysterical sobs, and then stood calm, looking not upon her father, but upon her lover; as much as to say, Is this love, or is it not?

Her mother, who was a quiet, inoffensive creature, without any principle or opinion whatsoever at variance with those of her husband, rose upon hearing this announcement; but so ambiguous were her motions, that we question whether the most sagacious prophet of all antiquity could anticipate from them the slightest possible clue to her opinion. The husband, in fact, had not yet spoken, and until he had, the poor woman did not know her own mind. Under any circumstances, it was difficult exactly to comprehend her meaning. In fact, she could not speak three words of common English, having probably never made the experiment a dozen times in her life. Murray was struck for some time mute.

“And is this the young man,” said he, at length, “that has been the mains of preventin’ you from being so well married often and often before now?”

“No, indeed, father,” she replied, “he was not the occasion of that; but I was. I am betrothed to him, as he is to me, for five years.”

“And,” said her father, “my consent to that marriage you will never have; if you marry him, marry him, but you will marry him without my blessin’.”

“Jemmy Murray,” said Art, whose pride of family was fast rising, “who am I, and who are you?”

Margaret put her hand to his mouth, and said in a low voice—

“Art, if you love me, leave it to my management.”

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"Ho, Jemmy," said the mother, addressing her husband, "only put your ears to this! *Ho, dher manim*, this is that skamin' piece of *feasthealagh* (* nonesense) they call *grah* (*love). Ho, by my sowl, it shows what moseys they is to think that—what's this you call it?—low-lov-loaf, or whatsomever the devil it is, has to do wid makin' a young couple man and wife. Didn't I hate the ground you stud on when I was married upon you? but I had the _airighid_. Ho, faix, I had the shiners."*

"Divil a word o' lie in that, Madjey, asthore. You had the money, an' I got it, and wern't we as happy, or ten times happier, than if we had married for love?"

"To be sartin we am; an' isn't we more unhappier now, nor if we had got married for loaf, glory be to godness!"

"Father," said Margaret, anxious to put an end to this ludicrous debate, "this is the only man I will ever marry."

"And by Him that made me," said her father, "you will never have my consent to that marriage, nor my blessin'."

"Art," said she, "not one word. Here, in the presence of my father and mother, and in the presence of God himself, I say I will be your wife, and only yours."

"And," said her father, "see whether a blessin' will attend a marriage where a child goes against the will of her parents."

"I'm of age now to think and act for myself, father; an' you know this is the first thing I ever disobeyed you in, an' I hope it 'ill be the last. Am I goin' to marry one that's discreditable to have connected with our family? So far from that, it is the credit that is comin' to us. Is a respectable young man, without spot or stain on his name, with the good-will of all that know him, and a good trade—is such a person, father, so very high above us? Is one who has the blood of the great Fermanagh Maguires in his veins not good enough for your daughter, because you happen to have a few bits of metal that he has not? Father, you will give us your consent an' your blessin' too; but remember that whether you do, or whether you don't, I'll not break my vow; I'll marry him."

"Margaret," said the father, in a calm, collected voice, "put both consent and blessin' out of the question; you will never have either from me."

"Ho *dher a Ihora heena*," exclaimed the mother, "I'm the boy for one that will see the buckle crossed against them, or I'd die every day this twelve months upon the top and tail o' Knockmany, through wind an' weather. You darlin' scoundrel," she proceeded, addressing Art, in what she intended to be violent abuse—"God condemn your sowl to happiness, is I or am my husband to be whillebelewin' on your loaf? Eh, answer us that, if you're not able, like a man, as you is?"

Margaret, whose humor and sense of the ludicrous were exceedingly strong, having seldom heard her mother so excited before, gave one arch look at Art, who, on the contrary, felt perfectly confounded at the woman's language, and in that look there was a kind of humorous entreaty that he would depart. She nodded towards the door, and Art, having shook hands with her, said—

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“Good-by, Jemmy Murray, I hope you’ll change your mind still; your daughter never could got any one that loves her as I do, or that could treat her with more tendherness and affection.”

“Be off, you darlin’ vagabone,” said Mrs. Murray, “the heavens be your bed, you villain, why don’t you stay where you is, an’ not be malivogin an undacent family this way.”

“Art Maguire,” replied Murray, “you heard my intention, and I’ll never change it.” Art then withdrew.

Our readers may now anticipate the consequences of the preceding conversation. Murray and his wife having persisted in their refusal to sanction Margaret’s marriage with Maguire, every argument and influence having been resorted to in vain, Margaret and he made what is termed a runaway match of it, that is, a rustic elopement, in which the young couple go usually to the house of some friend, under the protection of whose wife the female remains until her marriage, when the husband brings her home.

And now they commence life. No sooner were they united, than Art, feeling what was due to her who had made such and so many sacrifices for him, put his shoulder to the wheel with energy and vigor. Such aid as his father could give him, he did give; that which stood him most in stead, however, was the high character and unsullied reputation of his own family. Margaret’s conduct, which was looked upon as a proof of great spirit and independence, rendered her, if possible, still better loved by the people than before. But, as we said, there was every confidence placed in Art, and the strongest hopes of his future success and prosperity in life expressed by all who knew him; and this was reasonable. Here was a young man of excellent conduct, a first-rate workman, steady, industrious, quiet, and, above all things, sober; for the three or four infractions of sobriety that took place during his apprenticeship, had they even been generally known, would have been reputed as nothing; the truth is, that both he and Margaret commenced life, if not with a heavy purse, at least with each a light heart. He immediately took a house in Ballykeerin, and, as it happened that a man of his own trade, named Davis, died about the same time of lockjaw, occasioned by a chisel wound in the ball of the thumb, as a natural consequence, Art came in for a considerable portion of his business; so true is it, that one man’s misfortune is another man’s making. His father did all he could for him, and Margaret’s sisters also gave them some assistance, so that, ere the expiration of a year, they found themselves better off than they had reason to expect, and, what crowned their happiness—for they were happy—-was the appearance of a lovely boy, whom, after his father, they called. Arthur. Their hearts had not much now to crave after—happiness was theirs, and health; and, to make the picture still more complete, prosperity, as the legitimate reward of Art’s industry and close attention to business, was beginning to dawn upon them.

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One morning, a few months after this time, as she sat with their lovely babe in her arms, the little rogue playing with the tangles of her raven hair, Art addressed her in the fulness of as affectionate a heart as ever beat in a human bosom:—

“Well, Mag,” said he, “are you sorry for not marryin’ Mark Hanratty?”

She looked at him, and then at their beautiful babe, which was his image, and her lip quivered for a moment; she then smiled, and kissing the infant, left a tear upon its face.

He started, “My God, Margaret,” said he, “what is this?”

“If that happy tear,” she replied, “is a proof of it, I am.”

Art stooped, and kissing her tenderly, said—“May God make me, and keep me worthy of you, my darling wife!”

“Still, Art,” she continued, “there is one slight drawback upon my happiness, and that is, when it comes into my mind that in marryin’ you, I didn’t get a parent’s blessin’; it sometimes makes my mind sad, and I can’t help feelin’ so.”

“I could wish you had got it myself,” replied her husband, “but you know it can’t be remedied now.”

“At all events,” she said, “let us live so as that we may desarve it; it was my first and last offence towards my father and mother.”

“And it’s very few could say as much, Mag, dear; but don’t think of it, sure, may be, he may come about yet.”

“I can hardly hope that,” she replied, “after the priest failin’.”

“Well, but,” replied her husband, taking up the child in his arms, “who knows what this little man may do for us—who knows, some day, but we’ll send a little messenger to his grandfather for a blessin’ for his mammy that he won’t have the heart to refuse.”

This opened a gleam of satisfaction in her mind. She and her husband having once more kissed the little fellow, exchanged glances of affection, and he withdrew to his workshop.

Every week and month henceforth added to their comfort. Art advanced in life, in respectability, and independence; he was, indeed, a pattern to all tradesmen who wish to maintain in the world such a character as enforces esteem and praise; his industry was incessant, he was ever engaged in something calculated to advance himself; up early and down late was his constant practice—no man could exceed, him in punctuality—his word was sacred—whatever he said was done; and so general were his habits of

industry, integrity, and extreme good conduct appreciated, that he was mentioned as a fresh instance of the high character sustained by all who had the old blood of the Fermanagh Maguires in their veins. In this way he proceeded, happy in the affections of his admirable wife—happy in two lovely children—happy in his circumstances—in short, every way happy, when, to still add to that happiness, on the night of the very day that closed the term of his oath against liquor—that closed the seventh year—his wife presented him with their third child, and second daughter.

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In Ireland there is generally a very festive spirit prevalent during christenings, weddings, or other social meetings of a similar nature; and so strongly is this spirit felt, that it is—or was, I should rather say—not at all an unusual thing for a man, when taking an oath against liquor, to except christenings or weddings, and very frequently funerals, as well as Christmas and Easter. Every one acquainted with the country knows this, and no one need be surprised at the delight with which Art Maguire hailed this agreeable coincidence. Art, we have said before, was naturally social, and, although he did most religiously observe his oath, yet, since the truth must be told, we are bound to admit that, on many and many an occasion, he did also most unquestionably regret the restraint that he had placed upon himself with regard to liquor. Whenever his friends were met together, whether at fair, or market, wedding, christening, or during the usual festivals, it is certain that a glass of punch or whiskey never crossed his nose that he did not feel a secret hankering after it, and would often have snuffed in the odor, or licked his lips at it, were it not that he would have considered the act as a kind of misprision of perjury. Now, however, that he was free, and about to have a christening in his house, it was at least only reasonable that he should indulge in a glass, if only for the sake of drinking the health of "the young lady." His brother Frank happened to be in town that evening, and Art prevailed on him to stop for the night.

"You must stand for the young colleen, Frank," said he, "and who do you think is to join you?"

"Why, how could I guess?" replied Frank.

"The sorra other but little Toal Finnigan, that thought to take Margaret from me, you renumber."

"I remimber he wanted to marry her, and I know that he's the most revengeful and ill-minded little scoundrel on the face of the earth; if ever there was a devil in a human bein', there's one in that misshapen but sugary little vagabone. His father was bad enough when he was alive, and worse than he ought to be, may God forgive him now, but this spiteful skinflint, that's a curse to the poor of the country, as he is their hatred, what could tempt you to ax him to stand for any child of yours?"

"He may be what he likes, Frank, but all I can say is, that I found him civil and obligin', an' you know the devil's not so black as he's painted."

"I know no such thing, Art," replied the other; "for that matter, he may be a great deal blacker; but still I'd advise you to have nothing to say to Toal—he's a bad graft, egg and bird; but what civility did he ever show you?"

"Why, he—he's a devilish pleasant little fellow, any way, so he is; throth it's he that spakes well of you, at any rate; if he was ten times worse than he is, he has a tongue in his head that will gain him friends."

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“I see, Art,” said Frank, laughing, “he has been layin’ it thick an’ sweet on you. My hand to you, there’s not so sweet-tongued a knave in the province; but mind, I put you on your guard—he’s never pure honey all out, unless where there’s bitther hatred and revenge at the bottom of it—that’s well known, so be advised and keep him at a distance; have nothin’ to do or to say to him, and, as to havin’ him for a godfather, why I hardly think the child could thrive that he’d stand for.”

“It’s too late for that now,”, replied Art, “for I axed him betther than three weeks agone.”

“An’ did he consint?”

“He did, to be sure.”

“Well, then, keep your word to him, of coorse; but, as soon as the christenings over, drop him like a hot potato.”

“Why, thin, that’s hard enough, Frank, so long as I find the crathur civil.”

“Ay, but, Art, don’t I tell you that it’s his civility you should be afeard of; throth, the same civility ought to get him kicked a dozen times a day.”

“Faix and,” said Art, “kicked or not, here he comes; whisht! don’t be oncivil to the little bachelor at any rate.”

“Oncivil, why should I? the little extortionin’ vagabone never injured or fleeced me; but, before he puts his nose into the house, let me tell you wanst more, Art, that he never gets sweet upon any one that he hasn’t in hatred for them at the bottom; that’s his carracther.”

“I know it is,” said Art, “but, until I find it to be true, I’ll take the ginerous side, an’ I won’t believe it; he’s a screw, I know, an’ a skinflint, an’—whisht! here he is.”

“Toal Finnigan, how are you?” said Art; “I was goin’ to say how is every tether length of you, only that I think it would be impossible to get a tether short enough to measure you.”

“Ha, ha, ha, that’s right good—divil a man livin’ makes me laugh so much as—why then, Frank Maguire too!—throth, Frank, I’m proud to see you well—an’ how are you, man? and—well, in throth I am happy to see you lookin’ so well, and in good health; an’ whisper, Frank, it’s your own fau’t that I’m not inquirin’ for the wife and childre.”

“An’ I can return the compliment, Toal; it’s a shame for both of us to be bachelors at this time o’ day.”

“Ah,” said the little fellow, “I wasn’t Frank Maguire, one of the best lookin’ boys in the barony, an’ the most respected, an’ why not? Well, divil a thing afther all like the ould blood, an’ if I wanted a pure dhrop of that same, maybe I don’t know where to go to look for it—maybe I don’t, I say!”

“It’s Toal’s fault that he wasn’t married many a year ago,” said Art; “he refused more wives, Frank, than e’er a boy of his years from this to Jinglety cooeh—divil a lie in it; sure he’ll tell you himself.”

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Now, as Toal is to appear occasionally, and to be alluded to from time to time in this narrative, we shall give the reader a short sketch or outline of his physical appearance and moral character. In three words, then, he had all his father's vices multiplied tenfold, and not one of his good qualities, such as they were; his hair was of that nondescript color which partakes at once of the red, the fair, and the auburn; it was a bad dirty dun, but harmonized with his complexion to a miracle. That complexion, indeed, was no common one; as we said, it was one of those which, no matter how frequently it might have been scrubbed, always presented the undeniable evidences of dirt so thorougly ingrained into the pores of the skin, that no process could remove it, short of flaying him alive. His vile, dingy dun bristles stood out in all directions from his head, which was so shaped as to defy admeasurement; the little rascal's body was equally ill-made, and as for his limbs, we have already described them, as reaping-hooks of flesh and blood, terminated by a pair of lark-heeled feet, as flat as smoothing-irons. Now, be it known, that notwithstanding these disadvantages, little Toal looked upon himself as an Adonis upon a small scale, and did certainly believe that scarcely any female on whom he threw his fascinating eye could resist being enamored of him. This, of course, having become generally known, was taken advantage of, and many a merry country girl amused both herself and others at his expenses while he imagined her to be perfectly serious.

"Then how did you escape at all," said Frank—"you that the girls are so fond of?"

"You may well ax," said Toal; "but at any rate, it's the divil entirely to have them too fond of you. There's raison in every thing, but wanst a woman takes a strong fancy to the cut of your face, you're done for, until you get rid of her. Throth I suffered as much persecution that way as would make a good batch o' marthyrs. However, what can one do?"

"It's a hard case, Toal," said Art; "an' I b'lieve you're as badly off, if not worse, now than ever."

"In that respect," replied Toal, "I'm ladin' the life of a murdherer. I can't set my face out but there's a pursuit after me—chased an' hunted like a bag fox; devil a lie I'm tellin' you."

"But do you intend to marry still, Toal?" asked Frank; "bekaise if you don't, it would be only raisonable for you to make it generally known that your mind's made up to die a bachelor."

"I wouldn't bring the penalty an' expenses of a wife an' family on me, for the handsomest woman livin'," said Toal. "Oh no; the Lord in mercy forbid that! Amin, I pray."

"But," said Art, "is it fair play to the girls not to let that be generally known, Toal?"

“Hut,” replied the other, “let them pick it out of their larnin’, the thieves. Sure they parsecuted me to sich a degree, that they desarve no mercy at my hands. So, Art,” he proceeded, “you’ve got another mouth to feed! Oh, the Lord pity you! If you go on this way, what ’ill become of you at last?”

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“Don’t you know,” replied Art, “that God always fits the back to the burden, and that he never sends a mouth but he sends something to fill it.”

The little extortioner shrugged his shoulders, and raising his eyebrows, turned up his eyes—as much as to say, What a pretty notion of life you have with such opinions as these!

“Upon my word, Toal,” said Art, “the young lady we’ve got home to us is a beauty; at all events, her godfathers need not be ashamed of her.”

“If she’s like her own father or mother,” replied Toal, once more resuming the sugar-candy style, “she can’t be anything else than a beauty, It’s well known that sich a couple never stood undher the roof of Aughindrummon Chapel, nor walked the street of Ballykeerin.”

Frank winked at Art, who, instead of returning the wink, as he ought to have done, shut both his eyes, and then looked at Toal with an expression of great compassion—as if he wished to say, Poor fellow, I don’t think he can be so bad-hearted as the world gives him credit for.

“Come, Toal,” he replied, laughing, “none of your bother now. Ay was there, many a finer couple under the same roof, and on the same street; so no palaver, my man; But are you prepared to stand for the girsha? You know it’s nearly a month since I axed you?”

“To be sure I am; but who’s the midwife?”

“Ould Kate Sharpe; as lucky a woman as ever came about one’s house.”

“Throth, then, I’m sorry for that,” said Toal, “for she’s a woman I don’t like; an’ I now say beforehand, that devil a traneen she’ll be the betther of me, Art.”

“Settle that,” replied Art, “between you; at all events, be ready on Sunday next—the christenin’s fixed for it.”

After some farther chat, Toal, who, we should have informed our readers, had removed from his father’s old residence into Ballykeerin, took his departure, quite proud at the notion of being a godfather at all; for in truth it was the first occasion on which he ever had an opportunity of arriving at that honor.

Art was a strictly conscientious man; so much so, indeed, that he never defrauded a human being to the value of a farthing; and as for truth, it was the standard principle of his whole life. Honesty, truth, and sobriety are, indeed, the three great virtues upon which all that is honorable, prosperous, and happy is founded. Art’s conscientious scruples were so strong, that although in point of fact the term of his oath had expired at

twelve o'clock in the forenoon, he would not permit himself to taste a drop of spirits until after twelve at night.

"It's best," said he to his brother, "to be on the safe side at all events: a few hours is neither one way nor the other. We haven't now more than a quarther to go, and then for a tight drop to wet my whistle, an' dhrink the little girshas health an' her mother's. Throth I've put in a good apprenticehip to sobriety, anyhow. Come, Madjey," he added, addressing the servant-maid, "put down the kettle till we have a little jorum of our own; Frank here and myself; and all of yez."

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“Very little jorum will go far wid me, you know, Art,” replied his brother; “an’ if you take my advice, you’ll not go beyond bounds yourself either.”

“Throth, Frank, an’ I’ll not take either yours nor any other body’s, until little Kate’s christened. I think that afther a fast of seven years I’m entitled to a stretch.”

“Well, well,” said his brother; “I see you’re on for it; but as you said yourself a while ago, it’s best to be on the safe side, you know.”

“Why, dang it, Frank, sure you don’t imagine I’m goin’ to drink the town dhry; there’s raison in everything.”

At length the kettle was boiled, and the punch made; Art took his tumbler in hand, and rose up; he looked at it, then glanced at his brother, who observed that he got pale and agitated.

“What ails you?” said he; “is there any thing wrong wid you?”

“I’m thinkin’,” replied Art, “of what I suffered wanst by it; an’ besides, it’s so long since I tasted it, that somehow I jist feel for all the world as if the oath was scarcely off of me yet, or as if I was doin’ what’s not right.”

“That’s mere weakness,” said Frank; “but still, if you have any scruple, don’t drink it; I bekaise the truth is, Art, you couldn’t have a scruple that will do you more good than one against liquor.”

“Well, I’ll only take this tumbler an’ another to-night; and then we’ll go to bed, plase goodness.”

His agitation then passed away, and he drank a portion of the liquor.

“I’m thinkin’, Art,” said Frank, “that it wouldn’t be aisy to find two men that has a betther right to be thankful to God for the good fortune we’ve both had, than yourself and me. The Lord has been good, to me, for I’m thrivin’ to my heart’s content, and savin’ money every day.”

“And glory be to his holy name,” said Art, looking with a strong sense of religious feeling upward, “so am I; and if we both hould to this, we’ll die rich, plaise goodness. I have saved up very well, too; and here I sit this night as happy a man as is in Europe. The world’s flowin’ on me, an’ I want for nothin’; I have good health, a clear conscience, and everything that a man in my condition of life can stand in need of, or wish for; glory be to God for it all!”

“Amen,” said Frank; “glory be to his name for it!”

“But, Frank,” said Art, “there’s one thing that I often wonder at, an’ indeed so does every one a’most.”

“What is that, Art?”

“Why, that you don’t think o’ marryin’. Sure you have good means to keep a wife, and rear a family now; an’ of coorse we all wonder that you don’t.”

“Indeed, to tell you the truth, Art, I don’t know myself what’s the raison of it—the only wife I think of is my business; but any way, if you was to see the patthern of married life there is undher the roof wid me, you’d not be much in consate wid marriage yourself, if you war a bachelor.”

“Why,” inquired the other, “don’t they agree?”

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“Ay do they, so well that they get sometimes into very close an’ lovin’ grips togather; if ever there was a scald alive she’s one o’ them, an’ him that was wanst so careless and aisey-tempered, she has now made him as bad as herself—has trained him regularly until he has a tongue that would face a ridgment. Tut, sure divil a week that they don’t flake one another, an’ half my time’s, taken up reddin’ them.”

“Did you ever happen to get the reddin’ blow? eh? ha, ha, ha!”

“No, not yet; but the truth is, Art, that an ill-tongued wife has driven many a husband to ruin, an’ only that I’m there to pay attention to the business, he’d be a poor drunken beggarman long ago, an’ all owin’ to her vile temper.”

“Does she dhrink?”

“No, sorra drop—this wickedness all comes natural to her; she wouldn’t be aisy out of hot wather, and poor Jack’s parboiled in it every day in the year.”

“Well, it’s I that have got the treasure, Frank; from the day that I first saw her face till the minute we’re spakin’ in, I never knew her temper to turn—always the same sweet word, the same flow of spirits, and the same light laugh; her love an’ affection for me an’ the childher there couldn’t be language found for. Come, throth we’ll drink her health in another tumbler, and a speedy uprise to her, asthore machree that she is, an’ when I think of how she set every one of her people at defiance, and took her lot wid myself so nobly, my heart burns wid love for her, ay, I feel my very heart burnin’ widin me.”

Two tumblers were again mixed, and Margaret’s health was drunk.

“Here’s her health,” said Art, “may God grant her long life and happiness!”

“Amen!” responded Frank, “an’ may He grant that she’ll never know a sorrowful heart!”

Art laid down his tumbler, and covered his eyes with his hands for a minute or two.

“I’m not ashamed, Frank,” said he, “I’m not a bit ashamed of these tears—she desarves them—where is her aiquil? oh, where is her aiquil? It’s she herself that has the tear for the distresses of her fellow-creatures, an’ the ready hand to relieve them; may the Almighty shower down his blessins on her!”

“Them tears do you credit,” replied Frank, “and although I always thought well of you, Art, and liked you betther than any other in the family, although I didn’t say much about it, still, I tell you, I think betther of you this minute than I ever did in my life.”

“There’s only one thing in the wide world that’s throublin’ her,” said Art, “an’ that is, that she hadn’t her parents’ blessin’ when she married me, nor since—for ould Murray’s as stiff-necked as a mule, an’ the more he’s driven to do a thing the less he’ll do it.”

“In that case,” observed Frank, “the best plan is to let him alone; maybe when it’s not axed for he’ll give it.”

“I wish he would,” said Art, “for Margaret’s sake; it would take away a good deal of uneasiness from her mind.”

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The conversation afterwards took several turns, and embraced a variety of topics, till the second tumbler was finished.

“Now,” said Art, “as there’s but the two of us, and in regard of the occasion that’s in it, throth we’ll jist take one more a piece.”

“No,” replied Frank, “I never go beyant two, and you said you wouldn’t.”

“Hut, man, divil a matther for that; sure there’s only ourselves two, as I said, an’ Where’s the harm? Throth, it’s a long time since I felt myself so comfortable, an’ besides, it’s not every night we have you wid us. Come, Frank, one more in honor of the occasion.”

“Another drop won’t cross my lips this night,” returned his brother, firmly, “so you needn’t be mixin’ it.”

“Sorra foot you’ll go to bed to-night till you take another; there, now it’s mixed, so you know you must take it now.”

“Not a drop.”

“Well, for the sake of poor little Kate, that you’re to stand for; come, Frank, death alive, man!”

“Would my drinkin’ it do Kate any good?”

“Hut, man alive, sure if one was to lay down the law that way upon every thing, they might as well be out of the world at wanst; come, Frank."’

“No, Art, I said I wouldn’t, and I won’t break my word.”

“But, sure, that’s only a trifle; take the liquor; the sorra betther tumbler of punch ever was made: it’s Barney Scaddhan’s whiskey."*

* Scaddhan, a herring, a humorous nickname bestowed upon him, because he made the foundation of his fortune by selling herrings.

“An’ if Barney Scaddhan keeps good whiskey, is that any rason why I should break my word, or would you have me get dhrunk because his liquor’s betther than another man’s?”

“Well, for the sake of poor Margaret, then, an’ she so fond o’ you; sure many a time she tould me that sorra brother-in-law ever she had she likes so well, an’ I know it’s truth; that I may never handle a plane but it is; dang it, Frank, don’t be so stiff.”

“I never was stiff, Art, but I always was, and always will be, firm, when I know I’m in the right; as I said about the child, what good would my drinkin’ that tumbler of punch do Margaret? None in life; it would do her no good, and it would do myself harm. Sure, we did drink her health.”

“An’ is that your respect for her?” said Art, in a huff, “if that’s it, why—”

“There’s not a man livin’ respects her more highly, or knows her worth betther than I do,” replied Frank, interrupting him, “but I simply ax you, Art, what mark of true respect would the fact of my drinkin’ that tumbler of punch be to her? The world’s full of these foolish errors, and bad ould customs, and the sooner they’re laid aside, an’ proper ones put in their place, the betther.”

“Oh, very well, Frank, the sorra one o’ me will ask you to take it agin; I only say, that if I was in your house, as you are in mine, I wouldn’t break squares about a beggarly tumbler of punch.”

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“So much the worse, Art, I would rather you would; there, now, you have taken your third tumbler, yet you said when we sat down that you’d confine yourself to two; is that keepin’ your word? I know you may call breakin’ it now a trifle, but I tell you, that when a man begins to break his word in trifles, he’ll soon go on to greater things, and maybe end without much regardin’ it in any thing.”

“You don’t mane to say, Frank, or to hint, that ever I’d come to sich a state as that I wouldn’t regard my word.”

“I do not; but even if I did, by followin’ up this coorse you’d put yourself in the right way of comin’ to it.”

“Throth, I’ll not let this other one be lost either,” he added, drawing over to him the tumbler which he had filled for his brother; “I’ve an addition to my family—the child an’ mother doin’ bravely, an’ didn’t taste a dhrop these seven long years; here’s your health, at all events, Frank, an’ may the Lord put it into your heart to marry a wife, an’ be as happy as I am. Here, Madgey, come here, I say; take that whiskey an’ sugar, an’ mix yourselves a jorum; it’s far in the night, but no matther for that—an’ see, before you mix it, go an’ bring my own darlin’ Art, till he dhrinks his mother’s health.”

“Why now, Art,” began his brother, “is it possible that you can have the conscience to taich the poor boy sich a cursed habit so soon? What are you about this minute but trainin’ him up to what may be his own destruction yet?”

“Come now, Frank, none of your moralizin’,” the truth is, that the punch was beginning rapidly to affect his head; “none of your moralizin’, throth it’s a preacher you ought to be, or a lawyer, to lay down the law. Here, Madgey, bring him to me; that’s my son, that there isn’t the like of in Ballykeerin, any way. Eh, Frank, it’s ashamed of him I ought to be, isn’t it? Kiss me, Art, and then kiss your uncle Frank, the best uncle that ever broke the world’s bread is the same Frank—that’s a good boy, Art; come now, drink your darlin’ mother’s health in this glass of brave punch; my mother’s health, say, long life an’ happiness to her! that’s a man, toss it off at wanst, bravo; arra, Frank, didn’t he do that manly? the Lord love him, where ’ud you get sich a fine swaddy as he is of his age? Oh, Frank, what ’ud become of me if anything happened that boy? it’s a mad-house would hould me soon. May the Lord in heaven save and guard him from all evil and clanger!”

Frank saw that it was useless to remonstrate with him at such a moment, for the truth is, intoxication was setting in fast, and all his influence over him was gone.

“Here, Atty, before you go to bed agin, jist a weeshy sup more to drink your little sisther’s health; sure Kate Sharpe brought you home a little sisther, Atty.”

“The boy’s head will not be able to stand so much,” said Frank; “you will make him tipsy.”

“Divil a tipsy; sure it’s only a mere draineen.”

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He then made the little fellow drink the baby's health, after which he was despatched to bed.

"Throth, it's in for a penny in for a pound wid myself. I know, Frank, that—that there's something or other wrong wid my head, or at any rate wid my eyes; for everything, somehow, is movin'. Is everything movin', Frank?"

"You think so," said Frank, "because you're fast getting tipsy—if you arn't tipsy all out."

"Well, then, if I'm tip—tipsy, divil a bit the worse I can be by another tumbler. Come, Frank, here's the ould blood of Ireland—the Maguires of Fermanagh! And now, Frank, I tell you, it would more become you to drink that toast, than to be sittin' there like an oracle, as you are; for upon my sowl, you're nearly as bad. But, Frank."

"Well, Art."

"Isn't little Toal Finnigan a civil little fellow—that is—is—if he was well made. 'There never stood,' says he, 'sich a couple in the chapel of—of Aughindrumon, nor there never walked sich a couple up or down the street of Ballykeerin—that's the chat,' says he: an' whisper, Frank, ne—neither did there. Whe—where is Margaret's aiquil, I'd—I'd like to know? an' as for me, I'll measure myself across the shouldhers aginst e'er a—a man, woman, or child in—in the parish. Co—come here, now, Frank, till I me—measure the small o' my leg ag—aginst yours; or if—if that makes you afeard, I'll measure the—the ball of my leg aginst the ball of yours. There's a wrist, Frank; look at that? jist look at it."

"I see it; it is a powerful wrist."

"But feel it."

"Tut, Art, sure I see it."

"D—n it, man, jist feel it—feel the breadth of—of that bone. Augh—that's the—the wrist; so anyhow, here's little Toal Finnigan's health, an' I don't care what they say, I like little Toal, an' I will like little Toal; bekaise—aise if—if he was the divil, as—as they say he is, in disguise—ha, ha, ha! he has a civil tongue in his head."

He then commenced and launched out into the most extravagant praises of himself, his wife, his children; and from these he passed to the ould blood of Ireland, and the Fermanagh Maguires.

"Where," he said, "whe—where is there in the country, or anywhere else, a family that has sich blood as ours in their veins? Very well; an' aren't we proud of it, as we have a right to be? Where's the Maguire that would do a mane or shabby act? tha—that's what I'd like to know. Isn't the word of a Maguire looked upon as aiquil to—to an—another

man's oath; an' where's the man of them that was—as ever known to break it? Eh Frank? No; stead—ed—steady's the word wid the Maguires, and honor bright."

Frank was about to remind him that he had in his own person given a proof that night that a Maguire could break his word, and commit a disreputable action besides; but as he saw it was useless, he judiciously declined then making any observation whatsoever upon it.

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After a good deal of entreaty, Frank succeeded in prevailing on him to go to bed; in which, however, he failed, until Art had inflicted on him three woful songs, each immensely long, and sung in that peculiarly fascinating drawl, which is always produced by intoxication. At length, and when the night was more than half spent, he assisted him to bed—a task of very considerable difficulty, were it not that it was relieved by his receiving from the tipsy man several admirable precepts, and an abundance of excellent advice, touching his conduct in the world; not forgetting religion, on which he dwelt with a maudlin solemnity of manner, that was, or would have been to strangers, extremely ludicrous. Frank, however, could not look upon it with levity. He understood his brother's character and foibles too well, and feared that notwithstanding his many admirable qualities, his vanity and want of firmness, or, in other words, of self-dependence, might overbalance them all.

The next morning his brother Frank was obliged to leave betimes, and consequently had no opportunity of advising or remonstrating with him. On rising, he felt sick and feverish, and incapable of going into his workshop. The accession made to his family being known, several of his neighbors came in to inquire after the health of his wife and infant; and as Art, when left to his own guidance, had never been remarkable for keeping a secret, he made no scruple of telling them that he had got drunk the night before, and was, of course, quite out of order that morning. Among the rest, the first to come in was little Toal Finnigan, who, in addition to his other virtues, possessed a hardness of head—by which we mean a capacity for bearing drink—that no liquor, or no quantity of liquor, could overcome.

"Well," said Toal, "sure it's very reasonable that you should be out of ordher; after bein' seven years from it, it doesn't come so natural to you as it would do. Howandiver, you know that there's but the one cure for it—a hair of the same dog that bit you; and if you're afeared to take the same hair by yourself, why I'll take a tuft of it wid you, an' we'll dhrink the wife's health—my ould sweetheart—and the little sthranger's."

"Throth I believe you're right," said Art, "in regard to the cure; so in the name of goodness we'll have a gauliogue to begin the day wid, an' set the hair straight on us."

During that day, Art was neither drunk nor sober, but halfway between the two states. He went to his workshop about two o'clock; but his journeymen and apprentices could smell the strong whiskey off him, and perceive an occasional thickness of pronunciation in his speech, which a good deal surprised them. When evening came, however, his neighbors, whom he had asked in, did not neglect to attend; the bottle was again produced, and poor Art, the principle of restraint having now been removed, re-enacted much the same scene as on the preceding night, with this exception only, that he was now encouraged instead of being checked or reproved.

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There were now only three days to elapse until the following Sabbath, on which day the child was to be baptized; one of them, that is, the one following his first intoxication with Frank, was lost to him, for, as we have said, though not precisely drunk, he was not in a condition to work, nor properly to give directions. The next he felt himself in much the same state, but with still less of regret.

“The truth is,” said he, “I won’t be rightly able to do any thing till afther this christenin’, so that I may set down the remaindher o’ the week as lost; well, sure that won’t break me at any rate. It’s long since I lost a week before, and we must only make up for it; afther the christenin’ I’ll work double tides.”

This was all very plausible reasoning, but very fallacious notwithstanding; indeed, it is this description of logic which conceals the full extent of a man’s errors from, himself, and which has sent thousands forward on their career to ruin. Had Art, for instance, been guided by his steady and excellent brother, or, what would have been better still, by his own good sense and firmness, he would have got up the next morning in health, with an easy mind, and a clear conscience, and been able to resume his work as usual. Instead of that, the night’s debauch produced its natural consequences, feverishness and indisposition, which, by the aid of a bad proverb, and worse company, were removed by the very cause which produced them. The second night’s debauch lost the following day, and then, forsooth, the week was nearly gone, and it wasn’t worth while to change the system, as if it was ever too soon to mend, or as if even a single day’s work were not a matter of importance to a mechanic. Let any man who feels himself reasoning as Art Maguire did, rest assured that there is an evil principle within him, which, unless he strangle it by prompt firmness, and a strong conviction of moral duty, will ultimately be his destruction.

There was once a lake, surrounded by very beautiful scenery, to which its waters gave a fine and picturesque effect. This lake was situated on an elevated part of the country, and a little below it, facing the west, was a precipice, which terminated a lovely valley, that gradually expanded until it was lost in the rich campaign country below. From this lake there was no outlet of water whatsoever, but its shores at the same time were rich and green, having been all along devoted to pasture. Now, it so happened that a boy, whose daily occupation was to tend his master’s sheep, went one day when the winds were strong, to the edge of the lake, on the side to which they blew, and began to amuse himself by making a small channel in the soft earth with his naked foot. This small identation was gradually made larger and larger by the waters—whenever the wind blew strongly in that direction—until, in the course of time, it changed into a deep chasm, which wore away the earth that intervened between

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the lake and the precipice. The result may be easily guessed. When the last portion of the earth gave way, the waters of the lake precipitated themselves upon the beautiful and peaceful glen, carrying death and destruction in their course, and leaving nothing but a dark unsightly morass behind them. So is it with the mind of man. When he gives the first slight assent to a wrong tendency, or a vicious resolution, he resembles the shepherd's boy, who, unconscious of the consequences that followed, made the first small channel in the earth with his naked foot. The vice or the passion will enlarge itself by degrees until all power of resistance is removed; and the heart becomes a victim to the impetuosity of an evil principle to which no assent of the will ever should have been given.

Art, as we have said, lost the week, and then came Sunday for the christening. On that day, of course, an extra cup was but natural, especially as it would put an end to his indulgence on the one hand, and his idleness on the other. Monday morning would enable him to open a new leaf, and as it was the last day—that is, Sunday was—why, dang it, he would take a good honest jorum. Frank, who had a greater regard for Art's character than it appeared Art himself had, Spoke to him privately on the morning of the christening, as to the necessity and decency of keeping himself sober on that day; but, alas! during this friendly admonition he could perceive, that early as it was, his brother was not exactly in a state of perfect sobriety. His remonstrances were very unpalatable to Art, and as a consciousness of his conduct, added to the nervousness produced by drink, had both combined to produce irritability of temper, he addressed himself more harshly to his brother than he had ever done in his life before. Frank, for the sake of peace, gave up the task, although he saw clearly enough that the christening was likely to terminate, at least so far as Art was concerned, in nothing less than a drunken debauch. This, indeed, was true. Little Toal, who drank more liquor than any two among them, and Frank himself, were the only sober persons present, all the rest having successfully imitated the example set them by Art, who was carried to bed at an early hour in the evening. This was but an indifferent preparation for his resolution to commence work on Monday morning, as the event proved. When the morning came, he was incapable of work; a racking pain in the head, and sickness of stomach, were the comfortable assurances of his inability. Here was another day lost; but finding that it also was irretrievably gone, he thought it would be no great harm to try the old cure—a hair of the dog—as before, and it did not take much force of reasoning to persuade himself to that course. In this manner he went on, losing day after day, until another week was lost. At length he found himself in his workshop, considerably wrecked and debilitated, striving with tremulous and

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unsteady hands to compensate for his lost time; it was now, however, too late—the evil habit had been contracted—the citadel had been taken—the waters had been poisoned at their source—the small track with the naked foot had been made. From this time forward he did little but make resolutions to-day, which he broke tomorrow; in the course of some time he began to drink with his own workmen, and even admitted his apprentices to their potations. Toal Finnigan, and about six or eight dissolute and drunken fellows, inhabitants of Ballykeerin, were his constant companions, and never had they a drinking bout that he was not sent for: sometimes they would meet in his own workshop, which was turned into a tap-room, and there drink the better part of the day. Of course the workmen could not be forgotten in their potations, and, as a natural consequence, all work was suspended, business at a stand, time lost, and morals corrupted.

His companions now availed themselves of his foibles, winch they drew out into more distinct relief. Joined to an overweening desire to hear himself praised, was another weakness, which proved to be very beneficial to his companions; this was a swaggering and consequential determination, when tipsy, to pay the whole reckoning, and to treat every one he knew.

He was a Maguire—he was a gentleman—had the old blood in his veins, and that he might never handle a plane, if any man present should pay a shilling, so long as he was to the fore. This was an argument in which he always had the best of it; his companions taking care, even if he happened to forget it, that some chance word or hint should bring it to his memory.

“Here, Barney Scaddhan—Barney, I say, what’s the reckonin’, you sinner? Now, Art Maguire, divil a penny of this you’ll pay for—you’re too ginerous, an’ have the heart of a prince.”

“And kind family for him to have the heart of a prince, sure we all know what the Fermanagh Maguires wor; of coorse we won’t let him pay.”

“Toal Finnigan, do you want me to rise my hand to you? I tell you that a single man here won’t pay a penny o’ reckonin’, while I’m to the good; and, to make short work of it, by the contints o’ the book, I’ll strike the first of ye that’ll attempt it. Now!”

“Faix, an’ I for one,” said Toal, “won’t come undher your fist; it’s little whiskey ever I’d drink if I did.”

“Well, well,” the others would exclaim, “that ends it; howendiver, never mind, Art, I’ll engage we’ll have our revenge on you for that—the next meetin’ you won’t carry it all

your own way; we'll be as stiff as you'll be stout, my boy, although you beat us out of it now."

"Augh," another would say, in a whisper especially designed for him, "by the livin' farmer there never was one, even of the Maguires, like him, an' that's no lie."

Art would then pay the reckoning with the air of a nobleman, or, if he happened to be without money, he would order it to be scored to him, for as yet his credit was good.

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It is wonderful to reflect how vanity blinds common sense, and turns all the power of reason and judgment to nothing. Art was so thoroughly infatuated by his own vanity, that he was utterly incapable of seeing through the gross and selfish flattery with which they plied him. Nay, when praising him, or when sticking him in for drink, as it is termed, they have often laughed in his very face, so conscious were they that it could be done with impunity.

This course of life could not fail to produce suitable consequences to his health, his reputation, and his business. His customers began to find now that the man whose word had never been doubted, and whose punctuality was proverbial, became so careless and negligent in attending to his orders, that it was quite useless to rely upon his promises, and, as a very natural consequence, they began to drop off one after another, until he found to his cost that a great number of his best and most respectable supporters ceased to employ him.

When his workmen, too, saw that he had got into tippling and irregular habits, and that his eye was not, as in the days of his industry, over them, they naturally became careless and negligent, as did the apprentices also. Nor was this all; the very individuals who had been formerly remarkable for steadiness, industry, and sobriety—-for Art would then keep no other—were now, many of them, corrupted by his own example, and addicted to idleness and drink. This placed him in a very difficult position; for how, we ask, could he remonstrate with them so long as he himself transgressed more flagrantly than they did? For this reason he was often forced to connive at outbreaks of drunkenness and gross cases of neglect, which no sober man would suffer in those whom he employed.

“Take care of your business, and your business will take care of you,” is a good and a wholesome proverb, that cannot bo too strongly impressed on the minds of the working classes. Art began to feel surprised that his business was declining, but as yet his good sense was strong enough to point out to him the cause of it. His mind now became disturbed, for while he felt conscious that his own neglect and habits of dissipation occasioned it, he also felt that he was but a child in the strong grasp of his own propensities. This was anything but a consoling reflection, and so long as it lasted he was gloomy, morbid, and peevish; his excellent wife was the first to remark this, and, indeed, was the first that had occasion to remark it, for even in this stage of his life, the man who had never spoken to her, or turned his eye upon her, but with tenderness and affection, now began, especially when influenced by drink, to give manifestations of temper that grieved her to the heart. Abroad, however, he was the same good-humored fellow as ever, with a few rare exceptions—when he got quarrelsome and fought with his companions. His workmen all were perfectly aware of his accessibility

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to flattery, and some of them were not slow to avail themselves of it: these were the idle and unscrupulous, who, as they resembled himself, left nothing unsaid or undone to maintain his good opinion, and they succeeded. His business now declined so much, that he was obliged to dismiss some of them, and, as if he had been fated to ruin, the honest and independent, who scorned to flatter his weaknesses, were the very persons put out of his employment, because their conduct was a silent censure upon his habits, and the men he retained were those whom he himself had made drunken and profligate by his example; so true is it that a drunkard is his own enemy in a thousand ways.

Here, then, is our old friend Art falling fast away from the proverbial integrity of his family—his circumstances are rapidly declining—his business running to a point—his reputation sullied, and his temper becoming sharp and vehement; these are strong indications of mismanagement, neglect, and folly, or, in one word, of a propensity to drink.

About a year and a half has now elapsed, and Art, in spite of several most determined resolutions to reform, is getting still worse in every respect. It is not to be supposed, however, that during this period he has not had visitations of strong feeling—of repentance—remorse—or that love of drink had so easy a victory over him as one would imagine. No such thing. These internal struggles sometimes affected him even unto agony, and he has frequently wept bitter tears on finding himself the victim of this terrible habit. He had not, however, the courage to look into his own condition with a firm eye, or to examine the state of either his heart or his circumstances with the resolution of a man who knows that he must suffer pain by the inspection. Art could not bear the pain of such an examination, and, in order to avoid feeling it, he had recourse to the oblivion of drink; not reflecting that the adoption of every such remedy for care resembles the wisdom of the man, who, when raging under the tortures of thirst, attempted to allay them by drinking sea-water. Drink relieved him for a moment, but he soon found that in his case the remedy was only another name for the disease.

It is not necessary to assure our readers that during Art's unhappy progress hitherto, his admirable brother Frank felt wrung to the heart by his conduct. All that good advice, urged with good feeling and good sense, could do, was tried on him, but to no purpose; he ultimately lost his temper on being reasoned with, and flew into a passion with Frank, whom he abused for interfering, as he called it, in business which did not belong to him. Notwithstanding this bluster, however, there was no man whom he feared so much; in fact, he dreaded his very appearance, and would go any distance out of his way rather than come in contact with him. He felt Frank's moral ascendency too keenly, and was too bitterly sensible of the neglect with which he had treated his affectionate

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and friendly admonitions, to meet him with composure. Indeed, we must say, that, independently of his brother Frank, he was not left to his own impulses, without many a friendly and sincere advice. The man had been so highly respected—his name was so stainless—his conduct so good, so blameless; he stood forth such an admirable pattern of industry, punctuality, and sobriety, that his departure from all these virtues occasioned general regret and sorrow. Every friend hoped that he would pay attention to his advice, and every friend tried it, but, unfortunately, every friend failed. Art, now beyond the reach of reproof, acted as every man like him acts; he avoided those who, because they felt an interest in his welfare, took the friendly liberty of attempting to rescue him, and consequently associated only with those who drank with him, flattered him, skulked upon him, and laughed at him.

One friend, however, he had, who, above all others, first in place and in importance, we cannot overlook—that friend was his admirable and affectionate wife. Oh, in what language can we adequately describe her natural and simple eloquence, her sweetness of disposition, her tenderness, her delicacy of reproof, and her earnest struggles to win back her husband from the habits which were destroying him! And in the beginning she was often successful for a time, and many a tear of transient repentance has she occasioned him to shed, when she succeeded in touching his heart, and stirring his affection for her and for their children.

In circumstances similar to Art's, however, we first feel our own errors, we then feel grateful to those who have the honesty to reprove us for them: by and by, on finding that we are advancing on the wrong path, we begin to disrelish the advice, as being only an unnecessary infliction of pain; having got so far as to disrelish the advice, we soon begin to disrelish the adviser; and ultimately, we become so thoroughly wedded to our own selfish vices, as to hate every one who would take us out of their trammels.

When Art found that the world, as he said, was going against him, instead of rallying, as he might, and ought to have done, he began to abuse the world, and attribute to it all the misfortunes which he himself, and not the world, had occasioned him. The world, in fact, is nothing to any man but the reflex of himself; if you treat yourself well, and put yourself out of the power of the world, the world will treat you well, and respect you; but if you neglect yourself, do not at all be surprised that the world and your friends will neglect you also. So far the world acts with great justice and propriety, and takes its cue from your own conduct; you cannot, therefore, blame the world without first blaming yourself.

Two years had now elapsed, and Art's business was nearly gone; he had been obliged to discharge the drunken fellows we spoke of, but not until they had assisted in a great measure to complete his ruin. Two years of dissipation, neglect of business, and drunkenness, were quite sufficient to make Art feel that it is a much easier thing to fall

into poverty and contempt, than to work a poor man's way, from early struggle and the tug of life, to ease and independence.

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His establishment was now all but closed; the two apprentices had scarcely anything to do, and, indeed, generally amused themselves in the workshop by playing Spoil Five—a fact which was discovered by Art himself, who came on them unexpectedly one day when tipsy; but, as he happened to be in an extremely good humor, he sat down and took a hand along with them. This was a new element of enjoyment to him, and instead of reproving them for their dishonest conduct, he suffered himself to be drawn into the habit of gambling, and so strongly did this grow upon him, that from henceforth he refused to participate in any drinking bout unless the parties were to play for the liquor. For this he had now neither temper nor coolness; while drinking upon the ordinary plan with his companions, he almost uniformly paid the reckoning from sheer vanity; or, in other words, because they managed him; but now that it depended upon what he considered to be skill, nothing ever put him so completely out of temper as to be put in for it. This low gambling became a passion with him; but it was a passion that proved to be the fruitful cause of fights and quarrels without end. Being seldom either cool or sober, he was a mere dupe in the hands of his companions; but whether by fair play or foul, the moment he perceived that the game had gone against him, that moment he generally charged his opponents with dishonesty and fraud, and then commenced a fight. Many a time has he gone home, beaten and bruised, and black, and cut, and every way disfigured in these vile and blackguard contests; but so inveterately had this passion for card-playing—that is, gambling for liquor—worked itself upon him, that he could not suffer a single day to pass without indulging in it. Defeat of any kind was a thing he could never think of; but for a Maguire—one of the great Fermanagh Maguires—to be beaten at a rascally game of Spoil Five, was not to be endured; the matter was impossible, unless by foul play, and as there was only one method of treating those who could stoop to the practice of foul play, why he seldom lost any time in adopting it. This was to apply the fist, and as he had generally three or four against him, and as, in most instances, he was in a state of intoxication, it usually happened that he received most punishment.

Up to this moment we have not presented Art to our readers in any other light than that of an ordinary drunkard, seen tipsy and staggering in the streets, or singing as he frequently was, or fighting, or playing cards in the public-houses. Heretofore he was not before the world, and in everybody's eye; but he had now become so common a sight in the town of Ballykeerin, that his drunkenness was no longer a matter of surprise to its inhabitants. At the present stage of his life he could not bear to see his brother Frank; and his own Margaret, although unchanged and. loving as ever, was no longer to him the Margaret that she had been. He felt how much he had despised

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her advice, neglected her comfort, and forgotten the duties which both God and nature had imposed upon him, with respect to her and their children. These feelings coming upon him during short intervals of reflection, almost drove him mad, and he has often come home to her and them in a frightful and terrible consciousness that he had committed some great crime, and that she and their children were involved in its consequences.

“Margaret,” he would say, “Margaret, what is it I’ve done aginst you and the childre? I have done some great crime aginst you all, for surely if I didn’t, you wouldn’t look as you do—Margaret, asthore, where is the color that was in your cheeks? and my own Art here—that always pacifies me when nobody else can—even Art doesn’t look what he used to be.”

“Well, sure he will, Art, dear,” she would reply; “now will you let me help you to bed? it’s late; it’s near three o’clock; Oh Art, dear, if you were——”

“I won’t go to bed—I’ll stop here where I am, wid my head on the table, till mornin’. Now do you know—come here, Margaret—let me hear you—do you know, and are you sensible of the man you’re married to?”

“To be sure I am.”

“No, I tell you; I say you are not. There is but one person in the house that knows that.”

“You’re right, Art darlin’—you’re right. Come here, Atty; go to your father; you know what to say, avick.”

“Well, Art,” he would continue, “do you know who your father is?”

“Ay do I; he’s one of the great Fermanagh Maguires—the greatest family in the kingdom. Isn’t that it?”

“That’s it, Atty darlin’—come an’ kiss me for that; yes, I’m one of the great Fermanagh Maguires. Isn’t that a glorious thin’, Atty?”

“Now, Art, darlin’, will you let me help you to bed—think of the hour it is.”

“I won’t go, I tell you. I’ll sit here wid my head on the table all night. Come here, Atty. Atty, it’s wondherful how I love you—above all creatures livin’ do I love you. Sure I never refuse to do any thing for you, Atty; do I now?”

“Well, then, will you come to bed for me?”

“To be sure I will, at wanst;” and the unhappy man instantly rose and staggered into his bedroom, aided and supported by his wife and child; for the latter lent whatever little assistance he could give to his drunken father, whom he tenderly loved.

His shop, however, is now closed, the apprentices are gone, and the last miserable source of their support no longer exists. Poverty now sets in, and want and destitution. He parts with his tools; but not for the purpose of meeting the demands of his wife and children at home; no; but for drink—drink—drink—drink. He is now in such a state that he cannot, dares not, reflect, and consequently, drink is more necessary to him than ever. His mind, however, is likely soon to be free from the pain of thinking; for it is becoming gradually debauched and brutified—is sinking, in fact, to the lowest and most pitiable state of degradation. It was then, indeed, that he felt how the world deals with a man who leaves himself depending on it.

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[Illustration: PAGE AM1018— They immediately expelled him]

His friends had now all abandoned him; decent people avoided him—he had fallen long ago below pity, and was now an object of contempt. His family at home were destitute; every day brought hunger—positive, absolute want of food wherewith to support nature. His clothes were reduced to tatters; so were those of his wife and children. His frame, once so strong and athletic, was now wasted away to half its wonted size; his hands were thin, tremulous, and flesh-less; his face pale and emaciated; and his eye dead and stupid. He was now nearly alone in the world. Low and profligate as were his drunken companions, yet even they shunned him; and so contemptuously did they treat him, now that he was no longer able to pay his way, or enable the scoundrels to swill at his expense, that whenever he happened to enter Barney Scaddhan's tap, while they were in it, they immediately expelled him without ceremony, or Barney did it for them. He now hated home; there was nothing there for him, but cold, naked, shivering destitution. The furniture had gone by degrees for liquor; tables, chairs, kitchen utensils, bed and bedding, with the exception of a miserable blanket for Margaret and the child, had all been disposed of for about one-tenth part of their value. Alas, what a change is this from comfort, industry, independence, and respectability, to famine, wretchedness, and the utmost degradation! Even Margaret, whose noble heart beat so often in sympathy with the distresses of the poor, has scarcely any one now who will feel sympathy with her own. Not that she was utterly abandoned by all. Many a time have the neighbors, in a stealthy way, brought a little relief in the shape of food, to her and her children. Sorry are we to say, however, that there were in the town of Ballykeerin, persons whom she had herself formerly relieved, and with whom the world went well since, who now shut their eyes against her misery, and refused to assist her. Her lot, indeed, was now a bitter one, and required all her patience, all her fortitude to enable her to bear up under it. Her husband was sunk down to a pitiable pitch, his mind consisting, as it were, only of two elements, stupidity and ill-temper. Up until the disposal of all the furniture, he had never raised his hand to her, or gone beyond verbal abuse; now, however, his temper became violent and brutal. All sense of shame—every pretext for decency—all notions of self-respect, were gone, and nothing was left to sustain or check him. He could not look in upon himself and find one spark of decent pride, or a single principle left that contained the germ of his redemption. He now gave himself over as utterly lost, and consequently felt no scruple to stoop to any act, no matter how mean or contemptible. In the midst of all this degradation, however, there was one recollection which he never gave up; but alas, to what different and shameless purposes did he now prostitute it! That which had been in his better days a principle of just pride, a spur to industry, an impulse to honor, and a safeguard to integrity, had now become the catchword of a mendicant—the cant or slang, as it were, of an impostor. He was not ashamed to beg in its name—to ask for whiskey in its name—and to sink, in its name, to the most sordid supplications.

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“Will you stand the price of a glass? I’m Art Maguire; one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh! Think of the blood of the Maguires, and stand a glass. Barney Scaddhan won’t trust me now; although many a pound and penny of good money I left him.”

“Ay,” the person accosted would reply, “an’ so sign’s on you; you would be a different man to-day, had you visited Barney Scaddhan’s seldomer, or kept out of it altogether.”

“It’s not a sarmon I want; will you stand the price of a glass?”

“Not a drop.”

“Go to blazes, then, if you won’t. I’m a betther man than ever you wor, an’ have betther blood in my veins. The great Fermanagh Maguires forever!”

But, hold—we must do the unfortunate man justice. Amidst all this degradation, and crime, and wretchedness, there yet shone undimmed one solitary virtue. This was an abstract but powerful affection for his children, especially for his eldest son; now a fine boy about eight or nine. In his worst and most outrageous moods—when all other influence failed—when the voice of his own Margaret, whom he once loved—oh how well! fell heedless upon his ears—when neither Frank, nor friend, nor neighbor could manage nor soothe him—let but the finger of his boy touch him, or a tone of his voice fall upon his ear, and he placed himself in his hands, and did whatever the child wished him.

One evening about this time, Margaret was sitting upon a small hassock of straw, that had been made for little Art, when he began to walk. It was winter, and there was no fire; a neighbor, however, had out of charity lent her a few dipped rushes, that they might not be in utter darkness. One of these was stuck against the wall, for they had no candlestick; and oh, what a pitiable and melancholy spectacle did its dim and feeble light present! There she sat, the young, virtuous, charitable, and lovely Margaret of the early portion of our narrative, surrounded by her almost naked children—herself with such thin and scanty covering as would wring any heart but to know it. Where now was her beauty? Where her mirth, cheerfulness, and all her lightness of heart? Where? Let her ask that husband who once loved her so well, but who loved his own vile excesses and headlong propensities better. There, however, she sat, with a tattered cap on, through the rents of which her raven hair, once so beautiful and glossy, came out in matted elf-locks, and hung down about her thin and wasted neck. Her face was pale and ghastly as death; her eyes were without fire—full of languor—full of sorrow; and alas, beneath one of them, was too visible, by its discoloration, the foul mark of her husband’s brutality. To this had their love, their tenderness, their affection come; and by what? Alas! by the curse of liquor—the demon of drunkenness—and want of manly resolution. She sat, as we have said, upon the little hassock, while shivering on her bosom was a sickly-looking child, about a year

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old, to whom she was vainly endeavoring to communicate some of her own natural warmth. The others, three in number, were grouped together for the same reason; for poor little Atty—who, though so very young, was his mother's only support, and hope, and consolation—sat with an arm about each, in order, as well as he could, to keep off the cold—the night being stormy and bitter. Margaret sat rocking herself to and fro, as those do who indulge in sorrow, and crooning for her infant the sweet old air of "*Tha ma cullha's na dhuska me*," or "I am asleep and don't waken me!"—a tender but melancholy air, which had something peculiarly touching in it on the occasion in question.

"Ah," she said, "I am asleep and don't waken me; if it wasn't for your sakes, darlins, it's I that long to be in that sleep that we will never waken from; but sure, lost in misery as we are, what could yez do without me still?"

"What do you mane, mammy?" said Atty; "sure doesn't everybody that goes to sleep waken out of it?"

[Illustration: PAGE AM1019— There's a sleep that nobody wakens from]

"No, darlin'; there's a sleep that nobody wakens from."

"Dat quare sleep, mammy," said a little one. "Oh, but me's could, mammy; will we eva have blankets?"

The question, though simple, opened up the cheerless, the terrible future to her view. She closed her eyes, put her hands on them, as if she strove to shut it out, and shivered as much at the apprehension of what was before her, as with the chilly blasts that swept through the windowless house.

"I hope so, dear," she replied; "for God is good."

"And will he get us blankets, mammy?".

"Yes, darlin', I hope so."

"Me id rady he'd get us sometin' to ait fust, mammy; I'm starvin' wid hungry;" and the poor child began to cry for food.

The disconsolate mother was now assailed by the clamorous outcries of nature's first want, that of food. She surveyed her beloved little brood in the feeble light, and saw in all its horror the fearful impress of famine stamped upon their emaciated features, and strangely lighting up their little heavy eyes. She wrung her hands, and looking up silently to heaven, wept aloud for some minutes.

“Childre,” she said at length, “have patience, poor things, an’ you’ll soon get something to eat. I sent over Nanny Hart to my sisther’s, an’ when she comes back yell get something;—so have patience, darlins, till then.”

“But, mother,” continued little Atty, who could not understand her allusion to the sleep from which there is no awakening; “what kind of sleep is it that people never waken from?”

“The sleep that’s in the grave, Atty, dear; death is the sleep I mean.”

“An’ would you wish to die, mother?”

“Only for your sake, Atty, and for the sake of the other darlins, if it was the will of God, I would; and,” she added, with a feeling of indescribable anguish, “what have I now to live for but to see you all about me in misery and sorrow!”

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The tears as she spoke ran silently, but bitterly, down her cheeks.

“When I think of what your poor lost father was,” she added, “when we wor happy, and when he was good, and when I think of what he is now—oh, my God, my God,” she sobbed’ out, “my manly young husband, what curse has come over you that has brought you down to this! Curse! oh, fareer gair, it’s a curse that’s too well known in the country—it’s the curse that laves many an industrious man’s house as ours is this bitther night—it’s the curse that takes away good name and comfort, and honesty (that’s the only thing it has left us)—that takes away the strength of both body and mind—that banishes dacency and shame—that laves many a widow and orphan to the marcy of an unfeelin’ world—that fills the jail and the madhouse—that brings many a man an’ woman to a disgraceful death—an’ that tempts us to the commission of every evil;—that curse, darlins, is whiskey—drinkin’ whiskey—an’ it is drinkin’ whiskey that has left us as we are, and that has ruined your father, and destroyed him forever.”

“Well, but there’s no other curse over us, mother?”

The mother paused a moment—

“No, darlin’,” she replied; “not a curse—but my father and mother both died, and did not give me their blessin’; but now, Atty, don’t ask me anything more about that, bekase I can’t tell you.” This she added from a feeling of delicacy to her unhappy husband, whom, through all his faults and vices, she constantly held up to her children as an object of respect, affection, and obedience.

Again the little ones were getting importunate for food, and their cries were enough to touch any heart, much less that of a tender and loving mother. Margaret herself felt that some unusual delay must have occurred, or the messenger she sent to her sister must have long since returned; just then a foot was heard outside the door, and there was an impatient cessation of the cries, in the hope that it was the return of Nanny Hart—the door opened, and Toal Finnigan entered this wretched abode of sorrow and destitution.

There was something peculiarly hateful about this man, but in the eyes of Margaret there was something intensely so. She knew right well that he had been the worst and most demoralizing companion her husband ever associated with, and she had, besides, every reason to believe that, were it not for his evil influence over the vain and wretched man, he might have overcome his fatal propensity to tipple. She had often told Art this; but little Toal’s tongue was too sweet, when aided by his dupe’s vanity. Many a time had she observed a devilish leer of satanic triumph in the misshapen little scoundrel’s eye, when bringing home her husband in a state of beastly intoxication, and for this reason, independently of her knowledge of his vile and heartless disposition, and infamous character, she detested him. After entering, he looked about him, and even with the taint light of the rush she could mark that his unnatural and revolting features were lit up with a hellish triumph.

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“Well, Margaret Murray,” said he, “I believe you are now nearly as badly off as you can be; your husband’s past hope, and you are as low as a human bein’ ever was. I’m now satisfied; you refused to marry me—you made a May-game of me—a laughin’ stock of me, and your father tould my father that I had legs like reapin’ hooks! Now, from the day you refused to marry me, I swore I’d never die till I’d have my revinge, and I have it; who has the laugh now, Margaret Murray?”

“You say,” she replied calmly, “that I am as low as a human bein’ can be, but that’s false, Toal Finnigan, for I thank God I have committed no crime, and my name is pure and good, which is more than any one can say for you; begone from my place.”

“I will,” he replied, “but before I go jist let me tell you, that I have the satisfaction to know that, if I’m not much mistaken, it was I that was the principal means of leavin’ you as you are, and your respectable husband as he is; so my blessin’ be wid you, an that’s more than your father left you. Raipin’ hooks, indeed!”

The little vile Brownie then disappeared.

Margaret, the moment he was gone, immediately turned round, and going to her knees, leaned, with her half-cold infant still in her arms, against a creaking chair, and prayed with as much earnestness as a distracted heart permitted her. The little ones, at her desire, also knelt, and in a few minutes afterwards, when her drunken husband came home, he found his miserable family, grouped as they were in their misery, worshipping God in their own simple and touching manner. His entrance disturbed them, for Margaret knew she must go through the usual ordeal to which his nightly return was certain to expose her.

“I want something to ait,” said he.

“Art, dear,” she replied—and this was the worst word she ever uttered against him—-“Art, dear, I have nothing for you till by an’ by; but I will then.”

“Have you any money?”

“Money, Art! oh, where would I get it? If I had money I wouldn’t be without something’ for you to eat, or the childre here that tasted nothin’ since airly this mornin’.”

“Ah, you’re a cursed useless wife,” he replied, “you brought nothin’ but bad luck to me an’ them; but how could you bring anything else, when you didn’t get your father’s blessin’.”

“But, Art, don’t you remember,” she said meekly in reply, “you surely can’t forget for whose sake I lost it.”

“Well, he’s fizzin’ now, the hard-hearted ould scoundrel, for keepin’ it from you; he forgot who you wor married to, the extortin’ ould vagabone—to one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, an’ he’ not fit to wipe their shoes. The curse o’ heaven upon you an’ him, wherever he is! It was an unlucky day to me I ever seen the face of one of you—here, Atty, I’ve some money; some strange fellow at the inn below stood to me for the price of a naggin, an’ that blasted Barney Scaddhan wouldn’t let me in, bekase, he said, I was a disgrace to his house, the scoundrel.”

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“The same house was a black sight to you, Art.”

“Here, Atty, go off and, get me a naggin.”

“Wouldn’t it be better for you to get something to eat, than to drink it, Art.”

“None of your prate, I say, go off an’ bring me a naggin o’ whiskey, an’ don’t let the grass grow under your feet.”

The children, whenever he came home, were awed into silence, but although they durst not speak, there was an impatient voracity visible in their poor features, and now wolfish little eyes, that was a terrible thing to witness. Art took the money, and went away to bring his father the whiskey.

“What’s the reason,” said he, kindling into sudden fury, “that you didn’t provide something for me to eat? Eh? What’s the reason?” and he approached her in a menacing attitude. “You’re a lazy, worthless vagabone. Why didn’t you get me something to ait, I say? I can’t stand this—I’m famished.”

“I sent to my sister’s,” she replied, laying-down the child; for she feared that if he struck her and knocked her down, with the child in her arms, it might be injured, probably killed, by the fall; “when the messenger comes back from my sister’s——”

“D—n yourself and your sister,” he replied, striking her a blow at the same time upon the temple. She fell, and in an instant her face was deluged with blood.

“Ay, lie there,” he continued, “the loss of the blood will cool you. Hould your tongues, you devils, or I’ll throw yez out of the house,” he exclaimed to the children, who burst into an uproar of grief on seeing their “mammy,” as they called her, lying bleeding and insensible. “That’s to taich her not to have something for me to ait. Ay,” he proceeded, with a hideous laugh—“ha, ha, ha! I’m a fine fellow—amn’t I? There she lies now, and yet she was wanst Margaret Murray!—my own Margaret—that left them all for myself; but sure if she did, wasn’t I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh?—Get up, Margaret; here, I’ll help you up, if the divil was in you!”

He raised her as he spoke, and perceived that consciousness was returning. The first thing she did was to put up her hand to her temple, where she felt the warm blood. She gave him one look of profound sorrow.

“Oh, Art dear,” she exclaimed, “Art dear—” her voice failed her, but the tears flowed in torrents down her cheeks.

“Margaret,” said he, “you needn’t spake to me that way. You know any how I’m damned—damned—lol de rol lol—tol de rol lol! ha, ha, ha! I have no hope either here or hereafther—divil a morsel of hope. Isn’t that comfortable? eh?—ha, ha, ha”—another

hideous laugh. “Well, no matter; we’ll dhrink it out, at all events. Where’s Atty, wid the whiskey? Oh, here he is! That’s a good boy, Atty.”

“Oh, mammy darlin’,” exclaimed the child, on seeing the blood streaming from her temple—“mammy darlin’, what happened you?”

“I fell, Atty dear,” she replied, “and was cut.”

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“That’s a lie, Atty; it was I, your fine chip of a father, that struck her. Here’s her health, at all events! I’ll make one dhrink of it; hoch! they may talk as they like, but I’ll stick to Captain Whiskey.”

“Father,” said the child, “will you come over and lie down upon the straw, for your own me, for your own Atty; and then you’ll fall into a sound sleep?”

“I will, Atty, for you—for you—I will, Atty; but mind, I wouldn’t do it for e’er another livin’.”

One day wid Captain Whiskey I wrastled a fall, But, t’aix, I was no match for the Captain at all, Though the landlady’s measures they wor damnably small—But I’ll thry him to morrow when I’m sober.

“Come,” said the child, “lie down here on the straw; my poor mammy says we’ll get clane straw to-morrow; and we’ll be grand then.”

His father, who was now getting nearly helpless, went over and threw himself upon some straw—thin and scanty and cold it was—or rather, in stooping to throw himself on it he fell with what they call in the country a soss; that is, he fell down in a state of utter helplessness; his joints feeble and weak, and all his strength utterly prostrated. Margaret, who in the meantime was striving to stop the effusion of blood from her temple, by the application of cobwebs, of which there was no scarcity in the house, now went over, and loosening his cravat, she got together some old rags, of which she formed, as well as she could, a pillow to support his head, in order to avoid the danger of his being suffocated.

“Poor Art,” she exclaimed, “if you knew what you did, you would cut that hand off you sooner than raise it to your own Margaret, as you used to call me. It is pity that I feel for you, Art dear, but no anger; an’ God, who sees my heart, knows that.”

Now that he was settled, and her own temple bound up, the children once more commenced their cry of famine; for nothing can suspend the stern cravings of hunger, especially when fanged by the bitter consciousness that there is no food to be had. Just then, however, the girl returned from her sister’s, loaded with oatmeal—a circumstance which changed the cry of famine into one of joy.

But now, what was to be done for fire, there was none in the house.

“Here is half-a-crown,” said the girl, “that she sent you; but she put her hands acrass, and swore by the five crasses, that unless you left Art at wanst, they’d never give you a rap farden’s worth of assistance agin, if you and they wor to die in the streets.”

“Leave him!” said Margaret; “oh never! When I took him, I took him for betther an’ for worse, and I’m not goin’ to neglect my duty to him now, because he’s down. All the world has desarted him, but I’ll never desart him. Whatever may happen, Art dear—-

poor, lost Art—whatever may happen, I'll live with you, beg with you, die with you; anything but desart you."

She then, after wiping the tears which accompanied her words, sent out the girl, who bought some turf and milk, in order to provide a meal of wholesome food for the craving children.

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“Now,” said she to the girl, “what is to be done? for if poor Art sees this meal in the morning, he will sell the best part of it to get whiskey; for I need scarcely tell you,” she added, striving to palliate his conduct, “that he cannot do without it, however he might contrive to do without his breakfast.” But, indeed, this was true. So thoroughly was he steeped in drunkenness—in the low, frequent, and insatiable appetite for whiskey—that, like tobacco or snuff, it became an essential portion of his life—a necessary-evil, without which he could scarcely exist. At all events, the poor children had one comfortable meal, which made them happy; the little stock that remained was stowed away in some nook or other, where Art was not likely to find it; the girl went home, and we were about to say that the rest of this miserable family went to bed; but, alas! they had no bed to go to, with the exception of a little straw, and a thin single blanket to cover them.

If Margaret’s conduct during these severe and terrible trials was not noble and heroic, we know not what could be called so. The affection which she exhibited towards her husband overcame everything. When Art had got about half way in his mad and profligate career, her friends offered to support her, if she would take refuge with them and abandon him; but the admirable woman received the proposal as an insult; and the reply she gave is much the same as the reader has heard from her lips, with reference to the girl’s message from her sister.

Subsequently, they offered to take her and the children; but this also she indignantly rejected. She could not leave him, she said, at the very time when it was so necessary that her hands should be about him. What might be the fate of such a man if he had none to take care of him? No, this almost unexampled woman, rather than desert him in such circumstances, voluntarily partook in all the wretchedness, destitution, and incredible misery which his conduct inflicted on her, and did so patiently, and without a murmur.

In a few days after the night we have described, a man covered with rags, without shoe, or stocking, or shirt, having on an old hat, through the broken crown of which his hair, wefted with bits of straw, stood out, his face shrunk and pale, his beard long and filthy, and his eyes rayless and stupid—a man of this description, we say, with one child in his arms, and two more accompanying him, might be seen begging through the streets of Ballykeerin; yes, and often in such a state of drunkenness as made it frightful to witness his staggering gait, lest he might tumble over upon the infant, or let it fair out of his arms. This man was Art Maguire; to such a destiny had he come, or rather had he brought himself at last; Art Maguire—one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh!

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But where is she—the attached, the indomitable in love—the patient, the much enduring, the uncomplaining? Alas! she is at length separated from him and them; her throbbing veins are hot and rife with fever—her aching head is filled with images of despair and horror—she is calling for her husband—her young and manly husband—-and says she will not be parted from him—she is also calling for her children, and demands to have them. The love of the mother and of the wife is now furious; but, thank God, the fury that stimulates it is that of disease, and not of insanity. The trials and privations which could not overcome her noble heart, overcame her physical frame, and on the day succeeding that woful night she was seized with a heavy fever, and through the interference of some respectable inhabitants of the town, was conveyed to the fever hospital, where she now lies in a state of delirium.

And Frank Maguire—the firm, the industrious, and independent—where is he? Unable to bear the shame of his brother's degradation, he gave up his partnership, and went to America, where he now is; but not without having left in the hands of a friend something for his unfortunate brother to remember him by; and it was this timely aid which for the last three quarters of a year has been the sole means of keeping life in his brother's family.

Thus have we followed Art Maguire from his youth up to the present stage of his life, attempting, as well as we could, to lay open to our readers his good principles and his bad, together with the errors and ignorances of those who had the first formation of his character—we mean his parents and family. We have endeavored to trace, with as strict an adherence to truth and nature as possible, the first struggles of a heart naturally generous and good, with the evil habit which beset him, as well as with the weaknesses by which that habit was set to work upon his temperament. Whether we have done this so clearly and naturally as to bring home conviction of its truth to such of our readers as may resemble him in the materials which formed his moral constitution, and consequently, to hold him up as an example to be avoided, it is not for ourselves to say. If our readers think so, or rather feel so, then we shall rest satisfied of having performed our task as we ought.

Our task, however, is not accomplished. It is true, we have accompanied him with pain and pity to penury, rags, and beggary—unreformed, unrepenting, hardened, shameless, desperate. Do our readers now suppose that there is anything in the man, or any principle external to him, capable of regenerating and elevating a heart so utterly lost as his?

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But hush! what is this? How dark the moral clouds that have been hanging over the country for a period far beyond the memory of man! how black that dismal canopy which is only lit by fires that carry and shed around them disease, famine, crime, madness, bloodshed, and death. How hot, sultry, and enervating to the whole constitution of man, physically and mentally, is the atmosphere we have been breathing so long! The miasma of the swamp, the simoom of the desert, the merciless sirocco, are healthful when compared to such an atmosphere. And, hark! what formidable being is that who, with black expanded wings, flies about from place to place, and from person to person, with a cup of fire in his hands, which he applies to their eager lips? And what spell or charm lies in that burning cup, which, no sooner do they taste than they shout, clap their hands with exultation, and cry out, “We are happy! we are happy!” Hark; he proclaims himself, and shouteth still louder than they do; but they stop their ears, and will not listen; they shut their eyes and will not see. What sayeth he? “I am the Angel of Intemperance, Discord, and Destruction, who oppose myself to God and all his laws—to man, and all that has been made for his good; my delight is in misery and unhappiness, in crime, desolation, ruin, murder, and death in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution. Such I am, such I shall be, for behold, my dominion shall last forever!”

But hush again! Look towards the south! What faint but beautiful light is it, which, fairer than that of the morning, gradually breaketh upon that dark sky? See how gently, but how steadily, its lustre enlarges and expands! It is not the light of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of the stars, neither is it the morning twilight, which heralds the approach of day; no, but it is the serene effulgence which precedes and accompanies a messenger from God, who is sent to bear a new principle of happiness to man! This principle is itself an angelic spirit, and lo! how the sky brightens, and the darkness flees away like a guilty thing before it! Behold it on the verge of the horizon, which is now glowing with the rosy hues of heaven—it advances, it proclaims its mission:—hark!

“I am the Angel of Temperance, of Industry, of Peace! who oppose myself to the Spirit of Evil and all his laws—I am the friend of man, and conduct him to the true enjoyment of all that has been made for his good. My mission is to banish misery, unhappiness, and crime, to save mankind from desolation, ruin, murder, and death, in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution.”

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And now see how he advances in beauty and power, attended by knowledge, health, and truth, while the harmonies of domestic life, of civil concord, and social duty, accompany him, and make music in his path. But where is the angel of intemperance, discord, and destruction? Hideous monster, behold him! No longer great nor terrible, he flies, or rather totters, from before his serene opponent—he shudders—he stutters and hiccups in his howlings—his limbs are tremulous—his hands shake as if with palsy—his eye is lustreless and bloodshot, and his ghastly countenance the exponent of death. He flies, but not unaccompanied; along with him are crime, poverty, hunger, idleness, his music the groan of the murderer, the clanking of the madman's chain, filled up by the report of the suicide's pistol, and the horrible yell of despair! And now he and his evil spirits are gone, the moral atmosphere is bright and unclouded, and the Angel of Temperance, Industry, and Peace goes abroad throughout the land, fulfilling his beneficent mission, and diffusing his own virtues into the hearts of a regenerated people!

Leaving allegory, however, to the poets, it is impossible that, treating of the subject which we have selected, we could, without seeming to undervalue it, neglect to say a few words upon the most extraordinary moral phenomenon, which, apart from the miraculous, the world ever saw; we allude to the wonderful Temperance Movement, as it is called, which, under the guiding hand of the Almighty, owes its visible power and progress to the zeal and incredible exertions of one pious and humble man—the Very Rev. Theobald Matthew, of Cork. When we consider the general, the proverbial character, which our countrymen have, during centuries, borne for love of drink, and their undeniable habits of intemperance, we cannot but feel that the change which has taken place is, indeed, surprising, to say the least of it. But, in addition to this, when we also consider the natural temperament of the Irishman—his social disposition—his wit, his humor, and his affection—all of which are lit up by liquor—when we just reflect upon the exhilaration of spirits produced by it—when we think upon the poverty, the distress, and the misery which too generally constitute his wretched lot, and which it will enable him, for a moment, to forget—and when we remember that all his bargains were made over it—that he courted his sweetheart over it—got married over it—wept for his dead over it—and generally fought his enemy of another faction, or the Orangeman of another creed, when under its influence:—when we pause over all these considerations, we can see how many temptations our countrymen had to overcome in renouncing it as they did; and we cannot help looking at it as a moral miracle, utterly without parallel in the history of man.

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Now we are willing to give all possible credit, and praise, and honor to Father Matthew; but we do not hesitate to say, that even he would have failed in being, as he is, the great visible exponent of this admirable principle, unless there had been other kindred principles in the Irishman's heart, which recognized and clung to it. In other words it is unquestionable, that had the religious and moral feelings of the Irish people been neglected, the principle of temperance would never have taken such deep root in the heart of the nation as it has done. Nay, it could not; for does not every man of common sense know, that good moral principles seldom grow in a bad moral soil, until it is cultivated for their reception. It is, therefore, certainly a proof that the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland had not neglected the religious principles of the people. It may, I know, and it has been called a superstitious contagion; but however that may be, so long as we have such contagions among us, we will readily pardon the superstition. Let superstition always assume a shape of such beneficence and virtue to man, and we shall not quarrel with her for retaining the name. Such a contagion could never be found among any people in whom there did not exist predisposing qualities, ready to embrace and nurture the good which came with it.

Our argument, we know, may be met by saying that its chief influence was exerted on those whose habits of dissipation, immorality, and irreligion kept, them aloof from the religious instruction of the priest. But to those who know the Irish heart, it is not necessary to say that many a man addicted to drink is far from being free from the impressions of religion, or uninfluenced by many a generous and noble virtue. Neither does it follow that every such man has been neglected by his priest, or left unadmonished of the consequences which attended his evil habit. But how did it happen, according to that argument, that it was this very class of persons—the habitual, or the frequent, or the occasional drunkard—that first welcomed the spirit of temperance, and availed themselves of its blessings? If there had not been the buried seeds of neglected instruction lying in their hearts, it is very improbable that they would have welcomed and embraced the principle as they did. On the other hand, it is much more likely that they would have fled from, and avoided a spirit which deprived them of the gratification of their ruling and darling passion. Evil and good, we know, do not so readily associate.

Be this, however, as it may, we have only to state, in continuation of our narrative, that at the period of Art Maguire's most lamentable degradation, and while his admirable but unhappy wife was stretched upon the burning bed of fever, the far low sounds of the Temperance Movement were heard, and the pale but pure dawn of its distant light seen at Ballykeerin. That a singular and novel spirit accompanied it, is

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certain; and that it went about touching and healing with all the power of an angel, is a matter not of history, but of direct knowledge and immediate recollection. Nothing, indeed, was ever witnessed in any country similar to it. Whereever it went, joy, acclamation, ecstasy accompanied it; together with a sense of moral liberty, of perfect freedom from the restraint, as it were, of some familiar devil, that had kept its victims in its damnable bondage. Those who had sunk exhausted before the terrible Molpch of Intemperance, and given themselves over for lost, could now perceive that there was an ally at hand, that was able to bring them succor, and drag them back from degradation and despair, to peace and independence, from contempt and infamy, to respect and praise. Nor was this all. It was not merely into the heart of the sot and drunkard that it carried a refreshing consciousness of joy and deliverance, but into all those hearts which his criminal indulgence had filled with heaviness and sorrow. It had, to be sure, its dark side to some—ay, to thousands. Those who lived by the vices —the low indulgences and the ruinous excesses—of their fellow-creatures—trembled and became aghast at its approach. The vulgar and dishonest publican, who sold a *bona fide* poison under a false name; the low tavern-keeper; the proprietor of the dram-shop; of the night-house; and the shebeen—all were struck with terror and dismay. Their occupation was doomed to go. No more in the dishonest avarice of gain where they to coax and jest with the foolish tradesman, until they confirmed him in the depraved habit, and led him on, at his own expense, and their profit, step by step, until the naked and shivering sot, now utterly ruined, was kicked out, like Art Maguire, to make room for those who were to tread in his steps, and share his fate.

No more was the purity and inexperience of youth to be corrupted by evil society, artfully introduced for the sordid purpose of making him spend his money, at the expense of health, honesty, and good name.

No more was the decent wife of the spendthrift tradesman, when forced by stern necessity, and the cries of her children, to seek her husband in the public house, of a Saturday night, anxious as she was to secure what was left unspent of his week's wages, in order to procure to-morrow's food—no more was she to be wheedled into the bar, to get the landlord's or the landlady's treat, in order that the outworks of temperance, and the principles of industry, perhaps of virtue, might be gradually broken down, for the selfish and diabolical purpose of enabling her drunken husband to spend a double share of his hardly-earned pittance.

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Nor more was the male servant, in whom every confidence was placed, to be lured into these vile dens of infamy, that he might be fleeced or his money, tutored into debauchery or dishonesty, or thrown into the society of thieves and robbers, that he might become an accomplice in their crimes, and enable them to rob his employer with safety. No more was the female servant, on the other hand, to be made familiar with tippling, or corrupted by evil company, until she became a worthless and degraded creature, driven out of society, without reputation or means of subsistence, and forced to sink to that last loathsome alternative of profligacy which sends her, after a short and wicked course, to the jeering experiments of the dissecting-room.

Oh, no; those wretches who lived by depravity, debauchery, and corruption, were alarmed almost into distraction by the approach of temperance, for they knew it would cut off the sources of their iniquitous gains, and strip them of the vile means of propagating dishonesty and vice, by which they lived. But even this wretched class were not without instances of great disinterestedness and virtue; several of them closed their debasing establishments, forfeited their ill-gotten means of living, and trusting to honesty and legitimate industry, voluntarily assumed the badge of temperance, and joined its peaceful and triumphant standard!

Previous to this time, however, and, indeed, long before the joyful sounds of its advancing motion were heard from afar, it is not to be taken for granted that the drunkards of the parish of Ballykeerin Avere left to the headlong impulses of their own evil propensities. Before Art Maguire had fallen from his integrity and good name, there had not been a more regular attendant at mass, or at his Easter and Christmas duties, in the whole parish; in this respect he was a pattern, as Father Costelloe, the priest, often said, to all who were anxious to lead a decent and creditable life, forgetting their duty neither to God nor man. A consciousness of his fall, however, made him ashamed in the beginning to appear at mass, until he should decidedly reform, which he proposed and resolved to do, or thought he resolved, from week to week, and from day to day. How he wrought out these resolutions our readers know too well; every day and every week only made him worse and worse, until by degrees all thought of God, or prayer, or priest, abandoned him, and he was left to swelter in misery among the very dregs of his prevailing vice, hardened and obdurate. Many an admonition has he received from Father Costelloe, especially before he become hopeless, and many a time, when acknowledging his own inability to follow up his purposes of amendment, has he been told by that good and Christian man, that he must have recourse to better and higher means of support, and remember that God will not withhold his grace from those who ask it sincerely and aright. Art, however, could not

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do so, for although he had transient awakenings of conscience, that were acute while they lasted, yet he could not look up to God with a thorough and heartfelt resolution of permanent reformation. The love of liquor, and the disinclination to give it up, still lurked in his heart, and prevented him from setting about his amendment in earnest. If they had not, he would have taken a second oath, as his brother Frank often advised him to do, but without effect. He still hoped to be able to practise moderation, and drink within bounds, and consequently persuaded himself that total abstinence was not necessary in his case. At length Father Costelloe, like all those who were deeply anxious for his reformation, was looked upon as an unwelcome adviser, whose Christian exhortations to a better course of life were anything but agreeable, because he spoke truth; and so strong did this feeling grow in him, that in his worst moments he would rather sink into the earth than meet him: nay, a glimpse of him at any distance was sure to make the unfortunate man hide himself in some hole or corner until the other had passed, and all danger of coming under his reproof was over. Art was still begging with his children, when, after a long and dangerous illness, it pleased God to restore his wife to him and them. So much pity, and interest, and respect did she excite during her convalescence—for it was impossible that her virtues, even in the lowest depths of her misery, could be altogether unknown—that the heads of the hospital humanely proposed to give her some kind of situation in it, as soon as she should regain sufficient strength to undertake its duties. The mother's love, however, still prompted her to rejoin her children, feeling as she did, and as she said, how doubly necessary now her care and attention to them must be. She at length yielded to their remonstrances, when they assured her that to return in her present weak condition to her cold and desolate house, and the utter want of all comfort which was to be found in it, might, and, in all probability, would, be fatal to her; and that by thus exposing herself too soon to the consequences of cold and destitution, she might leave her children motherless. This argument prevailed, but in the meantime she stipulated that her children and her husband, if the latter were in a state of sufficient sobriety, should be permitted occasionally to see her, that she might inquire into their situation, and know how they lived. This was acceded to, and, by the aid of care and nourishing food, she soon found herself beginning to regain her strength.

In the meantime the Temperance movement was rapidly and triumphantly approaching. In a town about fifteen miles distant there was a meeting advertised to be held, at which the great apostle himself was to administer the pledge; Father Costelloe announced it from the altar, and earnestly recommended his parishioners to attend, and enrol themselves under the blessed banner of Temperance, the sober man as well as the drunkard.

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“It may be said,” he observed, “that sober men have no necessity for taking the pledge; and if one were certain that every sober man was to remain sober during his whole life, there would not, indeed, be a necessity for sober men to take it; but, alas! my friends, you know how subject we are to those snares, and pitfalls, and temptations of life by which our paths are continually beset. Who can say to-day that he may not transgress the bounds of temperance before this day week? Your condition in life is surrounded by inducements to drink. You scarcely buy or sell a domestic animal in fair or market, that you are not tempted to drink; you cannot attend a neighbor’s funeral that you are not tempted to drink—’tis the same at the wedding and the christening, and in almost all the transactions of your lives. How then can you answer for yourselves, especially when your spirits may happen to be elevated, and your hearts glad? Oh! it is then, my friends, that the tempter approaches you, and probably implants in your unguarded hearts the germ of that accursed habit which has destroyed millions. How often have you heard it said of many men, even within the range of your own knowledge, ’Ah, he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man—until he took to drink!’ Does not the prevalence of such a vile habit, and the fact that so many sober men fall away from that virtue, render the words that I have just uttered a melancholy proverb in the country? Ah, there he is—in rags and misery; yet he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man once, that is—before he took to drink! Prevention, my dear friends, is always better than cure, and in binding yourselves by this most salutary obligation, you know not how much calamity and suffering—how much general misery—how much disgrace and crime you may avoid. And, besides, are we not to look beyond this world? Is a crime which so greatly depraves the heart, and deadens its power of receiving the wholesome impressions of religion and truth, not one which involves our future happiness or misery? Ah, my dear brethren, it is indeed a great and a cross popular error to say that sober men should not take this pledge. I hope I have satisfied you that it is a duty they owe themselves to take it, so long as they feel that they are frail creatures, and liable to sin and error; and not only themselves, but their children, their friends, and all who might be affected, either for better or worse, by their example.

“There is another argument, however, which I cannot overlook, while dwelling upon this important subject. We know that the drunkard, if God should, through the instrumentality of this great and glorious movement, put the wish for amendment into his heart, still feels checked and deterred by a sense of shame; because, the truth is, if none attended these meetings but such men, that very fact alone would prove a great obstruction in the way of their reformation. Many,

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too many, are drunkards; but every man is not an open drunkard, and hundreds, nay, thousands, would say, 'By attending these meetings of drunken men, I acknowledge myself to be a drunkard also;' hence they will probably decline going through shame, and consequently miss the opportunity of retrieving themselves. Now, I say, my friends, it is the duty of sober men to deprive them of this argument, and by an act, which, after all, involves nothing of self-denial, but still an act of great generosity, to enable them to enter into this wholesome obligation, without being openly exposed to the consequences of having acknowledged that they were intemperate."

He then announced the time and place of the meeting, which was in the neighboring town of Drumnabrogue, and concluded by again exhorting them all, without distinction, to attend it and take the pledge. His exhortations were not without effect; many of his parishioners did attend, and among them some of Art's former dissolute companions.

Art himself, when spoken to, and pressed to go, hiccuped and laughed at the notion of any such pledge reforming him; a strong proof that all hope of recovering himself, or of regaining his freedom from drunkenness, had long ago deserted him. This, if anything further was necessary to do so, completed the scene of his moral prostration and infamy. Margaret, who was still in the hospital, now sought to avail herself of the opportunity which presented itself, by reasoning with, and urging him to go, but, like all others, her arguments were laughed at, and Art expressed contempt for her, Father Matthew, and all the meetings that had yet taken place.

"Will takin' the pledge," he asked her, "put a shirt to my back, a thing I almost forget the use of, or a good coat? Will it put a dacent house over my head, a good bed under me, and a warm pair of blankets on us to keep us from shiverin', an' coughin', an' barkin' the whole night long in the could?

"No, faith, I'll not give up the whiskey, for it has one comfort, it makes me sleep in defiance o' wind and weather; it's the only friend I have left now—it's my shirt—its my coat—my shoes and stockin's—my house—my blankets—my coach—my carriage—it makes me a nobleman, a lord; but, anyhow, sure I'm as good, ay, by the mortual, and better, for amn't I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh! Whish, the ou—ould blood forever, and to the divil wid their meetins!"

"Art," said his wife, "I believe if you took the pledge that it would give you all you say, and more; for it would bring you back the respect and good-will of the people, that you've long lost."

"To the divil wid the people! I'll tell you what, if takin' the pledge reforms Mechil Gam, the crooked disciple that he is, or Tom Whiskey, mind—mind me—I say if it reforms

them, or young Barney Scaddhan, thin you may spake up for it, an' may be, I'll listen to you."

At length the meeting took place, and the three men alluded to by Art, attended it as they said they would; each returned home with his pledge; they rose up the next morning, and on that night went to bed sober. This was repeated day after day, week after week, month after month, and still nothing characterized them but sobriety, peace, and industry.

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Unfortunately, so far as Art Maguire was concerned, it was out of his power, as it was out of that of hundreds, to derive any benefit from the example which some of his old hard-drinking associates had so unexpectedly set both him and them. No meeting had since occurred within seventy or eighty miles of Ballykeerin, and yet the contagion of good example had spread through that and the adjoining parishes in a manner that was without precedent. In fact, the people murmured, became impatient, and, ere long, demanded from their respective pastors that another meeting should be held, to afford them an opportunity of publicly receiving the pledge; and for that purpose they besought the Rev. gentlemen to ask Father Matthew to visit Ballykeerin. This wish was complied with, and Father Matthew consented, though at considerable inconvenience to himself, and appointed a day for the purpose specified. This was about three or four months after the meeting that was held in the neighboring town already alluded to.

For the last six weeks Margaret had been able to discharge the duties of an humble situation in the hospital, on the condition that she should at least once a day see her children. Poor as was the situation in question, it enabled her to contribute much more to their comfort, than she could if she had resided with them, or, in other words, begged with them; for to that, had she returned home, it must have come; and, as the winter was excessively severe, this would have killed her, enfeebled as she had been by a long and oppressive fever. Her own good sense taught her to see this, and the destitution of her children and husband—to feel it. In this condition then were they—-depending on the scanty aid which her poor exertions could afford them, eked out by the miserable pittance that he extorted as a beggar—when the intelligence arrived that the great Apostle of Temperance had appointed a day on which to hold a teetotal meeting in the town of Ballykeerin.

It is utterly unaccountable how the approach of Father Matthew, and of these great meetings, stirred society into a state of such extraordinary activity, not only in behalf of temperance, but also of many other virtues; so true is it, that when one healthy association is struck it awakens all those that are kindred to it into new life. In addition to a love of sobriety, the people felt their hearts touched, as it were, by a new spirit, into kindness and charity, and a disposition to discharge promptly and with good-will all brotherly and neighborly offices. Harmony, therefore, civil, social, and domestic, accompanied the temperance movement wherever it went, and accompanies it still wherever it goes; for, like every true blessing, it never comes alone, but brings several others in its train.

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The morning in question, though cold, was dry and bright; a small platform had been raised at the edge of the market-house, which was open on one side, and on it Father Matthew was to stand. By this simple means he would be protected from rain, should any fall, and was sufficiently accessible to prevent any extraordinary crush among the postulants. But how will we attempt to describe the appearance which the town of Ballykeerin presented on the morning of this memorable and auspicious day? And above all, in what terms shall we paint the surprise, the wonder, the astonishment with which they listened to the music of the teetotal band, which, as if by magic, had been formed in the town of Drumnabogue, where, only a few months before, the meeting of which we have spoken had been held. Indeed, among all the proofs of national advantages which the temperance movement has brought out, we are not to forget those which it has bestowed on the country—by teaching us what a wonderful capacity for music, and what a remarkable degree of intellectual power, the lower classes of our countrymen are endowed with, and can manifest when moved by adequate principles. Early as daybreak the roads leading to Ballykeerin presented a living stream of people listening onwards towards the great rendezvous; but so much did they differ in their aspect from almost any other assemblage of Irishmen, that, to a person ignorant of their purpose, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to guess the cause, not that moved them in such multitudes towards the same direction, but that marked them by such peculiar characteristics. We have seen Irishmen and Irishwomen going to a country race in the summer months, when labor there was none; we have seen them going to meetings of festivity and amusement of all descriptions;—to fairs, to weddings, to dances—but we must confess, that notwithstanding all our experience and intercourse with them, we never witnessed anything at all resembling their manner and bearing on this occasion. There was undoubtedly upon them, and among them, all the delightful enjoyment of a festival spirit; they were easy, cheerful, agreeable, and social; but, in addition to this, there was clearly visible an expression of feeling that was new even to themselves, as well as to the spectators. But how shall we characterize this feeling? It was certainly not at variance with the cheerfulness which they felt, but, at the same time, it shed over it a serene solemnity of manner which communicated a moral grandeur to the whole proceeding that fell little short of sublimity. This was a principle of simple virtue upon which all were equal; but it was more than that, it was at once a manifestation of humility, and an exertion of faith in the aid and support of the Almighty, by whose grace those earnest but humble people felt and trusted that they would be supported. And who can say that their simplicity of heart—their unaffected humility, and their firmness of faith have not been amply rewarded, and triumphantly confirmed by the steadfastness with which they have been, with extremely few exceptions, faithful to their pledge.

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About nine o'clock the town of Ballykeerin was crowded with a multitude such as had never certainly met in it before. All, from the rustic middle classes down, were there. The crowd was, indeed, immense, yet, notwithstanding their numbers, one could easily mark the peculiar class for whose sake principally the meeting had been called together.

There was the red-faced farmer of substance, whose sunburnt cheeks, and red side-neck, were scorched into a color that disputed its healthy hue with the deeper purple tint of strong and abundant drink.

"Such a man," an acute observer would say, "eats well, and drinks well, but is very likely to pop off some day, without a minute's warning, or saying good-by to his friends."

Again, there was the pale and emaciated drunkard, whose feeble and tottering gait, and trembling hands, were sufficiently indicative of his broken-down constitution, and probably of his anxiety to be enabled to make some compensation to the world, or some provision on the part of his own soul, to balance the consequences of an ill-spent life, during which morals were laughed at, and health destroyed.

There was also the healthy-looking drunkard of small means, who, had he been in circumstances to do so, would have gone to bed drunk every night in the year. He is not able, from the narrowness of his circumstances, to drink himself into apoplexy on the one hand, or debility on the other; but he is able, notwithstanding, to drink the clothes off his back, and the consequence is, that he stands before you as ragged, able-bodied, and thumping a specimen of ebriety as you could wish to see during a week's journey. There were, in fact, the vestiges of drunkenness in all their repulsive features, and unhealthy variety.

There stood the grog-drinker with his blotched face in full flower, his eye glazed in his head, and his protuberant paunch projecting over his shrunk and diminished limbs.

The tippling tradesman too was there, pale and sickly-looking, his thin and over-worn garments evidently insufficient to keep out the chill of morning, and prevent him from shivering every now and then, as if he were afflicted with the ague.

In another direction might be seen the servant out of place, known by the natty knot of his white cravat, as well as by the smartness with which he wears his dress, buttoned up as it is, and coaxed about him with all the ingenuity which experience and necessity bring to the aid of vanity. His napeless hat is severely brushed in order to give the subsoil an appearance of the nap which is gone, but it won't do; every one sees that his intention is excellent, were it possible for address and industry to work it out. This is not the case, however, and the hat is consequently a clear exponent of his principles and position, taste and skill while he was sober—vain pride and trying poverty now in his drunkenness.

The reckless-looking sailor was also there (but with a serious air now), who, having been discharged for drunkenness, and refused employment everywhere else, for the same reason, was obliged to return home, and remain a burden upon his friends. He, too, has caught this healthy epidemic, and the consequence is, that he will once more gain employment, for the production of his medal will be accepted as a welcome proof of his reformation.

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And there was there, what was better still, the unfortunate female, the victim of passion and profligacy, conscious of her past life, and almost ashamed in the open day to look around her. Poor thing! how her heart, that was once innocent and pure, now trembles within a bosom where there is awakened many a painful recollection of early youth, and the happiness of home, before that unfortunate night, when, thrown off her guard by accursed liquor, she ceased to rank among the pure and virtuous. Yes, all these, and a much greater variety, were here actuated by the noble resolution to abandon forever the evil courses, the vices, and the profligacy into which they were first driven by the effects of drink.

The crowd was, indeed, immense, many having come a distance of twenty, thirty, some forty, and not a few fifty miles, in order to free themselves, by this simple process, from the influence of the destructive habit which either was leading, or had led them, to ruin. Of course it is not to be supposed that among such a vast multitude of people there were not, as there always is, a great number of those vagabond impostors who go about from place to place, for the purpose of extorting charity from the simple and credulous, especially when under the influence of liquor. All this class hated the temperance movement, because they knew right well that sobriety in the people was there greatest enemy; the lame, the blind, the maimed, the deaf, and the dumb, were there in strong muster, and with their characteristic ingenuity did everything in their power, under the pretence of zeal and religious enthusiasm, to throw discredit upon the whole proceedings. It was this vile crew, who, by having recourse to the aid of mock miracles, fancied they could turn the matter into derision and contempt, and who, by affecting to be cured of their complaints, with a view of having their own imposture, when detected, imputed to want of power in Father Matthew;—it was this vile crew, we say, that first circulated the notion that he could perform miracles. Unfortunately, many of the ignorant among the people did in the beginning believe that he possessed this power, until he himself, with his characteristic candor, disclaimed it. For a short time the idea of this slightly injured the cause, and afforded to its enemies some silly and senseless arguments, which, in lieu of better, they were glad to bring against it.

At length Father Matthew, accompanied by several other clergymen and gentlemen, made his appearance on the platform; then was the rush, the stretching of necks, and the bitter crushing, accompanied by devices and manoeuvres of all kinds, to catch a glimpse of him. The windows were crowded by the more respectable classes, who were eager to witness the effects of this great and sober enthusiasm among the lower classes. The proceedings, however, were very simple. He first addressed them in a plain and appropriate discourse, admirably displaying the very description of eloquence

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which was best adapted to his auditory. This being concluded, he commenced distributing the medal, for which every one who received it, gave a shilling, the latter at the same time repeating the following words: "I promise, so long as I shall continue a member of the Teetotal Temperance Society, to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, unless recommended for medical purposes, and to discourage by all means in my power the practice of intoxication in others." Father Matthew then said, "May God bless you, and enable you to keep your promise!"

Such was the simple ceremony by which millions have been rescued from those terrible evils that have so long cursed and afflicted society in this country.

In this large concourse there stood one individual, who presented in his person such symptoms of a low, grovelling, and unremitting indulgence in drink, as were strikingly observable even amidst the mass of misery and wretchedness that was there congregated. It is rarely, even in a life, that an object in human shape, encompassed and pervaded by so many of the fearful results of habitual drunkenness, comes beneath observation. Sometimes we may see it in a great city, when we feel puzzled, by the almost total absence of reason in the countenance, to know whether the utter indifference to nakedness and the elements, be the consequence of drunken destitution, or pure idiocy. To this questionable appearance had the individual we speak of come. The day was now nearly past, and the crowd had considerably diminished, when this man, approaching Father Matthew, knelt down, and clasping his skeleton hands, exclaimed—

"Father, I'm afeard I cannot trust myself."

"Who can?" said Father Matthew; "it is not in yourself you are to place confidence, but in God, who will support you, and grant you strength, if you ask for it sincerely and humbly."

These words, uttered in tones of true Christian charity, gave comfort to the doubting heart of the miserable creature, who said—

"I would wish to take the pledge, if I had money; but I doubt it's too late—too late for me! Oh, if I thought it wasn't!"

"It's never too late to repent," replied the other, "or to return from evil to good. If you feel your heart inclined to the right I course, do not let want of money prevent you from pledging yourself to sobriety and temperance."

"In God's name, then, I will take it," he replied; and immediately repeated the simple words which constitute the necessary form.

“May God bless you,” said Father Matthew, placing his hand on his head, “and enable you to keep your promise!”

This man, our readers already guess, was Art Maguire.

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Having thus taken the medal, and pledged himself to sobriety, and a total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors, his first feeling was very difficult to describe. Father Matthew's words, though few and brief, had sunk deep into his heart, and penetrated his whole spirit. He had been for many a long day the jest and jibe of all who knew him; because they looked upon his recovery as a hopeless thing, and spoke to him accordingly in a tone of contempt and scorn—a lesson to us that we never should deal harshly with the miserable. Nor, however, he had been addressed in accents of kindness, and in a voice that proclaimed an interest in his welfare. This, as we said, added to the impressive spirit that prevailed around, touched him, and he hurried home.

On reaching his almost empty house, he found Margaret and the children there before him; she having come to see how the poor things fared—but being quite ignorant of what had just taken place with regard to her husband.

"Art," said she, with her usual affectionate manner; "you will want something to eat; for if you're not hungry, your looks! belie you very much. I have brought something for you and these creatures."

Art looked at her, then at their children, then at the utter desolation of the house, and spreading his two hands over his face, he wept aloud. This was repentance. Margaret in exceeding surprise, rose and approached him:—

"Art dear," she said, "in the name of God, what's the matter?"

"Maybe my father's sick, mother," said little Atty; "sure, father, if you are, I an' the rest will go out ourselves, an' you can stay at home; but we needn't go this day, for my mammy brought us as much as will put us over it."

To neither the mother nor child did he make any reply; but wept on and sobbed as if his heart would break.

"Oh my God, my God," he exclaimed bitterly, "what have I brought you to, my darlin' wife and childre, that I loved a thousand times betther than my own heart? Oh, what have I brought you to?"

"Art," said his wife, and her eye kindled, "in the name of the heavenly God, is this sorrow for the life you led?"

"Ah, Margaret darlin'," he said, still sobbing; "it's long since I ought to a felt it; but how can I look back on that woful life? Oh my God, my God! what have I done, an' what have I brought on you!"

"Art," she said, "say to me that you're sorry for it; only let my ears hear you saying the words."

“Oh, Margaret dear,” he sobbed, “from my heart—from the core of my unhappy heart—I am sorry—sorry for it all.”

“Then there’s hope,” she exclaimed, clasping her hands, and looking up to heaven, “there is hope—for him—for him—for us all! Oh my heart,” she exclaimed, quickly, “what is this?” and she scarcely uttered the words, when she sank upon the ground insensible—sudden joy being sometimes as dangerous as sudden grief.

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Art, who now forgot his own sorrow in apprehension for her, raised her up, assisted by little Atty, who, as did the rest of the children, cried bitterly, on seeing his mother's eyes shut, her arms hanging lifelessly by her side, and herself without motion. Water, however, was brought by Atty; her face sprinkled, and a little put to her lips, and with difficulty down her throat. At length she gave a long deep-drawn sigh, and opening her eyes, she looked tenderly into her husband's face—

"Art dear," she said, in a feeble voice, "did I hear it right? And you said you were sorry?"

"From my heart I am, Margaret dear," he replied; "oh, if you knew what I feel this minute!"

She looked on him again, and her pale face was lit up with a smile of almost ineffable happiness.

"Kiss me," said she; "we are both young yet, Art dear, and we will gain our lost ground wanst more."

While she spoke, the tears of delight fell in torrents down her cheeks. Art kissed her tenderly, and immediately pulling out the medal, showed it to her.

She took the medal, and after looking at it, and reading the inscription—

"Well, Art," she said, "you never broke your oath—that's one comfort."

"No," he replied; "nor I'll never break this; if I do," he added fervently, and impetuously, "may God mark me out for misery and misfortune!"

"Whisht, dear," she replied; "don't give way to these curses—they sarve no purpose, Art. But I'm so happy this day!"

"An' is my father never to be drunk any more, mammy?" asked the little ones, joyfully; "an he'll never be angry wid you, nor bate you any more?"

"Whisht, darlins," she exclaimed; "don't be spakin' about that; sure your poor father never beat me, only when he didn't know what he was doin'. Never mention it again, one of you."

"Ah, Margaret," said Art, now thoroughly awakened, "what recompense can I ever make you, for the treatment I gave you? Oh, how can I think of it, or look back upon it?"

His voice almost failed him, as he uttered the last words; but his affectionate wife stooped and kissing away the tears from his cheeks, said—

“Don’t, Art dear; sure this now is not a time to cry;” and yet her own tears were flowing; —“isn’t our own love come back to us? won’t we now have peace? won’t we get industrious, and be respected again?”

“Ah, Margaret darling,” he replied, “your love never left you; so don’t put yourself in; but as for me—oh, what have I done? and what have I brought you to?”

“Well, now, thanks be to the Almighty, all’s right. Here’s something for you to ait; you must want it.”

“But,” he replied, “did these poor crathurs get anything? bekase if they didn’t, I’ll taste nothin’ till they do.”

“They did indeed,” said Margaret; and all the little ones came joyfully about him, to assure him that they had been fed, and were not hungry.

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The first feeling Art now experienced on going abroad was shame—a deep and overwhelming sense of shame; shame at the meanness of his past conduct—shame at his miserable and unsightly appearance—shame at all he had done, and at all he had left undone. What course now, however, was he to adopt? Being no longer stupified and besotted by liquor, into a state partly apathetic, partly drunken, and wholly shameless, he could not bear the notion of resuming his habits of mendicancy. The decent but not the empty and senseless, pride of his family was now reawakened in him, and he felt, besides, that labor and occupation were absolutely necessary to enable him to bear up against the incessant craving which he felt for the pernicious stimulant. So strongly did this beset him, that he suffered severely from frequent attacks of tremor and sensations that resembled fits of incipient distraction. Nothing, therefore, remained for him but close employment, that would keep both mind and body engaged.

When the fact of his having taken the pledge became generally known, it excited less astonishment than a person might imagine; in truth, the astonishment would have been greater, had he refused to take it at all, so predominant and full of enthusiasm was the spirit of temperance at that period. One feeling, however, prevailed with respect to him, which was, that privation of his favorite stimulant would kill him—that his physical system, already so much exhausted and enfeebled, would, break down——and that poor Art would soon go the way of all drunkards.

On the third evening after he had taken the pledge, he went down to the man who had succeeded himself in his trade, and who, by the way, had been formerly one of his own journeymen, of the very men who, while he was running his career of dissipation, refused to flatter his vanity, or make one in his excesses, and who was, moreover, one of the very individuals he had dismissed. To this man he went, and thus accosted him—his name was Owen Gallagher.

“Owen,” said he, “I trust in God that I have gained a great victory of late.”

The man understood him perfectly well, and replied—

“I hope so, Art; I hear you have taken the pledge.”

“Belyin’ on God’s help, I have.”

“Well,” replied Owen, “you couldn’t rely on betther help.”

“No,” said Art, “I know I could not; but, Owen, I ran a wild and a terrible race of it—I’m grieved an’ shamed to think—even to think of it.”

“An’ that’s a good sign, Art, there couldn’t be betther; for unless a man’s heart is sorry for his faults, and ashamed of them too, it’s not likely he’ll give them over.”

“I can’t bear to walk the streets,” continued Art, “nor to rise my head; but still something must be done for the poor wife and childre.”

“Ah, Art,” replied Owen, “that is the wife! The goold of Europe isn’t value for her; an’ that’s what every one knows.”

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“But who knows it, an’ feels it as I do?” said Art, “or who has the right either? howandiver, as I said, something must be done; Owen, will you venture to give me employment? I know I’m in bad trim to come into a dacent workshop, but you know necessity has no law;—it isn’t my clo’es that will work, but myself; an’, indeed, if you do employ me, it’s not much I’ll be able to do this many a day; but the truth is, if I don’t get something to keep me busy, I doubt I won’t be able to stand against what I feel both in my mind and body.”

These words were uttered with such an air of deep sorrow and perfect sincerity as affected Gallagher very much.

“Art,” said he, “there was no man so great a gainer by the unfortunate coorse you tuck as I was, for you know I came into the best part of your business; God forbid then that I should refuse you work, especially as you have turned over a new lafe;—or to lend you a helpin’ hand either, now that I know it will do you and your family good, and won’t go to the public-house. Come wid me.”

He took down his hat as he spoke, and brought Art up to one of those general shops that are to be found in every country town like Ballykeerin.

“Mr. Trimble,” said he, “Art Maguire wants a plain substantial suit o’ clothes, that will be chape an’ wear well, an’ I’ll be accountable for them; Art, sir, has taken the pledge, an’ is goin’ to turn over a new lafe, an’ be as he wanst was, I hope.”

“And there is no man,” said the worthy shopkeeper, “in the town of Ballykeerin that felt more satisfaction than I did when I heard he had taken it. I know what he wants, and what you want for him, and he shall have it both cheap and good.”

Such was the respect paid to those who nobly resolved to overcome their besetting sin of drink, and its consequent poverty or profligacy, that the knowledge alone that they had taken the pledge, gained them immediate good-will, as it was entitled to do. This, to be sure, was in Art’s favor; but there was about him, independently of this, a serious spirit of awakened resolution and sincerity which carried immediate conviction along with it.

“This little matter,” said the honest carpenter, with natural consideration for Art, “will, of coorse, rest between you an’ me, Mr. Trimble.”

“I understand your feeling, Owen,” said he, “and I can’t but admire it; it does honor to your heart.”

“Hut,” said Gallagher, “it’s nothin’; sure it’s jist what Art would do for myself, if we wor to change places.”

Thus it is with the world, and ever will be so, till human nature changes. Art had taken the first step towards his reformation, and Owen felt that he was sincere; this step, therefore, even slight as it was, sufficed to satisfy his old friend that he would be safe in aiding him. Gallagher's generosity, however, did not stop here; the assistance which he gave Art, though a matter of secrecy between themselves,

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was soon visible in Art's appearance, and that of his poor family. Good fortune, however, did not stop here; in about a week after this, when Art was plainly but comfortably dressed, and working with Gallagher, feeble as he was, upon journeyman's wages, there came a letter from his brother Frank, enclosing ten pounds for the use of his wife and children. It was directed to a friend in Ballykeerin, who was instructed to apply it according to his own discretion, and the wants of his family, only by no means to permit a single shilling of it to reach his hands, unless on the condition that he had altogether given up liquor. This seemed to Art like a proof that God had rewarded him for the step he had taken; in a few weeks it was wonderful how much comfort he and his family had contrived to get about them. Margaret was a most admirable manager, and a great economist, and with her domestic knowledge and good sense, things went on beyond their hopes.

Art again was up early and down late—for his strength, by the aid of wholesome and regular food, and an easy mind, was fast returning to him—although we must add here, that he never regained the healthy and powerful constitution which he had lost. His reputation, too, was fast returning; many a friendly salutation he received from those, who, in his degradation, would pass him by with either ridicule or solemn contempt.

Nothing in this world teaches a man such well-remembered lessons of life as severe experience. Art, although far, very far removed from his former independence, yet, perhaps, might be said never to have enjoyed so much peace of mind, or so strong a sense of comfort, as he did now in his humble place with his family. The contrast between his past misery, and the present limited independence which he enjoyed, if it could be called independence, filled his heart with a more vivid feeling of thankfulness than he had ever known. He had now a bed to sleep on, with *bona fide* blankets—he had a chair to sit on—a fire on his hearth—and food, though plain, to eat; so had his wife, so had his children; he had also very passable clothes to his back, that kept him warm and comfortable, and prevented him from shivering like a reed in the blast; so had his wife, and so had his children. But he had more than this, for he had health, a good conscience, and a returning reputation. People now addressed him as an equal, as a man, as an individual who constituted a portion of society; then, again, he loved his wife as before, and lived with her in a spirit of affection equal to any they had ever felt. Why, this was, to a man who suffered what he and his family had suffered, perfect luxury.

In truth, Art now wondered at the life he had led,—he could not understand it; why he should have suffered himself, for the sake of a vile and questionable enjoyment—if enjoyment that could be called, which was no enjoyment—at least for the sake of a demoralizing and degrading habit, to fall down under the feet as it were, under the evil tongues, and the sneers—of those who constituted his world—the inhabitants of Ballykeerin—was now, that he had got rid of the thraldom, perfectly a mystery to him.

Be this as it may, since he had regenerated his own character, the world was just as ready to take him up as it had been to lay him down.

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Nothing in life gives a man such an inclination for active industry as to find that he is prospering; he has then heart and spirits to work, and does work blithely and cheerfully; so was it with Art. He and his employer were admirably adapted for each other, both being extremely well-tempered, honest, and first-rate workmen. About the expiration of the first twelve months, Art had begun to excite a good deal of interest in the town of Ballykeerin, an interest which was beginning to affect Owen Gallagher himself in a beneficial way. He was now pointed out to strangers as the man, who, almost naked, used to stand drunk and begging upon the bridge of Ballykeerin, surrounded by his starving and equally naked children. In fact, he began to get a name, quite a reputation for the triumph which he had achieved over drunkenness; and on this account Owen Gallagher, when it was generally known in the country that Art worked with him, found his business so rapidly extending, that he was obliged, from time to time, to increase the number of hands in his establishment. Art felt this, and being now aware that his position in life was, in fact, more favorable for industrious exertion than ever, resolved to give up journey work, and once more, if only for the novelty of the thing, to set up for himself. Owen Gallagher, on hearing this from his own lips, said he could not, nor would not blame him, but, he added—

"I'll tell you what we can do, Art—come into partnership wid me, for I think as we're gettin' an so well together, it 'ud be a pity, almost a sin, to part; join me, and I'll give you one-third of the business,"—by which he meant the profits of it.

"Begad," replied Art, laughing, "it's as much for the novelty of the thing I'm doin' it as any thing else; I think it 'ud be like a dhrame to me, if I was to find myself and my family as we wor before." And so they parted.

It is unnecessary here to repeat what we have already detailed concerning the progress of his early prosperity; it is sufficient, we trust, to tell our readers that he rose into rapid independence, and that he owed all his success to the victory that he had obtained over himself. His name was now far and near, and so popular had he become, that no teetotaller would employ any other carpenter. This, at length, began to make him proud, and to feel that his having given up drink, instead of being simply a duty to himself and his family, was altogether an act of great voluntary virtue on his part.

"Few men," he said, "would do it, an' may be, afther all, if I hadn't the ould blood in my veins—if I wasn't one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, I would never a' done it."

He was now not only a vehement Teetotaller, but an unsparing enemy to all who drank even in moderation; so much so, indeed, that whenever a man came to get work done with him, the first question he asked him was—"Are you a Teetotaller?" If the man answered "No," his reply was, "Well, I'm sorry for that, bekase I couldn't wid a safe conscience do your work; but you can go to Owen Gallagher, and he will do it for you as well as any man livin'."

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This, to be sure, was the abuse of the principle; but we all know that the best things may be abused. He was, in fact, outrageous in defence of Teetotalism; attended all its meetings; subscribed for Band-money; and was by far the most active member in the whole town of Ballykeerin. It was not simply that he forgot his former poverty; he forgot himself. At every procession he was to be seen, mounted on a spanking horse, ridiculously over-dressed—the man, we mean, not the horse—flaunting with ribands, and quite puffed up at the position to which he had raised himself.

This certainly was not the humble and thankful feeling with which he ought to have borne his prosperity. The truth, however, was, that Art, in all this parade, was not in the beginning acting upon those broad, open principles of honesty, which, in the transactions of business, had characterized his whole life. He was now influenced by his foibles—by his vanity—and by his ridiculous love of praise. Nor, perhaps, would these have been called into action, were it not through the intervention of his old friend and pot companion, Toal Finnigan. Toal, be it known to the reader, the moment he heard that Art had become a Teetotaller, immediately became one himself, and by this means their intimacy was once more renewed; that is to say, they spoke in friendly terms whenever they met—but no entreaty or persuasion could ever induce Toal to enter Art's house; and the reader need not be told why. At all events, Toal, soon after he joined it, put himself forward in the Teetotal Movement with such prominence, that Art, who did not wish to be outdone in anything, began to get jealous of him. Hence his ridiculous exhibitions of himself in every manner that could attract notice, or throw little Toal into the shade; and hence also the still more senseless determination not to work for any but a Teetotaller; for in this, too, Toal had set him the example. Toal, the knave, on becoming a Teetotaller, immediately resolved to turn it to account; but Art, provided he could show off, and cut a conspicuous figure in a procession, had no dishonest motive in what he did; and this was the difference between them. For instance, on going up the town of Ballykeerin, you might see over the door of a middle-sized house, "Teetotal Meal Shop. N. B.—None but Teetotallers need come here."

Now every one knew Toal too well not to understand this; for the truth is, that maugre his sign, he never refused his meal or other goods to any one that had money to pay for them.

One evening about this time, Art was seated in his own parlor—for he now had a parlor, and was in a state of prosperity far beyond anything he had ever experienced before—-Margaret and the children were with him; and as he smoked his pipe, he could not help making an observation or two upon the wonderful change which so short a time had brought about.

"Well, Margaret," said he, "isn't this wondherful, dear? look at the comfort we have now about us, and think of—; but troth I don't like to think of it at all."

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“I never can,” she replied, “without a troubled and a sinkin’ heart; but, Art, don’t you remember when I wanst wished you to become a Teetotaller, the answer you made me?”

“May be I do; what was it?”

“Why, you axed me—and you were makin’ game of it at the time—whether Teetotallism would put a shirt or a coat to your back—a house over your head—give you a bed to lie on, or blankets to keep you and the childre from shiverin’, an’ coughin’, an’ barkin’ in the could of the night? Don’t you remember sayin’ this?”

“I think I do; ay, I remember something about it now. Didn’t I say that whiskey was my coach an’ my carriage, an’ that it made me a lord?”

“You did; well, now what do you say? Hasn’t Teetotallism bate you in your own argument? Hasn’t it given you a shirt an’ a coat to your back, a good bed to lie on, a house over your head? In short, now, Art, hasn’t it given you all you said, an’ more than ever you expected? eh, now?”

“I give in, Margaret—you have me there; but,” he proceeded, “it’s not every man could pull himself up as I did; eh?”

“Oh, for God’s sake, Art, don’t begin to put any trust in your own mere strength, nor don’t be boasting of what you did, the way you do; sure, we ought always to be very humble and thankful to God for what he has done for us; is there anything comes to us only through him?”

“I’m takin’ no pride to myself,” said Art, “divil a taste; but this I know, talk as you will, there’s always somethin’ in the ould blood.”

“Now, Art,” she replied, smiling, “do you know I could answer you on that subject if I liked?”

“You could,” said Art; “come, then, let us hear your answer—come now—ha, ha, ha!”

She became grave, but complacent, as she spoke. “Well, then, Art,” said she, “where was the ould blood when you fell so low? If it was the ould blood that riz you up, remember it was the ould blood that put you down. You drank more whiskey,” she added, “upon the head of the ould blood of Ireland, and the great Fermanagh Maguires, than you did on all other subjects put together. No, Art dear, let us not trust to ould blood or young blood, but let us trust to the grace o’ God, an’ ax it from our hearts out.”

“Well, but arn’t we in great comfort now?”

“We are,” she replied, “thank the Giver of all good for it; may God continue it to us, and grant it to last!”

“Last! why wouldn’t it last, woman alive? Well, begad, after all, ’tis not every other man, any way—”

“Whisht, now,” said Margaret, interrupting him, “you’re beginnin’ to praise yourself.”

“Well, I won’t then; I’m going down the town to have a glass or two o’ cordial wid young Tom Whiskey, in Barney Scaddhan’s.”

“Art,” she replied, somewhat solemnly, “the very name of Barney Scaddhan sickens me. I know we ought to forgive every one, as we hope to be forgiven ourselves; but still, Art, if I was in your shoes, the sorra foot ever I’d put inside his door. Think of the way he trated you; ah, Art acushla, where’s the pride of the ould blood now?”

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“Hut, woman, divil a one o’ me ever could keep in bad feelin’ to any one. Troth, Barney of late’s as civil a crature as there’s alive; sure what you spake of was all my own fault and not his; I’ll be back in an hour or so.”

“Well,” said his wife, “there’s one thing, Art, that every one knows.”

“What is that, Margaret?”

“Why, that a man’s never safe in bad company.”

“But sure, what harm can they do me, when we drink nothing that can injure us?”

“Well, then,” said she, “as that’s the case, can’t you as well stay with good company as bad?”

“I’ll not be away more than an hour.”

“Then, since you will go, Art, listen to me; you’ll be apt to meet Toal Finnigan there; now, as you love me and your childre, an’ as you wish to avoid evil and misfortune, don’t do any one thing that he proposes to you: I’ve often tould you that he’s your bitterest enemy.”

“I know you did; but sure, wanst a woman takes a pick (pique) aginst a man she’ll never forgive him. In about an hour mind.” He then went out.

The fact is, that some few of those who began to feel irksome under the Obligation—by which I mean the knaves and hypocrites, for it is not to be supposed that among such an incredible multitude as joined the movement there were none of this description—-some few, I say, were in the habit of resorting to Barney Scaddhan’s for the social purpose of taking a glass of the true Teetotal cordial together. This drinking of cordial was most earnestly promoted by the class of low and dishonest publicans whom we have already described, and no wonder that it was so; in the first place, it’s sale is more profitable than that of whiskey itself, and, in the second place, these fellows know by experience that it is the worst enemy that teetolism has, very few having ever strongly addicted themselves to cordial, who do not ultimately break the pledge, and resume the use of intoxicating liquor. This fact was well known at the time, for Father Costelloe, who did every thing that man could do to extend and confirm the principle of temperance, had put his parishioners on their guard against the use of this deleterious trash. Consequently, very few of the Ballykeerin men, either in town or parish, would taste it; when they stood in need of anything to quench their thirst, or nourish them, they confined themselves to water, milk, or coffee. Scarcely any one, therefore, with the exception of the knaves and hypocrites, tampered with themselves by drinking it.

The crew whom Art went to meet on the night in question consisted of about half a dozen, who, when they had been in the habit of drinking whiskey, were hardened and

unprincipled men—profligates in every sense—fellows that, like Toal Finnigan, now adhered to teetotalism from sordid motives only, or, in other words, because they thought they could improve their business by it. It is true, they were suspected and avoided by the honest teetotallers,

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who wondered very much that Art Maguire, after the treatment he had formerly received at their hands, should be mean enough, they said, ever “to be hail fellow well met” with them again. But Art, alas! in spite of all his dignity of old blood, and his rodomontade about the Fermanagh Maguires, was utterly deficient in that decent pride which makes a man respect himself, and prevents him from committing a mean action.

For a considerable time before his arrival, there were assembled in Barney Scaddhan’s tap, Tom Whiskey, Jerry Shannon, Jack Mooney, Toal Finnigan, and the decoy duck, young Barney Scaddhan himself, who merely became a teetotaller that he might be able to lure his brethren in to spend their money in drinking cordial.

“I wondher Art’s not here before now,” observed Tom Whiskey; “blood alive, didn’t he get on well afther joinin’ the ’totallers?”

“Faix, it’s a miracle,” replied Jerry Shannon, “there’s not a more ’spbnsible man in Ballykeerin, he has quite a Protestant look;—ha, ha, ha!”

“Divil a sich a pest ever this house had as the same Art when he was a blackguard,” said young Scaddhan; “there was no keepin’ him out of it, but constantly spungin’ upon the dacent people that wor dhrmkin’ in it.”

“Many a good pound and penny he left you for all that, Barney, my lad,” said Mooney; “and purty tratement you gave him when his money was gone.”

“Ay, an’ we’d give you the same,” returned Scaddhan, “if your’s was gone, too; ha, ha, ha! it’s not moneyless vagabones we want here.”

“No,” said Shannon, “you first make them moneyless vagabones, an’ then you kick them out o’ doors, as you did him.”

“Exactly,” said the hardened miscreant, “that’s the way we live; when we get the skin off the cat, then we throw out the carcass.”

“Why, dang it, man,” said Whiskey, “would you expect honest Barney here, or his still honester ould rip of a father, bad as they are, to give us drink for nothing?”

“Now,” said Finnigan, who had not yet spoken, “yez are talkin’ about Art Maguire, and I’ll tell yez what I could do; I could bend my finger that way, an’ make him folly me over the parish.”

“And how could you do that?” asked Whiskey.

“By soodherin’ him—by ticklin’ his empty pride—by dwellin’ on the ould blood of Ireland, the great Fermanagh Maguires—or by tellin’ him that he’s betther than any one else, and could do what nobody else could.”

“Could you make him drunk to-night?” asked Shannon.

“Ay,” said Toal, “an’ will, too, as ever you seen him in your lives; only whin I’m praisin’ him do some of you oppose me, an’ if I propose any thing to be done, do you all either support me in it, or go aginst me, accordin’ as you see he may take it.”

“Well, then,” said Mooney, “in ordher to put you in spirits, go off, Barney, an’ slip a glass o’ whiskey a piece into this cordial, jist to tighten it a bit—ha, ha, ha!”

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“Ay,” said Tom Whiskey, “till we dhrink success to teetotalism, ha, ha, ha!”

“Suppose you do him in the cordial,” said Shannon.

“Never mind,” replied Toal; “I’ll first soften him a little on the cordial, and then make him tip the punch openly and before faces, like a man.”

“Troth, it’s a sin,” observed Moonoy, who began to disrelish the project; “if it was only on account of his wife an’ childre.”

Toal twisted his misshapen mouth into still greater deformity at this observation—

“Well,” said he, “no matter, it’ll only be a good joke; Art is a dacent fellow, and afther this night we won’t repate it. Maybe,” he continued “I may find it necessary to vex him, an’ if I do, remember you won’t let him get at me, or my bread’s baked.”

This they all promised, and the words were scarcely concluded, when Art entered and joined them. As a great portion of their conversation did not bear upon the subject matter of this narrative, it is therefore unnecessary to record it. After about two hours, during which Art had unconsciously drunk at least three glasses of whiskey, disguised in cordial, the topic artfully introduced by Toal was the Temperance Movement.

“As for my part,” said he, “I’m half ashamed that I ever joined it. As I was never drunk, where was the use of it? Besides, it’s an unmanly thing for any one to have it to say that he’s not able to keep himself sober, barrin’ he takes an oath, or the pledge.”

“And why did you take it then?” said Art.

“Bekaise I was a fool,” replied Toal; “devil a thing else.”

“It’s many a good man’s case,” observed Art in reply, “to take an oath against liquor, or a pledge aither, an’ no disparagement to any man that does it.”

“He’s a betther man that can keep himself sober widout it,” said Toal dryly.

“What do you mane by a betther man?” asked Art, somewhat significantly; “let us hear that first, Toal.”

“Don’t be talking’ about betther men here,” said Jerry Shannon; “I tell you, Toal, there’s a man in this room, and when you get me a betther man in the town of Ballykeerin, I’ll take a glass of punch wid you, or a pair o’ them, in spite of all the pledges in Europe!”

“And who is that, Jerry,” said Toal.

“There he sits,” replied Jerry, putting his extended palm upon Art’s shoulder and clapping it.

“May the divil fly away wid you,” replied Toal; “did you think me a manus, that I’d go to put Art Maguire wid any man that I know? Art Maguire indeed! Now, Jerry, my throoper, do you think I’m come to this time o’ day, not to know that there’s no man in Ballykeerin, or the parish it stands in—an’ that’s a bigger word—that could be called a betther man that Art Maguire?”

“Come, boys,” said Art, “none of your nonsense. Sich as I am, be the same good or bad, I’ll stand the next trate, an’ devilish fine strong cordial it is.”

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“Why, then, I don’t think myself it’s so good,” replied young Scaddhan; “troth it’s waiker than we usually have it; an’ the taste somehow isn’t exactly to my plaisin’.”

“Very well,” said Art; “if you have any that ’ill plaise yourself betther, get it; but in the mane time bring us a round o’ this, an’ we’ll be satisfied.”

“Art Maguire,” Toal proceeded, “you were ever and always a man out o’ the common coorse.”

“Now, Toal, you’re beginnin’,” said Art; “ha, ha, ha—well, any way, how is that!”

“Bekaise the divil a taste o’ fear or terror ever was in your constitution. When Art, boys, was at school—sure he an’ I wor schoolfellows—if he tuck a thing into his head, no matter what, jist out of a whim, he’d do it, if the divil was at the back door, or the whole world goin’ to stop him.”

“Throth, Toal, I must say there’s a great deal o’ thruth in that. Divil a one livin’ knows me betther than Toal Finigan, sure enough, boys.”

“Arra, Art, do you remember the day you crossed the weir, below Tom Booth’s,” pursued Toal, “when the river was up, and the wather jist intherin’ your mouth?”

“That was the day Peggy Booth fainted, when she thought I was gone; begad, an’ I was near it.”

“The very day.”

“That may be all thrue enough,” observed Tom Whiskey; “still I think I know Art this many a year, and I can’t say I ever seen any of these great doing’s. I jist seen him as aisy put from a thing, and as much afeard of the tongues of the nabors, or of the world, as another.”

“He never cared a damn for either o’ them, for all that,” returned Toal; “that is, mind, if he tuck a thing into his head; ay, an’ I’ll go farther—divil a rap ever he cared for them, one way or other. No, the man has no fear of any kind in him.”

“Why, Toal,” said Mooney, “whether he cares for them or not, I think is aisily decided; and whether he’s the great man you make him. Let us hear what he says himself upon it, and then we’ll know.”

“Very well, then,” replied Toal; “what do you say yourself, Art? Am I right, or am I wrong?”

“You’re right, Toal, sure enough; if it went to that, I don’t care a curse about the world, or all Ballykeerin along wid it. I’ve a good business, and can set the world at defiance. If the people didn’t want me, they wouldn’t come to me.”

“Come, Toal,” said Jerry; “here—I’ll hould you a pound note”—and lie pulled out one as he spoke—“that I’ll propose a thing he won’t do.”

“Aha—thank you for nothing, my customer—I won’t take that bait,” replied the other; “but listen—is it a thing that he can do?”

“It is,” replied Jerry; “and what’s more, every man in the room can do it, as well as Art, if he wishes.”

“He can?”

“He can.”

“Here,” said Toal, clapping down his pound. “Jack Mooney, put these in your pocket till this matther’s decided. Now, Jerry, let us hear it.”

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“I will;—he won’t drink two tumblers of punch, runnin’; that is, one afther the other.”

“No,” observed Art, “I will not; do you want me to break the pledge?”

“Sure,” said Jerry, “this is not breaking the pledge—it’s only for a wager.”

“No matther,” said Art; “it’s a thing I won’t do.”

“I’ll tell you what, Jerry,” said Toal, “I’ll hould you another pound now, that I do a thing to-night that Art won’t do; an’ that, like your own wager, every one in the room can do.”

“Done,” said the other, taking out the pound note, and placing it in Mooney’s hand—Toal following his example.

“Scaddhan,” said Toal, “go an’ bring me two tumblers of good strong punch. I’m a Totaller as well as Art, boys. Be off, Scaddhan.”

“By Japers,” said Tom Whiskey, as if to himself—looking at the same time as if he were perfectly amazed at the circumstance—“the little fellow has more spunk than Maguire, ould blood an’ all! Oh, holy Moses; afther that, what will the world come to!”

Art heard the soliloquy of Whiskey, and looked about him with an air of peculiar meaning. His pride—his shallow, weak, contemptible pride, was up, while the honest pride that is never separated from firmness and integrity, was cast aside and forgotten. Scaddhan came in, and placing the two tumblers before Toal, that worthy immediately emptied first one of them, and then the other.

“The last two pounds are yours,” said Jerry; “Mooney, give them to him.”

Art, whose heart was still smarting under the artful soliloquy of Tom Whiskey, now started to his feet, and exclaimed—

“No, Jerry, the money’s not his yet. Barney, bring in two tumblers. What one may do another may do; and as Jerry says, why it’s only for a wager. At any rate, for one o’ my blood was never done out, and never will.”

“By Japers,” said Whiskey, “I knew he wouldn’t let himself be bate. I knew when it came to the push he wouldn’t.”

“Well, Barney,” said Toal, “don’t make them strong for him, for they might get into his head; he hasn’t a good head anyway—let them be rather wake, Barney.”

“No,” said Art, “let them be as strong as his, and stronger, Barney; and lose no time about it.”

“I had better color them,” said Barney, “an’ the people about the place ’ll think it’s cordial still.”

“Color the devil,” replied Art; “put no colorin’ on them. Do you think I’m afeard of any one, or any colors?”

“You afeard of any one,” exclaimed Tom Whiskey; “one o’ the ould Maguires afeard! ha, ha, ha!—that ’ud be good!”

Art, when the tumblers came in, drank off first one, which he had no sooner emptied, than he shivered into pieces against the grate; he then emptied the other, which shared the same fate.

“Now,” said he to Barney, “bring me a third one; I’ll let yez see what a Maguire is.”

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The third, on making its appearance, was immediately drained, and shivered like the others—for the consciousness of acting-wrong, in spite of his own resolution, almost drove him mad. Of what occurred subsequently in the public house, it is not necessary to give any account, especially as we must follow Art home—simply premising, before we do so, that the fact of "Art Maguire having broken the pledge," had been known that very night to almost all Ballykeerin—thanks to the industry of Toal Finnigan, and his other friends.

His unhappy wife, after their conversation that evening, experienced one of those strange, unaccountable presentiments or impressions which every one, more or less, has frequently felt. Until lately, he had not often gone out at night, because it was not until lately that the clique began to reassemble in Barney Scaddhan's. 'Tis true the feeling on her part was involuntary, but on that very account it was the more distressing; her principal apprehension of danger to him was occasioned by his intimacy with Toal Finnigan, who, in spite of all her warnings and admonitions, contrived, by the sweetness of his tongue, to hold his ground with him, and maintain his good opinion. Indeed, any one who could flatter, wheedle, and play upon his vanity successfully, was sure to do this; but nobody could do it with such adroitness as Toal Finnigan.

It is wonderful how impressions are caught by the young from those who are older and have more experience than themselves. Little Atty, who had heard the conversation already detailed, begged his mammy not to send him to bed that night until his father would come home, especially as Mat Mulrennan, an in-door apprentice, who had been permitted that evening to go to see his family, had not returned, and he wished, he said, to sit up and let him in. The mother was rather satisfied than otherwise, that the boy should sit up with her, especially as all the other children and the servants had gone to bed.

"Mammy," said the boy, "isn't it a great comfort for us to be as we are now, and to know that my father can never get drunk again?"

"It is indeed, Atty;" and yet she said so; with a doubting, if not an apprehensive heart.

"He'll never beat you more, mammy, now?"

"No, darlin'; nor he never did, barrin' when he didn't know what he was doin'."

"That is when he was drunk, mammy?"

"Yes, Atty dear."

"Well, isn't it a great thing that he can never get drunk any more, mammy; and never beat you any more; and isn't it curious too, how he never bate me?"

“You, darlin’? oh, no, he would rather cut his arm off than rise it to you, Atty dear; and it’s well that you are so good a boy as you are—for I’m afeard, Atty, that even if you deserved to be corrected, he wouldn’t do it.”

“But what ’ud we all do widout my father, mammy? If anything happened to him I think I’d die. I’d like to die if he was to go.”

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“Why, darlin’?”

“Bekase, you know, he’d go to heaven, and I’d like to be wid him; sure he’d miss me—-his own Atty—wherever he’d be.”

“And so you’d lave me and your sisters, Atty, and go to heaven with your father!”

The boy seemed perplexed; he looked affectionately at his mother, and said—

“No, mammy, I wouldn’t wish to lave you, for then you’d have no son at all; no, I wouldn’t lave you—I don’t know what I’d do—I’d like to stay wid you, and I’d like to go wid him, I’d—”

“Well, darlin’, you won’t be put to that trial this many a long day, I hope.”

Just then voices were heard at the door, which both recognized as those of Art and Mat Mulrennan the apprentice.

“Now, darlin’,” said the mother, who observed that the child was pale and drowsy-looking, “you may go to bed, I see you are sleepy, Atty, not bein’ accustomed to sit up so late; kiss me, an’ good-night.” He then kissed her, and sought the room where he slept.

Margaret, after the boy had gone, listened a moment, and became deadly pale, but she uttered no exclamation; on the contrary, she set her teeth, and compressed her lips closely together, put her hand on the upper part of her forehead, and rose to go to the door. She was not yet certain, but a dreadful terror was over her—Could it be possible that he was drunk?—she opened it, and the next moment her husband, in a state of wild intoxication, different from any in which she had ever seen him, come in. He was furious, but his fury appeared to have been directed against the apprentice, in consequence of having returned home so late.

On witnessing with her own eyes the condition in which he returned, all her presentiments flashed on her, and her heart sank down into a state of instant hopelessness and misery.

“Savior of the world!” she exclaimed, “I and my childre are lost; now, indeed, are we hopeless—oh, never till now, never till now!” She wept bitterly.

“What are you cryin’ for now?” said he; “what are you cryin’ for, I say?” he repeated, stamping his feet madly as he spoke; “stop at wanst, I’ll have no cry—cryin’ what—at—-somever.”

She instantly dried her eyes.

“Wha—what kep that blasted whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, out till now, I say?”

“I don’t know indeed, Art.”

“You—you don’t! you kno—know noth-in’; An’ now I’ll have a smash, by the—the holy man, I’ll—I’ll smash every thing in—in the house.”

He then took up a chair, which, by one blow against the floor, he crashed to pieces.

“Now,” said he, “tha—that’s number one; whe—where’s that whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, till I pay—pay him for stayin’ out so—so late. Send him here, send the ska-min’ sco—-scoundrel here, I bid you.”. Margaret, naturally dreading violence, went to get little Atty to pacify him, as well as to intercede for the apprentice; she immediately returned, and told him the latter was coming. Art, in the mean time, stood a little beyond the fireplace, with a small beach chair in his hand which he had made for Atty, when the boy was only a couple of years old, but which had been given to the other children in succession. He had been first about to break it also, but on looking at it, he paused and said—

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“Not this—this is Atty’s, and I won’t break it.”

At that moment Mulrennan entered the room, with Atty behind him, but he had scarcely done so, when Art with all his strength flung the hard beach chair at his head; the lad, naturally anxious to avoid it, started to one side out of its way, and Atty, while in the act of stretching out his arms to run to his father, received the blow which had been designed for the other. It struck him a little above the temple, and he fell, but was not cut. The mother, on witnessing the act, raised her arms and shrieked, but on hearing the heavy, but dull and terrible sound of the blow against the poor boy’s head, the shriek was suspended when half uttered, and she stood, her arms still stretched out, and bent a little upwards, as if she would have supplicated heaven to avert it;—her mouth was half open—her eyes apparently enlarged, and starting as if it were out of their sockets; there she stood—for a short time so full of horror as to be incapable properly of comprehending what had taken place. At length this momentary paralysis of thought passed away, and with all the tender terrors of affection awakened in her heart, she rushed to the insensible boy. Oh, heavy and miserable night! What pen can portray, what language describe, or what imagination conceive, the anguish, the agony of that loving mother, when, on raising her sweet, and beautiful, and most affectionate boy from the ground whereon he lay, that fair head, with its flaxen locks like silk, fell utterly helpless now to this side, and now to that!

“Art Maguire,” she said, “fly, fly,”—and she gave him one look; but, great God! what an object presented itself to her at that moment. A man stood before her absolutely hideous with horror; his face but a minute ago so healthy and high-colored, now ghastly as that of a corpse, his hands held up and clenched, his eyes frightful, his lips drawn back, and his teeth locked with strong and convulsive agony. He uttered not a word, but stood with his wild and gleaming eyes riveted, as if by the force of some awful spell, upon his insensible son, his only one, if he was then even that. All at once he fell down without sense or motion, as if a bullet had gone through his heart or his brain, and there lay as insensible as the boy he had loved so well.

All this passed so rapidly that the apprentice, who seemed also to have been paralyzed, had not presence of mind to do any thing but look from one person to another with terror and alarm.

“Go,” said Margaret, at length, “wake up the girls, and then fly—oh, fly—for the doctor.”

The two servant maids, however, had heard enough in her own wild shriek to bring them to this woful scene. They entered as she spoke, and, aided by the apprentice, succeeded with some difficulty in laying their master on his bed, which was in a back room off the parlor.

“In God’s name, what is all this?” asked one of them, on looking at the insensible bodies of the father and son.

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“Help me,” Margaret replied, not heeding the question, “help me to lay the treasure of my heart—my breakin’ heart—upon his own little bed within, he will not long use it—-tendherly, Peggy, oh, Peggy dear, tendherly to the broken flower—broken—broken—-broken, never to rise his fair head again; oh, he is dead,” she said, in a calm low voice, “my heart tells me that he is dead—see how his limbs hang, how lifeless they hang. My treasure—our treasure—our sweet, lovin’, and only little man—our only son sure—our only son is dead—and where, oh, where, is the mother’s pride out of him now—where is my pride out of him now?”

They laid him gently and tenderly—for even the servants loved him as if he had been a relation—upon the white counterpane of his own little crib, where he had slept many a sweet and innocent sleep, and played many a lightsome and innocent play with his little sisters. His mother felt for his pulse, but she could feel no pulse, she kissed his passive lips, and then—oh, woful alternative of affliction!—she turned to his equally insensible father.

“Oh, ma’am,” said one of the girls, who had gone over to look at Art; “oh, for God’s sake, ma’am, come here—here is blood comin’ out of the masther’s mouth.”

She was at the bedside in an instant, and there, to deepen her sufferings almost beyond the power of human fortitude, she saw the blood oozing slowly out of his mouth. Both the servants were now weeping and sobbing as if their hearts would break.

“Oh, mistress dear,” one of them exclaimed, seizing her affectionately by both hands, and looking almost distractedly into her face, “oh, mistress dear, what did you ever do to desarve this?”

“I don’t know, Peggy,” she replied, “unless it was settin’ my father’s commands, and my mother’s at defiance; I disobeyed them both, and they died without blessin’ either me or mine. But oh,” she said, clasping her hands, “how can one poor wake woman’s heart stand all this—a double death—husband and son—son and husband—and I’m but one woman, one poor, feeble, weak woman—but sure,” she added, dropping on her knees, “the Lord will support me. I am punished, and I hope forgiven, and he will now support me.”

She then briefly, but distractedly, entreated the divine support, and rose once more with a heart, the fibres of which were pulled asunder, as it were, between husband and son, each of whose lips she kissed, having wiped the blood from those of her husband, with a singular blending together of tenderness, distraction and despair. She went from the one to the other, wringing her hands in dry agony, feeling for life in their hearts and pulses, and kissing their lips with an expression of hopelessness so pitiable and mournful, that the grief of the servants was occasioned more by her sufferings than by the double catastrophe that had occurred.

The doctor’s house, as it happened, was not far from theirs, and in a very brief period he arrived.

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“Heavens! Mrs. Maguire, what has happened?” said he, looking on the two apparently inanimate bodies with alarm.

“His father,” she said, pointing to the boy, “being in a state of drink, threw a little beech chair at the apprentice here, he stepped aside, as was natural, and the blow struck my treasure there,” she said, holding her hand over the spot where he was struck, but not on it; “but, doctor, look at his father, the blood is trickling out of his mouth.”

The doctor, after examining into the state of both, told her not to despair—

“Your husband,” said he, “who is only in a fit, has broken a blood-vessel, I think some small blood-vessel is broken; but as for the boy, I can as yet pronounce no certain opinion upon him. It will be a satisfaction to you, however, to know that he is not dead, but only in a heavy stupor occasioned by the blow.”

It was now that her tears began to flow, and copiously and bitterly they did flow; but as there was still hope, her grief, though bitter, was not that of despair. Ere many minutes, the doctor’s opinion respecting one of them, at least, was verified. Art opened his eyes, looked wildly about him, and the doctor instantly signed to his wife to calm the violence of her sorrow, and she was calm.

“Margaret,” said he, “where’s Atty? bring him to me—bring him to me!”

“Your son was hurt,” replied the doctor, “and has just gone to sleep.”

“He is dead,” said Art, “he is dead, he will never waken from that sleep—and it was I that killed him!”

“Don’t disturb yourself,” said the doctor, “as you value your own life and his; you yourself have broken a blood-vessel, and there is nothing for you now but quiet and ease.”

“He is dead,” said his father, “he is dead, and it was I that killed him; or, if he’s not dead, I must hear it from his mother’s lips.”

“Art, darlin’, he is not dead, but he is very much hurted,” she replied; “Art, as you love him, and me, and us all, be guided by the doctor.”

“He is not dead,” said the doctor; “severely hurt he is, but not dead. Of that you may rest assured.”

So far as regarded Art, the doctor was right; he had broken only a small blood vessel, and the moment the consequences of his fit had passed away, he was able to get up, and walk about with very little diminution of his strength.

To prevent him from seeing his son, or to conceal the boy's state from him, was impossible. He no sooner rose than with trembling hands, a frightful terror of what was before him, he went to the little bed on which the being dearest to him on earth lay. He stood for a moment, and looked down upon the boy's beautiful, but motionless face; he first stooped, and putting his mouth to the child's ear said—

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“Atty, Atty”—he then shook his head; “you see,” he added, addressing those who stood about him, “that he doesn’t hear me—no, he doesn’t hear me—that ear was never deaf to me before, but it’s deaf now;” he then seized his hand, and raised it, but it was insensible to his touch, and would have fallen on the bed had he let it go. “You see,” he proceeded, “that his hand doesn’t know mine any longer! Oh, no, why should it? this is the hand that laid our flower low, so why should he acknowledge it? yet surely he would forgive his father, if he knew it—oh, he would forgive that father, that ever and always loved him—loved him—loved him, oh, that’s a wake word, a poor wake word. Well,” he went on, “I will kiss his lips, his blessed lips—oh, many an’ many a kiss, many a sweet and innocent kiss—did I get from them lips, Atty dear, with those little arms, that are now so helpless, clasped about my neck.” He then kissed him again and again, but the blessed child’s lips did not return the embrace that had never been refused before. “Now,” said he, “you all see that—you all see that he won’t kiss me again, and that is bekaise he can’t do it; Atty, Atty,” he said, “won’t you speak to me? it’s I, Atty, sure it’s I, Atty dear, your lovin’ father, that’s callin’ you to spake to him. Atty dear, won’t you spake to me—do you hear my voice, *asthore machree*—do you hear your father’s voice, that’s callin’ on you to forgive him?” He paused for a short time, but the child lay insensible and still.

At this moment there was no dry eye present; the very doctor wept. Margaret’s grief was loud; she felt every source of love and tenderness for their only boy opened in her unhappy and breaking heart, and was inconsolable: but then compassion for her husband was strong as her grief. She ran to Art, she flung her arms about his neck, and exclaimed—

“Oh, Art dear, Art dear, be consoled: take consolation if you can, or you will break my heart. Forgive you asthore! you, you that would shed your blood for him! don’t you know he would forgive you? Sure, I forgive you—his mother, his poor, distracted, heart-broken mother forgives you—in his name I forgive you.” She then threw herself beside the body of their child, and shouted out—“Atty, our blessed treasure, I have forgiven your father for you—in your blessed name, and in the name of the merciful God that you are now with, I have forgiven your unhappy find heart-broken father—as you would do, if you could, our lost treasure, as you would do.”

“Oh,” said his father vehemently distracted with his horrible affliction; “if there was but any one fault of his that I could remimber now, any one failin’ that our treasure had—if I could think of a single spot upon his little heart, it would relieve me; but, no, no, there’s nothin’ of that kind to renumber aginst him. Oh, if he wasn’t what he was—if he wasn’t what he was—we might have some little consolation; but now we’ve none; we’ve none—none!”

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As he spoke and wept, which he did with the bitterest anguish of despair, his grief assumed a character that was fearful from the inward effusion of blood, which caused him from time to time to throw it up in red mouthfuls, and when remonstrated with by the doctor upon the danger of allowing himself to be overcome by such excitement—

“I don’t care,” he shouted, “if it’s my heart’s blood, I would shed it at any time for him; I don’t care about life now; what ’ud it be to me without my son? widout you, Atty dear, what is the world or all that’s in it to me now! An’ when I think of who it was that cut you down—cursed be the hand that gave you that unlucky blow, cursed may it be—cursed be them that tempted me to drink—cursed may the drink be that made me as I was, and cursed of God may I be that—”

“Art, Art,” exclaimed Margaret, “any thing but that, remember there’s a God above—-don’t blasphame;—we have enough to suffer widout havin’ to answer for that.”

He paused at her words, and as soon as the paroxysm was over, he sunk by fits into a gloomy silence, or walked from room to room, wringing his hands and beating his head, in a state of furious distraction, very nearly bordering on insanity.

The next morning, we need scarcely assure our readers, that, as the newspapers have it, a great and painful sensation had been produced through the town of Bally-keerin by the circumstances which we have related:—

“Art Maguire had broken the pledge, gone home drunk, and killed his only son by the blow of an iron bar on the, head; the crowner had been sent for, an’ plaise God we’ll have a full account of it all.”

In part of this, however, common fame, as she usually is, was mistaken; the boy was not killed, neither did he then die. On the third day, about eight o’clock in the evening, he opened his eyes, and his mother, who was scarcely ever a moment from his bedside, having observed the fact, approached him with hopes almost as deep as those of heaven itself in her heart, and in a voice soft and affectionate as ever melted into a human ear—

“Atty, treasure of my heart, how do you feel?”

The child made no reply, but as his eye had not met hers, and as she had whispered very low, it was likely, she thought, that he had not heard her.

“I will bring his father,” said she, “for if he will know or spake to any one, he will, spake to him.”

She found Art walking about, as he had done almost ever since the unhappy accident, and running to him with a gush of joyful tears, she threw her arms about his neck, and kissing him, said—

“Blessed be the Almighty, Art—” but she paused, “oh, great God, Art, what is this! merciful heaven, do I smell whiskey on you?”

“You do,” he replied, “it’s in vain, I can’t live—I’d die widout it; it’s in vain, Margaret, to spake—if I don’t get it to deaden my grief I’ll die: but, what wor you goin’ to tell me?” he added eagerly.

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She burst into tears.

“Oh, Art,” said she, “how my heart has sunk in spite of the good news I have for you.”

“In God’s name,” he asked, “what is it? is our darlin’ betther?”

“He is,” she replied, “he has opened his eyes this minute, and I want you to spake to him.”

They both entered stealthily, and to their inexpressible delight heard the child’s voice; they paused,—breathlessly paused,—and heard him utter, in a low sweet voice, the following words—

“Daddy, won’t you come to bed wid me, wid your own Atty?”

This he repeated twice or thrice before they approached him, but when they did, although his eye turned from one to another, it was vacant, and betrayed no signs whatsoever of recognition.

Their hearts sank again, but the mother, whose hope was strong and active as her affection, said—

“Blessed be the Almighty that he is able even to spake but he’s not well enough to know us yet.”

This was unhappily too true, for although they spoke to him, and placed themselves before him by turns, yet it was all in vain; the child knew neither them nor any one else. Such, in fact, was now their calamity, as a few weeks proved. The father by that unhappy blow did not kill his body, but he killed his mind; he arose from his bed a mild, placid, harmless idiot, silent and inoffensive—the only words he was almost heard to utter, with rare exceptions, being those which had been in his mind when he was dealt the woful blow:—“Daddy, won’t you come to bed wid me, wid your own Atty?” And these he pronounced as correctly as ever, uttering them with the same emphasis of affection which had marked them before his early reason had been so unhappily destroyed. Now, even up to that period, and in spite of this great calamity, it was not too late for Art Maguire to retrieve himself, or still to maintain the position which he had regained. The misfortune which befell his child ought to have shocked him into an invincible detestation of all intoxicating liquors, as it would most men; instead of that, however, it drove him back to them. He had contracted a pernicious habit of diminishing the importance of first errors, because they appeared trivial in themselves; he had never permitted himself to reason against his propensities, unless through the indulgent medium of his own vanity, or an overweening presumption in the confidence of his moral strength, contrary to the impressive experience of his real weakness. His virtues were many, and his foibles few; yet few as they were, our readers perceive that, in

consequence of his indulging them, they proved the bane of his life and happiness. They need not be surprised, then, to hear that from the want of any self-sustaining power in himself he fell into the use of liquor again; he said he could not live without it, but then he did not make the experiment; for he took every sophistry that appeared to make in his favor for granted. He lived, if

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it could be called life, for two years and a half after this melancholy accident, but without the spring or energy necessary to maintain his position, or conduct his business, which declined as rapidly as he did himself. He and his family were once more reduced to absolute beggary, until in the course of events they found a poorhouse to receive them. Art was seldom without a reason to justify his conduct, and it mattered not how feeble that reason might be, he always deemed it sufficiently strong to satisfy himself. For instance, he had often told his wife that if Atty had recovered, sound in body and mind, he had determined never again to taste liquor; “but,” said he, “when I seen my darlin’s mind gone, I couldn’t stand it widout the drop of drink to keep my heart an’ spirits up.” He died of consumption in the workhouse of Ballykeerin, and there could not be a stronger proof of the fallacy with which he reasoned than the gratifying fact, that he had not been more than two months dead, when his son recovered his reason, to the inexpressible joy of his mother; so that had he followed up his own sense of what was right, he would have lived to see his most sanguine wishes, with regard to his son, accomplished, and perhaps have still been able to enjoy a comparatively long and happy life.

On the morning of the day on which he died, although not suffering much from pain, he seemed to feel an impression that his end was at hand. It is due to him to say here, that he had for months before his death been deeply and sincerely penitent, and that he was not only sensible of the vanity and errors which had occasioned his fall from integrity, and cut him off in the prime of life, but also felt his heart sustained by the divine consolations of religion. Father Costello was earnest and unremitting in his spiritual attentions to him, and certainly had the gratification of knowing that he felt death to be in his case not merely a release from all his cares and sorrows, but a passport into that life where the weary are at rest.

About twelve o’clock in the forenoon he asked to see his wife—his own Margaret—and his children, but, above all, his blessed Atty—for such was the epithet he had ever annexed to his name since the night of the melancholy accident. In a few minutes the sorrowful group appeared, his mother leading the unconscious boy by the hand, for he knew not where he was. Art lay, or rather reclined, on the bed, supported by two bolsters; his visage was pale, but the general expression of his face was calm, mild, and sorrowful; although his words were distinct, his voice was low and feeble, and every now and then impeded by a short catch—for to cough he was literally unable.

“Margaret,” said he, “come to me, come to me now,” and he feebly received her hand in his; “I feel that afther all the warfare of this poor life, afther all our love and our sorrow, I am goin’ to part wid you and our childhre at last.”

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“Oh, Art, darlin’, I can think of nothing now, asthore, but our love,” she replied, bursting into a flood of tears, in which she was joined by the children—Atty, the unconscious Atty, only excepted.

“An’ I can think of little else,” said he, “than our sorrows and sufferins, an’ all the woful evil that I brought upon you and them.”

“Darlin’,” she replied, “it’s a consolation to yourself, as it is to us, that whatever your errors wor, you’ve repented for them; death is not frightful to you, glory be to God!”

“No,” said he, looking upwards, and clasping his worn hands; “I am resigned to the will of my good and merciful God, for in him is my hope an’ trust. Christ, by his precious blood, has taken away my sins, for you know I have been a great sinner;” he then closed his eyes for a few minutes, but his lips were moving as if in prayer. “Yes, Margaret,” he again proceeded, “I am goin’ to lave you all at last; I feel it—I can’t say that I’ll love you no more, for I think that even in heaven I couldn’t forget you; but I’ll never more lave you a sore heart, as I often did—I’ll never bring the bitther tear to your eye—the hue of care to your face, or the pang of grief an’ misery to your heart again—-thank God I will not; all my follies, all my weaknesses, and all my crimes—”

“Art,” said his wife, wringing her hands, and sobbing as if her heart would break, “if you wish me to be firm, and to set our childre an example of courage, now that it’s so much wanted, oh, don’t spake as you do—my heart cannot stand it.”

“Well, no,” said he, “I won’t; but when I think of what I might be this day, and of what I am—when I think of what you and our childre might be—an’ when I see what you are—-and all through my means—when I think of this, Margaret dear, an’ that I’m torn away from you and them in the very prime of life—but,” he added, turning hastily from that view of his situation, “God is good an’ merciful, an’ that is my hope.”

“Let it be so, Art dear,” replied Margaret; “as for us, God will take care of us, and in him we will put our trust, too; remimber that he is the God and father of the widow an’ the orphan.”

He here appeared to be getting very weak, but in a minute or two he rallied a little, and said, while his eye, which was now becoming heavy, sought about until it became fixed upon his son—

“Margaret, bring him to me.”

She took the boy by the hand, and led him over to the bedside.

“Put his hand in mine,” said he, “put his blessed hand in mine.”

She did so, and Art looked long and steadily upon the face of his child.

“Margaret,” said he, “you know that durin’ all my wild and sinful coorses, I always wore the lock of hair you gave me when we wor young next my heart—my poor weak heart.”

Margaret buried her face in her hands, and for some time could not reply.

“I don’t wish, darlin’,” said he, “to cause you sorrow—you will have too much of that; but I ax it as a favor—the last from my lips—that you will now cut off a lock of his hair—his hair fair—an’ put it along with your own upon my heart; it’s all I’ll have of you both in the grave where I’ll sleep; and, Margaret, do it now—oh, do it soon.”

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Margaret, who always carried scissors hanging by her pocket, took them out, and cutting a long abundant lock of the boy's hair, she tenderly placed it where he wished, in a little three-cornered bit of black silk that was suspended from his neck, and lay upon his heart.

"Is it done?" said he.

"It is done," she replied as well as she could!

"This, you know, is to lie on my heart," said he, "when I'm in my grave; you won't forget that!"

"No—oh, no, no; but, merciful God, support me! for Art, my husband, my life, I don't know how I'll part with you."

"Well, may God bless you forever, my darlin' wife, and support you and my orphans! Bring them here."

They were then brought over, and in a very feeble voice he blessed them also.

"Now, forgive me all," said he, "forgive ME ALL!"

But, indeed, we cannot paint the tenderness and indescribable affliction of his wife and children while uttering their forgiveness of all his offences against them, as he himself termed it. In the meantime he kept his son close by him, nor would he suffer him to go one moment from his reach.

"Atty," said he, in a low voice, which was rapidly sinking;—"put his cheek over to mine"—he added to his wife, "then raise my right arm, an' put it about his neck;—Atty," he proceeded, "won't you give me one last word before I depart?"

His wife observed that as he spoke a large tear trickled down his cheek. Now, the boy was never in the habit of speaking when he was spoken to, or of speaking at all, with the exception of the words we have already given. On this occasion, however, whether the matter was a coincidence or not, it is difficult to say, he said in a quiet, low voice, as if imitating his father's—

"Daddy, won't you come to bed for me, for your own Atty?"

The reply was very low, but still quite audible—

"Yes, darlin', I—I will—I will for you, Atty."

The child said no more, neither did his father, and when the sorrowing wife, struck by the stillness which for a minute or two succeeded the words, went to remove the boy,

she found that his father's spirit had gone to that world where, we firmly trust, his errors, and follies, and sins have been forgiven. While taking the boy away, she looked upon her husband's face, and there still lay the large tear of love and repentance—she stooped down—she kissed it—and it was no longer there.

There is now little to be added, unless to inform those who may take an interest in the fate of his wife and children, that his son soon afterwards was perfectly restored to the use of his reason, and that in the month of last September he was apprenticed in the city of Dublin to a respectable trade, where he is conducting himself with steadiness and propriety; and we trust, that, should he ever read this truthful account of his unhappy father, he will imitate his virtues, and learn to avoid the vanities and weaknesses by which he brought his family to destitution and misery, and himself to a premature grave. With respect to his brother Frank, whom his irreclaimable dissipation drove out of the country, we are able to gratify our readers by saying that he got happily married in America, where he is now a wealthy man, in prosperous business and very highly respected.

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Margaret, in consequence of her admirable character, was appointed to the situation of head nurse in the Ballykeerin Hospital, and it will not surprise our readers to hear that she gains and retains the respect and good-will of all who know her, and that the emoluments of her situation are sufficient, through her prudence and economy, to keep her children comfortable and happy.

Kind reader, is it necessary that we should recapitulate the moral we proposed to show' in this true but melancholy narrative? We trust not. If it be not sufficiently obvious, we can only say it was our earnest intention that it should be so. At all events, whether you be a Teetotaller, or a man carried away by the pernicious love of intoxicating liquors, think upon the fate of Art Maguire, and do not imitate the errors of his life, as you find them laid before you in this simple narrative of "The Broken Pledge."