HER IRISH HERITAGE

BY ANNIE M. P. SMITHSON

AUTHOR OF " BY STRANGE PATHS"

CHAPTER III. CONTINUED

"THERE'S A LAND-A DEAR LAND" Nevertheless, she looked round it now a little doubtfully, all fresh and clean no doubt, but how different it must be to the luxurious bedroom-with probably a dressing-room and boudoir also-to which doubtless her cousin had been accus-

tomed. "I hope you will be comfortable here," she said, rather wistfully;
"it is the best I could manage for
you Clare, but I know that you
were used to—"

But Clare interrupted her swiftly. "Oh! Mary! please! Don't. If you only knew how glad in many ways I was to leave London and how delighted I am to be with you! And you are all so kind to me—I feel almost at home already! And do you know I felt quite nervous coming amongst you all—if only I had known how kind you all were!" Mary put her arms round her and kissed her with real affection.

"Oh! what a relief it is to hear you speak like that!" she said, and you speak like that! she said, and then she laughed her rather rare but hearty laugh. "If you knew how I have been dreading you! We were all a bit afraid at the thought of you, but I think I was the worst! But see how mistaken we all were. And now I will leave And now I will leave you for awhile—there is hot water and all you want here—and I'll come back and bring you down to and she was gone, leav-

ing Clare to her own reflections.

They were fairly pleasant ones too, as she washed her face and hands and smoothed her hair. Her new relations seemed really glad to see her, her welcome had been a sincere one, and it had reached the very heart of the girl, for lately she had been inclined to retreat into her shell and to turn a hard face to the world which had treated her so

But here amongst her mother's people all seemed different and Clare began to feel that she had really come to a home

wonder what I should wear ?" she debated in some perplexity—to "tea — Mary said, but it is just seven o'clock! Well, I suppose a seven o'clock! Well, I suppose a tea-gown will do," and she slipped into what she considered a very simple affair of black lace.

Soon afterwards, Mary's knock sounded at the door, and when Clare opened it she noticed that her cousin glanced at her dress in some

Clare went the point at once with

her usual directness.
"Mary," she said—"I didn't know what to do in the way of Is this all right—or should dress. I have dressed for dinner Mary laughed, and slipped her

arm through Clare's as she answered gaily.
"Dressed for dinner! No, indeed! We don't dine late. You see, except myself, they are all out through the day and they get a light lunch in town—then we have a sort of high tea about seven o'clock. Your dress is lovely, but everyone will be afraid to talk to you-you

They had reached the diningroom now where tea—a substantial meal with several additional items in

honor of the guest—was ready.

Mr. Blake came forward and drew Clare to the table. Placing her beside himself, the others took their seats and the meal began, but not before there had been a moment's silence, and Clare in astonishment saw the sign of the cross made reverently by all at the table. Then came the cheerful rattle of tea cups, the sound of knives and forks and gay chatter and laughter.

Clare had never experienced anything quite like it before—the gay nonsensical talk, the happy joking, and above all the swift reparted that went on with such real good nature.

I am afraid you will think I have a very unruly family, Clare," said her uncle, smiling at her over his glasses as he carved the ham, "but they are not as bad as they

Now, Dad!" interposed Pat, "don't be putting Clare against us—and she doesn't even know us yet!

I don't believe she know one of us from the other! Now do you, Clare?"

Clare shook her head, and smilingly had to admit that she was a bit puzzled as to the identity of most of her new cousins.

"Allow me then to give you a short—a very short category of the esteemed members of your family, now assembled around this sumptu-

Ah! Pat, be quiet, and let Clare

take her tea in peace!"
"Mary, I must really beg that you will not interrupt in this rude manner! Now Clare, you have met Tom-all I need to say about him is, don't let him bully you or give you good advice—you needn't try to look important, old man — we all know you! Then there is your cousin Ursula in the next seat—I am taking them as they are placed at table as you will observe, it will save any amount of jealousy as to who should be mentioned first and so on! Now she looks very sedate and quiet, doesn't she? You think so?—yes. Oh! Well, I will only answer with the well-known phrase of "wait and And now let me introduce

your cousin Bride, merely adding that she had everything she wanted that should you desire any information as to the social conditions the Irish poor and you might like to contribute articles on these submany herrings toey eat at dinner— or what day of the week can they afford the luxury of pig's cheek, also any details you want in regard to our schools, social clubs, free breakfasts, homes for aged females, for inebriated males, for-

"Imbecile youths," interposed ide, "and I must see if I can find a vacancy there for a near relative

Or any other social problem, went on Pat, as if no interruption had occurred, "you can safely refer in all these matters to my sister Bride." He cleared his throat and glanced down the table. "And now behold!" with a wave of the hand towards Nora, "see our Society beauty—our lovely gad-a-bout! One of the noted belles of Rathmines! The "—but here his speech was momentarily checked by a hard crust dexterously aimed by Nora and landing on his nose.

'Shut up for goodness' sake! said that young lady. "Dad! Can't you tell him to hold his tongue

Oh! Listen! listen! to dulcet tones!" said Pat, gazing with simulated admiration at her flushed countenance, ' olush mount to her girlish Oh! that Gerald Hammond soft blush brow. was but here to see it! Or Ronnie Black, or Charlie Daly, or—" "There, that will do, Pat; leave

your sister in peace—don't tease her around; there were a few old paintany more," interposed Mr. Blake, ings on the wall—the gift of the taking pity on Nora's speechless in-

Very well, sir! Let us pass on and leave this blushing subject for awhile. Now Clare, take a good Two large loaves are on the table, look at your cousin Shamus, for in him you see the new spirit of the age—the reincarnation of the Celt e great revival of the Gael! he spoken to you yet? No? I thought not. He would not condescend to speak your Saxon tongue—

the very accents would choke him!"
Clare lobked half fearfully at
Shamus—how much of Pat's talk
was serious she did not know. To her relief Shamus smiled back and answered in remarkably good English—the soft modulated Eng-

glish to which she was already be coming accustomed-Don't mind that mad fellow. Clare-when he's done his nonsense we will give you his character

My character is it? know that it is pure as the undriven snow, as high as Mont Pelier, as untarnished as gold, as good as—as—"
"Oh! stop, for pity's sake!"
merposed Bride, "do you want
Clare to think us all mad?"

Not all-not all, my dear sister, only a certain proportion of us! "I think I know you all now," said Clare smiling, "but"—with a sudden recollection of a loving little scrawl at the foot of her uncle's

tter, "which of you is Angel!"
"Angel!" repeated Tom, and
Angel!" cried some of the others. Then Mary spoke.

"I will bring you to see Angel after tea," she said, "she thought you would be tired or I would have brought you to her sooner. She was not feeling very well and did not come downstairs this evening. Clare, who of course, knew nothing about Angel, and thought it was perhaps a headache from which she was suffering, now asked gaily for —if tea can be spoiled in the pourament of the control of the cont Pat to give her Angel's character also. To her surprise Pat only smiled and his blue eyes had a cups, holding the teapot aloft until

Angel's room. As they went Mary told Clare in a few short but tender words about Angel's health, and when they entered the room and Clare saw the eager little form on the sofa, with the wistful eyes but bright smile, her heart went out to this little crippled cousin, and she shrunken body.

"And so you are Angel," she said, "and it was you that added the little line of invitation to Uncle's The meal is of the little line of invitation to Uncle's letter? Do you know. I think it was that dear little scribble at the was that dear little scribble at the was that dear little scribble at the "Matron is making the lotion" "Matron is making the lotion" "Matron is making the lotion" "The over" one of them

"Oh, was it? I am glad!" and Angel's eyes were shining, "do sit down - take that armchair and we have a chat. I've been morning tea known amongst themdying to see you, but I wanted you selves to have your tea first.

the love which existed between Angel and her father. It brought the sudden tears to Clare's eyes, and she had to bite her lips hard to keep from breaking down. But Mary noticed her and tactfully drew the Coombe vicinity—a good her attention ways talking of the coombe vicinity—a good her attention ways talking of the coombe vicinity—a good the coombe vicinity—a good the coombe vicinity—by the coombe vicinity—a good the coombe vicinity—by the coombe vicinit her attention away, talking of other things with such delicate kindness Home is situated in one of the old and consideration that Clare soon squares on the north side of the

Left alone, Clare glanced casually round the room-which she had not noticed in detail earlier in the even jects to the English press, its quite ing—and her gaze was arrested by a the fashion now-a-d ys—as to how picture of Our Lady under her title many herrings toey eat at dinner— of "Mother of Perpetual Succour." The strange old-world look of the picture aroused her interest and she

examined it more closely.

"What a queer picture!" she murmured. "It seems very old—a relic of medieval times I suppose. Mother of Perpetual Succour, she repeated slowly. "What a strange title. But how comforting to those who can believe in such things— fancy a Mother of Perpetual Succour! Oh, what peace and joy the very thought of such a thing would bring to one's heart, but not for me—not for me. And yet my own mother believed in all these old superstitions—and I suppose my coasins do also. How strange it is to see how these old beliefs still and with a half smile. survive. half sigh, she began to prepare for rest.

CHAPTER IV.

ST. COLUMBA'S HOME 'Should old acquaintance beforgot'

In the dining-room of Columba's Home for district nurses, the staff were assembled round the breakfast table, awaiting the entrance of the Matron for that meal to commence. It was a large bare room, containing little furniture besides the long dining table with the chairs placed primly women of title whose town house this once had been-and at a small side table stood two of the junior nurses ready to serve the bacon. -one at each end of the board. At the Matron's end is the tea-tray, Has and two brown teapots, and on the ? I lid of one of those sits a small and exceedingly antiquated cosy, which never by any amount of stretching or of squeezing could be made to go over the tea-pot.

At the opposite end of the table are the two staff nurses, and on each side stand the probationers trained nurses all, but doing their probationary period in district work. They have, most of them, been to seven-thirty Mass at a city church near the Home, but a few lazy ones amongst them have not been out. The Matron has not returned from the church yet.

"Stir the tea quickly—some one!" exclaimed Nurse Dunbar. The nurse nearest to the tea-tray whips away the useless cosy, and lifting the lid of the teapot commences to stir the contents vigorously, until one of the others exclaims—"Here's Matron!" whereexclaimsupon she bangs back the lid and almost drops the spoon as she scurries back to her seat.

M ss McFarland enters almost immediately, grace is said, the nurses drop into their places and the meal commences.

Two of the nurses cut the bread and hand it round, the two at the side table dispense a minute rasher of bacon to each nurse, and the Matron pours out the tea. Two or three of the nurses who happen to be especially fond of their morning cup, watch her anxiously, for Miss strangely tender look as he re- the fluid poured out more nearly plied—
"Angel's character? Well, Angel is just our little bit of Heaven!—
but you will see her for yourself!"
And in a short while Clare found herself with Mary going towards herself with Mary going towards and forwards in some unique manner, so that in the end each nurse receives a cup of the queerest concoction that was ever dispensed under the name of tea.

To crown all, one of the staff had overslept herself and her tea had been poured out by mistake.
"Oh, is Nurse Johnson not down

went forward swiftly and put her yet? Well! just pass me back her arms tenderly round the poor cup please!" and the contents of the cup, milk and all, is, flung into the teapot as a finishing touch to

> worse than ever," one of them remarks to her companion as they mount the long flight of stairs to the bedroom. By this name is the

'Oh! awful!" replied the other,

the Coombe vicinity—a good distance from St. Columba's, for the

found herself chatting away at her city.

Mary Carmichael was about

but sorrow ravaged her good looks

with a sweeping hand. And Mary had seen much trouble within the fold of the Catholic during her life. The meaning of Church—"for these kind goeth not the word home was almost unknown forth but by prayer and fasting." to her, for being left an orphan very young she had been bandied about by various relatives until she had been able to earn her own living. At the earliest age allowable she entered one of the large hospitals in London, where she stayed for four years; then she did private nursing for some time in a surgical home in the West End, and after that she took up District work, and for the last two years had been one of the staff nurses at St. Columba's.

Here she was completely happy, for she loved her work, and had found her true vocation in the slums. To Mary it was a sheer delight to go in and out of the alleys and lanes grouped round St. Patrick's, and her whole heart was given to her daily toil amongst the poor of her native city.

She was a strange mixture, and yet few guessed the various ele-ments that were sometimes at war within her. Most of her ordinary friends and fellow nurses would have been amazed if they could have known that there were times when Mary Carmichael felt inclined to fling her district bag away to the far ends of the earth, and leave the stern path of duty to lead a life of frivolity and pleasure, to wear beautiful clothes and to eat and drink of the best, to travel where she wished on this fair earth of ours-and to flirt and sing dance her way through life. When these temptations—as she regarded them-came to her, she would pray upon herself something in the way of penance, until she "came back to her senses"—as she expressed it. But in the past it was not so. had been a convert to the Church for the last five years, but before that time, religion of any kind had been a dead letter to her, and she had lived her life her own way, only trying to get the best she could out of it—not that she had ever done anything seriously wrong, but looking back now with clearer eyes, she often wondered how it vas that she had managed to keep on the straight path. The young Irish girl in London, full of life and gaiety, and knowing little of the real evils of that modern Babylon, had several times been very nearly swept away in the currents of the fast life all around her. She saw other nurses going that way—especially in the West End Home where she worked for some timeteas, theatres, supper parties, trips up the river, dinners at Richmondall these first. Then came week-end trips and soon good-bye to the drudgery of the nursing profession, and heigh-ho for a life of pleasur,e for a few years of luxury—for a draught from that cup which is so intoxicating,—until the dregs are reached—and then for the bitterness which is worse than death, for remorse unspeakable and for the worm which dieth not. Yet somehow, Mary had kept straight, and still managed to enjoy herself fully. No one flung herself with more zest into the enjoyment of a Bohemian supper, or the abandon of a masked ball, or a "joy ride" to Richmond, than Mary Carmichael, and yet she never allowed the men of the party to take the slightest liberty with her—she was one of women who always wield certain fascination for the other

sex, but who always manage to command their respect also. And then suddenly had come the awakening. A casual visit to a little Catholic Church down Soho way while a "Mission" was in progress, a certain sermon which kept her awake all that night and many succeeding ones—further attendance at the Mission, followed by more wakeful nights, and general misery, and finally an inter-view with one of the missioners, a new world dawned for Mary Carmichael then. With the zeal of the convert, she flung have Church militant—she worked and fasted, and prayed—her old haunts knew her no more. With her adherence to the old Faith, came also the wish to return to her native city again, so she entered St. to have your tea first."

"Oh! awful!" replied the other, we used to say that it was tea one drawing up her chair close to Angel's couch listened to the innocent chatter and gladly answered her eager questions.

Two or three of the others strolled in after awhile, and then came Mr. Blake, and it was delightful to see the love which existed between the love which existed the the other, which existed the the other, where the still r

varied greatly in her appearance; true, but she could never quite at times she looked almost pretty, and again there were occasions on small voice" which reminded her which reminded her which she seemed really plain. Now and then of that other self ther looks depended to a great extent on her feelings—happiness could nearly make a beauty of her. those powerful weapons which are found in their real strength only

But lately Mary had not been troubled by her spiritual condition, and neither had she been as keen as usual in the pursuit of amusement. A great happiness was dawning for her, a something that seemed too good to be true was drawing near to her. She who had seen men at their worst, aud who had so often seen the beast that is in every man, rise to the surface and confront he in all its hideous nakedness, so that she had almost despaired of ever meeting one who was clean-souled and pure hearted—was at last compelled to admit that her ideal man had entered her life. years she had mistrusted nearly every man she met—at most she held them in contempt. This by the way did not prevent her flirting with them-flirtation came natural ly to Mary, and even now in her regenerate days she could seldom resist an innocent flirtation when a favourable occasion occurred, but she looked upon it as a game of give and take, and she was well able to look after herself at the same game. But so far, she had never regarded her dealings with men in a serious light; the years in London had taught her to take care of herself, to enjoy herself, and to get all the amusement she could while with the opposite sex, but they had also taught her to regard them as woman's natural enemy-ready at any moment to take an advantage if it came within their power. had gone to London very young and innocent—a mere child in the knowledge of good and evil—and disillusionment had come so quickly and so thoroughly that although the Catholic religion now taught her that men can be good and pure and clean-still the old memories what she had seen and heard and learned while working in London remained with her and more or less oloured her views of men for all

But at last she had met a man who could command all her respect whom she could honor look up to with reverence. For two years she had known Dr. Delaney and the more she knew of him, the more she honored him. That their friendship was quickly merging into something nearer and dearer she -and there were when Mary almost refused believe that he could care for her her woman's instinct told her the truth, but her great love made her humble and in her own eyes she appeared unworthy of him. At such times she could have gone down on her knees and "thanked" God fasting for a good man's love.

From house to house she went swiftly, for she had a heavy morning's work before her, and that each nurse should be in time for the two o'clock dinner was as a law of the Medes and Persians in St. Columba's Home. Hurrying down Francis Street she almost collided with a tall girl in a neat tailor made costun from one of the side alleys.

TO BE CONTINUED

THE BEST OF A BARGAIN

It was in July, six years ago, that saw him first, Belgium was in her agony then, and we were all knitting day and night, that every relief ship which left our ports might carry warm woolen things to her people. My dear father used to say, only too truly, that I never do anything in moderation; and worked so closely all wi ter that by March my eyes had begun to complain: and when I paid no heed and to the warning, they had rebelled so furiously that I was forced to give them absolute rest, and to go to Dr. White for treatment three My appoint on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the convert, she flung herself mornings; and day after day I heart and soul, into the arena of the reached his office at 10 and sat there until 11 or even 11:30 before he found time to see me.

How I hated those long waits ! That my time was not at all valuable was no consolation; although it was some justification of Dr. Columba's Home, and after her White, who was beset by patients probationary period was passed, who insisted that they must not be

outward seeming her religion and her work filled her life.

But Mary herself knew better, she knew that her "other self" was yet strong within her. She was an ardent theatregoer still, a great lover of the picture houses, and all kinds of amusements, and never missed a dance, if she could manage it at all. Sometimes her conscience pricked her about these things, but she would persuade A quernlous old woman was always. found herself chatting away at her ease once more.

But she was really tired, more from the mental than the physical strain of the day, and she was glad to accept Mary's suggestion and retire early to bed. Her cousin accompanied her to her room to see

ing towns, whose whole talk was of the schedule of interurban cars; and one or two business men, who had evidently succeeded in making Dr. White believe that their time was priceless, for they were always called into the inner office a few minutes of the their saving. minutes after their arrival.

On the morning of my sixth visit. as soon as I was seated my eyes were attracted by a woman across the room whom I had never seen there before. She was perhaps fifty years of age, small, thin, spectacled, with a sweet, patient face which brightened wonderfully when she smiled. I noted, too, that she was simply, even shabbily dressed, in an old fashioned black cloth skirt and a white lawn waist. Beside her sat a young man, whom I took to be her son; but it was the mother who first drew and held my attention. She had a wonder-ful face, I decided, patient to the point of heroism. The son I thought a little stolid until he turned to his mother and said a few words, which I did not overhear. After that it was he who interested me especially; for as soon as he smiled and I quickly found that he smiled constantly, his face was the merriest had ever seen; and his manner toward his mother was beautifulprotecting and tender and reverent Once or twice when the room chanced to be unusually quiet, I overheard his little remarks to her, and laughed to myself; for every word of his was somehow delight funny whether he commented on the length of their wait, or the stuffiness of the room, or the noises that came from the crowded street below. "It is plain that he is trying to cheer her," I thought, and liked him for it. I wondered a little if his mother had serious trouble with her eyes and worried

much about them.
Soon one of the attendants came into the room, and I looked up expectantly, hoping that my turn had come; but she motioned to the pair across the room, and then, to my amazement, I discovered that it was the young man, not mother who was the patient. wore no eye glasses; neither were eyes inflamed or swollen, but evidently he saw very little or not at all. When the nurse motioned to them, the mother told him that was his turn and, taking arm, she led him toward Dr. White' consultation room

That was on Monday morning, and on Wednesday I saw them again. When I entered the waiting room they were seated near a window with a vacant chair beside the mother, and I took it eagerly. Soon I made some little conventional remark, hoping to find that she was inclined to talk; but she responded shyly, and in very few words, and I doubt if I should have succeeded in winning her attention. and much less her in opening my bag I had not chanced to drop my Rosary on the floor. After I had picked it up and put it away, I found that was smiling at me in a friendly

So you are a Catholic?" she said, as if that fact were a strong tie between us. I understood, in-stinctively, from the tone of her voice, that the faith meant something to her.
She talked a little then of com-

monplace things, and I quickly perceived she was shy, but glad enough to make even passing friends. We had chatted freely for five or ten minutes, when Dr. White appeared in the doorway. It was the first time I had seen him in the waiting room, and at once I turned to watch him Another doctor was with him, and they talked in an undertone a few moments, before Dr. White approached my new acquaintance

and touched the young man' arm.
"Dr. Gaynor and I will have a look at you now," he said; and to the mother: "You need not come. The inner office is hot today, and your son will tell you Dr Gaynor's opinion." So it came about that the mothe

and I were left alone together, and at once she turned to me and began to talk much more freely than she had done when her son was present "Dr. Gaynor is to examine John's eyes and to give his opinion although Dr. White has very little hope that it will differ from his own. You see, my son's case—" And there she checked herself abruptly. After a pause, she asked apologetically: "But would it bore you to hear about it?"

"Bore me! Indeed, I should be very much interested," I answered sincerely, and smiling her thanks, the mother went on directly

the mother went on directly:

"I try to be cheerful and brave.
John has never broken down for a minute. You see, he has a serious and very unusual disease of the eyes. Dr. White says that he cannot help him at all; he says there is only one man in the world who might be able to cure him; a Dr. Bryton in London England. a Dr. Buxton, in London, England. He has made a specialty of this trouble. But the trip for two of us and the oculist's bill—we cannot do it. We tried to plan a way when Dr. White first spoke of it, but it is impossible—simply impossible."

It is not often that I am interested in strangers, but somehow this brave little woman's distress went straight to my heart and quite openly I expressed my sympathy. She seemed to be touched, and continued her confidence, even more freely

I am a dressmaker," she said. "I have worked ever since my

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