

Crompton, the pleasantest raconteur and brodeur, used to tell a story of the extraordinary appearance which Mr. Gregory presented in the park one morning in this dressing-gown. A duel had been arranged between Sir Valentine Blake and Robert Burke of St. Clere's, two Galway gentlemen, and the spot selected was close to my grandfather's gate. He was engaged at his important shaving operation, when he heard first one, and then, after an interval, a second double shot, which he knew to be from pistols. He did not hesitate a moment, but ran down stairs, bare-legged as he was. An orderly's horse was at the door; he sprang on it, and galloped to his gate-house. As he neared the gate, he heard close at hand a third double shot, and just outside he saw a gathering of spectators around the seconds, who were discussing the subject of making a fourth shot effective. Just he got to the ring, a huge fellow rode in and shouted out: "Gentlemen, this is all child's play. Let's finish the business properly. Let each second advance his man two paces, and I'll engage they won't miss." "Who are you, sir?" cried my grandfather, dashing his horse forward. "Who are you, sir, to give such bloody counsel?" "Who am I, indeed?" said the other man looking at the strange figure in a grey dressing-gown and bare legs. "I'll have you to know, sir, I'm Mr. Hickman, the Clerk of the peace (?), for the County of Clare!" "Then, Mr. Hickman," said my grandfather, very quietly, "I arrest you and the principals and seconds of this duel in the King's name, and I'll have you all taken up before twelve o'clock." After which, he rode home in his bare legs, chatting very pleasantly to Sir Philip, who had been on the ground acting professionally for the belligerents.

There are several such stories in the book, which, too, has—and what picture of Irish life has not—its gloomy side. The chapter dealing with the famine of 1847 gives us a vivid view of the awful want and suffering of that dread year. It is relieved, however, by instances of genuine heroism. Our author's father fell a victim to duty at this crisis and left a claim to the deathless gratitude of his tenants. We can do us better here than briefly draw us on the chapter adverted to. "I must now leave," the writer says, "my political career and refer to the events of 1847 as they affected my private life. In that year, in April, my father died. He was one of the victims of duty during that terrible time when fever followed famine. Among the other landowners of my country that perished from their intercourse with the sick, were Lord Dunsandle and Thomas Martin owner of the great Ballinahinch estate. From the moment that my father saw the extent and nature of the catastrophe, he and the priest of Kinvard, Father Ford, whose name should be recorded, worked together incessantly to meet the emergency. At last, my father was stricken down, and Father Ford shortly after was added to the roll of victims. I was in London in April and knew nothing of my father's illness till I received my mother's letter with the ominous words, "Make haste or you will be too late." I was too late. In those days there was no telegraph, nor was there a railway to the west of Ireland. I had to post in a hired carriage all the way from Dublin, and when I reached my gatehouse I saw by the face of those who were there, that I need ask no questions. I was one day too late. There never was hope from the first day of the seizure. I was quite overwhelmed, for I loved my father very dearly and respected his honest, honourable qualities. . . . I did, however, all I could to alleviate the dreadful distress and sickness in our neighborhood. I well remem-

ber poor wretches being housed up against my demesne wall in wigwams of fir branches. There was no place to which they could be removed. The workhouse infirmary and sheds were crowded. Fortunately these patients did better in the pure open air than those who were packed together within four walls. There was nothing that I ever saw so horrible as the appearance of those who were suffering from starvation. The skin seemed drawn tight like a drum to the face, which became covered with small light coloured hairs like a gooseberry. This and their hollow voices, I can never forget, and yet they behaved with the greatest propriety. I believe a few sheep were stolen, but in my neighbourhood at least there was a total absence of crime. There seemed to be a general race to get out of the country at all hazards; farms were abandoned, even where no rent was asked, fences were broken down, houses were unroofed; in short, if an army of Huns and Vandals had swept over the country they would hardly have created greater terror, desolation, and despair.

Early in 1872, Gregory left Ireland for Ceylon. His work as Governor of that important colony has won for him a high place on the roll of eminent viceroys whom the British Crown has sent to represent it beyond the seas. His administration was a beneficent one. The condition of the native population was greatly ameliorated. A statue of him in the public square of Colombo voices the gratitude of a people whom he faithfully served. One more extract—and the last—from his Autobiography. It is his graceful tribute to a Catholic missionary, whom he had met in the wilds of Ceylon. "On reaching a place," he writes, "called Chavukacherri, the last halting place before the end of journey at Jaffra, I was called on by the priest, a Frenchman, the only European in the district. He was a remarkably good looking man of about forty, tall and erect, and I was greatly struck by his well-bred manner and conversation. I asked him to take a walk and to dine, both which invitations he readily accepted. During the walk he made use of some expressions which caused me to turn round, and looking him full in the face, I said, 'Mon pere vous avez ete militaire?' He colored and was silent, and then, after a long pause, as we walked on he said, 'Yes, I have been a soldier, a French officer and fought side by side with your countrymen throughout the Crimea. I had a strong liking for them. Look here, see what I wear, and shall wear till I die.' And he opened his soutane and underneath, next to the skin, was our Crimean medal. 'What made you abandon the military life?' I asked. Ah! said he, there are some misfortunes that it is pleasant to recount for there is comfort in doing so, if one meets with sympathy. But there are other misfortunes, too great to touch on.' I asked him if he was happy. 'Perfectly so,' he said. He had made himself the guide and friend and doctor of the people about him; he never intended to leave them till it was the will of God to take him. I asked him to come and visit me in Colombo. No, he could not leave his people, by whom I heard that he was perfectly adored from his kindness and gentleness. The archbishop told me recently that he had offered him advancement, but to no purpose, and that he is now dead. He would not leave his solitary post; he held it to the last, a true soldier of the Cross. I asked the Archbishop if he knew his history. He did not, but he believed his whole life had been changed by some terrible event."

The Autobiography has been admirably edited. The preface and the

concluding chapter from the pen of Lady Gregory reveal a literary style and unobtrusiveness rare in works of this character. Among the few books which the man of letters and the historian, dealing with the Ireland of the century now drawing to its close will set an especial value on, this book is bound to be classed. By the general reader, certainly by him who can distinguish between that sorry product often made to pass for Irish wit and literary brightness and that genuine product of the wit, the scholar and the gentleman, it will be cordially welcomed. E. P. S.

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