

"If Morris Donovan's stick touched them, they shan't come here," said the farmer, striking the poor little table such a blow with his clenched hand, as made not only it, but Mrs. Clary jump.

"And why so, pray?" asked the dame.

"Because nothing belonging to Morris, let alone Morris himself, shall come into the house," replied Clary; "he's not to my liking, any how, and there's no good in his bothering here after what he won't get."

"Excellent!" thought Norah.

"Lord save us!" ejaculated Mrs. Clary, as she placed the grilled snipes on the table, what's come to the man?" Without heeding his resolution, she was proceeding to distribute the savoury 'bird-eens,' when, to her astonishment, her usually tame husband threw the dish and its contents into the flames; the good woman absolutely stood for a moment aghast. The calm, however, was not of long duration. She soon rallied, and with blazing face, and fiery tongue, thus commenced hostilities:—"How dare ye, ye spalpeen, throw away any of God's mate, after that fashion, and I to the fore!—What do you mane, I say?"

"I mane, that nothing touched by Morris Donovan shall come under this roof, and if I catch a girl of mine looking, at the same time, the road he walks on, by the powers! I'll tear the eyes out of her head, and send her to a nunnery!"

"You will! and you dare to say that to my face, to a child o'mine—You will—will ye,—we'll see, my boy! I tell you what, if I like, Morris Donovan shall come into this house, and, what's more, be master of this house; and that's what you never had the heart to be yet, ye poor ould snail!" So saying, Mistress Clary endeavoured to rescue from the fire, the hissing remains of the poor snipes. Norah attempted to assist her mother, but Clary lifting her up somewhat after the fashion of an eagle raising a golden wren with its claw, fairly put her out of the kitchen. This was the signal for fresh hostilities. Mrs. Clary stormed and stamped, and Mr. Clary persisted not only in abusing Morris, but Morris's uncle, Father Donovan, until at last the farmer's helpmate swore, aye and roundly too, by cross and saint, that before the next sunset, Norah Clary should be Norah Donovan. I wish you could have seen Norry's eye, dancing with joy and exultation, as it peeped through the latch-hole;—it sparkled more brightly than the richest diamond in our monarch's crown, for it was filled with hope and love.

The next morning was clear and frosty; long, slender icicles hung from the branches of the wild hawthorn and holly, and even under the light footsteps of Norah, the glazed herbage crackled like feathery grass. The mountain rill

murmured under a frost bound covering, and the poor sheep in their warm fleeces, gazed mournfully over the landscape, beautiful as it was in the healthy morning light, for neither on hill or dale could they discover a mouthful of grass. The shrill December breeze rushed unheeded over the glowing cheek of Norah Clary, for her "*wise thought*," had prospered, and she was hastening to the trysting tree where, "by chance," either morning or evening, she generally met Morris Donovan. I don't know how it is, but the moment that the course of true love runs smooth, it becomes very uninteresting except to the parties concerned. So it is now only left me to say, that the maiden, after a due and proper time in teasing and tantalizing her intended, (a practice, by the way, which I *strongly* recommend as the best mode of discovering the temper, &c. of the gentlemen,) told him her saucy plan and its result. And the lover hastened upon the wings of love (which, I beg my readers to understand, are swifter and stronger in Ireland than in any other country) to apprise the priest of the arrangement, well knowing that his reverence loved his nephew and niece that was to be (to say nothing of the wedding supper, and the profits arising therefrom,) too well, not to aid their merry jest.

What bustle, what preparation, what feasting, what dancing, gave the country folk enough to talk about, during the happy Christmas holidays, I cannot now describe. The bride, of course, looked lovely and sheepish, and the bridegroom, —but pshaw! bridegrooms are always interesting. One fact, however, is worthy of recording. When Father Donovan had concluded the ceremony, before the bridal kiss had passed, Farmer Clary, without any reason that his wife could discover, most indecorously sprang up, and seizing a shillela of stout oak, whirled it rapidly over his head, shouting, "Carry me out!—By the powers! she's bet!—we've won the day!—Ould Ireland for ever!—Success, boys! she's bet—she's bet!" The priest, too, seemed vastly to enjoy this extemporaneous effusion, and even the bride laughed outright. Whether the good wife discovered the plot or no, I never heard; but of this I am certain, that the joyous Norah never had reason to repent her "*Wise Thought*."

AIR MGH.—A high standard—an elevated aim—this is the safeguard of character, and the main-spring of excellence; this makes the skilful mechanic, the enterprising merchant, the useful citizen, the learned jurist, the eloquent orator, the wise statesman.—*Dr. Hawes.*