

The Minstrel's Curse.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND. There stood, in days long vanished, a castle high and grand; Low glanced it down to the ocean, wide looked it over the land; Around about it crested bright beds of fragrant flowers, Amidst them sprang fresh fountains in sparkling rainbow showers.

There dwelt a haughty monarch by wealth and conquest known; Gloomy, with pallid visage, he sat upon his throne. For all his thoughts were Terror, Fear trembled where he stood. And when the spake was Fortune, and what he wrote was Blood.

Once journeyed to this castle a noble minstrel fair, One with bright golden ringlets, and one with thin grey hair: The old man, hard on shoulder, did ahead beside him, The while his youthful comrade walked briskly by his side.

Spoke the graybeard to the stripling: "Now valiant be my son; Think of our fondest ballads, sing in thy sweetest tone. Of love, and joy, and sorrow, with all thy wondrous art; Be thou today to soften the monarch's stony heart."

Now stand the twain together in the lofty audience hall, The king and queen in grandeur enthroned above all— The king in fearful splendor, like the bloody moon; The lady mild and gentle, and as the full moon bright.

The old man sweeps the harp-strings so grandly and so well; That richer, ever richer upon the ear they swell; Then bursts with heavenly clearness the young voice from its thrall; A distant spirit-chorus it seems to rise and fall.

"FATHER PROUT."

Those Silvery Bells of Shandon are Ringing Yet.

Chicago Herald. He was born in sweet Killybegs. One day when he was young; And that's the reason, don't you see, The blarney's on his tongue!

More than half a century ago the world was informed that The bells of Shandon Sound so sweet and grand on The pleasant waters Of the River Lee.

The old chimes are ringing still, and the ivy-clad tower in which they toll casts a shadow like a projecting pall over the grave of the man who keeps on whispering, as it were, to this day the echoes of the familiar notes in the ears of Irish exiles all over the earth.

Everybody has heard at some time or another "Shandon Bells" played or sung or whistled. Nearly everybody sets down the authorship of the quaint old lilt—kept alive mayhap by the spirit of home love which it breathes—to the credit of some obscure rollicking Irish rhymer. But few know that it was "Father Prout," who cracked bottles and jokes at the merry board of the Frasierian circle in London town with Dickens, Carlyle and Thackeray, who penned the droll ditty.

And "Father Prout" himself? Why he wasn't himself at all. Many a "character" has the Emerald Isle supplied the world with, but assuredly none more interesting ever had the touch of the brogue on his tongue than Frank Mahony, who, as "Father Prout" in *Fraser's Magazine*, as "Don Jeremy Savonarola" in the appendix to Dickens' "Pictures from Italy," as the "bright boy from Barney" at the Frasierian symposiums, took rank among the brilliant band of bohemians who used to spend their evenings in the beginning of the century in the English capital after the manner of a famous body known as the Shamrock Society of Philadelphia, which once upon a time, paid a visit to Chicago and left the scent of clover blossoms in the air for a month.

"Father Prout" was in reality a priest, but an unattached and unemployed one, who discovered after his ordination that he had missed his vocation. He was described by one of the scholarly wits of his time as "an Irishman by birth, an ecclesiastic by profession, a journalist by occupation, a cosmopolitan by habit, whose productions in *Fraser*, sparkling with wit, humor, scholarship and classical illustration, at once obtained for the author a foremost place among those who were contributing to the lighter and more elegant literature of the times.

His genius cosmopolitan. Essentially Hibernian, the wit and genius of Mahony were of the soil which gave him birth, but were acclimated and polished in foreign schools. If the garb was of homely frieze, it sparkled with gems from the mines of Greece and Rome, and the shamrock of Erin alternated with classic parsley in the buttonhole. He invited you to a stroll in the groves of Barney, and you found yourself, "unbeknownst," in those of the academy.

Here is the sketch of the bohemian drew of himself: "A combination of the Triumvir and the Irish bagpipe; of the Ionian dialect blending harmoniously with the Cork brogue; an Irish potato seasoned with attic salt." Now as to who Mahony was and whence he came: Francis Sylvester Mahony was born in 1801, on the banks of the Lee, within a hop, step and jump of the Lakes of Killybegs and almost within kissing distance of the blarney stone. For twelve years after he first heard the sound of the bells

having, "with the wit of Sterne, the fantastic spirit of Richelieu and the power of Rabelais, propounded a system of philosophy as profound as that of Fichte."

With "Father Prout" holding his own in the pages of *Fraser's Magazine* among a galaxy of the brightest minds of the epoch; with Daniel Maclise, the Royal Academician, whom Sir Walter Scott, on the occasion of a tour through Ireland, lifted to the path of fame, as its sketch artist; with William Maginn, the "versatile Celtic genius," in the editorial chair, Cork's own town was assuredly in those days well represented in London, for all three were born in the city by the Lee. What "Father Prout" was to *Fraser* with his pen Maclise was with his pencil. In 1830 appeared in the magazine the first of a series of sketches entitled "A Portrait Gallery of Illustrations of Literary Characters." The peculiarities of the leading bohemians of the day were hit off with such faithfulness in the gallery that the sketches became the leading and most attractive features of *Fraser*. Renowned as they were even then in the field of literature, the Frasierians sought not the lordly halls or gilded palaces of the rich in their hours of leisure. In the true club spirit they jingled glasses, chopped logic and banded wit in out-of-the-way dens and mysterious holes and corners.

Under the names of the "Fraserians," the "Eccentrics," the "Hooks and Eyes" and the "Tumblers" their custom was to meet in free and easy good fellowship. In the historic haunts known as "The Coal-hole" and "The Widow's in St. Martin's Lane." The painter, the actor, the reviewer, the critic, the journalist, the barrister, the author, and even the divine, fraternized, we are told, in these coteries, and one of the most prized sketches of Scott's *protege* Maclise represents the choice spirits of one of the famous gatherings. The Frasierians were described later on as "being these depicted, with marvellous verisimilitude, Glances and decanters are scattered about the fruit-laden board; Dr. Maginn, the editor of *Fraser*, has just risen to give the toast of the evening. Upon either side of him, in the background, are the two nameless attendants—one a Sydney Smith-like butler in the act of decanting an especial magnum of port, the other an assistant flunkey extracting with an all but audible cloop the cork from a fresh bottle. Coleridge, Carlyle, Thackeray, Lockhart, Southey, D'Ossy are among those who are

THE MOST READILY DISTINGUISHED. Immediately at the left of Maginn, as he stands there delicately resting the tips of his fingers on the table, are seated three clergymen, Edward Irving of the Unknown Tongues; Gleig, the army chaplain, and between the two, shrewdly peering at you from under his eyebrows and over his spectacles, Frank Mahony himself." On the first page of the initial number of *Bantley's Magazine*, in the second year of its publication, appeared under the name of Frank Mahony, "A Poetical Epistle from Father Prout to Boz."

It is worth giving: Write on, young sage! Still over the page; Pour forth the flood of fancy; Divinely draw! Write over the soul! Whirls wand of necromancy. Behind thy broom! The undying laurel thickens! For Swift or Sterne! Might live and learn! A thing or two from Dickens! In 1837, "Father Prout," tired of London life, roved through Germany, Hungary, Asia Minor, Greece and Egypt, all the time contributing to *Fraser* and *Bantley*. After a time he settled in the south of France, whence he returned to London in 1845. In the latter year Dickens started the *Daily News* and invited the Frasierian to take up his abode in Rome and become the foreign correspondent for the new paper. It was during Mahony's occupation in this capacity that Garibaldi established his bivouac in the Grand Piazza of St. Peter's. Father Prout's letters were afterward published as an appendix to Dickens' own Italian sketches.

That the admiration of "Father Prout" by "Boz" was reciprocated by Dickens is shown by a note where the latter says, speaking of the boy from Barney: "Every chap from so brilliant an old block may be said to possess a lustrous peculiarity of his own, hence we may not fear to disperse them up and down our miscellany. They are gems of the purest whiskey." At the age of sixty-six the priest, poet, essayist, humorist and bohemian died in Paris. Although he laid aside, not long after his ordination, his functions as a priest, he always adhered to the faith of his early manhood. "There is nothing, after all," said Prout, shortly before his death, "like the associations which early infancy attaches to the well-known and long-remembered chimneys of our own parish steeple; and no magic can equal the effect on our ear when returning after long absence in foreign, and, perhaps, happier countries."

This "chimney of his own parish steeple," the bells of Shandon, tolled his funeral dirge on the morning of May 27, 1866, when he was laid to rest in the Shandon churchyard. A neglected case of cold in the head may cost you your life. Why run the risk when Nasal Balm offers you a speedy relief and certain cure. Sold by all dealers. Try it. Would you like to exchange your yellow cheeks for those glowing with health's roses? Then try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. They rebuild the system and make life as bright as childhood's dream. Much distress and sickness in children is caused by worms. Mother's Remedies' Worm Expeller gives relief by removing the cause. Give it a trial and be convinced. Minard's Liniment for Rheumatism.

Talked and Acted Like a Man.

The young man had been with the party some time, and he finally rose to go. The others vetoed the proposition. "O, sit down!" cried one. "What do you want to break up the party for?" said another. "Be a good fellow," said the third. "Now that 'be a good fellow'—well, every man knows what that means. Every man has done something he did not want to do and ought not to have done for fear some one might think he was not a 'good fellow.' The young man hesitated. "No; I guess I had better go," he said at last.

"None! It's early yet!" protested one. "Sit down! Sit down! We'll all be home before 12," added another. The young man sat down, rested his arms on the table, and said: "Well, I'll submit the case to you. You are talking of going to the theatre, or having a game of cards at the club, and you want me to be one of the party. Now in a cozy little home on the North Side there's a little woman—"

"Children sick?" put in one of the party. "No; there's only one, and he's in good health." "Wife sick?" "No; well—"

"Wait a minute, interrupted the young man. 'I'll leave it to you, but you must hear the case. The little woman is alone in the house. The baby is in bed, and she is sitting there reading or sewing, and listening to the steps of those passing the house. I left home at 9 o'clock this morning, and since then she has been alone with the baby. Now she hasn't even the baby to occupy her time.' He paused a moment to give them an opportunity to speak, but no one said a word. Then he said: "Boys, if you think you want my company to-night more than she does I'll stay."

There was another pause, and then one of the party took a sip of champagne and said: "I'd rather you'd go home." The others nodded their assent, and the young man said: "I'd rather go." It was some time later in the evening when one of the members of the party said: "There's a man." And every one knew to whom he referred.

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