

"Oh! well—well—well!" ejaculated Brian, as he wrung his hands in momentary bitterness. The next minute he seated himself at the basket, and began his supper in silence, internally exclaiming, "Sure there's no use in talking to the creature—if God gave her better sense, she'd have it, that's all!"

For about a month Oonagh was a pattern of prudence. Full of remorse for the mistake which she had made, she was doubly on her guard, good honest woman! lest she should make matters still worse by any further blunder. Nor had she concealed from Brian, this her firm resolution to be more sharp-sighted for the time to come, which resolve had given Brian some rather strong hopes that she might yet amend. On the faith of this hope, then, he handed to his help-mate one day, as he came to dinner, a certain scrap of cloth in which was carefully tied up the sum of ten shillings. "There, Oonagh! put that some place where it 'll be safe—there's jist ten shillin's in it that I got from the masther awhile ago, an' it 'll be some help to'ast (towards) paying the rent—God send that we may be able to make up the remaindher afore Lammass, for if we don't I'm afraid we'll have to sell the oats, and it's so chape now that it 'll bring nothin' at all. In the honor o' God I ask you now, Oonagh dear! not to make any bad hand o' that, for if you do I don't know what we'll do at all."

"Arrah, do you think, Briney, I'm a fool?" asked Oonagh with honest indignation, as she carefully stowed away the treasure in a certain little deal box which stood under the bed. "Now don't I know that this is for the rent, an' sure I'd be worse than the divil (God pardon me!) if I'd let it go to loss; jist wait an' you'll see how I'll take care of it." Relying on her assurances, Brian took his dinner and went off to his work. He was no sooner gone than Oonagh set her wits to work, in order to contrive some plan for increasing the amount of Brian's deposit, before the time of paying the rent. All that afternoon did she ponder upon the all-important project, but without coming to any final conclusion. And yet she had set her heart upon the matter, chiefly with the wish of repairing the mischief she had done, and further to take Brian by surprise, and let him see how clever a manager she was. A happy thought at length occurred to her simple mind; the next day was the market-day in the neighbouring town, and she would go there and lay out her ten shillings on some merchandise, which would be sure to sell again at a good profit. All that night did Oonagh lie awake, revolving in her mind the speculation on which she was about to venture—and next morning Brian was

scarcely out of sight, when, drawing from its concealment her little capital, she threw her grey cloak around her, and set out for the neighbouring town, which was more than two miles distant. Her impatience, however, had anticipated the proper time, for the streets of the little town were yet about empty. Here was another delay, but Oonagh amused herself going from shop to to shop, and examining with eager admiration the various articles offered for sale in the windows.

"Who knows now," she soliloquized, as she took her stand in front of a window gaily bedizened with shawls, caps, ribbons, &c., all of the most flaring colours; "Who knows but when I give Briney the money that I'll make this time, but maybe he'd buy me a new lace cap, or one o' them purty yellow hankershers. An' who'd have a betther right to it, bekase it's my own four bones that 'll earn it?" In such like meditations the time passed away, till the fastly-filling streets reminded Oonagh that the business of the day was about to commence. "I'll begin at one end o' the town," thought she, "and I'll go on to the other, an' then surely I'll see something that I'll lay out my money on." She did literally go through the market, pausing at every *standing* where anything was to be sold—but all in vain, she could decide on nothing, and the hour for Brian's dinner was fast approaching; she must therefore hurry home, and sorry enough she was that she could find nothing to speculate in. She had already got through the greater part of the principal street on her way home, when her eye fell on a certain vender of crockery, whose clamorous praises of his wares had attracted a considerable crowd around him. The article which he had to sell was a kind of coarse crockery, burnt to a dark hue and roughly polished. It is much used among the Irish peasantry, for milk, water, &c. Oonagh stood for a few minutes amongst the crowd, and thought surely it was her own good genius brought her there, for the crockery was going for a price next to nothing, and she at once determined to invest therein her ten shillings. Having made (as she triumphantly thought) an excellent bargain, and paid down her money, our speculator suddenly asked herself how she was to get her purchase home? An exceedingly pertinent question, had it not come too late. As it was, however, all she had for it was to stand by her *crocks*, keeping "watch and ward" over them, unknowing but that her watch might extend itself through the night as well as the day. Fortune this time befriended her it would seem, for she had not been long *en attendant* when Jemmy Casey, a near neighbour of