

abode flashed on her mind, and drawing near to her lady she whispered a brief warning. Mary turned her head and gave a glance at the persecutor; that glance brought the colour into her cheek.

She made one of those mighty efforts which, in timid, shrinking natures such as hers, are heroic, stood still and waited for her foe to come up to her. The man approached. Biddy stood close to her mistress with the air of one who knew herself to be a body-guard, and intended to defend her charge to the death.

"What would you of me, sir?" said Mary, trying to steady her voice; then suddenly, "Heaven have mercy!—'tis Roger!"

"Yes, Mary O'Neill," with a scornful emphasis on her name, "it is Roger!"

"Oh, then I need not fear," said Mary, smiling, "I am safe with you. Will you escort me home, and will you come and see Lady Elizabeth?"

"Not I," said Roger, sullenly, "I want none of your old hags."

"Roger! how can you speak so of one noble, loving, and good?"

"A plague on your goodness, Mary! Much it ever did for me! Your goodness, as you term it, has darkened my life for aye. So," with an indescribable sneer, "Eveleen is *professed*, I hear?"

"She is," said Mary, whose inward trembling was beginning almost to overcome her; "and she prays for you Roger."

"Curses, on her prayers!" cried he furiously, "I want them not. She stamped out faith and hope from my heart long ago."

"Oh, Roger, hush! let us speak of something else. What think you of the state of matters, of our cause. You are aide-de-camp to Colonel Preston, are you not?—and, how comes it you can walk about undisguised in the streets of Dublin?"

"Oh," said Roger, with a sardonic grin on his face, "we soldiers have to run all sorts of risks, you know. As to our prospects, whenever the fools whom you, I suppose, call the supreme council, condescend to come to their senses and treat with Inehiquin, we shall have peace; but I imagine they will go on till they have lost every man and spent every penny. Believe you that these

foreign negotiations will come to anything? I tell you, no."

"I will not despair at your words Roger. God will protect his own. But here we are now—this is my home; will you not come in?"

He shook his head, and then, with a touch of the old courtesy which his passion had obscured, took off his hat, bent to kiss her hand, and was gone.

"Holy Mary, guard us from harm!" ejaculated Biddy, crossing herself, and then, "Madam Mary, dear, why ever did you walk along with the like of him? He'll betray us, sure as the sun is in the heavens."

"No fear of that, Biddy," said Mary, drying her eyes. "He and I have played together as children. He goes the wrong road, poor fellow, but he will not harm me or be untrue to his own people: he is a Catholic, Biddy."

"And sure then, I'd say he had a deal more to do with the old enemy than the Pope," muttered Biddy to herself; "but there, it's no good thinking. If they kill us all they must, and we've just got to bear it."

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

"You are late, my Mary," said Lady Elizabeth as she entered, "and here is Father Fitzsymons to welcome you."

Mary ran forward to greet a priest who was standing by the window trying to catch the last gleam of the fast departing day to say his office. Father Fitzsymons was one of the most celebrated characters among the Irish Catholics of that period.* He was a tall spare man of an exceedingly robust constitution and unflagging energy. His few and scanty white hairs was the only evidence of old age. The fire of his eye, the clearness of his voice, gave him the appearance of being twenty years younger than he really was, while a fund of natural cheerfulness which his habitual spirit of self-sacrifice had heightened and sanctified, made him the joy and support of all his persecuted brethren.

He closed his book and blessed Mary as she knelt before him, asked the reason of her pale cheeks, and listened with in-

*Father Henry Fitzsymons, of the society of Jesus, was born in Dublin, 1567. All the incidents recorded of this priest's life in our story are strictly historical.