

AILEY MOORE

TALE OF THE TIMES SHOWING HOW VICTIMS, MURDER AND SUCH-LIKE PASTIMES ARE MANAGED AND JUSTICE ADMINISTERED IN IRELAND TOGETHER WITH MANY STIRRING INCIDENTS IN OTHER LANDS

BY RICHARD O'BRIEN, D. D., DEAN OF NEWCASTLE WEST CHAPTER VII SHOWING HOW PEGGY HYNES DID NOT GO TO THE POOL-HOUSE, AND WHY

Biddy Browne the beggarwoman's house lay at the back of all the dwellings of the town-land. It was a lonely house, on a lonely road, called the "Bog road," and behind it, far far away to the shadowy mountains, one saw nothing but "reeks" of various bulks, and "holes" of various dimensions; these "holes" spreading out, some into diminutive lakes, and others looking like open graves, overflowed with water. It was a sad place to dwell, and only Biddy Browne could live there; but Biddy very truly said that "beggars can't be choosers."

Biddy Browne's house was not better than its situation; the walls were mud, and where the old thatch had been worn away, it had been replaced with loose straw; the chimney was a remnant of wicker-work that had never been very substantial; the window-holes were open in the summer days and nights, but stuffed as best they might be in the winter. There was a bench covered with sods of green grass at one side of the door—the left—and a very black-looking pool of water on the other. An asthmatic-looking duck was muddling in the pool, and a poor-looking cock and hen—the beggars of their tribe—vainly scraped up the mound at some distance, looking for a collection. So that the apologists of Biddy Browne, who said she did not beg through pride, or stay out of the workhouse for comfort, were not far mistaken.

A great flood of light poured in through the chimney, and made the hearth-place very like a roofless portion of the "cabin." A large quantity of reddish peat-ashes was always gathered here, and it was a favorite spot for little Eddy to sit while he made his "sally whistles," or sometimes fondled, much against its will frequently, Biddy Browne's black cat.

There was a plain board on ledges, which somehow or other kept their places on the wall—this was the "dresser." There was a large hanging from an old cross-beam—a broken tub, an old sieve, and a spinning-wheel on the floor; "Our Blessed Lady"—a frightful woodcut besmeared with pink and blue (why don't we make out some decent woodcuts for the poor?)—was on the wall; and in the end of the cabin there were two "locks of straw" by a figure of speech these were called beds; and alas! they are the beds of the poor.

But Christ was poor; and "dear Mary" often, it is said, was hungry; and the best friends of God—those who lived only to make Him known, and died to glorify Him—they all lived in hunger and thirst and cold, like the winter-time of old Biddy Browne's cabin. "A great sign," poor Biddy often said, "a great sign," she said, "that this wasn't the world that God made for His friends, for many uv em hadn't much uv id, an' the handful of 'em that had any uv id didn't care about id—like Ailey Moore, God bless her."

Would any of the philosophers please to inform a man who does not wish to give up the Christian religion, upon what principle—that is, by what reason—money is in these times made a sign of the love of God, and of the truth of religion? "Wherever I met the cross," says a mighty peer of England, and a very devout man too, "wherever I saw the cross, poverty was near at hand," and then his lordship shook a wise and pitying brain. "Surely," was the sympathizing induction—"God's truth and this poverty can't abide together."

"Is he not the son of Joseph, the carpenter?" over again. The world will never be without Gentiles, to whom the cross is "folly." A sick girl was lying on one of the above-mentioned locks of straw, and a baby, beautiful as a cherub, was lying beside her. Nedly, with the shirt clean as ever, and the elbows and knees still "out," and the stiff hair shooting straight and uncombed, from all parts of his head, was gazed in the middle of the floor, "making a new sally whistle, to please poor Peggy Hynes' child," Nedly had a brave, healthy heart, we would say, under his dreamy and often abrupt manners.

Peggy Hynes it was that lay in Biddy Browne's poor cabin. Thus it happened.

On the day that she prepared "to go in," that is, into the poor-house, Peggy brought the baby once more to St. Senanus's well; and she knelt, this day all alone, at the foot of the great stone cross—and she thought of everything—the distant—the dead—the past, and, ah! the future, the frightful future. It must be admitted that the young mother wept very much—it may be too much, because there is a great well of feeling in the depths of the hearts of the poor; and when her soul was fullest, and her eyes swimming in tears, she looked at her baby, and it smiled—smiled so joyously, so heavenlike, the poor little angel, and flung its little arms round the mother's neck so—that love, and fear, and memory, and apprehension, smote her all together, and poor Peggy Hynes fell

down sobbing, with her baby in her arms, at the foot of the great cross. She remained there a long time, a very long time, she said, until her infant began to weep along with her, and then she remembered the "Mother of God, near the Cross, on Mount Calvary," and though it made her shed more tears, she said, it comforted her somewhat, and she began to make up her mind to go.

And then poor Peggy looked at everything around St. Senanus's—the little spring that sparkled in the sun, and the shadows of the leaves, as they trembled on the clear deep water. She looked at the pleasant little nooks where she used to nestle with a little girl, and where she used to feel "like as if the angels were all round 'er," though she saw them not; and the little oler-tree—she thought she knew every leaf upon it, for she never remembered that it changed; and she thought how many a time she stood in its shadow, and somebody that loved it with her too, beside her. The thought brought another burst of memories which again opened the fountain. Poor child! she thought it hard to leave them all—perhaps for ever; and she was foolish enough to kiss many a spot beside the Cross—spots where loved ones and holy ones too, and whose prayers for her were often breathed—she was tempted to believe, too, vainly; and she looked and looked, and was almost jealous of the beauty that was round her; she thought it nearly unfeeling in everything to look so gay, and she "going into the poor-house." Poor Peggy Hynes!

At length she tore herself away. The peasant's final thought—God bless the Irish peasantry!—was Peggy Hynes, "God's holy will be done!" The girl's mind was burdened with a multitude of griefs, and her affections were fresh and full as the spring in her own valley. So she went often taking "last looks," until she came to a turn in the highway, on her sad journey;—there the Old Cross would vanish—a few little steps, and she could see it, never. Why did poor Peggy believe that she should never see it again?

The lonely woman paused—the baby looked into her face. Permeated as she thought was the infant's look. It clung to her, and it shook, poor little creature; and then a huge cloud darkened the sun—a few drops fell, and there was a peal of thunder. Peggy looked her little one in the arms. Her heart began to beat—fearfully—terribly.

That was all Peggy Hynes remembered, when she woke in Biddy Browne's cabin, and found old Father Mick Quinlivan by her bed of straw. Drenched with rain, and covered with gore—for she had burst a blood-vessel—little Ned discovered her, and like a sensible boy that knew the soft heart that old Gran had—she told the reader that Biddy Browne had a gentle heart under her rough looks—she engaged the services of the first passer-by to bring her to "his house," and to save her.

Biddy Browne clasped her hands—thanked God upon her knees—cursed the "agent," it must be admitted—prayed for "every poor sinner that wanted id"—chafed the temples of the sick woman with some decoction of herbs—sent Nedly off for Father Quinlivan, and then remembered she had not the young mother's dinner. "God's will be done!" said Biddy Browne.

The faith and hope and patience of the poor! If ever poor, and sick and deserted, we find ourselves homeless and hopeless, may it be near the cottages of the poor! The comforts of poverty are the comforts of feeling and hope—they all come from the other world, or, at all events, they all have the light of the other world upon them. Faith is not a mere word with the poor, as it is with people who have their pleasure in eating, and drinking and pride. Faith is the poor man's inheritance, and the fortune of his little children and his wife. He clings to its promises, therefore, and he does its commands, because he "will have pleasure in heaven." A greatly deceived man is any who looks for happiness to falsehood and folly; but the poor man, whose religion is his *all*, if he look to any thing but God for comfort, is a madman. And the great bulk of the good of the world is among the poor—all the holy saints were poor. If we ever get sick and sorrowful, far from the aid of home and friendship, may it be among the cottages of the poor!

On the fifth day of July, in the year before mentioned, poor Peggy was better; she had now been a full fortnight lying down. Her features had become more defined; her flaxen hair was softer and more glossy, and her skin was fairer and more delicate than ever it had been before. Her eyes were very brilliant, and her cheek had the color of a young and tender rose-leaf; and as she bent her mother's look upon the sleeping baby by her side, she seemed a creature fit for paradise. Everything around Peggy Hynes, we should remark, wore an appearance of neatness, and even of comfort. The sheets were white and fine—the counterpane was nearly new, and she had two pillows; in fact, her little bed—clothes contrasted with the bed and with the place.

Gran was at her wheel near the great light-house hearth, and she looked towards Peggy and the infant. Nedly was at his work for the "babby," and the mother was praying for it. God makes people love little children.

"Gran!" said Nedly, suddenly. "Comin'," said Gran.

"Peggy is very handsome," said Nedly—although he had never looked round.

"Yes, *aviv*; poor Tom will be glad to see her; won't he, *avra*," she said, addressing Peggy, "whin he comes back from Marikay!"

Peggy smiled, and a large tear rolled down her cheek, and fell upon the baby. Poor thing! it stretched its little arms up towards its mother, and cried.

She raised the creature and kissed it, and laid it gently in her bosom; but the drops of perspiration stood upon her brow after the little exertion thus made, and she nearly fainted.

"Gran?" she said.

"Yes, *avra*," said the good hearted beggarwoman, as she rose and went towards her.

"Gran," she whispered, "bury me down by old Mammy's side," and the tears rolled fast as she was speaking.

"Gran, *avra*, I'm dying, and dying in peace, an' wid a forgivin' heart for all. Bring Tom to where you lay me, Gran, an' make him kneel upon the grass alongside me," an' say to him, Peggy, his own colleen, was thrue, an' will meet him—"

poor Peggy looked up, for her speech had failed her.

"Cushla, Cushla!"—said Gran. "Step!" interrupted Peggy. "Gran, the Father of Heaven will bless you, and Nedly will be your gardlan. Nedly is so good, and he never, never lets one hear uv id. Nedly, come an' kiss me,—your poor Peggy *avra*, gall."

"No, I won't!" answered Ned, abruptly.

"Eh! Ned?" said the sick girl.

"No!" the boy answered, in a lower voice.

"Och, Nedly," joined Gran; "I thought—"

The poor boy was overcome; he burst into a passionate grief, frightful for one so young—and ran—ran out of the door—ran, shrieking along the road.

God bless that healthful honest heart of little Ned!

"Gran," again said the sick woman.

"Yes, *avra*, don't wak'n yourself!" "Gran," and she smiled; 'twas like sunshine from heaven on her face, even while she was still weeping. "Gran, I have got a mother for little Aileen!" and she again raised her first-born, who laughed in freshened vigor as it embraced its parent. "An', Gran, listen; God made me call her Aileen; tell no one till I'm gone—but d'ye know the reason?"

"Yes," answered Gran.

"Ah! no one knows the angel, on'y me; she never let me out o'er eyes—never; an' no one was the wiser. An', I'm lyin' on the sheets of her own bed; an' her pillow are supportin' me. Oh! darlin',—darlin' Ailey Moore!"

A shadow fell on the doorway; the speaker looked from Gran, and she saw Ailey Moore herself, leading Eddy by the hand.

"Och, *cead mille failte routh nasail, iasail*!" cried Gran as she ran over and fell upon her knees; "*Cead mille failte routh*!"

We cannot give a translation of Gran's welcome—the English language fails us here. The idea, however, is, a hundred thousand welcomes to the fair Ailey, whom she calls a lady that comes down to the level of the poor. If any of our readers will send us a better translation of *nasail iasail*, we shall correct the one which we have given.

"Thank you, Gran," said Ailey, taking off her bonnet, and approaching Peggy Hynes. Ailey took Eddy's kiss from the invalid, and raised up the baby. "Come," she said, "I must have my little namesakes," and the child clasped its little hands, and put forth its little lips to press those of Ailey.

The young lady pressed the nursing to her bosom ardently.

No one but such as Ailey Moore knows the luxury of making poverty's paradise. What an ecstasy there is in beholding even an infant rejoice in your arms, and in witness the fire of her burning heart come into the mother's eye as she proudly sees her little one caressed by a "lady." Alas! with what little cost wealth might become the sunshine of the sorrowful, and share the felicity it creates and forms! How happy even a few young ladies might make their locality by sitting down once a day, even for a little while, beside the bed of the lowly! How much love they might develop! How much gratitude!—and then how strong might be the bonds between the rich and the poor!

Father Mullois, of Paris, tells us that a medical man, some short time ago, found a smart-looking, neat young woman, and a handsome one, waiting upon a poor invalid in a poor faubourg in a back room of a wretched poor house. Everything was neatly done up. The furniture was clean, the bed adjusted, the few little articles all nicely in their places.

"A neighbor of yours?" said the doctor to the sick old woman,—"and a good little girl, truly!"

"A friend of hers," said the young woman, anticipating the old lady's reply.

"Very good," said the M. D.

In a short time afterwards the Countess of— had occasion to call upon the same doctor, the servants in livery attended her.

"Mon Dieu!" cries the doctor—"mais—but your ladyship is the same I met cleaning up old madame's house!"

"Hush!" said the countess, placing her fingers on her lips. "But the doctor did not 'hush,' for which we hereby thank him.

Was not the countess happy?—certainly she was. And there are hundreds of lady's like her in Paris, for Paris is Catholic, thank God!

Ailey Moore spent a portion of every day with her sick friend, preparing her to die, and persuading her to live. She would take her by the hand, and kiss her hand very often, for Ailey thought her holy. She was a martyr, poor Peggy was, as she said she deserved everything for her sins; for oh! she "so often fretted her good mother, and she was so wild," she said, and "hadn't loved God half enough, and He was always so good to her; although once she had put Tom between her and God, and God had given Tom to her, and he had done everything for her, and she had done everything for Miss Ailey!"

Eddy was kneeling near the lady's chair or seat, and he had the point of his finger on Ailey's little shoe, and he looked up in her face like one worshiping, and he really did worship her—'he murmured, "Ailey Moore!"

Ailey overheard him.

"Well, dear little Eddy?" she said, raising him with one hand, while she held the child by the other—"well?" she said.

"Nothing," replied Eddy.

"Do you remember the story I told you?"

"Of the boy that bought his father from slavery by working and saving?"

"Exactly."

"I'd do more than that for some wan," said Eddy.

"What would you do?"

"I'd go and be the slave myself to the man."

"You would?"

"Ia."

"Bravely said; and for whom?"

"Oh, for some wan."

"Come now, for whom?—tell me; for the priest?"

"Yes, sartainly, for Father Mick," replied Eddy; "he's good to Gran an' ev'ry wan."

"And for poor Gran?" pursued Ailey.

Eddy gave Gran one of these concentrated looks so wonderful in a boy—it spoke a volume.

"And," continued the beautiful girl, "surely for—"

Ailey Moore, steadily as if he were a man, and in a low tone, replied, "poor Eddy."

Eddy had a brave heart.

Ailey Moore and Eddy, two hours after, were proceeding along the "Bog road." The evening was fast declining; Ailey had over-stayed her time. At a distance the sea was seen through two hills, and looked like an undulating lake of molten gold. The cultivated lands spread around their rich verdure and glorious promise. The smoke was ascending in blue curls from the farmhouses, and the cattle lowed upon the plain and hill. It was a beautiful evening, indeed; this 5th of July, Ailey had no fear; every one knew her, and loved her. She prayed, because she always prayed. She never saw a shrub, or flower, or piece of sky, that struck her as beautiful that brought not the Eternal to her mind, because she knew He had sent them. She was the sister of Reginald or Gerald Moore, and she was a Catholic.

Right in the mid path, as they proceeded, they were met by the man whom we have seen so often, and know so well—

"Shaun a Dherk." He asked an aim as he received it.

"God bless the Lily of the Valley!" said Shaun; "an' God protect 'er from her enemies!"

"That's Shaun," said Eddy, in his old dreamy way.

"Will you gie me wan momint's talk miss?" said the beggar-man.

"Certainly," was the reply.

"Miss Ailey," the strange man said, in a low voice, and one of great solemnity, "you are the friend of the poor, an' the poor love you. I want to do your brother good."

Ailey started, and reddened, and grew pale.

"Avourneen," the beggarman continued, "there is a net around him and you; och, don't fear—don't shrivel a bit, not a bit *avra*; there's a God in heaven, an' a strong, onest arm on earth to do God's business!"

"Look at me!" said Shaun a Dherk. She did, and his form expanded; the change was almost like a miracle.

"But you frighten me," she replied.

"Look into my face!" he said. She saw the soul of an enthusiast, and read unshakable resolution.

"You look like one who can trust me," he said; "then, sweet lady, never know me again—never, until God is satisfied. Give this letter to your brother, he met me wance afore. He's a man. Tell 'im I'm the whip of justice—to avoid Boran an' never pretend to know 'Shaun a Dherk.' God protect the Lily of the Valley, that Mary may pray for her an' the owid parish priest?"

Ailey made no unnecessary delay in reaching home. Her heart beat violently, and no wonder.

She reached Gerald's room, and on her knees she prayed to know was he in any danger?

"None, sweet sister."

"None whatever?"

"None. What means this letter?"

The following was Shaun's letter: "Sir—It is known the landlord refused you everything, an' his insults to you whin you went there. You can't keep the land—the rears of rint would brake you. You'll be charged with murder, to take you out o' the way, an' thin the wolf will come upon your fold. All the money you have in the world want pay a bond your father signed in security for a mah that's gone to Marikay. *Snapper* has that bond; he took it from the dead man Sherkin. When you're in jail and your father is poor, an' your sweet sister hasn't a home to cover her; some people think they'll get a wife say. You have some friends that want nothin' from you—they don't want to know you till the day come. They'll die or save you in the end; but, as an honorable man, burn this letter, an' never know, in any case, SHAUN."

"The clouds are gathering," said Gerald, as he tore the paper to atoms quietly, and burned the fragments on the grate. "God's will be done!"

TO BE CONTINUED

THE CALL OF CAITLAN

A ST. PATRICK'S DAY SKETCH BY REV. D. A. CASEY, in the Magnificat.

Over the miles of ocean space they are calling—these Voices from the glens of Ireland. A soft croon from the fair plains of Tipperary; a wailing cry from the desert ranches of Meath; a stern call from the rugged heights of Mayo; a plaintive banishes heaving from the empty halls of Tara; a murmur as of many voices from the glorious Yellow Ford. From glen and hillside and sun-kissed plain is Caitlan calling on this night of memories, and eyes shine brighter and hearts beat faster at the sound of her voice, for she is a fair sweet-heart, is Caitlan-ni Houlihan, and broad as the earth is her kingdom, and countless as the stars her lovers. It matters not whether they dwell in gorgeous city mansion or lonely log cabin, rich or poor, they have wooed and loved her, and she smiles alike on all. It may have been yesterday you knelt at her feet or kissed her goodbye: it may have been many, many years ago. Caitlan of the unforgettable heart has not forgotten you. Every day she stands on the mountain top looking out across the sea for a sight of the ship that is bringing you back to her. And every night she kneels by her lonely couch and prays the God of Nations to keep and guard you. She is weary waiting for that to-morrow that will bring you back to her. But it is ever to-morrow, to-morrow, and to-morrow never comes. Yet does she keep on hoping against hope that some day you will sire of your wanderings and come back to her. She has many other lovers, but you she cannot, she will not forget. It is you she wants—you to kneel at her feet, to hold her soft white hand, to kiss her red lips. You are far away and lonely and she would cuddle you to her breast and comfort you. She would to her best and comfort you. She would to her best and comfort you. She would to her best and comfort you.

But a mother never forgets, and Caitlan of the many lovers is the mother of the Gael. A mother's heart, the holiest thing on earth, treasures your memory, and as long as the shamrock grows green in her valleys so long will she remember you—so long will the Spirit Voices call you.

The Spirit Voices? They are forever calling, but to-night of all nights you hearken to their incessant pleading. Come back? Come back? To the heart that is hungry for you, to the home that is lonely, and the eyes that are dim for a glimpse of you. "The hearts that don't forget" are calling you—the hearts of your kindred. From the storied heights of Tyroconnell their pleading comes to you. From the glens of Wicklow they speak in the night winds that play about the moors of Kerry. You catch their accents in the lapping of the waters at the lonely feet of Kin-coora. And the din of the city streets is as the echo of fairy music; the babel of the many voices is as the chanting of the Litany amid the broken cloisters of Clonmacnoise; the very winds that wake the silence of the forest glades are as the cooing of the mighty dove. Caitlan of the Unforgettable Heart will not suffer herself to be forgotten. Her spell is ever upon you, but it is at such a time as this that you especially feel her witching thralldom. Scenes that you had thought forgotten crowd the portals of memory: Voices long silent whisper in your listening ear. Faces you have loved people the shadows. Ah, it is to-night of all nights Caitlan of the many lovers speaks to your hearts. And there is a strange, gripping of the heart as you listen, for the call of Caitlan is the saddest cry on earth—the home cry of the Gael.

It was on the Curragh quay at Queenstown one beautiful morning in early August that I first heard the call of Caitlan. The great liner that had left Liverpool at midnight was now nearing the Cove of Cork. Like some huge dragon it came ploughing its way through the breakers, as if impatient for the feast the tender was bearing forth to its hungry maw. The salon and second cabin had already embarked. They were a happy, careless crowd, returning Americans for the most part, already counting the hours until the statue of Liberty would welcome them back to the great land of their adoption.

"Third class passengers, open up your tickets," calls the man at the gangway. I had heard so much of

the bleeding wound of emigration, of the heart-rending separation between parents and children, brothers and sisters; of the going forth into an exile more bitter than death, that it was with interest I turned from my place on the deck of the little vessel to see the crowd that was now preparing to come aboard. They were fine, strapping lads, and handsome lasses for the most part, with here and there a sprinkling of grey hairs—fathers and mothers going out to join their children in the great strange West. One by one they crossed the narrow gangway—the bone and sinew, the health and strength, the youth and beauty of this stricken land. No smile on the white, drawn faces; no merry glance from the tear filled eyes; no cheery call from the quivering lips. Above the autumn sun shone brightly in the unclouded sky; a blackbird thrilled forth his soulful melody from the groves on the hillside; the clang of the cathedral bell called the early worshippers to Mass; scarce a ripple broke the azure surface of the bay. Everything in nature spoke of life and happiness. One felt it good to be alive. But there was a blot on the fair canvas as though some devouring moth had settled upon it. There was a discordant note in nature's grand melody. It was as though the summer's sun shone down upon, and the birds sang in the trees above, some lonely country churchyard where the grass grows above the graves of the forgotten dead. Here was death-in-life, the passing of a nation, its manhood fleeing from a land fruitful as another Eden. How many tragedies have been enacted here upon this quay of Queenstown? What deeds of heroism, epic in their greatness, have had their setting? Under God, and Victor, guardian angel of His Irish people, who can tell?

One typical example must be recorded. When nearly everyone had crossed the narrow gangway we noticed a poor old woman clinging to her boy in one long farewell embrace. She was loth to part with him, and although her eyes were dry we knew her heart was breaking. True daughter of the Mother of Martyrs she tried to make the parting less bitter for her son by denying nature its tribute of tears! But the filial heart would not be denied, and great as the sea were the sobs that shook that manly frame. A gruff call from the official cut short the leave taking. The young man pressed one last kiss upon the withered forehead above which the grey hairs fell back under the neat white cap, then the narrow plank echoed to his footsteps, and she was alone. The whistle sounded; the gangway was drawn up; the engines throbbled, and we were away. Then it was that a cry, as awful and heart-rending as ever fell upon mortal ears, rang out over the waters. No words can convey its depth of misery. Rachel was weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they were not. That cry on the quay at Queenstown is still ringing in my ears. I have seen the infant fawn from its mother's arm, a blossom nipped in the bud ere yet the warm sunshine of life had time to wake it upwards and bring it to maturity. I have stood above the new-made grave and saw a mother look down upon the coffin of her only child. It was terrible, but it was Nature's law. But this death-in-life was something that nature rebelled against as ever more terrible than death itself. It was a poor broken hearted figure that toiled slowly back to her home amongst the mountains that August morning. The sun shone upon her pathway, but the sun of her life had set forever. No more would she stand at the cabin door as the shadows lengthened to welcome his home coming after the day's task had been accomplished. No more would his presence make sunshine in the humble cottage. No more would they kneel together upon the earthen floor to tell the beads, before seeking their well-merited repose. The leaden hours would lengthen out into weeks, the weeks into months and years, until the hour struck that called her on a longer journey, and the stranger's hand it was that would prepare her for that journey. But the giant of the waters went its way unheeding this tragedy of the lonely mothers of Ireland.

The lonely Irish mothers explain the Spirit Voices. It is from such homes as we have described their message comes over the waters. And somehow, out in the great new world, they wake responsive echoes in exile breasts. The telepathy of love and grief links up the leagues that part. Memory annihilates distance. From out the shadows faces peer at you, and ghosts of the dead past go by in the darkness. And oh! who is this that with gentle step and gentler touch comes to you in the twilight of this festive day of the Gael? Aye, there is magic in the touch, and it needs not the familiar lips to tell you that the best beloved on earth that has come to you with the spirit Voices. Away in our Tipperary home she has been counting the days that will bring you back to her, but this night of nights she cannot remain away from you, so she comes to you on the wings of the wind and bears you back with her across the miles of space, back to the old, old home. To-morrow is Patrick's day, and she wants to pin your Patrick's Cross upon your shoulder. You have outgrown that you think, but in her eyes you are still the baby she carried in her arms in the golden days ere grief had set its seal upon her brow. Poor, lonely mother? She will think of you to-morrow as she kneels at Mass in the village chapel. When she sees other

mother's boys come in and kneel beside them she will think of you. And it will be through a mist of tears that she will look up at the altar and at Father Pat saying Mass. And many's the prayer will be said for you, and many a beads will she offer up to the desolate mother ere she returns to the home that knew you as a boy. And then she will take down your letters and read them over—poor, faded lines, blotched by a mother's tears, until maybe some kind hearted neighbor dropping in, will find her crying over them and will tell her "not to be foolish," and to put them away. Ah, poor lonely Irish mothers! God bless them everyone, and comfort their desolate hearts. May they live to see the ship come in over the waters—to see the dawning of the day when the Spirit Voices will not call in vain.

The Spirit Voices? Do you not hear them calling. Across the miles of space they come borne on the breeze that has its source 'mid the hills of Ireland. And it blows softly through the city streets, gliding in at open windows, rustling memoranda on the business man's desk, climbing up long flights of steps to where, in lonely garrets, the toilers are resting after the heat of the day, or maybe it taps gently at some aristocratic suburban villa, half afraid to enter here. And to one and all it bears the same message—a message from Ireland. Then again it takes wing and is away to the hills and the fields, over great rivers and through lonely forests, searching out the child of Ireland. And it enters in with the smell of the health-clad hill, munter heavy upon it and the murmur of the limpid brook in its wake. And old eyes brighten, and young hearts beat proudly for it is the call of the blood, the voice of Caitlan. A mere speck on the world's surface. A tiny little island far out on the breast of the sea. And yet the eyes of the Gael turn towards it as the exiled Israelites looked to Jerusalem and the Sacred Mount.

"Whence this fever? Whence this burning, Love and longing?"

Answer it, burning and lonely heart, Answer it, leagues of ocean foam, That widely, darkly and drearily Part the wandering Celt from his native home."

It is only the exile's heart can answer. Only the exile understands what is meant by the call of the Spirit Voices.

THE ACADIANS

WAS BELCHER ACTING ILLEGALLY IN DEPORTING THEM

Editor of the Halifax Chronicle:

Sir:—The sketch of the life and public services of Chief Justice Belcher, which the Chief Justice, Sir Charles Townshend, read at the meeting of the Nova Scotia Historical Society on Friday evening, is a valuable and important contribution to the political history of the province. Prepared after careful and full investigation into every source from which information could be gleaned, and presented, as might be expected, in attractive form, it was fitting that a resolution was passed at the conclusion of the meeting, requesting the early publication of the paper in the printed records of the society.

Belcher was a highly educated man. He was likewise a well-trained and careful lawyer. Very shortly after he assumed the duties of his public office in Nova Scotia, he pointed out to the Governor and the other members of the council, he himself being a member, that that body exceeded its powers in passing ordinances; imposing taxation on the people and otherwise regulating their civil duties. No such power was given to the government in his commission and instructions; and all the powers the Governor had were derived from these documents. His powers were stated in clear and unmistakable terms in the commission and if he assumed powers not provided for in the commission, his action therein was illegal and void. The commission authorized the Governor to constitute his council to assist him in the government of the country, and the council was accordingly constituted; but the commission continued to be the sole charter of his powers until an assembly should be summoned.

The opinion of Chief Justice Belcher was concurred in by the law officers of the Crown, one of whom afterwards became the famous Lord Mansfield, and to that opinion we owe very largely so early in the history of our colony the establishment of our representative institutions. In this matter Belcher displayed the caution and spirit of a careful lawyer and legislator; he manifested a feeling of solicitude and anxiety that the body of which he was a member—the Governor and Council—should perform no act, should adopt no policy and should pass no ordinance which was not fully authorized by law.

There was, however, another matter in which he took a large share of responsibility, because it had his approval and support as a member of the council. With respect to this matter one may fairly ask upon what legal grounds Chief Justice