ELLEN AHERN;

THE POOR COUSIN.

CAPTER XVI. - (Continued.)

Ellen Abern and Therese, with Cato at hand, kent watch in the room adjoining Mr. Wardell's, that they might be in readiness on the shortest notice to render any assistance the medical men may require. But he still remained in a comatose state, scarcely breathing, and only giving evidence of life by an occasional spasmodic twitching of his eyelids. Therese had sobted herself to sleep about midnight, exhausted with the excess of emotion she had endured throughout the day: and Ellen Ahern sat listening with strained ears for every sound that came from the sick room—the soft, cautious tread of the physicians as they passed to and from the bedside of their patient, and their low, earnest whispering when they consulted together on his case. Once or twice she glided noiselessly in to ask how Mr. Wardell was, and inquire if there was anything that she could do, but no change bad taken place and her services were not needed, so she returned to resume her lonely vigils and earnest prayers beside Therese. It had been thought best not to inform Mrs. Wardell of the illness of her son, her own state being so precari ous that it was feared that tie shock and anx sety together might kill her: and as the physicians had not abandoned all hope of relieving him, it was deemed judicious to postpone imparting his illness to her until it could be ascertained with some certainty whether life or death would ensue. Accustomed for many years to not seeing her son for days together, when he was more than ordinarily engrossed with business, and caring but little for the company of Ellen Abern or Therese, she remained quite ignorant of the great sorrow with which the house was full : and felt, withal, no little relief at being left once more to herself. Her room was too remote from the front of the house to hear the continual stir and muffled sounds from it; and her nurse, who was a quiet, prudent person, had received strict orders to mention nothing to her.

Faint luminous streaks in the sky, and the paling of eastern constellations, as they dipped down towards the horizon, announced the approach of day dawn. Snow had fallen heavily during the place. Why it was only 'tother night we took night, and lay drifted in great piles along the sidewalks, while the north-west wind, which had under her shawl, and she wasn't a gal after all, inner tife was unchanged by the outward rites arisen and swept the clouds from the heavens, only a fellow dressed up like one. Next night, and divine Sacraments he had received. Only still raved and shricked through the deserted streets. Ellen Abein still knelt beside Therese, pleading and importuning Heaven that the life of her benefactor might be spared; spared only long enough-if his days were indeed numbered -to attend to the affairs of his soul and receive the Sacraments. Everything was hushed and silent, except when a sound, half sob half sigh, arose from the breast of the sleeping child, or a glowing coal crumbled and tell in sparkling fragments through the hars of the grate. Suddealy, she heard a low indistinct murmur of voices in the sick room; she sprang lightly to her feet and listened. She heard Mr. Wardell's voice, and flew to the door just in time to bear bim say, in a fretted, drowsy tone, as if just roused from a deep sleep :- What are you ing women, mostly-ain't able to do it. But shout in room, at this hour? Then they told here we are. This is the church, miss; good other, that it was an evidence of some disorder him who they were, and that he had been very ill, offering at the same time the remedies and nourishment they had prepared for him. And he thanked God that he was spared-thanked Him in simple and brief words that He granted him a return of his faculties, and time to complete his unfinished task. Then, with the docility of a child, swallowed what his physicians offered him. After resting a moment, and surveying his left hand, which lay heavy and lifeless beside him, with a curious and unreadable glance, he asked that ' Miss Ahern be sent for.'

My dear sir, quiet is imperatively necessary for you, observed the doctor.

"Of body or mind, sir?" he asked, in his old

caustic way. Both, sir, if possible; but particularly quiet

of mind. Then, sir, I must see Miss Abern. I have a great stake in living. Believe me, I shall do nothing to increase the odds against me. Send for her.

bedside,, his lifeless hand folded in both of hers: arm and leg were paralized, but it would and, while tears streamed over her cheeks, she take time to remedy that, if it was God's told him in a low, gentle voice, how glad she was that he wes better.

Thank you, Miss Ahern. I have something to say to you. Will you do me a favor? With all my heart, sir.'

Very good. Lean over here. I am as fee-ble as a child. Go to your room, wrap yourself up warm, and make Cato take a lantern and go with you, without losing a moment, to the church o C street, and rouse up the old Father who officiates there. Tell him that a dying man

8 10 17

' Thursday, sir.'

'Tuesday night-he'll remember,' said Mr. Wardell, in his usual quick, imperative way.

'I will go this instant !' replied Ellen Abern, scarcely able to restrain her joy; 'meantime, sir, invoke the aid of Mary, conceived without sin.' Then, pressing his hand, she went with a quiet, light step to do his bidding. She found Cato at his master's door, and told him that he was better, and wished him to accompany her with a lantern to C---- street, on an errand which admitted of no delay. The faithful fellow, crying and sobbing with joy-for he was deeply attached to the man be had served over wenty years, and from whom he had received nothing but kindness-was soon ready, and they started on their darksome way. In some places the drifts of snow were impassable for so slight as he was able to do so, to dispense his means a form as Ellen Ahern's, and it was only by being lifted like a child in Cato's strong arms and carried through them, that she was able to proceed. Then the wind threatened to take her off her feet several times, and she was glad to cling by the frail class of her hands to the negro s burly arm. They met one of the night watch him to make a fervent act of contrition, and who was going the last round on his beat, who challenged them and demanded their business out at that hour.

'We's gwine to Church,' replied Cato,

" We are going to seek a priest for a person who is dangerously ill,' added Ellen Ahern.

'A priest, the mischief!' growled the watchman, holding up his lantern to inspect them: 'a white 'oman and a nigger! Come 'long to the watch-house; ,ou're arter no good, I'll swear.'

Do not detain us, I implore you,' said Ellen Ahern, earnestly; 'We are members of Mr. Wardell's family; he is extremely ill, and this is his servant.

'Mr. Wardell! Yes, I heard about his having a stroke. How is he miss?' said the man, who was inspired with respect at the sound of that great name, and also by Ellen's appearance and earnestness.

'Slightly better, but extremely ill yet,' she replied moving ou.

'I'll go with you, miss; some of my comrades might think it their duty to stop ye; you know there is a great deal of deviltry going on in this up a gal that had a bag full of burglar's tools we grabbed a man 'tother side of the bridge running for life, he was jingling of something in a green bag that he carried, and 'twas a good bit afore we caught up with him, and when we did-ba, ba, ba ! it makes me laugh many a time since to think of it, who should it be but Dr. | lionaire was thought to be one of Janger; and Butler, going full speed with his instruments to cut some poor devil's leg off. But Mr. Wardell will be a mighty great loss to to the city, miss, if he dies. He's a good man—so charitable to the poor. Lord bless you, miss, you wouldn't believe the mount of wood and coal that

man gives away every winter.' ' I don't doubt it, said Eilen.

And I don't know how many houses he's got that don't pay rent, 'cos the tenants-poor sew-

"Tis a'past five o'clock, an' all's well," shouted the watchman in a stentorian voice, as he halted at the corner-the last stopping-place on his beat-to cry the hour and go home-

The good and boly old man whom they had come in quest of, and who we will introduce to our readers as Father St. John, was un and preparing to go into the church to celebrate Mass, but laying aside his vesiments as soon as he heard their errand, he sent the scholastic who had come into the sacristy to serve and assist him at Mass, for another Father, he got the boly oils and took from the Tabernacle the divine viaticum, which he deposited in his bosom, there threw on his surplice and stole, over which he cast an ample cloth clock, and was ready to accompany them to Mr. Wardell's; who, by the time they armved, had rallied considerably, and was thought by the physicians-who hoped, from the absence of all unfavorable symptoms-to be In another moment Ellen Abern was by his at least out of immediate danger. His left will that he should ever be finally restored .--An expression of intense satisfaction brightened up his stern white face when Ellen Abern led Father St. John to his bedside, and a glowing spot appeared on each cheek .-Requesting to be left alone with the priest, the medical men retired to the next room, while Ellen Ahern went down to suggest to Cato the propriety of sending them some strong coffee and he continued to be, and also the fact of his hay-intently on his countenance, and allhough her other refreshments, which she thought wisely ing received the Sacraments of the Church .they must need after their long and sleepless Almost dumb with amazement and grief, she sat import of his words, she was determined for her

Tuesday after nightfall-told him that he was the man, and proceeded to unbosom himsolf freely and without reserve-concealing nothing -extenuating nothing-keeping back no part or tithe of his soul's history, until his heart was emptied of the stagnant pool that had been fesexperienced eye of Father St. Father St. John, by; the old fear being uppermost in her mind. who was deeply versed in spiritual affairs, to see his readiness to do all and whatever was necessary, even to the abandonment of all earthly and human considerations; but, unable to decide at once what special reparation would be necessary under the circumstances, he advised him to make his good resolutions with fervor, and, as soon as liberally among the poor and destitute, and found an asylum for children abandoned by their pa rents. Then, with many sweet and touching words of counsel and admonition, he exhorted him to be faithful to the grace Almighty God bad so remarkably favored him with-directed gave bim absolution. And as the morning sunbeams glanced like flashes of glory into the room, the weary produgal who had so long wandered astray from His Father's honse, partook of the Banquet prepared for him, as arrayed in robes of honor, and trembling yet with the joy of his Father's embrace, he reposed, tranquilhumble-and overwhelmed with the accumulated blessings that he had received. Could it be ?-Had he really stripped his soul of the ragged and loathsome garb of sin that had so long clothed it ? Had he-so long offending-really received boly absolution? And, more wonderful than all, did he hold within his breast H m who was ready to light and smooth his way into Eternity? Was it possible that all those senses, which had so many times dishonored instead of honored God, had been purfied and made clean by the holy announting? Silence was all be could essay-there was no word that could express the least emotions-he was lost in the immensity of his thoughts — in the depths of his humility-of his gratitude, his compunction and his adoration. But he gave no outward sign, when they came and spoke to him after Father St. John went away, his replies were curt and brief, as was his wont, and for all they knew his Ellen Ahern knew that it must be otherwise with him now, and was satisfied to know it with out wishing to bear him expatiate on it. The next morning the city papers announced

the gratifying intelligence that the eminent milthe fluctuations of hope and fear in so many hearts were calmed; and the money market, in which he represented immense interests, regained tidings, it went abroad-the greatest marvel of the day-that Mr. Wardell had become a Catholic-that one of the Jesuit Fathers from - street was with him daily-that he had received the Sacraments of the Church, and contormed in every particular to its dogmas and precents. And one whispered confidentially to the still hanging about his brain, the result of the stroke he had bad. If he had been perfectly sound, nothing could have induced him to throw himself away body and soul in that way into the hands of the Jesuits, which fact most of all astonished them. But they were well meaning people, wise in their generation concerning the things of time, but densely ignorant in relation to Sacred History, and the true meaning of the Word of God; and as no extraordinary event followed, and Mr. Wardell began ere long to receive his old friends and attend somewhat to his business-though confined to his sofa and chair-with his usual clear-headed sagacity, the excitement and wonder subsided, and was after a few days forgotten in the absorbing, incessant demands of business. It is true, they heard some talk of a magnificent scheme for the relief and maintenance of foundlings, but they thought it

farther attention. about her son's protracted absence from her room, and sent for Ellen Ahern and Therese repeatedly, to question them, asking them when he would come; when they had seen him, charging them with numerous messages, commanding his presence, and warning him to do nothing foolish. for the old thoughts and fears still haunted her. and made her miserable. At length Ellen, at Mr. Wardell's request, broke it cautiously to her -how extremely ill he had been, how helpless

words she essayed to calm ber.

Did I hear you right? Did you say she had seen a priest, and confessed?' she said, irefully. 'Yes. Father St. John has been with him every day.'

'How does be treat bim? I'd like to know tering within it for years. It was easy for the how he behaves to my son ?' she asked faltering-

Oh, madam, how could be do otherwise than the genumeness of his penicent's contrition, in behave tenderly and reverently towards such a man as Mr. Wardell?'

> 'Certainly. Send him to me when he comes again. I'll tell him a secret he doesn't know .-I dare say he believes everything his penitent told him! Very well, send him to me, that's all. he'd 'a died than done the thing he has. Be

Shall I bring him then? 'Didn't I tell you to? Yes, if he comes at midnight, fetch him. I've no notion of such runmad doings. My son's as soft as bog mud,' she exclaimed. Now ring for my nurse, and be off with you. I wish I could never see you again; coming here, all the way across the ocean, to stir up muddy waters with your Maguire eyes and pious doings,' she muttered to herself as Ellen eft the room, with a beavy step and dejected heart, but breathing a prayer to heaven that the bilter old woman's heart might become changed.

The same day about noon, as Mrs. Wardell sat shaking and jerking her head to and fro in her chair, pondering on what she had heard, and adding it to her vague and horrible fears, until she was almost freezied, muttering at intervals uncanny words, which might have been construed into curses, she beard a strange voice distinctly pronounced these words:- Peace be unto all bere,' and giving a start she looked up and saw a tall venerable mon, in a black, flowing sutan, with a rosary and crucifx depending from the leather girdle about his waist, standing before her. His countenance wore a look of such blended sweetness and severity, of authority and compassion, that she shrunk instinctively from his glance, and fell back cowering and speechless in her chair, for more than a score of years had passed since she had even looked on a priest, much less been brought in contact with one.

'You appear to be a great sufferer, my poor child.' said Father St. John, drawing her side, and speaking in a soothing tone.

'How is my son, to-day?' she gasped. 'He is recovering slowly, but, I hope, surely. Did I understand Miss Ahern to say that you

wished to see me ?' inquired Father St. John, 'Yes, I sent for you-not for myself, for its

nooody's business but my own how I suffer, or its buoyancy and stability. But with the good in what way I choose to die, so don't expect to get anything out of me.'

· God help you, my poor child; with such Jispositions, I can only pray for you. But what can I do for you?

'Do! Nothing for me, your reverence. I only wanted to put you on your guard about my son, and warn you not to believe a word he tells you about anything wrong that he funcies he did long ago, for he never harmed anything or anybody in his life. You see,' she went on to say, fully intent on screening and saving the honor of her son, while her poor old head jerked ruefully to and fro, 'you see he had a brain f ver many years ago, and got over it all except thinking that he had murdered a child, and that sticks to him-he can't get rid of it; and I'm atraid he'll bring himself to some desperate end about it yet. But don't believe a word of it-it's a lie from beginning to end.

'My dear child,' said Father St. John, gently, do not deceive yourself. Your son has made a true and humble confession of his past life, and vou have not to learn at this late day that the secrets of the confessional are inviolable and sacred. Hence, I beg of you not to resort to what must needs be burtful to your conscience to screen or excuse an act which, bitterly repented was only one of his ercentric charities—he had and humbly atoned for, has already received the a sound disturbed the hushed suliness of the often done things as foolish-and they gave it no forgiveness of Almighty God. Rather let me room. Mr. Wardell sat as motionless as she, persuade you, who must soon appear before the Mrs. Wardell had become restless and uneasy dread tribunal of Jesus Christ, to do penance for vour long neglect of duty, and seek to be restored to the favor of God through His I).vine ing. Sacraments. Human respect, and the vain fear of things to come, and which may never happen, however much they may support the soul in its rebellious defiance of God during life, will leave it forsaken, defenceless, and despairing in the hour of death and judgment.'

While he uttered these impressive words. Mrs. Wardell kept her cold, sunken eyes fixed heart was qualing and trembling at the awful

stranger who had come into his confessional on within her, even when with gentle, soothing are mistaken. I'd suffer ten thousand deaths, in this world and the next, before a single breath could be forced from my lips that would criminate my son; and your reverence may tell him so. If I could get to him, I'd shame him-I'd shame him, I would, to put his good name in peril

> Be calm, my poor child. Your son's secret, imparted to me under the seal of Sacramental confession, is as much buried as it he and I were in our graves. No human power-no human torture could wrest it from me. But I will go away now, praying that you will not much longer neglect the grace of Almighty God-reject His tender mercy and His offered pardon, but open your heart to Him. I cannot believe that you Tell my son if I could walk or be moved, I'd have forgotten all those early and innocent days come to him and never leave him. I'd rather of your life in old Ireland, when your faith was dearer to you than the breath of life, and where sure, you, and tell him so, and send the priest to your feet daily pressed the sod beneath which me,' said Mrs. Wardell, with spasmodic energy, slumbered the bodies of saidts and martyrs. Nor He will be here between 12 and 1 o'clock. has old age obliterated the remembrance of the parents who taught you to lisp the name of God ere you knew what that holy name meant, and who died in the sweet hope of eternal life and of a re-union at some future day with the children of their love. And there are others still nearer and dearer-I mean the busband of your youth, who died in the faith of his fathers, and with the humility of a Christian; and your babes-those sinless, innocent ones who, dwelling in the presence of the Most High, intercede for and watch over you-nay-who knows but that at this moment they eagerly await your decision ?' Father St. John had touched the right chord; the palsted head bad become gradually still; the ellish. lurid look melted away like a grim, grotisque cloud from her face, leaving thereon something more soft and human, while tears, strange and unworted guests in those sunken sockets, rolled over her shrivelled face. Her head sunk low on her breast, and Father St. John stole away from. the room, thinking it best to leave her with her own thoughts.

A lew days afterwards, Therese, who had gone up after dinner to sit with Mr. Wardell, ran down into the school room, where Eilen Ahern was writing letters, with the joyful tidings that he had taken a step or two about the room, leaning on her shoulder and his crutch, and that he was now sitting up in his large chair, and wanted her to come up and read the papers to him; 'you know, Miss Abern, papa does not admire my style of reading,' said the child, laughing.

'I will come immediately, dear Therese letters do not go until to morrow,' replied Ellen Abero, kissing the glowing cheek of Therese, and locking ber portfolio. 'But whither away?'

'To grandmamma; she sent for me,' answered Therese, hastening from the room.

Mr. Wardell held out his hand to Ellen Abern as she came towards him, and thanked her for not keeping him waiting, for 'his patience,' he declared, 'was almost worn thread-bare, he had been starving so long for the news.'

'I am very glad, sir, to find you so much improved. Do not starve any more for the news; I will come up at any time and read it to you, until you are able to read it yourself,' replied Ellen, opening the papers.

'The moment I begin to read,' he resumed. the letters begin to doze about in such an odd.

way, that they seem alive.' That will wear off, sir, no doubt. You

should not try again until you are strong. Ellen now observed Mr. Wardell more closely, and saw that although he looked very wan and thin, there was neither langor or suffering in his countenance. 'Neither should you attempt to write. I will do whatever writing you may wish done.'

'I think if you are my reading clerk, it will do,' replied Mr. Wardell. 'Begin.' And Ellen Ahera read through column after column of the daily papers, until the shadows from the gathering twilight crept so stealthily and dimly into the room, that she could no longer distinguish oneletter from another. The paper lay open on her knee, while her thoughts wandered silently and swiftly away-like the flight of a spirit-to the distant and beloved scenes at Fermanagh. Not and his thoughts were apparently as wandering.

'Miss Ahern!' he said, abruptly. 'Did you speak sir ?' answered Ellen, start-

Your thoughts are in Ireland! Yes, sir. Somehow this bour is always filled with thoughts of home."

' And how does old, gray Fermanagh, and the ruins at Catha-guira look at twilight?? 'Sir - what - now? What do you know of

my old home?' asked Ellen in blank amazement.

'I was there once upon a time, Miss Abern, but it was long, long years gone by.'

And how did you know, sir, that I came from

By your name; and something about your.

awaits his presence—the same who was with him vigils. Left alone with the man of God, Mr. shaking so violently and glowering so vengefully son's sake to brave it out and excfaimed: Wardell had no difficulty in reminding him of the on her, that Ellen Abern felt her heart qualing on-wat is to-day? It ye think to worm anyting out of me, ye A SHORE CONTRACTOR OF THE STATE (i) The Third Property of the The The Third Property of the control of the con