

BESSY CONWAY;

OR,

THE IRISH GIRL IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

IN the heart of the rich and fertile county of Tipperary, not far from the banks of the silvery Suir, and almost in the shadow of the mouldering castle of Ardfinnan, there is a snug and comfortable farm-house owned by one Denis Conway, as decent a man, so the neighbors say, as you would find in the five counties. Denis is what you may call a "sponsible farmer," he holds some fifty acres of as good ground as any in Tipperary, and that at an easy rent, so easy, indeed, that Denis is putting by something every year for the "rainy day." No wonder that he should, when he can, for he has lived through the darkest and most dismal of "rainy days," when gaunt famine stared in at the door and pestilence at the window; when a shilling was worth a precious life, and a pound of meal its weight in gold, because of the hunger that was gnawing at the people's hearts, and Denis Conway had seen all that, and, moreover, he had lost his farm and his dwelling in that dreary time, and was turned out with his family to seek shelter where they could find it, all because he could not pay his rent, then fearfully in arrear. So even as a *burnt child* is said to dread the fire, Denis had a salutary fear of being again penniless, and now that God had given him back the blessing of prosperity,