

THE BLAKES AND FLANAGANS.

BY MRS. JAS. A. SADDLER.

CHAPTER XI.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE TURNS UP. It was "past twelve" when Tim Flanagan's guests...

It happened that the Sheridans had to pass a tavern of the very lowest description...

"All right, father-go ahead!" said Mike; "we'll be as quiet as mice."

"I guess you did, Hugh—the old shark got bit on me. Ha, ha!"

"But who have we here?" said the first speaker,luckily catching a glimpse of Annie Sheridan's fair face.

"Why, now, Dan," said Mrs. Sheridan, "can it be possible that he's so far gone as that?"

"Not so old as you think," said Dan to himself; "young enough and strong enough to deal with the like of you the best day ever you were."

"A fine night, Miss!" said the fellow called Hugh, coming up close to poor Annie, whose little heart throbbled as though it would burst its prison.

"Not so fast there!" cried the drunken assailant; "I'm bound to have a look at this here gal. I say, young woman, won't you take my arm?"

"Hands off!" cried Mike; "don't dare to lay a finger on her!"

on his posterior, telling him to take that by way of a keepeake. Mrs. Sheridan and her daughter had just got into the house, where Nancy, the maid-servant, had been sitting up waiting for them.

"Never mind wakening the men, Jenny!" said her husband from without, "Mike and I have settled the fellow."

"You did, indeed, father!" said Mike, laughing heartily, "what a great lubberly poltroon the fellow is!"

"I wish you jay of your admirer, Annie!" said Mike, with a smile. "Do you know who he is?"

"Annie began to pout. She was only fourteen, though tall for her age, and she was really so far behind the age as to feel ashamed at any allusion of the kind."

"Did you know him, father?" inquired Mike earnestly. "Know him! To be sure I did—wasn't it that vagabond Dillon? didn't I hear what you and he said to each other?"

"Mike cleared his throat once or twice before he attempted to answer. "Small thanks to me for that, father. I'd be very glad if I could ever forget your goodness to me, and, please God, I never will!"

"I hope that unfortunate Dillon isn't badly hurt," said Mike, thoughtfully. "I know he was only stunned, for I saw him beginning to move as I ran off to help your father."

"Even if he was hurt," said Dan, shortly. "You needn't bother yourself about him. Go to bed and try to get some sleep. Thanks be to God, it's no worse with us than it is!"

By degrees he arrived at the conclusion that it was himself—Hugh Dillon,—and no other, who lay there in his own proper person; then came the question—

went, it is true, but with little hope of succeeding; still he went, because he thought it his duty to go when asked; and he talked to Hugh with that mild dignity and persuasive eloquence which had won back many a soul from the ways of vice and error...

"That was Dr. Power's last visit to Hugh Dillon, who ever told as a capital joke how the priest had tried 'to come over him, but was confoundedly bit—the cunning old fox!"

"I guess it won't heal my arm!" "I guess it will," said Dan, with a growl. "I'll get me a doctor and some close confinement to do my eye—sure the feller, if ever I get my eye on him again, I'll do for him—I will, by—"

"All right, old feller!" responded Dillon, as they gained the door. "It will go hard with two of us, if we don't give him his oats! We owe him, let me see, a broken head, ditto an arm, together with an unmanly application of his boot to the rear of Bill's premises."

It was the morning after the merry meeting at Tim Flanagan's. Miles Blake and his wife were seated at the breakfast table. They had sent more than once to apprise the young people that breakfast was ready.

"Such had been the life of Hugh Dillon since we saw him at Mr. Simpson's school, sneering at Harry Blake for his Irish and native propensities. It was a pitiable life to contemplate, especially when taken in connection with Dillon's personal appearance, for he was really a fine-looking young fellow, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of his condition."

"When Hugh began to recover his consciousness, suspended for a while by Mike's well-timed lying against a lamp-post, and his first sensation was that of a man who had been in a sticky situation."

"How did I get here?" Now, it was nothing new for poor Hugh to find himself in similar circumstances, but he wanted to know who reduced him to such a state on the present occasion.

"Where can they have gone to?" he asked himself over and over again, thinking of his trusty comrades. "I guess their minding number one!"

At first this note was regarded by both parents as a practical joke, notwithstanding Eliza's assurance that it was no such thing; but, on inquiring of the servants, it was found that Henry had actually sent off his trunks very early in the morning.

"Now that's what I call real mean of you, Dillon!"—do you know that I've got my arm broken—and it was all along your quarrel, I had nothing to do with it. See there!"

"Well, it can't be helped!" replied Dillon, coolly. "Where's that blubbering feller, Bill? Hello! here he comes! I guess his arm ain't broken! He must always get it on the other end of him!"

"Bill only replied by a sullen grunt, and an affectionate consignment of the querist to the land of 'blazes.' Jim was in little better humor, so that Dillon found it expedient to lay a stickling-plaster over their mental wounds."

"But it wasn't the young man that I had to do with," said Bill, sullenly. "It was the old feller himself. I'll be changed if he hasn't the strength of two men in him! That leg of his was something harder than a doctor's allotted part, and the great amusement of Dillon, at least, for Jim was in no humor of laughing. His friend Boner sent for a doctor to set his broken limb, and in his hands we leave him. Well content are we to get back to 'other men and other scenes.' And yet the course of our narrative brings us but one step higher in the moral order."

"Eliza coming in at the moment prevented her mother from making any reply. "What in the name of goodness kept you so late?" said Mrs. Blake. "It's a shame for young people to be waiting for their father at the breakfast table!"

"No, indeed, I knew no such thing. Where else would he breakfast? Hush! here he comes!"

"My dear mother!—As my father thought proper to favor me last evening with an intimation that my ways were not altogether pleasing to him, I hereby beg to apprise you and him, with all due respect, that I would much rather perform that office myself than have him or any one else do it for me."

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Miles shook his head, but resumed his place at the table. His wife dried her eyes, and prepared to pour out the coffee. Eliza's kindness was the best consolation that either could have had at the moment, and their gratitude to her was so touchingly manifest, that Eliza could scarcely restrain her tears.

coffee. Eliza's kindness was the best consolation that either could have had at the moment, and their gratitude to her was so touchingly manifest, that Eliza could scarcely restrain her tears.

It seemed to her then that nothing could ever again induce her to treat them with disrespect. Whether she kept her good resolution remains to be seen.

"Hold on there, Zachary!" cried Blake, laughing; "I object to one of your terms; Mr. Miles Blake is no more my governor than he is yours."

"About eight, or half-past eight. Shall I call for you?" "If you please—you will find me ready."

"At eight o'clock, punctual to his appointment, came Zachary Thomson, and as the two friends walked arm-in-arm to the house where the Lodge assembled, Henry said, all of a sudden:

"Oh! that's all settled. The Lodge meets to-night, and I'll introduce you. I proposed you at the last meeting, and you are to be admitted this evening. I suppose you hardly thought it necessary to acquaint your governor with your intentions?"

"I tell the tale as 'twas told to me." "That Dillon is a great scamp!" said Zachary, with honest indignation.

"I don't doubt it—come along, my friend—my brother that it is to be! You are about to take an important step, but I have taken it before you!"

"Perfectly satisfied," was the response, "and much encouraged."

For fully five minutes, which seemed hours to her, the figure of the girl advanced and retreated, she was not to be made on her part, the monk raised his head and looked straight into the eyes of the girl. A pleading expression passed over his pale, haggard countenance as he fixed a pair of piercing eyes upon her, and then slowly and solemnly made a movement with his long, bony fingers, motioning her to rise and follow him.

mason, and he was quite sure it would be most beneficial to me to my profession. "Ah!" sighed Blake, "there is the advantage of having an enlightened, educated man for a father; I can almost envy you."

THE GHOSTS OF THE ABBEY. AGNES O'FARELL BOWEN IN CATHOLIC WORLD.

It was a very old, rather tumbled-down and dilapidated looking house. For years it had borne the reputation of being haunted and was supposed to have been a monastery in days gone by.

The country declared that the monks were to be seen nightly about the grounds, telling their beads, while one old friar in particular was reported to traverse certain corridors, and visit parts of the house in a manner which most decidedly seemed to point to the fact that some secret weighed heavily upon his mind.

This good spirit was described by those who alleged they had seen him as wearing a coarse brown habit fastened at the waist by a cord, the hood, or cowl, being always well drawn forward so as to conceal the head. A low murmuring sound, generally heard some distance off, was thought to warn people of the approach of the supernatural visitor, was supposed to accompany each apparition.

"No, I cannot say that I have been honored by a visit from his reverence myself," said our host, in answer to some of the questions asked; "but my daughter has seen the visitor twice, according to her story, but alas! never mustered sufficient courage to challenge him. I must acknowledge that we have all heard rather strange, uncanny sounds at times, but have seen nothing, so we put the peculiar noise down to no more romantic source than the settling of water rats. In spite of Mr. White's assertion that he saw some dark object hiding among the ruins of the old abbey church a few weeks ago, previously, the major still remained an unbeliever and could not be raised to sufficient enthusiasm to head the search party which we intended to institute.

Meantime Ella Leigh lay awake thinking of all the stories she had ever heard in connection with their new home. It was only of late years that the old Abbey had been purchased by her father, and now that she had finished school and was at liberty to indulge in a little romance of this sort she found it very interesting to hear the different stories told by the neighboring peasants.

With a terrible feeling of horror upon her Ella lay watching him, spell-bound with amazement, scarcely daring to breathe lest her attention might be attracted towards herself.

The mysterious figure stood for some time as though expecting the girl to address him, but all her boasted courage seemed to have deserted her. She only stared with wildly terrified eyes upon him, while her tongue, with which she would fain have summoned help, seemed to cleave to the roof of her mouth and was unable to perform its office.

For fully five minutes, which seemed hours to her, the figure of the girl advanced and retreated, she was not to be made on her part, the monk raised his head and looked straight into the eyes of the girl. A pleading expression passed over his pale, haggard countenance as he fixed a pair of piercing eyes upon her, and then slowly and solemnly made a movement with his long, bony fingers, motioning her to rise and follow him.

Her girls did not seem to walk, but rather glided along as though floating on air. Still keeping her courage well to the fore, the girl pressed on, closely following him as he traversed the landing outside her room. Pausing at last before an alcove which was quite big enough to hold the full-sized stature of a man, her strange guide paused.