imprisonment, he lay awake in pain, tossing from side to side in great agony. His mind was unusually active; and the sudden thought seized him to sketch a visionary future for his country, founded on this ideal of simplicity and self-renunciation. As his thoughts worked onwards, and built up this airy commonwealth of Christ, the pain was completely forgotten; and he fell asleep early in the morning. The doctor found his temperature much higher on his morning call; yet he declared him somewhat better.

"Doctor, I want something badly," said Luke. "Can I have it?"

"By all means," said the doctor. "What is it?"

"Pen, ink, and plenty of foolscap paper," said Luke. "Not yet," said the doctor. "I presume you have not yet learned to write with your toes."

It was so much the better, because Luke had time to think and develop his ideas more fully, before he committed them to paper.

Then the pain and sacrifice met with their immediate reward. There was no demonstration on his release from prison. He was an unknown factor in politics. Even in Rossmore there was no ovation. It was felt that he was above such things. But, during his imprisonment, every kindness and attention was lavished on his father and sister and her children, who had to become his guests in his little home. And the same silent, gentle sympathy flowed around him when he returned. Mary wept hysterically, and kissed his hands passionately; and wept still more when she saw his face drawn and pale from much suffering. John said:

"Bad luck to the Government and the landlords! Wonder they let him out alive!"

Every kind of shy, pathetic question was put to him by this sympathetic people; every kind of gentle, unobtrusive benevolence was shown him. They could not presume too far upon this grave, silent man; but they spoke their mute love and admiration in a hundred ways. Yet things were a little tightened in economical matters sometimes. Will McNamara had gone to America; but the father and Lizzie and the children were there. And children must have bread, and meat, and clothes, too. Nature says so, and must not be denied.

One day Luke was walking down the village street in his silent, abstracted way, when he heard a voice challenging him, and rather defiantly:

"What's the matther wid me mate, yer reverence?"

He turned round, and came face to face with the village butcher, Joe Morrissey. Joe seemed to be angry. There had been for a long time a certain want of sympathy between Joe and the "Cojutor." For Joe was a Nationalist, and an extreme one. He had been out in 67; had cut the telegraph wires between the Junction and Limerick; and had been one of the last part from the young Irishman who gave up his life gallantly for his country in the woods near Shrahsarla. And he had taken it as granted that this polished, well-dressed young priest, who was always preaching the virtues of the Anglo Saxon — their thrift, punctuality, etc., and consequently emphasizing the defects of his own countrymen —could not be a Nationalist or a patriot. His opinions changed a little after the sermon on Cremona; and had now completely veered round after the scene at the eviction and the subsequent knighthood of the jail.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Morrissey," said Luke, humbly, for life's events had made him very humble.

"I want to know, yer reverence," said Joe, clapping his broad knife across the palm of his hand, "what's the matther wid my mate that you're reflectin' on it?"

"I'm sure I'm quite unconscious, Mr. Morrissey," said Luke, quite puzzled, "of having said anything derogatory—"

"Look at that for mate," said Joe, unheeding, and slapping with the knife the joints that hung in the open window. "Is there the likes of that in the County Limbrick? Look at that for lane, red and juicy; and that fat, rich and creamey; and what's a poor man to do whin his clergy and the heads of his Church—"

"Don't mind him, yer reverence," said Mrs. Morrissey, coming out, and wiping away with her check apron the tears that were streaming down her face; "he doesn't mane what he says, yer reverence—"

"Will ye hold yer tongue, 'uman?" said Joe, angrily; "can't you let me talk whin a gintleman comes into the shop? I say, yer reverence, 'tis a shame that our clergy should be turnin' their backs on their dacent parishioners, and sindin' for their mate to Limbrick and elsewhere, whilst—"

"Never mind him agin, yer reverence," interposed Mrs. Morrissey, still weeping. "What he manes is, that every Saturday, wid God's blessin', for the future, a leg and a line (loin) will go down to you; and, sure, some time or other, you can pay us. And sure if you never did, God is good."

Joe had gone out in his indignation; and was looking up and down the street, in a very determined manner. Luke came out, and was about to express his gratitude when Joe stopped him.

"There's jest wan favour I want to ask yer reverence," he said.

"To be sure, Mr. Morrissey, if I can possibly grant it," said Luke, in wonder

"Oh begor, you can," said Joe, cheerfully. "Since I was the height of that," he said, stooping down and putting his open palm within six inches of the ground, "no one ever called me anything but Joe. Me father called me Joe; me mother called me Joe; me brothers and sisters called me Joe; the schoolmaster called me Joe, whin he didn't call me, 'You d—d ruffian!' Whin I grew up, and got married, me wife called me Joe; and whin God sint the childre, wan be wan, begor! they never called me annything but Joe. The youngster inside in the cradle knows me as well as yer reverence; and faix! he never calls me 'daddy,' but Joe. And to tell you the truth, yer reverence, whin you call me Misther Morrissey, I don't know who you're talking to. Would it make any difference to yer reverence to call me Joe, like all the nabours?"

"Certainly not, Mr.—Joe;" said Luke, deeply touched, and stretching out his hand. "God bless you!"

"'Tis dirty," said Joe, hastily rubbing his hand on his breeches, "but 'tis the hand of an honest man."

And Joe had the reward of his generosity. It came quickly, and in its most attractive form. That is, the little incident gave him the opportunity—the dearest that can fall to the lot of an Irishman in this world—of making a good joke. And so, when he sat that evening on the leaden ledge of his open window, and lit his pipe, he was a happy man.

"Begor," he said to the group that always surrounded his establishment, "'tis the best thing that occurred for many a long day 'Mind the pinnies,' sez he, 'an' the poun's will take care of theirselves.' Ha! ha! ha! 'Look out for a rainy day,' sez he, 'an' make hay while the sun shines.' Ha! ha! ha! ha! Begor! the poor man wint to a bad schoolmaster whin he began to tache himself. Faix, he hasn't even a butcher's penny to bless himself wid."

"How could he have it?" said a bystander, "whin he gives it to this, that, and the other wan. Begor, the Bank of England wouldn't sthand it."

"Look here, hones' man," said Joe Morrissey, taking the pipe out of his mouth, "that's all right; and tisn't me as is goin' to find fault with him. But, what did he want talkin' to us about savin' money, whin he wasn't savin' it himself; and all about English ways whin the man has an Irish heart, no matter how he consales it? That's what kills me. Sure, the ould sayin' is thrue—Do what the priests tell ye; but don't do what the priests do their-selves."

So public opinion surged around Luke in these days of trial. For now, Lizzie and her little children had to go away. The strong, brave young farmer had got a job in the docks of New York; and had paid their passage. And with breaking hearts on both sides, they parted with all they held dear on earth, and exchanged the free, pure air, the sweet waters, the rushing winds, the rustling trees, the murmuring seas, and freedom and happiness, for a flat in the tenement house in the great city, and the fever and the fret of a new life. Ah, me! will it ever cease—this dread transformation in lives that were never created but for the sweetness and purity, the silence and the holiness of simple rural environments? And one day, old Mike Delmege, "neart-broke after the little childhre," bowed his head, and was gathered unto his fathers.

Then there came a great void in Luke's life He shrank even more and more into himself; and without being in the least degree moody or reserved, he detached himself from all human things; and wrought in simple earnest love towards the Divine. But the few ties which circumstances had created for him—spiritual ties that grew all the stronger by reason of their unworldliness—drew him from time to time from his hermitage; and maintained for him that perfect poise between the world and God, which would otherwise have been broken by a morose asceticism or a too great leaning over to the creature. And so he kept up a constant and mutually edifying correspondence and intercourse with Father Tracey and Father Martin; and sometimes he found himself in a closer and more intimate friendship with his Bishop than he had ever dreamed of.

And one day, he found himself the happy intermediary in a little scene in the Canon's drawing room, which seemed to him a beautiful and divinely appointed denouement in the little drama in which he had been not always a successful actor.

The good Canon had had a relapse after the exciting scene at the eviction, and had sunk into a condition of extreme helplessness. One side was hopelessly paralyzed; and he had to be wheeled from room to room in a bath-chair The tolerant legislation of the Irish Church reflects strongly the charitable bias of the people's minds; and allows an aged pastor, "who has borne the burden of the day and the heat" and who is disqualified for further work, to retain his parish and presbytery to the end, in sturdy independence. And it was very beautiful and edifying to see the broken and enfeebled giant, rolled in and out to his little church, where he spent the greater part of his declining days. The little children used fight for the honor of rolling back across the gravelled walk their aged pastor. They had lost all fear of him now, even of the great snowy beard that swept down on his breast. And still the people came to consult him in their troubles and to talk of the golden age that had been. And so calmly and so peacefully his days glided on to the great sea over which he looked without fear, or terror, or misgiving. One thing only troubled this calm evening of life—the mystery that hung around his beloved niece. Her strange history had been carefully concealed from him, until all should be ripe for revelation

He was dozing calmly one summer afternoon, when Luke was announced. The latter had often called to exchange ideas with his old pastor, and to relieve the monotony of his illness. The Canon was not surprised, therefore, only deeply pleased at the announcement.

"Ha, my dear young friend" he said, "you caught me—ha—napping. Take a chair, and sit down with me for a while Somehow, old times seem to have come back most vividly this—a—afternoon"

He was silent for a time, his mind busily gathering up the broken threads of the past. Luke sought to divert his attention by telling of his own experiences.

"My sister and her husband are doing well in New York" he said. "I have had a letter lately, asking had any one taken Lisnalee."

"That is not very likely," said the Canon. "Lisnalee remains a monument, and forever—well, we must not be resentful. But—the events of that—ha—miserable day had one good effect. The horror has not—ha—been repeated; but the people are anxious, frightened, dispirited They know not when the evil spirit will come again"

"Yes," said Luke, mournfully; "the golden age of my poor parish is passed forever.

"Yet" he said, brightening up, "the world is not all a hopeless and helpless place; nor life altogether an insoluble problem."

"You have heard—ha—something that might excite your hopes, and—ha—sympathies?"

"Yes, sir," said Luke. "I have heard something that deeply concerns me, and—"

"I hope my conjecture is correct," said the Canon, listlessly; "and that His Lordship has yielded to my repeated—ha—solicitations; and, consulting for your unique circumstances advanced you to a—ha—benefice?"

"It is not quite that, sir," said Luke, feeling his way nervously. For now the drawing-room was opened as gently as if only the summer breeze had stolen in and touched it with a light finger "It is a something that also, if you will pardon me, may also concern you."

Luke was never so nervous before; not even on his first student visit to that dread presbytery. He thought the great clock on the mantelpiece quite impertinent in its noisy ticking.

"Alas!" said the old man, feebly, "very little concerns me now except that one great event. I did think, indeed — perhaps you will esteem it—ha—a harmless vanity—that the Bishop might have—well—offered me the Archdiaconate, before I died. But that was not to be! That was not to be!"

"The diocese thought he would have done so," said Luke, watching the door, intently; "but the Bishop looks mostly to the young. He would, however, have given any honor to our old friend, Father Tracey, I believe; but that great saint will have none of these things"

"I haven't always agreed with that excellent but—ha—rather eccentric clergyman," said the Canon; "but I dare say he is right—quite right!"

"What I am referring to, however, sir," said Luke, now in a state of desperation, "is something that concerns you even more deeply—something that has been the thought and dream of your life"

The old man seemed sunk in a kind of stupor; but something in Luke's words seemed to wake him up to a new life; for he started, and asked in an excited whisper:

"Barbara!"

It was the question he had been asking for twelve weary years. He now dreaded to hear again the eternal answer—No! And his face pleaded eloquently against it

"You know something?" he said. And Luke said, "Yes!"

"It is a strange coincidence," said the Canon, his face lighted up with a new emotion, "that just as you were announced, this afternoon I was dreaming of Barbara. I suppose it is senile weakness, or the mental debility arising from my condition; but in a half doze I thought I—ah—saw my dear niece entering drawing room with such easy grace and dignity. Ah me! those were happy days, did we know it. But you were about to say—ha—my dear young friend, that you had some news from Barbara. There is that—ha—singular delusion again. I fear, my young friend, that my intellect is becoming weak. It's a singular delusion, but now I think, of course, it is only an hallucination, that there in that doorway—ha—what—my God!—"

Ah, yes! dear old soul this time there was no delusion; for a figure of light did stand in the dark framework of the door, clothed all in white, save a tiny thread of blue; and that figure of light did tremble all over under the sweet, tremulous dread of shocking with too sudden bliss the frail old man. But now there was no time for further concealment; and with a little glad cry of delight and pain, Barbara, clothed now in the white, beautiful habit of the Good Shepherd Nuns, was at her uncle's feet, and was kissing his two withered hands passionately amid her tears. Luke had done his part well; and had quietly gone out, leaving uncle and niece together

He went down to the old hut by the sea-shore to visit his old friends, to say a kind word to Moira, who was wasting away slowly in consumption and to exchange the account of his prison experiences with Mona his fellow martyr. When he returned to the drawing-room, Barbara still sat at her uncle's feet; the old man, with a look of rapture on his face, was toying with her white scapulary, and murmuring something that sounded like "Sans tache!"

Ah, yes! spotless and immaculate, and with all the purity of a fire-tried soul, she had passed under the mighty yoke of Christ, who had put his own stole of suffering around her. But, strange to say, though now enrolled in the glorious band of Virgins, who follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth, and sing the canticle none other can sing, there were hours and days when the thought haunted her with a sense of pain and fear, that perhaps after all the day of trial was sweeter than that of victory; and that, like Alexis of old, it would have been better, or more glorious, to have died a reputed Magdalen. For saintly souls, like this, are ambitious. They want the highest and the noblest. The martyrdom must continue to the last breath; nor do they care to yield up their souls but in a sigh of pain and the agony of dereliction. But then, here too, the Supreme Law, God's will, was manifested; and beneath it she sheltered herself when regrets for the lost nobility of perpetual pain reproached her. And hence when, in the ecstasy of this reunion, which was the one thing that nature demanded, the thought recurred: "Would it have been better otherwise; or if this meeting with the beloved one had only taken place on the far, eternal shore? she brushed aside the thought as a temptation and gamboiled around the dear old presbytery as a child. And she showed her companion-sister all the wonders of the place—the dairy, where she had—indeed she had—made butter; and the poultry—the same old identical Orpingtons and Dorkings which had won so many prizes for dear uncle; the flower-beds, alas! now not so neat and perfect as when her gentle hends had tended them. And "here" she said, "Father Delmege stood, leaning on that mantelpiece the evening he sang that fierce, rebel song; and I, a giddy young girl, raced down after him along that footpath that runs to the gate, and begged him to lock after Louis in England! Ah! poor Louis! if he were only here now!"

And the happy Barbara wiped away a tear with her plain cotton handkerchief And then, after tea, these birds should shake out all too prematurely their wings in the great clock; and the deep gong tolls out, like a bell of doom the hour of 6—and then—the parting, as of all things else on earth, for Luke had to drive the nuns to the evening train for Limerick, where they would get one night's lodging before going back to the novitiate.

CHAPTER XLI.

A PROFESSION SERMON.

Then, after another brief interval, the great day arrived, the day that was to witness the consummation of great hopes, afar foreshadowing of the final Vinal, spousal mea! It is doubtful whether there is any moment in the life of mortals so full of pure and perfect bliss as that which marks the taking of the final vows of profession. Around he marriage feast there hangs some shadow of fear and anxiety for a future which at best is problematical; and the eyes that watch the happy couple, stepping out, hand in hand from their flows, to walk the ways of life in a new partnership so exclusive and so responsible, are filled with a vague anxiety and foreboding; and the sunlight is broken in the prism of tears. But at a profession ceremony there is neither parting, nor sorrow, nor fretful fear; only the calm intoxication of a too great joy, for the spouse is given into the arms, not of man, but of God. And hence the profession morning of Barbara Wilson broke with a promise of a glorious day; and the very atmosphere seemed to hum with Halleluiahs—the glad echoes of all the music that filled the hearts of Sisters priests, and penitents. For the latter knew now all the pathetic heroism of their former sister; and if they regretfully parted with the assumption that the great Mother of God had been amongst them, they comforted themselves in the assurance that at least one of her saints had been their gentle companion during ten eventful years. And it mitigated their shame and remorse to think that a pure soul had shared their lot. Her heroism had been a second absolution.

That little chapel, then, to the left of the high altar, was filled that morning with a curious, happy, loving, eager throng of penitents; and the very idea that one of their number was about to be raised to the glory of the white habit, and a place of honor in the choir stalls, filled all with a kind of personal pride and exultation. And so they whispered and watched and pointed and conjectured, until the great organ rolled out its mighty volumes of sound, and the opening hymn announced the advent of the Bishop and his assistants. Then after the preliminary ceremonies, Mass commenced; and, after the Gospel, Luke Delmege knelt for the episcopal blessing, and ascended the predella of the altar.

Luke was by no means nervous. He had long since acquired so thorough and perfect a command of thought and utterance, that he knew a breakdown to be impossible. Yet, he felt all the solemnity of the occasion; and he was about to depart from the usual style of pulpit utterances, and pass from abstractions to the concrete facts of his own life and the workings of his own conscience. For, although that life was immaculate and that conscience unrebuking, he felt that an amende was due to God and his own soul for the one fault—that he had failed to grasp his vocation to sour unto the highest; and as a penalty of that infidelity that his life had been dragged along on broken wing." Now, such an unveiling is at times embarrassing; and, especially, as it now broke through the thick folds of a reserve that was almost haughty, and showed the world, who only deemed him an unapproachable and coldly perfect character, an estimate of self that shrunk into the smallest dimensions under the light of great humility and sublime contrasts. He felt, also, that he had to enunciate principles that would seem so large for human effort as to appear affected and extreme by their very difficulty; and he had to synthesize and compare religion and philosophy in a manner that would seem to ordinary understandings the outcome of pedantry and vanity.

He took for his text:—

"At that time, Jesus said to His disciples. 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. Whosoever shall save his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it.'"

"The divine peremptoriness and the seeming contradiction in these words," continued Luke, "would yield another proof if proof were needed, of Christ's divinity. Never man spake like this man.' An earthly philosopher, a Grecian sophist would either promise vast things to his followers, as the adversary tempted the hungry and weary One in the desert; or, if he affected truth, he would teach it in abstractions, and leave nature to cut its easiest path toward happiness. But the great Divine Teacher laid down the minimum condition of being His disciple in that stern command, Deny thyself; and He appended the vague, and apparently contradictory, promise, that 'whosoever shall lose his life, shall find it.' It is strange, that men not only were not scandalized at His words, but readily accepted them as doctrinal truth and infallible promise; and the half educated publican and the totally illiterate fisherman rose up hastily to follow a Teacher who demanded so great a sacrifice for so problematical a reward. And stranger still it is that, generation after generation, souls are to be found who, fascinated by the very arbitrariness of this command, rise swiftly to the high levels of sanctity which it connotes; and, passing beyond the dictates of a protesting self love, or the still more dangerous platitudes of a compromising world, find themselves suddenly in that desert where the Hand of their Master is as a shelter of a rock and the sound of His voice as the murmur of running waters. Such a sacrifice we are witnessing to day, such relinquishment of youthful desires and ambitions, such a calm severing of ties that bind as closely as the silver cord of life, such a renunciation and self-abandonment, such sacrificial vows written and sealed on parchment in the presence of the King, yet more truly written and sealed with the heart's blood, as if to meet the theological condition of destruction and consumption. But there is a peculiar and individual feature in the circumstances of to-day's immolation that lends to it a special significance, and from which I shall be pardoned if I deduce a special meaning, and perhaps a wider and far reaching application. You will have noticed that my text implies, not only the idea of Renunciation, but also the idea of Sacrifice. 'Deny thyself!' 'Lose thyself!' This is the command. In the great generality of religious professions, the first precept alone is insisted upon; the latter idea of sacrifice, particularly vicarious sacrifice, seldom enters. The Church seems the absoluteness of the former as embracing and containing the latter. But, in the present instance, it is at least a peculiar feature that the life of vicarious sacrifice should be terminated by vows of renunciation; and that the latter, which generally denote the incipience of a life of self-denial, should, in this case, mark a termination of a sacrifice so great that, like the command to the patriarch of old, only the Supreme Will could impose it on one of its best beloved creatures. It happened thus. The good Sister will pardon the details, because they show how steadily and invisibly God's hand is ever moving through His creation.

Here Luke narrated all the details of Louis' errors, and his sister's devotion, and continued:

"Then that soul of the beloved one was in peril. His life was doomed. The danger of eternal damnation from being remote, became proximate. Nothing but Omnipotence was between that soul and hell. In the mighty agony of a sister's soul which alone seemed to yearn after the lost one a sudden inspiration dawned. That soul had just shuddered, in the involuntary shrinking of pure minds, from the very name that, if symbolical of love, is also suggestive of forgiven sin. And the Most High, in His secret and ineffable designs, decided that this should be the sacrifice The price of the brother's soul was to be the sinless shame of the sister; he was to be saved through the voluntary ignominy of an immaculate and spotless victim. It is the reflection in miniature of that mighty oblation made by our great Brother, Christ; just as this latter was foreshadowed, almost in the words I am using, by the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. There was, of course, the dread, the human trembling before the altar; but then the soul spoke through the firm will; the sacrifice was accepted, the brother's soul was miraculously snatched from the flames, and the sister, unknown to all but God, passed from the bright world into the hiddenness of this asylum; and here lived, to all outer appearance a Magdalen, with all the outer marks of humiliation, her sinlessness only known to God and the good priest who represented Him.

"Whilst all this was in progress, another life ran on in parallel lines; but alas! with what a chaos between them! A young priest had rejected a similar inspiration to a life of the absolute sacrifice, communicated at the moment of his ordination, had descended from the heroic to the commonplace; and there, his instincts still active and alive, were fascinated by the very watchwords on the lips of the world, which were the daily maxims reduced to daily practice of the saints. 'Renunciation,' sacrifice,' 'abandonment of self,' 'the interests of the race,' 'the sacred calls of Humanity,' here were words forever ringing in his ears, and calling, calling to some high mystic life, far removed from selfish ease or the cravings of ambition. Alas! it took many years to teach him how hollow was it all—that there was no God in Humanity, except the God Who embraced Humanity to raise it almost to the Godhead; nor were the sublime doctrines of renunciation and sacrifice practised except by the lowly followers of the one Divine Man. Yet this was the eternal craving of the human soul; and as the young priest moved along in this painful path of wisdom, he saw how human philosophy, with a dark lantern in his hand, went painfully groping along the tortuous mazes of the human mind, to emerge in the full light of the Gospel, yet with darkened eyes: for the sublime word 'Renunciation' he found in the last note in the music of the greatest of modern poets; and the divine contradiction, 'He that will lose his life shall save it,' he found to be the ultimate of one of the greatest of modern philosophers. But what have these, however sublime to do with the difficulties of modern life? Action, and men of action, rule the modern world. Ideas ruled the vast worlds of Oriental mysticism until they culminated in the sublime realities of the Christian religion; but the Occidental bias is toward materialism, and its one great dogma—the ETETNAL I. But that which was so familiar to the sages of old, which is found in labor and much pain by the great moderns, who agonize in the birth throes of monsters, is easily grasped by the little ones who seek wisdom in simplicity; and are fain to follow as guides those who, divinely ordained, teach, not in the persuasive words of human wisdom but in the direct interpretation of plain language more than philosophy can discern, or learning fathom, or fancy conceive.

"And so, the young priest, coming back to to his native land, dreamed he had a message to his race. He would inaugurate a new era; he would bring his generation into touch with all modern ideas of progress; he would introduce a new civilization in place of an old and effete system. The idea was a generous one—only it rested on a wrong principle Or rather it sought to build without principle—the great underlying principle of man's dualism—ideas and action, matter and form, soul and body; each with its interests, each with its destiny. He had heard it said, and said with some show of authority; 'Seek men's souls through their bodies! Sanctity follows earthly prosperity; and in riches are to be found the secrets of great grace!' He hardly believed it. Yet he would make the experiment He was warned: This people must create their own civilization. There is no use in appealing to purely material and mercenary principles. If the spiritual ardship of Irish aspirations must be anchored in a kind of mild materialism, remember always that the latter is but an adjunct And so the people rejected at once his suggestion to move on to happiness in the lines of modern progress. To his plea for prudence they answered, Providence; for human foresight, they placed divine omniscience; for thrift, charity; for advancement, humility; for selfishness generosity: until he began to feel he was clipping the wings of spirits, and bringing down to the gross earth souls destined for the empyrean. He then found himself face to face with the problem, How to conserve his race, and their old-fashioned ideals at the same time?

"In searching for this, he stumbled into an error, and found a solution. He thought it was a first principle that nations work out their own destinies, and that character forces its way to conquest. He made no allowance for a nation's environments, for dread surroundings through which no purely human energy can cut a path to long-deferred, ever vanishing, yet still realizable ideals He saw the confirmation of this idea, he thought under his own eyes, in his own native place—the Ireland which poets have dreamed of, and for which patriots have died. Under the vivifying power of a great personality, the people rose up to seize the possibilities within their reach; and moving on to great spirituality, they seized at the same time every opportunity of advancing themselves materially. And they succeeded. Whilst all around was a desert, was a land flowing with milk and honey; and the dwellers on the barren mountains looked down with envy on the smiling plains of Arcady. Alas! the element of permanency the element of security was absent; and one day, under a touch of evil, all the beauty and happiness vanished in smoke and flame and ruin. And, as the two illusions disappeared—that of Ireland built from its ruins on purely material and selfish principles; and that of an Ireland, built without the foundation and security and independence, the young priest woke up suddenly to the vision of his country, developing under new and stable conditions her traditional ideas; and becoming in the face of a spurious and unstable civilization rocked to its foundations by revolution a new commonwealth of Christ. The possibility of such an event had been vaguely hinted at by priests, who evidently were struggling to evolve coherent ideas from a mass of sensations and instincts, righteous and just, but yet unformed. It was foreshadowed by the manner in which the people, untrained and illiterate, groped after and grasped the highest principles of Christian civilization; it was foretold by the energy with which men contemned the mere acquisition of wealth, and felt ashamed of possessing it; it was outlined in the simple, human lives, with all their Spartan severity toward themselves and all their divine beneficence toward others It took shape in the sharp and violent contrasts presented by the fierce rivalry for wealth that animates the citizens of the world's great metropolis, and the milder, yet not less energetic, emulation for grace that was witnessed in our own capital—a contrast as great as that which distinguished the bandit of the Apennines, surrounded with barbaric pomp from the poor man of Assisi' And finally, it was personified in the example of a humble and hidden priest, who long go had denuded himself of all things for Christ's sake, and chosen all that was lowly and hard to human nature, before all that was peasant and attractive; and the still more picturesque example of a young girl who voluntarily embraced humility and suffering, and found in her cross the satisfaction of all earthly desire, the perfection of all earthly happiness. It was the old story, which we read so often, of days far distanced from ours by time and change—of souls who brushed with the tip of their wings the fire of hell, and then soared aloft even unto Paradise.

"There can be no question" continued Luke, "but that such a life of heroism and self sacrifice is closely symbolical of our beloved country. It argues a disbelief in the divine economy to suppose that our martyrdom of seven hundred years was the accident of human events, uncontrolled except by their intrinsic possibilities and ultimate developments. That this long cycle of suffering is to close even now is as certain as that our young postulant has put off the robes of penance and humiliation, and put on the garments of gladness. Her future it is easy to forecast. She will move down the valleys of life with an eternal song of love and gratitude in her heart, passing from hour to hour, from thought to thought, from deed to deed, and gathering from each some sweetness that will be dropped in the bitterness of chalices which some have yet to drink. It is as easy to forecast the destiny of Ireland. She will never adopt the modern idea of placing all human happiness, and therefore all human effort, in the desire of purely natural splendor, and sink down into a nation of money grubbers and pleasure-seekers, becoming at last not an island of strength and sorrow, but a Cyprus for voluptuousness, and a Lydia for effeminacy. But she will strike the happy mean and evolve her own civilization by conserving her ideals, whilst seeking after the practical For it is certain that the traditions, the thoughts, the instincts, the desires, the very passions, of this people tend towards the supernatural. And this must be the germinal idea—the primary and palmary principle in her future development—the cornerstone of the mighty building which the hands of her children are tingling to raise, the keystone in that arch of triumph beneath which her crowned and garland heroes will pass unto the jubilee of her resurrection.

"Sister Barbara, I make no apology for having made your life a symbol of your country's destiny, and merely a subject of a barren discourse. I make bold to continue the parallel to the end. I interpret your thoughts very faintly, if I do not perceive that now and again, whilst accepting the decision of the Supreme Will, your thoughts revert to and linger lovingly, the hours you spent with your crucifixion. I never doubted that, even on the sunlit morning of the Resurrection, such generous souls as John and Magdalen did revert with some tender longing to the darkness and gloom and sorrow of Calvary, and the love that went forth to the agonized One, and flowed back into a stream of sanctity to their hearts Perhaps, indeed, you have sometimes dreamed that it might have been greater and more noble, if you had borne your shame even unto the eternal gates and allowed the hands of Christ alone to take from your head the crown of thorns, and place thereon the golden fillet of His love. Such ideas are the heritage of your race. I too, shared them once. But, led by purely utilitarian ideas I flung aside the call to heroism, and descended to the commonplace. Let wise teachers beware of bringing down the mind of the entire nation to a common level of purely natural ambition and purely materialistic success. However necessary for the mass a such efforts may be to save the race from extinction, it is not the specific genius of our people. That soars higher; and material prosperity must not be the ultimate goal of our race; but only the basis of the higher life. That world was never so much in need of thinkers and saints as at present It never needed so much to see the embodiment of the positive teaching of Christ, not the nebulous reflection of that teaching in the wisdom of latter-day philosophy, as now. One such example as that which we have before us to-day would be a powerful lever in lifting up the ideas of the world from the rut into which they have fallen; and you might have a thousand such examples amongst so generous a people if the higher life, with its struggles and glories were placed before them. Nor have I the least doubt, that, like the gentle regrets after her cross that mingle with happier feelings in the heart of the professed Sister of to day, when the Resurrection day shall have dawned for Ireland, when her valleys are ringing with music and her exiled children have come back, bearing the many and beautiful sheaves garnered in the harvests of the world, many of her chosen souls will look back with regretful eyes on the days of her gloom and martyrdom; and escaping from the Hosannas and the palms, will ascend her lofty mountains and create there once more Golgothas of vicarious suffering for the entire race For unto the end of time there will be sin, and sins demand retribution and atonement, and it is not the sinner but the saint that makes it. And men, to the end of time, will be consumed with selfish desires; and selfishness must find its constant corrective in Renunciation. And where, in all the wide earth, can this sublime philosophy of Christ be practised, if not here? And where shall the divine contradiction Lose that you may gain; Give, that you may get; Die, that all may live;—be verified, if not amongst the people that has held its hands to heaven in an agony of supplication for twice three hundred years? Where shall the fatal sin of self be extinguished, if not amongst the race which has given to the world in its apostles and martyrs the highest examples of divine altruism! And where shall the final law of love be established if not where all that is holy and most pure stoops to all that is sordid and stained; and blends, in the alchemy of charity, sin and purity, shame and pity, so perfectly, that, as in the example before us to day, men fail to discern beneath the outward shows of life the sinner and the saint, the fallen and the unfallen the lambs that never wandered from the fold and the sheep that strayed in the forlorn and unlighted deserts of sin and death?"

When the ceremony was over Luke sought the solitude of the convent grounds, to calm the emotion under which he had labored. He cared little what verdict would be passed on that sermon. He only knew that he wished to reveal himself—to make a clear, noble confession of his own shortcomings; and he felt he had only half succeeded. He knew he dared not have spoken more plainly, lest he should shock sensibilities too delicate and tender not to be respected; yet he also felt that he had wrapped up his thoughts so well in a cloud of words that his feelings were but half revealed.

And this was really the case. For at the dejeuner, very various were the opinions expressed about the sermon. One said it was all "rhetoric," a word that has come to mean unutterable things in Ireland. Father Tracey, who looked quite spruce in the newly dyed coat, called over Sister Eulalie, whose eyes were red from weeping, and asked her in a whisper:

"That was a grand sermon, my dear. But my poor brains could not follow it. What was it all about? Why, my child, you have been crying! God bless my soul, crying, and on such a day!"

Sister Eulalie answered not; but went away weeping all the more.

Matthew O'Shaughnessy, who, as a great benefactor to the convent, had always the privilege of an invitation to these ceremonies, said to a priest across the table:

"That was the grandest discourse I ever hard, by the friend, Father Luke."

"What was it all about?" said the priest, without a smile.

"Eh? About?" said Matthew, bewildered. "Tell him what 'twas about, Mary. I'm a little hard of hearing."

But Mary, with her woman's quick intuition divined how matters stood; and said, with a good deal of dignity:

"What would it be about, but the young lady's profession?"

"Of course," said Matthew, who, as the Bishop entered, stood up in an attitude of adoration, and sought, in a most humble, deprecatory manner, to catch the Bishop's eye.

Then Barbara came in, led by the Mistress of Novices, and passed up along the ranks of visitors to kiss the episcopal ring, and get once more the episcopal blessing. Then, turning swiftly around, she saw, for the first time in twelve long years, her father's face. It was now framed in white, and deeply furrowed by care and the labors that are needed for ambition It was stern, too; for all the explanations made by the Mother Provincial and the priests failed to convince the man of the world that there was not a terrible cruelty and injustice inflicted upon his child But something—the swish of her white habit, the rattle of her beads, the swift grace of her movements, or the radiance that shone from her features, unnerved him; and, with a little sob of pleasure, he clasped his child to his heart, and kissed her face before all the people. Lady Wilson was more conventional and reserved. She felt she had been ill used; but, in a spirit of Christian meekness, she was willing to forgive. Each priest stood up, as Barbara approached, and touched her hand reverently. She sat for a long time near Father Tracey, who was much embarrassed at the honor, and said, "God bless me!" several times.

When the guests were dispersing in the great hall outside, the Bishop said aloud:

"Where is Father Delmege? I missed Father Delmege!"

Luke was found with some difficulty, and came forward.

"That was a fine sermon, Luke," said the Bishop.

"Thank you, my Lord," said Luke. Then, with a little malice:

"I hope there was no latent heresy in it?"

"No. But don' print it; or some fellow will ferret out something heterodox by the aid of a dictionary. By the way there's a letter for you. You needn't read it till you return home. Good-day! Come see me whenever you are in the city."

"He'll be in St. John's in a week," said Matthew, winking at Mary. "That's his appointment."

"And St. John's isn't half good enough for him," said Mary.

But Matthew for once was wrong. It was not to a curacy but to a benefice that Luke was now appointed—to the neat, compact little parish where he spent the remaining years of his life. Here, divesting himself of all things, he lived the life of an anchorite—a grave, gentle, loving man; and happy in having nothing and possessing all things. Revered and beloved by his own people, it is not surprising that he acquired the character being somewhat eccentric among his brethren. But this he did not mind. He had found peace by abstracting himself from passing and fading things, and fixing his thoughts on the unfading and eternal. One little luxury, as we have seen, he allowed himself—that of looking out, as a disinterested, if perplexed, spectator, over "the beautiful madhouse of the earth" and

Musing the woes of men,
The ways of fate, the doctrines of the books
The lessons of the creatures of the brake,
The secrets of the silence whence all come,
The secrets of the gloom whereto all go,
The life which lies between, like that arch flung
From cloud to cloud across the sky, which hath
Mists for its masonry and vapory piers.

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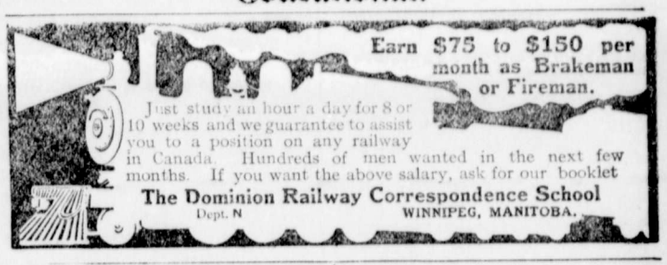
Educational.



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