

MARY LEE or The Yankee in Ireland

BY PAUL PETERGRASS, ESQ.

CHAPTER XIV.

KATE AND ELSE AT THE BEDSIDE OF THE CABIN BOY—ELSE BEGINS TO SUSPECT THE LITTLE FELLOW—A VISIT FROM UNRAVEL A MYSTERY—A VISIT FROM KATE PETERSHAM, WHO RECEIVES A LETTER FROM LANTY HANLON AN-NOUNCING RANDALL BARRY'S ARREST.

A severe attack of fever, resulting from the hardships he endured in the life boat, had now confined the little cabin boy to his room at the lighthouse for several days, during which Mary Lee was his constant attendant, hardly ever leaving him, day or night.

Dr. Camberwell had called to see the patient several times, and as often found Mary patiently watching by his bedside, with the fidelity and affection of a sister. Strongly did he remark on the imprudence of shutting herself up so constantly in the sick room, especially when Elise Curley and Roger O'Shaughnessy were there to attend him. But all in vain. Nothing could prevail on her to quit her post. She only smiled, and assured them she apprehended no danger whatever.

The room in which the boy lay was a small apartment on the north side of the lodge, directly over the Devil's Gulch, and looking out on the far-famed Swilly Rock, which lay in the very middle of the lough, about half a mile distant, showing its long black back now and then, as the swells of the sea broke over and soothed down its sides. Beyond it, in the distance, appeared the rugged outline of Malin Head, casting its deep shadow far into the sea, and frowning a sulky defiance at each passing ship as she rounded the dangerous bluff. It was to avoid that headland the ill-fated "Saldana" ran for a harbor, and struck on Swilly Rock. On that rock she lost her helm and masts, and then, broken up by the fury of the ocean, drifted in fragments to the shore.

Every soul on board perished, that night, but one little infant; and that infant, now a lovely girl of eighteen, her eyes turned to the fatal spot, was praying for the little wrecked cabin boy, lying beside her. She was kneeling before a crucifix, with a rosary in her hand, and old Drake, resting his nose on his shaggy paw, was peering up in her face.

Suddenly she turned, and looked towards the bed. "Sambo—Sambo," muttered the boy; "where are you, Sambo?"

Mary rose, and advancing to the bedside, laid her hand gently on the forehead of the little sufferer—it was burning hot.

"Sambo, dear Sambo," he again repeated, "let us return home. Mother calls me."

"It's the crisis," murmured Mary; "six hours more will terminate the contest between life and death. O Mother of God, Mother of our Redeemer," she added, "save this wandering boy, who has prayed for his knees again, till the tears rolled down her cheeks, and dropped unheeded on the bed."

"What's that you're doing, Sambo?" muttered the boy; "you said me with drops of lead."

"Hush, hush," whispered Mary in his ear. "Keep quiet; I'm with you."

"Take me home, Sambo, take me home."

"Where?"

"Where? to Old Virginny. There it is, right before you; don't you see the Old Potomac? Massa shan't blame you a mite—it was all my fault, and I'll tell him so. Won't you take me back, Sambo?"

"Yes, to-morrow—to-morrow; but keep still now, or I must leave you."

The threat of desertion seemed to silence the little fellow completely. Mary then applied a spongy steamed in vinegar and water to his burning temples, and after smoothing his pillow, was returning to her seat near the window, when all of a sudden she found herself clasped in the arms of Kate Petersham.

"Kate!" she exclaimed; "is it possible?"

"Yes—your own Kate—and I love you now a thousand times better than ever."

"You won't scold me, will you?"

"Scold you for what?"

"Not going to see you, according to promise."

"And abandon your little charge there. No, no, Mary, I know your heart too well for that. But I must scold you for something else, Mary. I must scold you for staying here so constantly in the sick room."

"There's no danger in the world, Kate."

"How very like my own fate is this little wanderer's!" said I; "perhaps he, too, has neither father nor mother left to watch over him." Just as I muttered these words to myself, he raised his eyes to mine, and seemed to make such an appeal to my heart that I couldn't, for the life of me, say a syllable in reply. So I only nodded a promise. He understood it though, perfectly, and smiled his thanks as I gave it.

"And you feel bound by that promise," said Kate, "though not a word was exchanged between you."

"O, indeed, as for that, Kate, I believe I had made the promise to the Blessed Virgin before he looked at me at all. For why should he have been cast ashore that night, of all the nights in the year, and consigned to my care too, by the doctor, if there hadn't been something mysterious in it?"

"And now, you're prepared to risk your life to save his?"

"No, no," replied Mary, throwing her arm round her companion's neck, and leaning her head gently on her bosom—"no, no, dear Kate, there's no risk for me, since the Queen of Virgins has promised to save me."

"But may not this be superstition?"

"Superstition? O Kate, Kate, if you only felt for one short hour the blessed hopes which the Mother of God inspires in the hearts of her suffering children, you would speak less coldly of our beautiful religion. Indeed, Kate, only for the consolations I have drawn for the last six years from that pure fountain of pity and love, I should long since have sunk under the weight of my sorrows."

"Ah," responded Kate, compassionately; "you've had sorrows enough, poor child."

"And yet, strange as it may seem, it's the cheerfulness with which he bears his misfortunes that wounds me the most."

"His misfortunes. Whom do you mean?"

"My uncle."

"O, I thought you were speaking of your own griefs."

"No; I never had any thing to grieve for but him—he is all the world, though, to me; for, indeed, I think, Kate, he loves me more than his life."

"Don't wonder much at that, Mary."

"To see him falling, step by step, from the proud position he once occupied among the best and noblest of the land; to see his friends—alas! they were sorry friends—deserting him day after day; to see his creditors, who were wont to come to him bowing in lowly reverence, now insolently rebuking him for his reckless extravagance; to see his stable empty, his hounds all dead and gone, his servants forsaking him one by one; and to see himself smiling and happy-looking as a bridegroom in the midst of all that desolation—O, Kate, it was that which almost broke my heart."

"On the contrary, Mary, I think it should have consoled you to see him bear his misfortunes so bravely."

"Ah, yes; but it's all deception—an outward show. He only affects to be happy on my account."

"You may be mistaken, Mary; it's his natural disposition, perhaps."

"O, no," replied the gentle girl; "I can tell his very thoughts, though he fancies them hidden from all the world. Often have I watched his countenance as he read over those insulting letters of his creditors, and seen how he struggled to hide his indignation under a smile. And now, Kate, they have found me out at last."

"What—discovered your retreat?"

"Yes; and threaten Mr. Lee with arrest, if their demands are not immediately satisfied. One man has bought up several of his bonds, and demands payment before the first of next month."

"And what's to be done? Can my brother do any thing to avert the blow? Shall I speak to him on the subject?"

"Not for the world, Kate."

"And why so? you know he loves your uncle."

"Yes, but for that very reason he would be the last man of whom he should ask a favor."

"To whom, then, will you apply for help?"

"I have applied already, Kate, to a dear friend."

"Yes; to one who never refused me in my need."

"Ah! I understand you. Indeed! And you expect succor from her. But why not apply to the Redeemer Himself—the fountain of all goodness?"

"Because, dear Kate, I fear I'm not worthy to approach Him; and I know, besides, He will hear the prayer of the Mother who bore Him sooner than mine."

"Then you apply to her merely as an intercessor? Why, I always thought you expected aid directly from herself."

"Kate, Kate, how often have I told you the contrary!"

"Yes; but I have heard it preached about so often in your pulpits."

"Hush! some one knocks. Come in."

The door opened, and Elise Curley, wrapped in her old gray cloak, entered the room.

Without uttering a word of recognition or apology, she advanced to the bed, and laid her withered hand on the temples of the patient. Then, having satisfied herself as to the progress of the disease, she turned slowly round, and throwing back her hood, addressed Miss Petersham in her usual hoarse, hollow tones:

"Young woman, why are you here?" she demanded.

"That's my own affair," replied Kate. "By what right do you ask?"

"The right which the age and experience of eighty years give me. I see many a favor, girl, in my time, but never yet so dangerous a favor as this. Away from the room—it's no place for idle visitors."

"And pray, old woman, what reason have you to feel so much concern for my safety?"

"The reason's too odd," replied Elise. "to speak of now. Your grandfather, if he lived, could hardly remember it. But here," she continued,

drawing a piece of folded paper from her bosom, "read this, and judge for yourself, if it's at Arabeora Head you ought to be."

Kate took the paper from her hand, and accompanied Mary to the parlor.

"Ha!" said Elise, now that she found herself alone with the sick boy; "if he hasn't lost his senses, I'll try what can be done to clear up this mystery. If the nigger started back frightened, as Lanty says, when he first seen weeks at Mr. Guirko's, he must know something about him; and according to all accounts, the nigger and the boy come from the same plantation. Ay, ay, there's a hole in that wall somewhere worth the ferretin. Look up," she continued, touching the lad on the arm with her fore-finger—"look up and spake to me."

"Who's that?" murmured the boy, turning on his side, and gazing at the old woman; "are you Sambo?"

"Ay, I'm Sambo."

"You're not Sambo—nigger Sambo."

"Don't you know me?"

"Yes, but you sure you're Sambo—very sure you're Sambo Nelson?"

"Quite sure—and what's your name?"

"My name—my name's Natty."

"Natty what?"

"Natty Nelson."

"And whose's your father?"

"My father—my father—well, let me see, my father—where's my father?"

"Where does he live?"

"Your father."

"Sambo, Sambo, whisper; don't be afraid; he shan't flog you."

"Who shan't flog me?"

"Father—old Danger, you know. So take me back to old Virginny—take me back, mother calls me. Listen, ain't that the wash of old Potomac against the ship's side?"

"Hush! don't speak so much, Natty—tell me, Natty."

"Ay, ay, sir, by the mark—seven—send all hands aloft—take in sail."

Else, finding it now impossible to draw any further information from the boy, took a small vial from her pocket, and pouring a few drops of the contents into a spoon, gave it to her patient.

"There," she muttered, "that'll make you sleep for the night; and when you wake, if yer senses haven't come back, I'll try some other manes to rache the secret." Then drawing out her stocking, she sat down on a low stool by the bedside, and commenced her knitting.

This is a very pretty piece of paper, said Kate, looking at the address as she entered the parlor.

"To her ladyship, Miss Petersham."

"Good, so far; now for the inside. Eh! what in the name of all the fairies is this? 'Lanty Hanlon is my name, and Ireland is my nashin, Donegal is my dwillin plas, and heven is my expectashin.' His expectation, the villain! Ha, ha! if heaven were full of angels like him, I'd rather be exoused from joining the company. It must be the by-lod of the fellow's prayer-book. But hold, here's something on the other side."

"This is to let you no, that"—here Kate suddenly dropped her voice, and read over the remainder in silence—

"Randall Barry lies woondid and a prisoner in Tammy Barries, I'll meet yer ladyship this evening at the castle about dusk, behind the ould boat-house, no more at present."

but remains your abaident to command LANTY HANLON.

"Anything amiss?" inquired Mary, as Kate finished the reading of the precious document "you look alarmed."

"Alarmed! do I? O, no, it's nothing particular."

"Lanty's full of mischief—been playing you some trick, perhaps."

"Lanty! no, no—it's a mere trifle; I must get home, however, as soon as possible. Please ring for Roger—I want him to call the cockswain."

Mary turned to ring the bell, but Roger made his appearance at the door, carrying the old silver salver, and awaiting the command of his young mistress to enter.

"Come in, Roger; what have you got there?" said Kate.

"A little refreshment, please, madam. Mr. Lee sends his compliments to Miss Petersham."

"No, madam; he went out in the direction of Arabeora a few minutes ago, and gave orders to have cake and wine sent in afore he left."

"What kind of wine is it, Roger?" inquired Kate, smiling over at Mary as she put the question.

"Ahem! what kind, madam? why, it's—a—it's a very delicate currant wine—very pure and delicate."

"And just twenty-five years old next Christmas. No, I make a mistake there—he's—twenty-four years next Christmas—ahem! just twenty-four years—exactly."

"O, it don't matter," said Kate, laughing; "a year, you know, is nothing."

"It's the wine Lady Templeton ust to like so much when she visited the castle, if you remember," observed Roger, bowing to his mistress.

"Current wine's but a sorry beverage at best, Roger," said Kate, mischievously.

"Well, perhaps, ladies, you would prefer Champagne or Sherry?"

"O, no; no, Roger, don't trouble yourself."

"No trouble in life, ma'am; only just say so, and I'll be happy to serve them. But if you try this here, you'll find it delicious."

"Very well; we must taste it on your recommendation; and now, Roger, send my love aboard—we must leave instantly."

When the old servant left the room, Mary laid her hand on Kate's shoulder, and looking at her affectionately, again expressed her fears that something was wrong at Castle Gregory.

"Nothing, Mary—nothing whatever."

"And yet you look deeply concerned. Has Captain Petersham or Mrs. Willoughby been sick?"

"No, no, dear child, they're both quite well. It's something I must attend to before to-morrow, having no immediate relation to any of the family."

As Mary stood there, leaning her arm on her companion's shoulder, and looking wistfully in her face, she exhibited a form and features of exquisite beauty. The rays of the declining sun had just then entered the window, and for a second or two bathed her whole person in gold light, illumining her countenance with that celestial glow which holy men say overpreads the features of the seraphim. Never breathed a fairer form than hers—never shone a fairer face; and yet the beauty of her soul transcended far the loveliness of her person. O, when loveliness of body and soul unites in woman, how truly does she then reflect the image of her Creator—the great source of purity, beauty and love!

"Kate, dear Kate," murmured Mary, "when shall we kneel together before the same altar? When shall we become sisters in faith, as we are now in affection?"

"Sooner, perhaps, than you anticipate," replied Kate, kissing the forehead of the lovely girl.

"You've read the little books I gave you?"

"Yes, and liked them too; but I've been reading another book, which speaks more eloquently of your faith, and draws me nearer to the threshold of your Church, than all the controversial works ever written."

"O, I'm so delighted, dear Kate! What is it?"

"I can't tell you that."

"Why so?"

"You would blush all over, and run away."

"Did I ever read it?"

"Never, I believe, though it belongs to you, and to you alone; for there's not another like it in the whole world."

"Belongs to me?"

"Yes, to your very self, and yet you're quite unconscious of its possession; but come with me to the steps—I must not delay another minute."

The two young friends now walked hand in hand across the green lawn, and stood at the head of the long flight of steps, looking down at the boatmen preparing to leave.

"Randall's coming here to night," said Mary.

"Poor fellow! I wish he were safe off to the south; for, indeed, he must soon be caught if he stay here much longer. Do you remember him in your prayers, Mary?"

"Sometimes," murmured the blushing girl, looking down on the grass at her feet.

"Then pray for him earnestly to-night," whispered Kate; and tenderly embracing her dear young friend, she ran down the steps before the latter had time to ask a single word of explanation.

"Now, my lads," she cried jumping into the stern sheets, and taking the tiller in her own hands, "now for it—out with every oar in the boat, and stretch to them with a will; we must make Castle Gregory in an hour and twenty minutes, if it can be done with oars and sail."

"Can't, Miss Kate! impossible!" said the cockswain, tautening the foresheet; "the obb tide will meet us at Dunree."

"Not if this breeze freshens a little," responded Kate, looking over her shoulder; "and it shall—for there it comes dancing in to us from the little boat lough."

As she spoke, the little boat, impelled by four stout oarsmen, shot out from under the shadow of the rocks, and began to cut her way through the waters. Mary stood for a moment looking down at the receding form of her reckless, light-hearted companion, as she sat in the stern with her hand on the rubber; and then, waving a last adieu, returned to resume her charge of the cabin boy.

MAUREEN.

Kathleen M. O'Brennan in New Ireland.

CHAPTER I.

Maureen sat on the rocks watching the boats as they pulled out to sea. She was leaning against a great green willow, and her brown cheeks rested on her still smaller hand. She was a beautiful girl, no a rarity on the west coast of Ireland, where the Celtic beauty still remains unmixed with Saxon blood, and as she stood wistfully gazing after the receding boats, with the moon's pale beams enveloping her graceful form, one might have taken her for some unhappy syren exiled from her home beneath the sea.

But Maureen was no spirit, her bosom swelled with every human thought and emotion, for 'neath it lay a heart capable of deep love and great pity. The villagers did not understand her, yet they loved her for herself, and though at times they criticized her new-fangled ways since she left the Convent school, they loved the child that had grown up amongst them, and there was never a home where sorrow entered but Maureen's sympathy extended help to every hand.

The women and children were wending their way up the one little street that the village boasted, but Maureen remained alone by the shore dreaming. The boats had drifted afar, but still she could hear the last strains of the boat song wafted across the waters, and her heart was full of love, while she shuddered with an unknown fear.

The waters were calm and beautiful, so there was no danger to Shawn's little smack that night; but something more occupied her thoughts as she gazed out on the silent ocean.

She had at last persuaded Shawn to leave his native village to go to an uncle in America, who offered him a bright future. Shawn loved the village and the wild life he had known from childhood, but he loved Maureen more, and his one great hope was to win her and make her happy.

Now more than ever, she seemed to struggle against her surroundings. She had been lifted out of them for a time when her uncle, a priest in Galway, placed her in a convent school for a few years, but his sudden death obliged her to return to the old home and renew the old life. Her father kept the only provision store in the village, and her time passed between keeping house for her father and mother, and looking after the children and selling

out small quantities of tea, sugar and meal to the fishing folks abroad or.

When the winter was bad, and the boats unable to face the harsh weather, Maureen felt it hard to refuse the poor fishermen's wives the scanty necessities of life, so in return for earnest promises of payment when the good time came, she gave with a ready hand and generous heart. Her father was old and unable to do much, so it lay with Maureen to do what was in her power to keep the little household together, and at the same time help those around who clung to her in need. Sometimes the struggle seemed too hard to bear, and it was in moments like these that she would tell Shawn of her ambition, and the wild hopes she had of doing good, if Shawn but tried his fortunes in America.

She had fallen into a reverie as she watched the moon beams glittering over the waters, but was suddenly roused by hearing a voice behind her cry "Maureen."

Starting up, she saw old Nancy Maguire, the village crone, whose superstitions were so much dreaded amongst the fisher folk as her prophecies.

"What are ye dhramin' idly for here, Maureen O'Brien, when there's so much to be done at yer home?" she cried.

Maureen feared Nancy, whom she regarded as an old fortune-teller, so said nothing.

"Don't ye know I heard what ye had to say to Shawn Daly this evening," she cried, in a wild voice.

"Don't try to hide anythin' from me, Maureen O'Brien. I know yer proud idle thoughts, but the day Shawn Daly leaves this shore for America it'll be the cursed day for you, and ye'll mind me words when it's too late. Don't know what happened Jim Maguire. Did he ever come back? Do you think you and Shawn Daly'll meet agin wanst the seas are between ye. Oehone!" she cried, as she swayed herself to and fro; "it's the cursed day for Ireland when her women drive the men from the land niver to come back agin," and as she looked out on the wide expanse of ocean the moon hid itself behind a dark cloud and for the first time Maureen felt a doubt as to what she had done.

Nancy waited to say no more, but hobbled up the rocks. Maureen watched her receding figure in awe, and when she had climbed some distance she again turned round and raising her stick in the air, cried:

"Min' what I said Maureen O'Brien, cursed be the day for Ireland that the women drive the men from the land they love." Then she disappeared up the little street.

CHAPTER II.

The American "Wake" was in full swing, for Shawn was leaving in the morning. Amidst the dancing and amusement Shawn and Maureen slipped out into the bright starry night and strolled down to the beach.

"Ye must be brave now, Maureen," Shawn said, as he saw the large tears rolling down her soft cheeks.

"Let me feel I'm a man, an' not a lazy spalpeen idlin' here all me life." But Maureen's emotion was the greater, and bursting into tears, she again pleaded with Shawn, as she had done for days past, not to leave her.

Shawn, however, had often listened to Maureen's playful upbraiding of his idleness, and had at last determined to sail for America, and prove that he could do as others had done, although his heart was breaking at the moment.

"I'll come back as ye wished, Maureen, with plenty of gold, and then we can be good to the village folk, and buy new boats and nets and be very happy here agin."

It was no use talking now, all was arranged, so they made their way to where the pleasure was slackening, and the sad hour approaching Shawn was to leave in the morning, and his own little smack was to make a last journey, rowed by its owner, to the next fishing village, where a number of young lads like himself were awaiting the steamer that was to take them to Galway.

The morning was foggy, and every moment the mist was thickening, but Shawn started off as gaily as could be expected, though some said his strong hand trembled as he said good-bye. The whole village has assembled to give him a send-off, and many were the tears shed and fervent prayers uttered.

Maureen stood amongst the crowd, pale and white, shedding no tears, but looking in helpless agony on the companion of her childhood and the love of her youth. A kind womanly hand tried to lead her away, but she clung to the rocks gazing after the little boat in a wild despair.

"So he's gone," cried a voice behind, and Nancy Maguire's tall form over-shadowed her.

"He's not," cried Maureen, starting up, and stung by the old woman's words. "He's not gone yet." She ran towards old Jim Malone, who was smoking his pipe quite near and moralizing on the scene. He was used to the young lads leaving the village, and was now only longing for youth and strength to do the same himself.

"Push out your boat, Jim, it's not yet too late; we must overtake him before he reaches the steamer."

"Shure ye wouldn't be mad, mavourneen, to put out on a sea like that. It's only Shawn himself as'll push his way in that fog."

But Maureen was impatient, and pulling down the little boat she jumped in, seized the oars and pushed out to sea.

It was not her first time to handle an oar, and though the fog was dense, she felt confident of her knowledge of the coast. It was but two miles up, and she pushed along with all her strength, determined to be in time. The perspiration was pouring down her cheeks, so she threw off her cloak and hood and resumed the oars with more vigor. At times she pulled with one oar, using the other to probe the distance before her for fear of the rocks. In every splash she could hear Nancy Maguire's words, "cursed be the day for Ireland when her women drive the men from the land they love."

one last effort to save Shawn, even if she were to risk her life in the act.

She thought she could see a large dark mass looming in the distance, with a light twinkling here and there. It was surely the steamer that was to take the lads to Galway. Some few more dozen strokes and she would be near the landing place, so she hurried forward, but as she did so something struck the little boat, and in a few seconds she knew no more.

The steamer delayed till the fog cleared before starting for Galway. When it passed out of port those on board saw a woman's cloak hanging on a ledge of rocks close by, while beside it was a little boat, whose keel just appeared above the waters.

Much was the consternation, but only Shawn Daly guessed the truth, and when he returned to his village that night, and heard from Nancy Maguire the whole story, he was a changed man.

"He is still seen in the village, a tall white-haired man, loved by the women and children, always ready to give a share in his boat to anyone who needs it, but ever refusing to carry a lad to the steamer for Galway on its way to America."

EASTER THOUGHTS.