

besides all this, they had a large sack filled with oats, (Brian had rented the ground for this extra crop for the one season,) this latter being intended to pay the rent, so that if Brian and Oonagh were not independent, I wonder who is. But the best part of their possessions remains to be told; this was a certain little purse of coarse blue linen, which contained no less than three guineas—gold guineas, no less!—which Brian had managed to scrape together. This he brought home, and deeming his treasure far too precious to be entrusted to Oonagh's care, he mounted an inverted *creel*,* and thrust the precious deposit into a hole in the wall, just over the open chimney, remarking as he did so—"now Oonagh, there's something for a sore fut—may be we'll be glad to have it some day or another!"

"Troth its thrue for you, Briney dear!" resumed Oonagh, in ready accordance with her husband's observation, and indeed without asking what was put away so carefully—she, however, noted the place wherein it was placed, as we shall see. Brian of course thought no more of his money—he had put it in a place known only to Oonagh and himself; so that all was right, as it should be. Some days after, Oonagh was sitting spinning—she was all alone in the house, for Brian was away at his work. Poor Oonagh was just thinking of—nothing at all, when a poor man presented himself at the open door; a tattered looking creature he was too, and seemed to lean heavily on a large stick, which he carried in his right hand, while the other held a huge wallet which was slung over his left shoulder. He entered with a "God save all here!"—to which Oonagh replied in the usual terms, "'God save you kindly, honest man!'—Come by an' sit down," she added, reaching him a little bench, (called in Ireland, and we believe in Scotland too, a *creepie*).

"Troth, an' I will; an' thank you for the offer," said the beggar, as, laying aside his wallet, he took the offered seat. After Oonagh had given him *his charity*, (viz., some half dozen potatoes or so,) her eye fell on his right leg, which was thickly bandaged.

"Arrah, then, what's the matther wid your fut, ahagur?" she asked, in a tone of compassion.

"Och, then, bad scan to it for a fut," returned the other; "but its the dear fut to me;—there's a runnin' sore on it, you see, on the upper part of it, and its as good as three months badwid me, and there's not an herb that I could hear tell of, bein' good for the like of it, but I thried; but its all of no use, and its jist as bad now, as it was

* A species of deep basket much in use amongst the Irish peasantry.

two months agone. Ochone, but that's the fut that laves me as I am, God help me!" While he spoke, Oonagh had in her turn ascended the creel, and taking down Brian's purse from its *safe*, she handed it to the beggar, without even opening it.

"Amen—God help you, poor man!—but there's something that our Briney put up there in the wall the other day—he said it 'id be for a sore fut, and as yours is so bad, throth I'll not be keepin' it lyin' up there—I'm sure I'll see nobody that 'll have a sorer fut than you—there now, take it, and God send that it may do you good! I'm sure if Briney had been here, he'd have given it to you himself!" The beggar in his heart doubted the latter assertion, for he saw at a glance how matters stood.

"God bless you, then, honest woman!" he exclaimed, "but its rejoiced I am to get any chance of bein' cured, an' now as its dhravin' on evenin' I'll be cuttin' the road short, for I have two miles to go the night yet!" whereupon gathering up his effects in all haste, he speedily disappeared with his prize. He was not long gone, when Brian, returning from his day's work, came in to rest himself, and take his supper before going out to the garden. "Well, Briney aghra," said Oonagh, as she placed the basket of potatoes, and the noggin (*i. e.* a sort of wooden drinking vessel) of milk before him, "if it was'n't the Lord himself that put it into your head to lave that thing by for a sore fut:—I'm sure I was as glad to have it this day, as if it was a bag o' gold!"

"What thing are you talking about, Oonagh?" inquired Brian in surprise.

"Why, what would I be talkin' of, only the thing in the little blue bag, that you put up in the hole there beyant:—there came a poor man in, jist a while agone, and he had a mighty sore fut entirely, and so I gave it to him, bekase you said it was for a sore fut!"

Brian went to the hole—the money was gone!

"Arrah, then, Oonagh! is it in earnest you are?"

"Throth it is, Briney dear."

"Well, now, am'n't I to be pitied, that has sich a woman to my wife!" he exclaimed in a towering passion—(towering for our friend Brian, whose highest state of indignation could scarcely be called *anger*.) "Now, Oonagh! did'n't you know in your heart and sowl, that it was money was in it?"

"No, nor the divil a know, Briney, and sure you said it was for a sore fut!—an' when I seen the poor man not able to walk a'most, he was so bad,—don't you think but I'd give it, no matther what it was?"