

MARY LEE or The Yankee in Ireland

BY PAUL PEPPERGRASS, ESQ. CHAPTER XIII.

DR. HENSHAW'S PRIDE IS DEEPLY WOUNDED.—TO BE TAKEN FOR A BURGLAR, AND TREATED AS A BURGLAR, IS MORE THAN HE FELT PREPARED TO PUT UP WITH.—CAPTAIN PETERSHAM ANOLOGYZES FOR HIS MURDER, BUT TO NO PURPOSE.

Captain Petersham, booted and spurred, and accompanied by an officer in undress and constabulary uniform, entered the parlour the moment the servants rushed in with the lights, and there beheld, to his utter astonishment, the insensible form of his venerable aunt, in the arms of a tall, red-bearded stranger. The groans of the unfortunate African on the floor, and the cries of Uncle Jerry, mingling with the screams and confusion of the affrighted servants, left him no room to doubt the man was a burglar, and fired with indignation at the outrage thus offered his relative, he snatched a pistol from the mantel-piece, and bounding over chairs, tables, broken glasses, and every thing else that lay in his way, presented the weapon at his head.

"Villain, desist," he cried, "or I blow your brains out." "Hold on, sir," ejaculated Henshaw, "remove your weapon."

"Lay down the lady on the sofa, sir!—lay her down instantly!" "Are you mad, sir?—I have no—no—"

"Down with her, or by—"

The doctor, feeling the cold muzzle of the pistol touch his forehead, dropped his burden as suddenly as if she has been a bar of hot iron, and then drawing himself up, and pursuing out his lips, demanded to know who dared assault him thus.

"Silence, villain," again thundered the captain, "silence." "Sir, I'm no villain, and I demand—"

"Another word!" and the excited captain again raised his weapon.

But the police officer, fearing his fiery temper might drive him to extremities, arrested his arm, and begged him to see to the lady, while he took charge of the prisoner.

"Hold him fast, then," he cried. "Let him escape at your peril! Ho! there," he continued, shouting to the servants—"ho! there, rascals; let two of you remove Mrs. Wolloughby to her room, and the others start off and scour the country for the rest of the gang; five pounds for the first capture; come now, my lads, lose no time; tumble out and be active."

As the excited captain rushed from the parlour, after issuing his orders, he came full tilt against Uncle Jerry, and laid him sprawling on his back.

"Thank you," said the latter; "I'm exceedingly obliged, upon my word. Well, I vow and declare, he added, as he kicked up his little gaitered legs, and wriggled like a capizid crab—"I vow and declare there's not such another place as Castle Gregory in the whole world."

"Kate Petersham! Kate Petersham! Hilloo, Kate, where are you?" cried the captain, leaving Mr. Guirkie to his own resources.

"Here," said a voice behind him. The captain turned, and to his surprise beheld his sister in an arm chair, her head thrown back, her hair all down over her shoulders, and her whole frame convulsed with laughter.

"What in the name of all the Furies does this mean?" he demanded, beginning to suspect some mistake.

But Kate, to save her life, could not articulate a syllable; all she could do was to point to Uncle Jerry, on the floor.

"Who is he?" said the captain; and turning to the prostrate man, he seized him by his arm, and raised him on his feet.

"Why, how now? is it possible?—good Heaven!—how came you here, Mr. Guirkie?"

"That's not the thing, captain, nor, sir, that's not the thing; the question is, how I'm to get away, for the devil's in the house."

"Where is Dr. Henshaw?" inquired the priest, stopping a servant running across the hall.

act of carrying off my aunt." "Excellent! he, he! excellent! Capital idea, such a man as Dr. Henshaw carry away your aunt. Ha, ha!"

"Are you ready?" cried Kate, marching up to the captain with a cutting whip in her hand, and the strap of her riding cap under her chin.

"Don't provoke me, Kate. Go away now."

"What, sir, turned coward? and your whole retinue in the field." "Bagone, I say."

"And your venerable relative wrested from the arms of one of the gang!"

The captain retreated into the parlour, but Kate followed him.

"Shall I have the five pounds if I succeed?—five pounds, you know, for the first capture."

"Bagone this minute," ejaculated the mortified captain, turning short and pursuing her; but the mirth-loving, provoking girl was too swift for him, and fled from the room laughing till the spacious hall rang again.

But to return to the prisoner in the breakfast parlour.

The wrath of the distinguished reviewer, on finding himself shut up in custody of a police officer, knew no bounds.

"Open that door, sir," he exclaimed, violently, pointing at it with his finger—"open that door constantly, and give me free egress from this infernal house."

"Keep quiet, my good man," coolly replied the officer—"keep quiet."

"Stand from the door," vociferated Henshaw, raising his clinched fist, "or I'll fall you to the earth."

"If you don't keep your temper, I'll handcuff you," replied the officer, with as much coolness as before.

"Handcuff me! Sirrah," cried Henshaw running his thumbs into his waistcoat, and swelling up till he looked like a Jupiter Tonans. "Handcuff me—cuff, cuff?"

"You presumptuous pygmy," growled the doctor; and he shot at his keeper a look of withering scorn like Gienalvon when he said to the young Douglas,

"Knowest thou not Gienalvon, born to command Ten thousand slaves like thee?"

"Pray, fellow, what do you take me for?" at length he added, a little cooled down under the officer's imperturbability of look and tone.

"A robber—caught in the very act of abducting one of the ladies of the house."

"A robber! Look at me again, sir! Am I like a robber?"

"Can't say as to that. I've seen robbers as good-looking in my time."

"You're an ensouled scoundrel; but go on, play out the play. This is my first Irish lesson, I presume."

the priest. "I'm sorry, sir, for this ridiculous blunder on your account; but hang me if I can play the supplicant any longer."

"Of course not."

"Should he happen to be a gentleman, and desire satisfaction of another kind, I shall be most happy to accommodate him. He can have Johnson of Birchfield, you know, in a moment's warning."

"No, no, captain," replied the priest, smiling; "he must dispense with such favors for the present. For myself, exceedingly regret having brought him with me to Castle Gregory. But there was no help for it. The night was dark, and Mr. Guirkie absolutely refused to part with the negro till he had seen you, and placed him under your special protection, I'm sorry also I must accompany the doctor; for I had promised myself a long chat with Kate on a certain interesting subject which—"

Which is neither more nor less than the comparative merits of the Anglican and Catholic churches. I suspected all along, my dear fellow, what you and Kate were about; but it's no concern of mine—let her please herself. If she wishes to adopt a new form of religion, I'm satisfied—only let it be a decent one; for by all the saints in the calendar, if she dared look even sideways at any of those tinkering religions they manufacture nowadays, I'd hang her up for the crow's to pick."

"Ha, ha! I don't like these new-fangled systems, I perceive."

"Like them! why, they're the most damnable nuisances in the country. One of these canting fellows who peddle them round here, called on me last week, and after disgusting me with his hypocritical twaddle, had the impudence to invite me to what he called a prayer meeting. Ha, ha! By George, I had a good mind to fling the fellow, neck and heels, out of the window. No, sir; I was bred a Protestant myself, and intend to live and die one; but Kate is old enough now to know what she's about, and may, for aught it concerns me, turn Catholic, if her taste lies that way—but let her keep clear of pettifoggers; that's all the stipulation I make."

"Well, but suppose," observed the priest, smiling, "suppose her taste led her to adopt the Methodist—"

"O, hang the Methodist, I'd rather see her peddle eggs with a basket on her arm."

"You don't apprehend much danger of that, I suppose? Kate's not exactly of that turn of mind."

"No; but you can't tell, sir, what may happen—you can't tell. Those Hardwinkles are here night and day, and she's stopped going to church on Sundays."

"Humph, and these visits are intended to counteract the influence of Mary Lee, I suspect."

"Poor Mary! Is she not a most fascinating creature?" said the captain, earnestly. "I tell you what, sir, I believe in my soul I'm in love with that girl."

The priest looked at the burly captain, and smiled.

"Well, hang me if I know what to make of it; but I feel sometimes as if I could propose for her myself. Ha, ha! what think you of that, sir, from a bachelor of forty-five?" and the captain laughed till his fat sides shook again at the idea of such a match.

"You would have but little chance against Randall Barry, I fear," replied the priest.

"Yes, and the foolish boy is now somewhere in the neighborhood, I understand."

"Saw him myself, and a devilish fine-looking fellow he is—saw him at the lighthouse yesterday."

"Is it possible! and you didn't arrest him as in duty bound? You're a very pretty magistrate, indeed. Why, captain, I must report you to the government as an abettor of treason."

"Nonsense—I'm not a policeman, to carry handcuffs in my pocket."

"But you might have ordered his arrest."

"Humph! when I order the arrest of a fine young fellow like that, whose only crime is to love his country, I shall be no longer Tom Petersham. Still, if he happen to be brought before me, you need not be alarmed. I'll identify him fully."

of Mary Lee, nor forget to read that book I lent you on the beauties of the Catholic religion."

"Never fear," replied Kate; and then having promised Uncle Jerry to see particular care taken of his poor African, she waved her hand in adieu, and the carriage drove off at a gallop down the avenue.

TO BE CONTINUED.

AN AFFLICTED FAMILY.

TOUCHING WORD PICTURE FROM THE PEN OF A MOUNTAIN PRIEST—EXPLANATION OF THE IRISH PEOPLE'S RESIGNATION UNDER TRIALS.

From "Sketches in the Mountain Parish," from the Ave Maria.

One day, soon after coming to the parish, I called at a house up the mountain side, just to introduce myself and say "Good morning!" as I returned home from a sick call, I unbolted the door and made some remark to an old woman sitting in the chimney corner, something after the manner of my visitation rounds in Liverpool. The colliery inclined her head in my direction in a manner which showed she was somewhat deaf, and turned her bleared eyes on me in a way that proved she was blind, or nearly so, as well.

"I thought I heard some one talking," she observed, still in a listening attitude. "But maybe it's only the children, the cratures, home from school. Is that you Tommy avic, and Bridgie alanna?"

"It's the priest," I said, in a very loud voice. "I just called in to see you as I passed the door."

"Ah, a poor man!" she said, compassionately, as she seemed to gather this idea from the last word of my observation, which, although pronounced in a stentorian tone, she evidently mistook for "poor." "The woman of the house," she continued, "is out, milkin' but there's praties there in the tub and meal there in the bag near the chest; so take what you like, and God bless you! We never refuse a poor person a titrille, although we are poor ourselves, avic!"

"Knowing now that the old woman was not merely 'a little hard o' hearin'," as she herself imagined, but very deaf indeed, I turned to leave, and in doing so I saw standing at the door "the woman of the house" referred to already. It was evident she overheard the well-meant, but misapplied language of the old crone, for her comely face wore a griefed if not horror-stricken expression. It wore away, however, and changed into an amused smile as she noticed that I laughed heartily at the blind woman's mistake.

"Poor old granny is dark, your reverence," she hastened to explain, "and she's as bothered as a beetle as well. I'm sorry I was not in to receive your reverence and that we have such a tossed place for you to come into, for I'm not able to keep it as clean and neat as it used to be since I got disabled, God help me!"

At the same time she entered the kitchen on crutches, as I observed with surprise, for I had imagined her to be a vigorous, active young woman, judging from her appearance as she looked in over the half door with rueful countenance.

"Granny dear," she said, bending over the placid face of the old woman and speaking sharply and distinctively into her ear, "what are you after saying? Sure, it's the priest that's here—our new priest, God bless him! that's called in to see us!"

A look of blank bewilderment not unminged with alarm came over the old crone's wrinkled countenance, and she raised and clasped and unclasped and raised her hands several times before she broke forth into a torrent of apologies for her mistake.

"The priest, is it—the priest!" she cried, dropping on her knees beside her stool. "O, yer reverence, I humbly beg yer pardon a thousand times, and a hundred thousand times! Oh, wirra, wirra, sare I didn't know it was yer reverence was in it, at all, at all! And to spake to you in that unmannerly way—ow, ow, ow! I'm ashamed of myself to take yer holy reverence for a poor man! But I'm only a poor, old, dark, stupid crature, and I'm a little hard o' hearin' as well, yer reverence. So I beg yer pardon ten thousand times and yer forgiveness and yer blessing on my bended knees!"

I instructed my interpreter—her daughter-in-law, as I learned—to tell her there was nothing to forgive, and that in any case I was no more than a "poor man" living on the charity of my good parishioners. As I helped her to arise and resume her stool, she seized on my hand, which she first kissed and then placed on her eyes and on her ears, in the hope, no doubt, of miraculous healing effects. She continued, however, to upbraid and reproach herself in halfaudible mutterings, in which I caught the words, "How dare I?" And then, "Oh! oh!" and "Wirra! wirra!" as I inquired sympathetically the reason of Mrs. Kelly's being obliged to go on crutches. She was the wife of a John Kelly, a small farmer, whose mother was the nonagenarian "dark woman" in the corner.

"Ah, your reverence," she explained, "you see me in a poor way! I lost my leg about six months ago. I injured my knee by a fall crossing over a stile, and I kept on working and neglected it too long; so when I went to the hospital at last the doctors told me that mortification had set in and that amputation was necessary to save my life. Well, they cut off my leg above the knee, and here I am now a poor cripple on crutches! But it might be worse, and I'm thankful to God for my life, blessed and praised be His holy will! Ah, we're meeting with sad and sore trials in this house, your reverence! For us," she said, "and he hasn't very little child there in the corner, sitting near granny that minds her. She's going on four years now and she never either walked or spoke yet, and what's worse, your reverence, she's blind from her birth—stone blind, the crature."

As she reached this pathetic climax in her tale of woe, two liquid drops started from fountains that seemed often

called on for such service and coursed down her fair but fading cheeks. Did an angel, I wondered, catch them in a golden vial as too precious to be lost?

"What!" I said. "Can it be that those large, lustrous, beautiful eyes of that handsome child are sightless?" And I stooped and raised up the little girl to examine them more closely.

A bright smile of gladness or hope illumined the mother's face as she saw the little thing clinging to me for support.

"Oh, you'll do something for her, your reverence!" she said. "I know you can if you like; you'll make her see, please God, if you only raise your holy hand over her! Oh, maybe, with God's help and yours, she'll get strong, now you took her in your arms, the poor little dark crature!"

I touched the little one's face lightly and caressingly with my hand, and what was my surprise to find that she opened her mouth as if for food, just as a little unfledged bird does in the nest when one noisily approaches it so as to remind it of the coming of the parent provider!

Mrs. Kelly explained that the child would eat nothing out of her own hand and had to be fed after the manner of a three-months-old baby. I placed a morsel of bread in her mouth, which she ate, and then opened it again for me with her dark, brilliant, sightless orbs. Ah, yes, it was a sad, touching, tender spectacle of utter helplessness and simplicity, and I confess the sight brought tears to my eyes! I carefully placed the soft, limp, clinging little thing in the arms of the old woman, who crooned and "husbed" over her, muttering various endearing phrases with loving fondness and affecting tenderness.

Ah, what a spectacle it was! The blind grandmother, in her second childhood, nursing her "dark" grandchild, still a dumb and helpless babe at that wretched age when children usually delight and enchain the hearts of parents with their lively babble and their artless ways. But there was another trial in the gloomy annals of this afflicted family of which I had yet to hear.

Mrs. Kelly informed me that her husband was at present in a very delicate state of health. He had passed through a "heavy bout" of illness—pneumonia—the previous spring and had contracted, in consequence, a lung weakness which seemed to be developing into slow consumption. He had gone that day, she told me, to the dispensary, and was expected home any minute. In fact, while we were speaking about him he arrived, looking very weary and exhausted after his walk to and from the village, three miles away. As he welcomed me to his humble home in kindly Irish fashion he spoke in gasps, and when he sat down he was attacked by a fit of coughing which utterly prostrated him for some time. His once powerful frame was bent and shrunken and his naturally genial and indeed rollicking countenance wore the drawn and cadaverous expression of the consumptive, if ever a face did. As I looked on him there, bowed, broken and gasping, I thought him more worthy of compassion than any in that sad, afflicted group.

"I thought, yer reverence," he said, "that I was improving and would soon be all right again. But the cough is getting worse and worse every day, and when the doctor examined me the day after yesterday, he shook his head and said he thought he couldn't do anything for me—that one of my lungs was nearly gone and the other beginning to go. So I suppose I can't recover now, barring the mercy of God. But His will be done—aye, welcome be the will of God!"

And he dashed away a big tear stealthily, as if ashamed of his weakness, and changed the conversation to other topics, such as how I liked the parish, or if I had got a horse yet, or if I was fond of a greyhound. Poor fellow! with that unselfish generosity so characteristic of the Irish nature, he did not wish to intrude his private griefs and sufferings on me or sadden me by their recital.

As we conversed pleasantly a bright, healthy-looking girl entered, whom he introduced to me as his daughter Nellie.

"She's the best crature in the world, yer reverence," he said. "I don't know what under the sun we'd do without her since the woman here got disabled. Although she's only sixteen years of age, she's as cute and as conny as an old woman, and she's after doing as much as two all day binding the corn, the crature! Is Murty coming in to his day, Nellie alanna?"

"Yes, father," she answered, in a low, gentle voice, and proceeded to prepare the evening meal with a skill and quickness that would do credit to a trained waitress. She looked two or three years older than she really was, and there was on her pretty, winsome face a premature look of care and sadness seldom associated with "sweet sixteen." She was evidently the light of that household and the idol of her parents, who followed her movements with moistened eyes of love and gratitude. She was truly "an eye to the blind and a foot to the lame" and a prop to the weak in that afflicted family.

Murty soon made his appearance, stopping short as he saw me in the midst of a drawing ditty known as "Come-all-ye," which I had heard faintly for a few minutes previously and which he continued to chant lugubrously up to his entrance to the house. Booming on me with a broad grin, he sat in the chimney corner and relieved the old woman in the task of nursing the blind child. There was a vacant, careless, yet good-humored expression on his face—that was neither old nor young—just puzzled me to account for, until Mrs. Kelly volunteered the explanation.

"He's an innocent crature that works for us," she said, "and he hasn't very good talk either"—meaning he had an impediment in his speech. "But he's as quiet as a child, and works like a black, tuning and stinging away to himself all the day long. He wouldn't leave us for the world, and so long as he gets a bit and a sup and some duds to wear he doesn't care whether he gets any wages or not, poor fellow!"

We wouldn't be in the place, your reverence, only for him—God bless the poor, harmless crature! Sure, he dotes down on that poor dark child, and he thinks more of Nellie there than—than—I dunno what."

I took my leave of that afflicted and strangely assorted group, promising to call very soon again.

"They promised me at the hospital," Mrs. Kelly said, "to give me a cork leg, and maybe I'll have it by the time you come again, and I'll be able to move about better than I am at present."

"Bedad, yer reverence," her husband observed, with a faint smile, "when she gets that she'll be light on foot, anyhow!"

Melancholy though I felt in the presence of so much that was sad and depressing, I could not refrain from smiling at this witty ally. Murty, delighted evidently to see my gloomy face assume a cheerful expression, joined me in a long and loud guffaw, and Nellie, rather at him than with him, laughed like a bell, while Mrs. Kelly's grief-scared countenance relaxed into something of that roguish archness it must have worn when she was the happy, blushing girl that Jack Kelly wooed and won to the heyday of their sorrow.

And so I left them all in good humor, and as I went homeward I pondered on the scene I had just witnessed with feelings that words fail adequately to express.

Here was a family poor in the world's goods and with a much larger share of the afflictions of Providence than falls to the lot of most, yet not merely resigned to their hard fate, but actually cheerful under it. No doubt, the natural and irrepressible gaiety and good humor of the Irish character had something to do with it, but the peace of soul which pure hearts, simple, God-fearing lives and a good conscience ever afford had, as it appeared to me, most to do with it.

It is in their religion that the true explanation is to be found of the Irish people's admirable resignation under trials. When the heaviest of their sorrows is blackest and blindest after blow of misfortune strikes them with relentless and pitiless force, the Irish peasantry find consolation and hope in their religion—and only in their religion. It sweetens their sufferings and assuages their griefs; it is their solace in life and their support in death. When the cold, cruel, selfish world spurns them, they turn to religion for protection and relief. It teaches them to regard trials and sorrows as blessings in disguise and as sent for their good. It makes them what they are—the most prayerful, spiritual-minded and religiously inclined people on the face of God's fair and beautiful earth.

"God is very good to us," they will say, "to let us put our purgatory over us on earth. Doesn't our catechism say, 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted?'"

Again and again as I sat that night in my little parlour—or dining-room, drawing-room, library and study all in one, as it was—the images returned to me of that dear little blind child and that maimed, sad mother; that pining, consumptive father and that brave, old-fashioned child-woman Nellie, with her silvery laugh still ringing in my ears, and the more I tried to give relief. It teaches them to regard trials and sorrows as blessings in disguise and as sent for their good. It makes them what they are—the most prayerful, spiritual-minded and religiously inclined people on the face of God's fair and beautiful earth.

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A SAMARITAN IN SILKS.

LOWLY SERVICE PERFORMED BY A WEALTHY CATHOLIC WOMAN FOR A ONE-LEGGED CHIMP.

From the Church Progress, St. Louis.

There can be no disguising the fact that the greed of commercialism is fashioning for us a people totally at variance with the generation gone to its grave. Upon the authority of our fathers, God rest their noble souls! we are a changed nation. In feelings, customs, manners we hold nothing akin.

For into the grave went with them their honesty, generosity, confidence and charity. In the place of these the commercialism has substituted a class distinction of money, and each day finds the separation growing wider.

Open conflict is not an unusual occurrence. Peace among the warring classes might be preserved were it not for the arrogance, the coldness and the inhumanity of wealth. It is because of the abuse of this power it possesses that our modern conflicts arise.

To the same cause may be properly attributed the growth of doctrines dangerous to social peace and the widespread animosity to the possessors of wealth.

But there are some undeserving the hatred. A remarkable instance was recently made known to us. We repeat it for the great lessons of charity and humility which it teaches. It occurred two Sundays ago, when the thermometer in St. Louis went below zero. The worshippers at the late Mass at the old Cathedral had departed for their homes. Down the steps, after a few extra prayers which delayed her, came a fashionably attired lady. Carefully picking her way over the icy sidewalk and through the snow, she encountered a few yards west of the church entrance a man whom the world designates a mendicant—a one legged cripple in tatters.

The front of his old shoe was cut away and his bare foot protruded through the torn sock that covered it. He was laboring to balance himself in order to cover the almost frozen member. Seeing his predicament the lady asked him what was his trouble. Looking down at the exposed foot, he answered in a loud voice: "Don't you see what the trouble is?" She saw and stooping down with her kid-gloved hand she drew the dirt begrimed sock over the foot, and with a "thank you" went on her way.

What charity! What humility! How the recording angel must have rejoiced as he registered that deed in heaven. Little did she dream that there was one near by to tell her noble deed to others. It was the act of a noble Catholic woman, a Samaritan in silks, whom wealth has not contaminated. God bless her!