

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Our young readers now have an opportunity of judging of the merits of a new contributor to this department—Miss Clara Beatrice Senecal—of St. John's whose two stories, "Angel Visitants" and "Jack Redmond" are offered for their appreciation this week.

ANGEL VISITANTS—One hot day in summer, two children were rambling through a wood, situated in part on their father's land, in quest of berries. The elder, a little boy of eight, with dark clustering curls, and the other, a sweet little girl of five, with golden, wavy hair flowing to the wind. They formed a lovely picture as they rambled on, hand in hand, through the cool shady wood, now stopping to pick berries, or wild flowers, now listening to the songs of the birds or overjoyed at the finding of some little nest full of little birds, to whom they spoke in sweet caressing accents, and fed with some of their berries. Coming to a soft mossy bank, they sat down to rest a little. The great trees overhead formed colossal archways, through which the birds flitted and the pure blue of the heavens could be seen, and now and then a gust of wind wandering by would wave their long branches and make the beautiful leaves flutter with a pleasant rustle the little ones loved to hear.

They remained some time listening to the harmonious and mysterious whisperings of the forest, that they had heard so oft before, and where dear old Mother Nature told them so many beautiful things: but hark! what was that? Mingling with the murmurs of the forest, were strange, unusual sounds, and listening intently they could distinguish strains of music, soft, sweet, tender, heavenly; and as the sounds drew nearer, they could distinguish many voices singing. Peeping through the branches they saw two men advancing cautiously; one was carrying something in a canvas bag under his arm. Following in their wake was a band of angels, a whole troop of them, of snowy whiteness, and with beautiful shining wings, playing on harps and singing the sweetest harmonies that could be heard. So unusual a sight terrified the children.

Crouching down in some bushes they hid themselves, yet managed so they could watch what was going on. "They must be the fairies," whispered the little girl.

"No," said the little boy, "I know they are angels 'cause they have wings. Fairies have no wings, and they are so beautiful, they must have come right from heaven."

They were now so close that the children dared not even whisper, but kept watch with eager eyes. The two men came to a large tree in which was a very deep hollow, and depositing their burden far down into it, and placing a piece of moss over the opening, hastened away seemingly unconscious of the presence of any other beings but themselves.

Not so with the angels; they formed into a circle around the tree and bowing down in adoration, continued their heavenly praise. Sweet, oh so sweet, did those heavenly strains fall on the stillness of the wood. The heavens seemed to open and angels kept descending; beautiful, white, diaphanous beings, all enwrapped in a halo of light: the sun's rays seemed dim in comparison; yet it was a soft heavenly radiance, that did not hurt the eyes; on the contrary, one could not willingly turn one's eyes from it.

The little ones were entranced and unable to move. Long they remained thus, tasting, as it were, of the joys of Paradise, though to them it seemed but an instant, till the voices of their parents calling loudly aroused them. Alarmed at their long absence, their parents had gone in search of them. The children would not shout back for fear of disturbing the angels, so they crept out of their hiding place and hurried in the direction from whence the calls came.

Eager were the enquiries of their parents concerning their long absence, for it was almost nightfall. The little one related in hushed accents all they had heard and seen. At first the parents believed they must have fallen asleep and dreamt, yet thought it strange they should have dreamt

alike, and still stranger that they should be so impressed, nay, almost terrified by a dream, for they dared not speak scarcely above a whisper. They insisted on bringing their parents to the spot to prove the truth of what they asserted. The angels were no longer visible, but reaching down into the hollow of the tree, their father drew forth the canvas bag, and opening it found, to his astonishment, two silver chalices and a pix containing several hosts. They fell on their knees in adoration. The mysterious presence of the angels was now no longer a mystery, for well they knew that in those frail hosts were their God and Saviour, and fearing the robbers would return at night to take the holy vessels away, he replaced them in the hollow of the tree and leaving his wife and children in adoration with the angels who no doubt were still there, though no longer visible, he hastened to the village to tell the pastor, who came with all the village and removed the sacred hosts and vessels to the Church.

The next day they heard that a Church in a town at some distance had been broken into and the sacred vessels, together with the consecrated hosts had been taken. The robbers knowing they were pursued, and fearing detection, resolved to hide their booty for a time, intending to return for it when the search would have been over. But God not wishing the sacred Hosts to be profaned by the sacrilegious hands of the brigands, permitted His angels to become visible to the pure eyes of innocent children, scarcely less pure than the angels themselves.

A chapel was built in the woods to commemorate the spot, where Jesus was pleased to manifest, in so wonderful a manner, His Divine presence in the consecrated Host, and became a place of great devotion to the inhabitants for many miles around.

JACK REDMOND.—In a pretty cottage, on the banks of the river Suir, just on the outskirts of the City of Clonmel, lived a widow and her only son. Her husband, Dr. George Redmond, a young physician of considerable skill, had died six years previously, leaving a delicate wife to struggle for her existence, and that of her child, as best she could, for he had died poor. He had only just begun to establish a reputation, and acquire a fair amount of practice when death made his grim appearance. One dark night, returning from the country, where he had been called in haste, he was fished from a fiery death. A broken spine; two weeks of intense suffering, and all was over with Dr. Redmond.

The grief of the young wife knew no doubts, but, resigned to the will of heaven, she prayed for strength, and the Father of all mercy, who is, in particular, the Father of the poor and afflicted, abandoned her not. Somehow she managed to obtain a living. The pieces of land surrounding her cottage were carefully cultivated by the neighboring peasants, who owed many a service to her husband's medical skill, and yielded almost enough for her subsistence. Many foes, also, which her husband had been unable to collect, were brought to her, and part of her cottage was rented to another old lady, who paid her well for it. Thus years rolled by, little Jack Redmond grew tall and strong, and was now a bright lad of ten. His mother's one care had been to train him in the practice of virtue, and her efforts had been amply rewarded. Not that he was perfect, but he endeavored earnestly to correct his many little faults, and in his heart was laid the foundation of solid virtue.

It was now the eve of his First Communion. For many months he had prayed and studied hard, he had purified his soul in the holy tribunal of penance; and now it was the last eve of waiting; on the morrow he would be admitted to Holy Communion for the first time: that beautiful, merciful Saviour, who had loved him so much, and whom he desired so ardently, would come to him and would embrace his soul, and fill his heart with His adorable presence. That night his heart was full of joy, as he kissed his mother good night and laid his head on his pillow. He passed over again in his mind all the good resolutions he had taken, and fell asleep repeating the holy names of Jesus and Mary.

The morrow was bright and beautiful, as such a day ought to be. The children approached the Holy Table with edifying devotion. One more step was taken on the road to heaven—God grant that all may persevere to the end.

One morning, not long after, Mrs. Redmond received a letter from her husband's brother in New York, asking her to come to him with her son; that he would be only too happy to provide for his nephew's future and attend to his education, having no family of his own; informing her, at the same time, that he had succeeded in business beyond his most sanguine hopes, and was on the way to fortune.

Mrs. Redmond loved the land of her birth; it was not without a pang that she contemplated immigrating to America; but of late her health had been very poorly, in fact, her physician feared a decline. The thought that she might soon die, leaving her little boy almost entirely alone, induced her to accept her brother-in-law's kind offer. Therefore, putting her affairs in order as soon as possible, she bid good-bye to her friends and native land, and with her son set out for America. She had written to her brother-in-law of her decision, but receiving no reply, resolved to travel on an immigrant ship, as she could not afford the high fare of the passenger ships. In the meantime her letter had been lost, and Mark Redmond wondered exceedingly why he heard no more from her.

In the quarantine hospital of New York, a little boy lay tossing in the delirium of fever. He had been brought from an Irish immigrant ship, and the kind doctor and nurse that attended the hospital could not but pity the poor little fellow, who had not a single friend to look after him. His mother, they said, had died on board the ship, and no one seemed to know or take any interest in him, and somehow in the registering of the other passengers he had been forgotten.

For many days he lay between life and death in the terrible grip of the deadly enemy with which he struggled. Finally victory was declared in his favor; he would live, but it would be a long time before he was strong enough to go about. By the time he was well enough to leave the hospital, kind Doctor Richards had grown so fond of the little fellow that he resolved to adopt him. His own little boy had died some time before, and his home was very lonely. His wife also approved of the plan. He questioned the little boy with regard to his identity, but alas! the fever had left his mind a blank; he could not remember the least particular regarding his past; he had forgotten even his own name.

This doctor believed that in time the remembrance of the past would return, as the little fellow seemed intelligent, so he gave him the name of his own little son, Eddie Richards. In fact, for the present, he thought it was just as well, as the little boy would become more attached to his adopted parents. The memory of the past, too, would undoubtedly be painful, so it was no more referred to.

Everything was done that could be to make the child happy, in his new home: He had everything he could wish for, and being of an affectionate nature, soon grew to love his adopted parents. He was very happy, but sometimes he would have strange dreams of a sweet woman who seemed to love him, and whom he loved. They would walk together along the banks of a beautiful river, or around the gardens of a pretty cottage, where everything seemed familiar to him. At other times she would lead him to a Church, where they would kneel together in adoration, and he would pray on the pretty white rosary he had. He seemed to know, or feel, that God was in this Church, the Jesus he loved was truly here, and though he had forgotten all else the religious instructions and virtuous training of his former years were still in his heart. He had a tender love for the sweet Virgin Mother of Christ, whose image was in this Church, and to which the sweet woman would lead him and seem to be asking her to protect him. He grew to love more and more the beautiful lady of his dreams, and often through the day, when tired of play, would pass hours thinking of her and

wondering if ever she would come to him, and every night would pray on his little beads that he might see her. Somehow it seemed to him that he had known her before; he had a vague remembrance of having lived through other scenes with her sweet face constantly with him, and everything good and beautiful seemed connected with it.

When he was strong enough he attended school and learnt quickly. On Sundays his adopted mother would take him to Sunday school at an Anglican Church, she being an Anglican; and sometimes he would attend services at the Methodist Church, with his father, to which church the latter belonged, but on every occasion he would pray on his little beads and seem in spirit transported to the Church where the beautiful lady used to take him in his dreams, and where the pastor looked more fatherly and loving. So real did everything seem in those spiritual flights or spells of absentmindedness, that he would rouse with a start when the service was over, and the people were leaving the Church.

Sometimes, as he grew older, and temptations became more numerous, if ever he did anything wrong, the sweet lady that watched over him would look so sad and reproachful that his heart would fairly ache with sorrow. Sometimes, too, even in his waking moments, he would have absent-minded spells, where visions of a tossing sea, and a black object on the water, that looked like a coffin, would make him feel as though he were in a nightmare.

Time rolled on, the years of his youth passed. He had always applied himself well to his studies, and now, in his nineteenth year, was finishing his academic course. The time had come for him to choose a profession, and he chose that of law. Possessed of great talents, he soon finished that course also, and was admitted to the Bar. He next entered a partnership with a well known firm of solicitors, Lancton and Drew, and was on the way to eminence.

It was usually busy in the office of Lancton, Drew & Richards, for they formed a very popular firm, but for some days past it had been busier than usual. The great merchant king of the city, Mark Redmond, had died a few weeks previous, and they had been appointed the executors of his will, which was as follows: The greater bulk of his fortune was left to his only nephew and heir at law, Jack Redmond, formerly of Clonmel, Ireland, but since fifteen years, his whereabouts unknown. Also donations to charitable institutions of New York and other cities. Having received no answer to the advertisements inserted in the different papers, the matter was discussed by the members of the firm. Finally it was decided that the junior member should be dispatched to Ireland to look up Jack, or more correctly, James Redmond.

It was the 17th of March, an ideal spring day. Everywhere the windows were open to let in the balmy spring air, and already the early spring flowers were making their appearance. All nature seemed filled with renewed life, after the long winter sleep. Some soft grey clouds, and white fleecy ones, floated in the clear blue of the heavens, but they were all tinged with silver, and only added to its beauty.

There was bustle and stir and gaiety in the city of Clonmel on this bright morning, for it was St. Patrick's day. A distinguished looking gentleman was seen wending his way leisurely along one of the principal streets. It was evident from his appearance that he was a stranger, and anyone acquainted with the characteristics of different nations would have at once pronounced him American. Suddenly, with the inconsistency of March weather, the rain began to fall in torrents. It was but a passing shower, but it fell with such force that everyone seemed rushing hither and thither to get out of its way. Looking around like the rest for a place of shelter, the American perceived the doors of a building that seemed to be a Church, open, and hastened to enter. He was somewhat surprised to find the Church full of people at that hour of the morning it not being Sunday. But then he recollected that he was not in America, and that probably it was some holy day peculiar to the country; then, as the organ peeped forth the joyous notes of "Patrick's Day," and

the sweet voices of the choir joined in the hymn of praise to this great Patron of Ireland, he recollected, sure enough, that it was St. Patrick's Day. Unable to find a seat at the back of the Church, he walked down the aisle to the front, where the Church seemed less crowded, in the hope of finding a seat; he found one at last, and sitting down rather critically glanced around. He was not an irreligious man, he had a great respect for any form of worship, though, educated in the public schools and Academies of America, he had never joined any particular church, but just worshipped where his parents or friends happened to lead him. Somehow the churches in which he had worshiped had seemed deficient; he could not tell why, but they did not seem to possess the power of conferring grace. They seemed to possess only the dried husks of religion, and not the essential kernel. The Bible he had read through and through, and endeavored to live up to its maxims, but there were many passages that formed points of controversy among the different churches he had attended, and which none seemed to interpret satisfactorily: there seemed a void in his soul that none of their doctrines could fill.

Presently a venerable white haired pastor ascended the pulpit and began to address the faithful. He spoke to them eloquently though briefly of the great Saint whose memory they celebrated on that day, and then, addressing himself in particular to some children about to approach the Holy Table for the first time, he spoke in touching language of the greatness of the act they were about to perform, of the love and mercy of that God who was about to give himself unreservedly to them, and of the importance of a holy First Communion; inciting them to renew their good resolutions, and the vows of their baptism, to live and die in that faith which is one and infallible. Enjoining them also to say every day of their lives, with sincerity, some part of their rosary. The stranger listened with wrapt attention; a strange fascination seemed to take possession of him where, he asked himself, had he heard and seen all this before? That kind, benevolent face, surely it was familiar. In vain did he strive to recollect, he could not fit it anywhere in his life; and yet he seemed certain to have lived, in former years, through just such scenes as these. The priest descended the pulpit and the Holy Sacrifice continued, yet those silvery tones kept ringing in his ears, and from whence was it that he had always said his rosary? Oh, yes, he remembered the beautiful lady whose image had seemed engraven in his mind; and this, yes, it was the same Church that he had seen so often. The people, following the Holy Sacrifice, rose, then knelt, and mechanically he had followed them. Presently it was the moment of Holy Communion, and the little boys and girls with angelic devotion approached the Holy Table; how pure and sweet they looked; he seemed to see himself, as though in a dream, approach the Holy Table as one of those innocent children. The memory of the sweet, tender face, that was even now, in his manhood, haunted his mind, and which he knew now to be that of his own mother, seemed interwoven with this mental picture. Something indefinably sweet and sad seemed to fill him, and leaning his head in his hand he began to recite the rosary that he had said so often, with more fervor than he had ever done, and which seemed to connect him in some way, to his mother.

The Mass ended, the children began reciting the prayers after communion, the acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, the renewal of their baptismal vows. Mechanically he repeated them with the children; yes, he had known and said these prayers before, then dimly the memory of the past seemed to return—yes, he could see himself in a Church just like this approach the Holy Table; his kind good mother was with him, and then—and then—what was it—Yes, they had gone on a ship, he could remember now, his mother had died before they got off, and yes, they had thrown her into the sea; he could remember his heart-breaking grief, his desolate loneliness, and how awful sick he had felt, and then came a blank; he had had the fever they said. The next he could remember was finding him-

self in the hospital: and then the adoption by the kind people who had brought him up; and strange, he had forgotten his own name. He knew he bore the name of Richards, that of his adopted parents; he must have had a name, before he came to them; strange he could not remember it. Probably it was that terrible fever that had made him forget even his own name. Thus mused our friend, when it occurred to him that it would be interesting to find out who he was. He knew he was born in Ireland, as it was from an Irish immigrant ship that he was taken to the quarantine; he felt almost certain that he had come from that part of Ireland, for, come to think of it, now, everything from the first had seemed familiar. Perhaps it was in this very Church he had received baptism and made his First Communion; but how to find out? However, he would call on the pastor, maybe he could tell him something.

That afternoon Father Murphy received a call from Edward Richards, who told him all he could remember of his former history; also his belief that he had come from that part of Ireland.

"Let me see," said the priest, "that would be about fifteen years ago. You say your mother died on board ship. Yes, I remember it well, poor woman, and now that I come to look at you I have no doubt of it; you bear a striking resemblance to your father, who was my dearest friend. My dear young man, you are no other than Jack Redmond!"

"Jack Redmond! Could he possibly have heard right? How strange—the very man he had come all the way from America to look up, and who was the heir to a large fortune."

"Why, good sir, are you sure it is not a mistake?" said he, as soon as his surprise could allow him to speak. "Quite sure, sir. You see, I received a letter from a friend of mine who was on the same ship, that Mrs. Redmond had died on board, and that her little boy had been sick also, and on arrival had been removed to the quarantine hospital. And then, as I said before, you bear an unmistakable resemblance to your father;" and opening a writing desk, the priest produced a portrait of George Redmond and handed it to the young man. The resemblance was so remarkable that it might easily have been mistaken for one of his own portraits.

Then he related to the priest how he had come to Ireland for the purpose of tracing Jack Redmond, as he was one of the firm of solicitors charged with the execution of his uncle, Mark Redmond's, will, who had died lately in America. The only information he could get was that Jack Redmond had immigrated to America with his mother fifteen years before, and nothing more had been heard of them.

"Well," said Father Murphy, "it is really an uncommon story, and I consider your entrance in Church this morning very providential. And now, Jack, I hope you will say the rosary with renewed fervour, and thank God for His goodness to you, and my son, taking his hand and clasping it warmly, I hope you will renew once more the vows of your baptism as on your First Communion Day. You were a good little lad then."

"But, kind father, I fear I am not so good now," then with the simplicity of a child, he knelt at the good father's feet, where he had knelt so often in his childhood. "Father, give me your blessing now, as on that day. It will help me to become as fervent as I was then." And before he left the shores of his native land, he had been again instructed in the faith of his childhood, and partaken of that sacred banquet, which is the bread of angels.

When he returned to America provided with certificates and proofs of his identity, the astonishment of his partners and adopted parents may well be imagined. Notwithstanding his wealth he still continued in his profession, and realized his ambition in becoming one of the leading members of the Bar. But dearer to him than fame or wealth is the faith of his forefathers, and one of his most treasured possessions is the little prayerbeads that, together with his mother's beatified spirit, had preserved him from the dangers and temptations of youth.

He lived till a good old age, and often amused his children relating to them how Jack Redmond had gone a-shunting for himself.

His face, as well as the rest of his voice told that he was truth, and Virginia strove to quell the temptation that flitted. Never before had she how much she admired the character of the man who from the depths of inebriated perfect Christian manhood all due to Agnes and her prayers, but still she knew was not without many eyes that he had become what she thought of Alexia. memory of what it must be, who was then in the youth, with gilded promises and happy life with a devoted hand, to say "no," gave her to conquer the temptation, voice that betrayed not the sign of emotion she said: "No, you may have your and I am more than happy her into the keeping of my father with whom I know will be very happy; but as self, I have other plans will render it impossible for me your kind offer."

He was wholly unprepared, but her manner was though very gentle, that dared say much more. "It is not possible," he said, "Agnes as you do you will easily give her up when you keep her with you."

"Mr. Malloy," said Virginia living mortal can ever know love I have felt for your the day that, as a little boy, she first came to me, to fill the place in left vacant by the death of child. She has brought so blessings to my home that eeding year has made her first to me, but since you first have been expecting a separation I am fully prepared for it, father you have the first child."

Before he could answer Virginia turned, and Virginia, untense of having some work left the room. She did not until Agnes called her in to father good night, and as he was gone the girl threw around her neck and said, "mamma, papa has told me his plans and how he wishes marry you."

"Did he, Agnes," asked Virginia. "Yes, mamma," was the answer. "And I am so sorry that you him, for he does love you very bad over it; but you will it over, mamma, won't you three might be so happy too."

Agnes spoke in that sweet tone which Virginia had ever heard so often, and she had clung to her, but her reply was, "Dear Agnes, you are now and can you not keep house father without me? We cannot live together."

"I suppose I might, mamma Agnes," but it would be so and I cannot give you up. would you do, mamma, it is mainly be very lonely for you alone?"

"I do not intend to remain said Mrs. Hurley, "but let us more of it to-night."

The next morning Virginia to the asylum and told her of her intention to enter the tion order as soon as she installed as her father's house. Sister Agnes Bernard could believe that she understood and said, "Virginia, do you do you know what your are of doing?"

"I think I do, for I have plotted it for some time," said Virginia.

"And you never told me said her cousin."

Virginia smiled and said, "years ago, Sister, I had a little who kept a secret from me have been trying to pay her. "Yes, Virginia, I remember Alexia, "but you know the stances were so different, I cousin would only have added own difficulties had she told her intentions; but does Agnes of this?"

"No," said Virginia, "I was to be the first to share my. After a long and confidential Alexia said, "Virginia, if you considered well what you are and are resolved to carry out pious intentions, it is best to from Agnes no longer."