

spirit he hurled swift thunderbolts of scorn. The many ludicrous accounts and representations he had seen of the devil could but make him laugh and sing:—

Oh! then, whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick or Clootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim and sootie,
Closed under hatches;
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,
To scaud poor wretches!

Hear me, old Hangie, for a wee,
And let poor d—d bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie
E'en to a deil
To skelp and scaud poor dogs like me,
And hear us squeal!

But the sighing, snarling unco' guid were his particular aversion. They turned up eyes of horror at him; wagged their heads in a solemn mournful manner—and he paid them back in language which I would commend to the careful attention of all of the same brood now extant on the earth: and if my advice be taken, Burns' books will get a large sale all christendom over, and Montreal trade will grow brisk as to one branch of it. There are some faults and failings which men can only be laughed and scoffed out of, because there are men whom nothing but scorn can reach; and Burns sent his pointed arrows tipped with laughter, straight through the gaping joints of Pharisae armour:—

Oh ye wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neebour's fauts and folly!
Wha's life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water
The heapit habber's ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douse Wisdom's door
For glaiket Folly's portals:
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propose defences,
Their dousie tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

None knew better than Burns how black mistakes can be; and if the defence is not of the noblest, it presents humanity just as it is, putting sin over against sin, and pleading that as none are free from folly, so all should hesitate to cast the first stone. That is not presenting the ideal of good and true living; it is not holding up the best and purest form of ethics; but it is a bit of honest common sense which the world and the unco' guid would do well to hear and heed. There were great springs of true religious sentiment and feeling in the man, which, though sometimes choked by the common dust of passion, did always again heave up and leap forth, giving to the life great patches of beauty. Who will not call to mind with gladness that brief letter to Mr. McNab, in which, after stating and bewailing his past follies, he says, "In the first place, let my pupil, as he tenders his own peace, keep a regular and warm intercourse with the Deity." There you have a sermon on prayer crystallising into great and peaceful life; a sermon flung into one glorious sentence. Or, need I call to your mind that soft and peace-breathing story of "The Cottar's Saturday Night," describing a scene than which I venture to say there is nothing more beautiful, more witching and more loved in all the world of literature. You know it. The cold November wind blowing, and sighing for all the evils it has passed; the shadows of night hiding the hill-tops and creeping down to the fields and the valleys; the tired beasts going home with sluggish step; the very birds hastening to the shelter of their nests; and the toil-worn cottar putting away his spades, his mattocks and his hoes, turns his face homewards, rejoicing at thought of meeting his bonnie lads and lassies, and together resting through the calm Lord's day. One by one they drop into the cot, and with brightened faces tell the harmless gossip of the week, while the parents "with partial eye" and quickened hope, look on. Then the word of tender, trembling admonition, better and dearer far than sacks of silver and gold—a great possession with which to face the world—and then the family Bible, and the reverent, solemn "Let us pray." With his eye on that, his heart in it, as a memory perhaps, and a longing, knowing that Scotland had drawn her virtuous women and her stout-hearted men from such scenes, what wonder that the poet sang:—

Oh Scotia—my dear my native soil,
For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health and peace and sweet content!
And oh! may heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion weak and vile!
Then—howe'er crowns and coronets be rent—
A virtuous populace may rise the while
And stand a wall of fire around their much loved isle.

Oh Thou! who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God peculiarly Thou art—
His friend, inspirer, guardian and reward.)
Oh never, never Scotia's realm desert:
But still the patriot and the patriot bard
In bright succession raise—her ornament and guard."

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, that passionate prayer was heard. The patriot's God has not deserted Scotia's realm; nor will He until the patriot himself shall cease from the land, and that will be—never. Her sons and daughters travel, yet always are at home—for they carry Scotland with them; and in our crowded towns, or far-off forest homes, sitting over the fire of blazing logs, many dream of the dear old mother-land three thousand miles away. They see again the heather-clad hills, with the crown of mist, and the lochs that gleam far below; faces of dear ones smile and whisper sweet words of love; and then, the dream becomes a song, and the song is "Auld Lang Syne," which leads in a natural way to "The Banks and Braes o' Bonny Doon." For when Scotland sings, she sings in the words of Burns—as she must needs, for those words breathe the spirit of the people and the land. Scotland will endure as long as Anglo Saxondom endures, and long as Scotland shall endure will be cherished the songs and the memory of Burns.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

FRANZ AND RENE. New York: Harper & Brothers. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

A beautiful story told in a charming way. The plot is simple—grandly simple—but is worked out with consummate skill. It is the story of a love that dies, being fixed on an object unworthy: and a friendship that kills, being between two worthy and pure spirits. Of course it is French. Only France can produce such gems of fiction—but it is rendered into good English, the spirit being well preserved in the translation.

We commend this book most heartily, and wait for more from the author.

A JEWEL OF A GIRL. New York: Harper & Brothers. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

Not quite a jewel of a book—still, fairly readable. It has plenty of characters, plenty of plot, plenty of talk—some of it easy—some of it hard—a little of it wise—a lot of it foolish—representative of our ordinary life and speech doubtless—plenty of everything but evidence of genius in the writer. Worse things than this have become popular—so this may reasonably be commended.

Believe not then, says Cicero, those old wives' tales, those poetic legends, the terrors of a material hell, or the joys of a sensual paradise. Rather hold, with Plato, that the soul is an eternal principle of life, which has neither beginning nor end of existence; for if it were not so, heaven and earth would be overset, and all nature would stand at gaze. "Men say they cannot conceive or comprehend what the soul can be, distinct from the body. As if, forsooth, they could comprehend what it is, when it is *in* the body,—its conformation, its magnitude, or its position there. * * * * * To me, when I consider the nature of the soul, there is far more difficulty and obscurity in forming a conception of what the soul is while in the body,—in a dwelling where it seems so little at home,—than of what it will be when it has escaped into the free atmosphere of heaven, which seems its natural abode."—I. c. 22. And as the poet seems to us inspired, as the gifts of memory and eloquence seem divine, so is the soul itself, in its simple essence, a god dwelling in the breast of each of us. What else can be this power which enables us to recollect the past, to foresee the future, to understand the present?

NO SIGN.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

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CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

When Dominick Daly was taken back to the jail, the usual increase in the severity of his conditions of imprisonment was put in operation. From the presumptive he had become the proven felon, and the degradation had to take form and system. But there was no active ill-will towards him. The officials of a prison are seldom actuated by an abstract hatred of crime, and, according to the jailer's standard, a very great criminal may be a "good prisoner," and if he be, will be treated accordingly. Daly was essentially a "good prisoner," perfectly acquiescent, civil and quiet. It was the opinion of the head-jailer, an experienced individual who regarded criminals from the "class" and "specimen" point of view, and was a great many years beyond the possibility of being surprised, shocked, or indeed moved by anything, that if "they" could only get a commutation, and turn Daly into a "lifer," the experiment would work admirably, and Daly would prove a credit to the system, and to the place which should witness his fulfilment of his term of punishment. Daly had requested an interview with the Governor of the Jail at Portmurrrough, and, it having been granted, he stated to that gentleman, in the strongest terms, his wish that nobody might be permitted to have access to him. On the Governor's expressing some surprise at so unusual a prayer, Daly replied, with respectful decision.

"I have no relatives, sir; there is no one who can demand to see me as a right; and I ask the privilege of passing my last few days undisturbed. Except the chaplain, sir, I beg you to permit *no one* to see me."

"Are you prepared to hear," asked the Governor, with some curiosity, for the reports in circulation had reached him, "that a young woman, one Katharine Farrell, has already applied for permission to visit you?"

"I did not think it would be so soon, sir," replied Daly; but my request applies to her. She is nothing to me, and I earnestly beg that she may be told that I refused to see her."

The speaker was a murderer, a prisoner, on his rapidly-shortening road to the gallows, but there was something in his face and voice that beat down the official in the Governor, and got at the man, who said:

"Never fear, Daly; no one shall intrude on you. Have you any other request?"

"I wish to write a letter, sir, to Father John O'Connor, of Narraghmore."

"Certainly. It must be brought to me, open, I suppose you know."

Daly appreciated the form of words, but he respectfully answered that there was nothing to be written for which he would desire secrecy.

His purpose was attained, although the total exclusion of visitors was found to be impossible, because Daly's friends immediately set on foot active efforts to procure a commutation of the sentence, and had to be admitted to him with that purpose in view. He heard of what they were doing with gratitude, but without distressing anxiety or suspense. He had no hope whatever of their success. "I am an innocent man, sir, as, God bless you, you believe me to be," he said to Mr. Bellew; "but there never was a clearer case."

His composure, never self-asserting or histrionic, lasted quite unimpaired. Katharine Farrell made several attempts to gain access to him. She was entirely reckless of appearances, and even the open gibes and insults with which she was assailed had not any effect on her; she passed them by unheeded. She haunted the prison gates, coming to them in the early morning, and lingering about them through the weary hours of the bright, beautiful, unsympathizing day. The worst, short of the truth, that could be said of the girl, was said at Portmurrrough. She had been Daly's mistress, and he had been in haste to marry her—so ran the amended version of the old Narraghmore story. She contrived to make acquaintance with two or three of the lower officials of the jail; they were nothing loth, for the murder was a big incident in their annals, and Katharine Farrell was interesting; and she made sundry attempts to get letters conveyed to Daly, and also have a handkerchief given to him, from her. It was believed, afterwards, that this handkerchief was saturated with poison, and intended to enable Daly to anticipate the sentence of death. But the Governor was faithfully served, and was permitted to reach the condemned prisoner. Once she contrived to make her way into the presence of the Catholic chaplain to the jail, and appealed to him:

"I was his sweetheart," she said, "and if it's the people inside there that are preventing him, he has a right to see me; if it's his own act that's keeping me away, I have a right to see him."

The chaplain visited Daly and told him.

"Your reverence will hear my last confession when the time comes," was Daly's determined, strange reply; "and then you will know what Katharine Farrell was to me. I will never see her again in this world."

When the chaplain told her the latter part of Daly's reply to his appeal—he said nothing of the former—Katharine Farrell received it with unexpected quietness. She simply said: "I thank your reverence. I see it's no use, and I'll give it up," and she went away with a firm step and tearless eyes. She was looking strangely old and worn, and the subtle beauty of her face was dimmed; she was a mere wreck of the woman who had stood among the golden gates of the chapel's presence, and walked away, along the south wall of the prison, unheeded. Here she stood for some time, as though she were measuring its proportions, then she went along the north wall, to its centre. As nearly as she had been able to understand the topography of the jail from the inquiries she had made, she guessed the position of the condemned cell to be beyond the portion of the great wall exactly in front of her. Standing there, she raised her hands to her neck, and with the old familiar action, she pulled at the neglected masses of her hair, that had tumbled down under her bonnet, anyhow.

"I will never see her again in this world," she muttered, gazing straight before her at the heavy, rough, inexorable wall—"that was what he said! That was his last message to *shall*!"

She turned sharp round, and walked away down a neighbouring street; and from that time, to the end, she was no more seen in the vicinity of the prison; she made no further attempt or appeal.

The efforts made by Daly's friends to obtain a commutation of his sentence proved unavailing. The condemned man was right; the same answer came from every one through whose hands their requisition passed to the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant. "There never was a clearer case." Not until two days before that appointed for the execution did the gentlemen who had undertaken this work of mercy relinquish their efforts, and abandon the result of their endeavours. He found Daly far less anxious and agitated than he was himself. He had never hoped. The meeting and the parting between the condemned man and the gentleman who had believed him innocent always, and still believed him innocent, were extremely affecting. At that last hour Daly broke through his habitual reserve and slowness of speech, being very near, asked him if there was any final request he would urge upon him, Daly, for the first time, spoke to him of Katharine Farrell.

"I give you the solemn assurance of a dying man," he said, "that what they say of her is not true. I loved her, sir, and if I had been a free man I would have married her; but I never deceived or misled her, and she is innocent of all harm from me.—If you and Mrs. Bellew would serve a poor lost creature, for the sake of one who owes you so much, you would protect her, and send her beyond the seas, to some strange place, where she can live honestly, and outlive all this. Don't keep her here, sir; that would not be good for her or others, but send her, at once, beyond the seas. If, in your great, great goodness, sir, you could promise me that would be done, I could turn my head and my heart away from this world, and get ready for my journey."

"My dear Daly, my poor, poor fellow! it shall be done."

(To be continued.)