LIFE'S SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

Go softly ! Uncle Abel sleeps ;
The summer wind remembers
How many Mays have found him here,
How many bleak Decembers.
It lifts his gray hair softly up,
While bees hum through the clover,
And shadows from the wooded hill
Come softly creeping over,
Until the streak of golden light
Deserts the window roses,
Oh, summer wind, oh, busy bee,
Oh, sombre shadow creeping,
What story do you murmur now,
What secret are you keeping?

Life's busy work is almost gone,
A span since hopeful Monday,
And now its saturday is here,
Foreruhning peaceful Sunday.
Life's school is out, the master's gone,
Forgotten Homer's story ;
The boys ? alas ! no longer boys,
But grey beards, wan and hoary,
Are scattered like the driven chaff ;
The girls are women weary,
The play ground scarred with graves,
Its shout a miserere.

And so the weary scholar rests,
Glad that his week is over ;
And so the shadows lower come
From window-sill and clover,
Faintly and low the life-blood runs,
Life's Saturday is going
For Uncle Abel ! no sound
But the south wind softly blowing.

'Tis better thus—the good man gone
Needed no solemn warning ;
His robes were white ed long ago,
Ready for Sunday morning.

The Colleen Rue.

BY N. ROBINSON.

A never approach for I fished down to him—showed me a tall, good-looking man of about thirty, strongly built, with a cherry face, very sunburned, not the ruddiness at the gills of your cricketer or gentleman-farmer, but the dull, brownish yellow of the merciless, tropical sun. Who was he ? What the deuce brought him to this out-of-the-way place ? Some tourist wandering from the beaten track, who had lost his way.

"Any sport sir ?" he asked., in a good, round voice, with a little touch of the Saxon in it.

"I have only just commenced to fish," was my reply.

There's a very good hole down below that clump of trees ; many a fine trout,—say, up to two pounds—have I taken out of it."

"You have fished this river, then?"

"Night, noon, and morning, sir. What flies have you up ?"

"Two orange wrens, and the tail fly, or black hackle.

"A very good cast," he observed, with the air of a connoisseur : "but I think you might try a grown fly, as there are clouds coming up."

"Thanks ; I'll adopt your suggestion. Have a cigar ?" I longed for a gossip with him, as, except with the author of the being of the Colleen Rue, I had held no converse with one of my own sex for weeks. What, a passport is a cigar ?—I mean a good one, of course. It is the calumet of peace. Jones makes Brown's acquaintance with a nod. He shakes his head over a cigar, asks him to dinner after two, and gives him his daughter, with five thousand pounds, by the time time that a box is consumed. You may smile, smirk, bow and kotow, to Robinson ; he'll not notice you. Why should he ? His acquaintance is too extensive as it is ; but just try him with a delicate "Exceptionale" or a languishing "Lopez, and Lombard street to a Chinese orange, but he'll listen to your sawdust ancedote, or smile at your wooden joke. A pinch of snuff is no mean introduction, but it requires prepping up, as the recipient is liable to walk away with a "Thank you." Let it be a rappee—one of that priceless mixture with which the first gentleman in Europe was wont to regale his royal nostrils at those wicked little suppers at the Carleton House ; or Lundy Foot's "black-guard, that Dan O Connell took while in Richmond Prison. The box, too, must have a history. Beaumanie's fingers or Beau Nash's waistcoat-pockets should have held it ; and the taper digits of the Miss of Richmond Hill, or of the Misses Linley who dyed with its enamelled lid. As good wine needs no bush, so a good cigar fearlessly asserts itself ; and the butt I gave that I tossed across the Corriebawn was fit to place beneath the hay-colored mustache of England's future king.

"That's a genuine 'Manual Garcia,'" exclaimed the stranger, as he placed the cigar under his nose, "and in prime condition. Let me return the compliment. Try these," and he flung a handful of enormous "half-hours-of-bliss" at my feet. "Please take them, sir." Seeing that I hesitated ; "I've just retattae I from Havana, and these belong to a lot that were being specially prepared for Alfonso, and, *entre nous*, for his mother Isabell., too ; they say she smokes like a medical student in the dissecting-room."

Good fellow-ship having been established upon such excellent foundations as superlative tobacco and scandal against the Queen of Spain. It is scarcely necessary to say that I threw my rod aside, and that, seated opposite each other, with the streamlet between us, we talked over each soothing whiff.

"Are you a native of this country ?" I asked.

"Oh, dear no, I'm English—my father and mother are Irish, though."

"You seem to know the country pretty accurately." He had named every land mark for miles around.

"Yes, I stopped about two years ago. By-the-way," he added, "do you happen to know if a man name Peter Clancy is in the land of the living and ?" He lived to reside about two miles from here, right under a high mountain, known as the "Devil's Lake."

"He's alive and well ; I lodge with him," I replied.

"The stranger took three or four rapid whiffs, coughed a little as if clearing his throat, and then said :

"His daughter lived with him—a golden-looking girl, with auburn hair. Is she alive and—and well ?"

"Of course she is, and the most beautiful colleen in Connemara."

"Is she single, or—"

Here the cough caught him again.

"She's not married yet, I observed, with an area significance.

"Then she's engaged to be married ?"—flinging his cigar into the river as if we were throwing an assagna.

"It's not likely that so charming a flower would remain ungathered, especially in Ireland, where the beauty of woman is a creed, and the men all saints in their devotion."

He said nothing. His Saxon dullness couldn't fathom my metaphor. He appeared dejected. His ignorance was sneering at him.

"When I was here,"—this in a low voice, as though speaking with an effort—"a young man lodged with them by

"Lyons," I interposed.

"You heard them speak of him?"

"A hundred times. This is a stunning weed !"

And so it was, with the fragrance of the breath of a houri, and an ash white as a snowflake.

"Did she speak of him ?" he asked, eagerly.

"Not much. He was a nice youth that Lyons."

"How ? Why do you say this ?" he burst in.

"It appears that the fellow had some little education, which he shared with the Colleen Rue. The girl's mind was a sponge. It soaked up all that he knew. The girl's heart was a cake of honey-soap, and this fellow's impression imprinted itself upon it. But Time, sir—Time washed his hand with this cake of soap, and rubbed out the gauger's image. Not that but that the poor child had a terrible tussle for it. She loved this man as a young girl loves but once, with a wild yearning, clinging, passionate devotion. The springtime of love is full of beauteous flowers, it is true, but give me the Indian-summer, when the fruit is on the trees, and the leaves have won the color which they will bear until they die."

"If she loved him as you say, why didn't she remain faithful to him ?" said the stranger.

"Faithful to him! why the deuce wasn't he faithful to her ?"

"I have reason to believe that he was."

"Then, sir, you have been misinformed ; let me tell you that. He left without explanation, and with but one flimsy letter."

"Three letters," interrupted my companion.

"One, sir ! I have it from the girl's own lips, and she is truth itself."

"She did not deign even to reply to this one."

"For the simple reason that she didn't know how to write at the time, and Lyons ought to have known that pretty well. Look at her caligraphy now," I added, taking an extract from "The Corsair," and flinging it wrapped around a small stone across to him. The stone, true to its mark, plunged against his stomach, but the paper stopped half-way, and dropped into the stream.

"I have seen the harmless, necessary cat dart at a mouse, a dog for a bone, a bull for a gaily attired matador ; but the spring with which the stranger plunged into the river after the floating paper surpassed for agile athletic agility any performance I had ever hitherto witnessed. He seized the paper much as the expectant heir crazes over the will, or as the master of Ravenswood the luckless document to which the trembling, terrified Lucy Ashton has just appended her quivering autograph. Up to his hips in water, he devoured every word which the Colleen Rue had written upon the dripping paper, his lips moving after the fashion of young gentleman when endeavoring to commit to memory within a very short space of time one hundred and fifty lines of the first book of Virgil, or a similar dose of the works of that wonderful little gentleman who knew a trifle of human nature, commonly called Horace.

"This eccentric conduct somewhat perplexed me. This man was perfectly sober, spoke rationally, and his tobacco went into the witness box and swore as to his taste and judgment.

"Hallo ! I cried, "you take the water like a retriever. Don't fetch on an attack of rheumatism. There isn't a drop of brandy within two good Irish miles."

This observation recalled him to his senses. He endeavored to laugh ; it would not do. A gen came up to make room for a gnat ; and finally he swashed over, till he reached my outstretched hand, when I jerked him on shore.

"We had better start for Clancy's at once," said I ; "a whiffer of cognac will do you no harm."

"No ! there, not there !" he muttered. "And yet—"

"Why not there ? they are most hospitable people."

Without word or warning, rhyme or reason, and as if following up some frozen idea, which had suddenly thawed, he asked :

"Is Mary Clancy going to be married ?"

"Not immediately," I replied.

"Is she engaged to anyone ?"

I could not utter a falsehood to save my somewhat crane-like neck. Why should I ? What mattered it to this eccentric stranger whether she was a maid, wife, or widow ?

"She is not exactly engaged, but a gentleman is paying her very marked attention, and—"

"What do you mean by a gentleman?" he brusquely demanded.

His tone was irritating, but his tobacco was soothing. The antidote had more go in it than the bane.

"A barrister by profession, a rising junior who had been offered the silk on two occasions, but is too young to accept it a scholar, a literateur, an enthusiast, one who loses sight of the meanness of her birth in the dazzle of her beauty, and who can make amends for her absence in culture by the exuberance of his own, handsome with winning manner and address, and of an ancient lineage. He is about to offer his hand, heart, fortune, and position to the red haired daughter of Peter Clancy of the Corriebawn."

"But will she accept him ?"

"Will yonder river reach the sea? Will that glorious sun sink into the embrace of the west ?"

"Pshaw ! Bosh ! I say, sir, scared I. A young girl's heart is like a slate—say a little of the chance of disappointment and the impression is slight. If you want to retrieve your lost name upon it. Take my advice, and do it."

"Do you think that if this Lyons were to come back, that—that in ordinary worldly and—and—"

I asked, in a jerky, nervous way.

"Not a bit of it. You drop a stone into the water ; there is a splash, a bubble, and all is calm as before. Such would be Lyons fate if he turned up now. An exclamation of surprise, a sob, a few recriminations, and Lyons would get his ticket-of-leave. But come along ; it won't do to stand dripping here discussing the improbable."

He did not move. His head was bent as though in his breast. There was unbearable anxiety in his whole bearing. I was anxious to rally him, and to dissipate it.

"Before I take leave of you, sir—for I am about to retrace my steps—will you kindly bear a message from me to the Colleen Rue ?"

"Why can't you take it to the girl yourself ? We can walk over in less than thirty minutes."

"I'll tell you why I cannot marry the lady of the Manoir Lyons."

He was a revelation to me. My castle in spain tocled under the shock as if it were made of cards. What fatality is that, out of the million of inhabitants of the earth, this individual should turn up ? Who wanted this individual after his sleep of four-and-twenty months? Not I. Not Mary. Ah ! was I certain of that ? Not quite. She felt a sneaking kindness for him still. The fire was not extinguished. A little wet slack had been cast upon it, which the slightest stir would set ablaze. She was my prize now ; I had cut him out ; and why should I haul down my colors ? No ; I would nail the black flag to the mast, and if needs be scuttle this fire-ship that now came cruising in my waters.

"Yes, I am Martin Lyons, and I love Mary Clancy now better than ever. I left suddenly because I received an important letter from the head of the department that required instant action. When I got to Liverpool I was intrusted, with another customs-officer with a secret mission to Havana. I wrote to mary three times, and in the last letter I said all that I had to say. The letters might be posted on the door of the chapel of Ballynacruskeen, and any friend could have answered them for her, especially Father Falvey. I got proud then, when I found no notice was taken of me, and I tried to forget her ; but I couldn't. Do what I would, she was always before me ; go where I would the Corriebawn was ever at my feet. At length I felt such a longing to see her that I came over, and I was trembling coming up the valley like some guilty person, when I met you. I know all now—I know all now, and Martin Lyons sat down upon a stone, and buried his face in his hands.

"Mary has no fortune—he said, presently, "and I would like to make her a little present. Take these !—thrusting a goodly bunch of crisp Bank-of-England notes toward me—"and tell her that they are from an old friend. Don't mention my name. Do you hesitate ?"

"I am a stranger," said I, "and—"

"But you are a gentleman," he burst in.

Confound that word !—it levelled me.

Down I went before it, hit between the eyes.

"Martin Lyons," I said, "no man shall give these notes to the Colleen Rue but yourself. Come to her, man. Every pulse of her heart is yours. You were never forgotten. Her love is as fresh and as pure as the Corriebawn."

The glare in his eyes dazzled me. The wrench he gave my hand caused every nerve to tingle.

"And this barrister ?" he inquired.

"A myth, my dear sir—a bogey ! He is fifty years old ; and for the first time in my life I added to my age. This was eating humble pie with a vengence. Why wasn't Mary culling flowers, eating honey, or "cutting bread and butter,"—anything but making pig's puddings, as I entered the cabin, Lyons remaining outside ?

"You rise home early, sir," she said.

"Yes, Mary. Like Daniel, I just escaped from the lion's den."

She didn't see the joke.

"Would you like me to read to you, Mary ?"

"Not here, sir, thank you."

"By-the-way, Mary, I had a dream last night, and whom do you think I dreamed about ?"

"Whom, sir ?"

"Martin Lyons."

Such a rosy red, such an ivory paleness, such a delicious tremor !

I thought that I met him in the valley, and that he told me that he was coming to clear up everything, and to ask you to be his wife."

My manner was agitated, in spite of a desperate resolve to remain as cool as a cabbage-leaf. She caught my agitation, and became infected.

"For heaven's sake tell me what you mean," she panted.

"My dream is no dream ; I met him this morning. He is here."

She fell into my arms. I was not prepared for this, nor yet to find her so exceedingly heavy. My foot slipped, and I measured five feet seven and a half inches upon the floor, ere Martin Lyons could rush to the rescue.

"Take her, for heaven's sake !" I groaned, as her radiant lover clasped her in his manly arms.

* * * * * * *

I attended the wedding at Ballynacruskeen Chapel, as Martin Lyons beat man. I kissed the bride, as was my privilege. I proposed her health. I danced on a door, and I am to be godfather to their little son.

The Conversion of America.

WHICH IS PROBABLE AND FOR WHICH THE SAINTS HAVE PRAYED.

From the Catholic Review.

The latest conversion to the Catholic faith in the United States is that of Mary Dana, daughter of R. H. Dana, Sr. We never feel that the conversion of anyone is an accession to the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supremely conscious of her own mission is independent of all accessions to her faith, but we can fascinate this lady on the happiness she gains by her admission to the fold of Christ. Indeed it is probable and possible that

THE UNITED STATES WILL YET

be one of the most Catholic countries in the world. There is nothing to hinder it, and everything to help it. The people of this country, in spite of the narrowness of sectarianism, principally of Method-ism, are very generous and a very liberal people. We do not mean liberal in the sense of the word as it is used on the European continent. We mean liberal in regard to the freedom of the range in opinions of others. This springs naturally from the fact that we are a people. Democracy generally and not solely. Of course there are those who work hard against that kind of liberty which accords to every man of every denomination the freedom of his conscience. But their day has gone by and is over. They make their attacks upon Catholicity and succeeded for a time so much that they believed Catholicity was conquered. They covered it with obloquy, they arrayed powerful factions against it, they even went so far as to create a social ostracism and to cause intolerance and contempt to fall it, without knowing the movement—but they failed in it, for the instinct of the American people is against oppression of all kinds, and two wrongs—oppression of the worst kind. Even yet we Catholics have to bear the attacks of a press in the interests of Protestantism, which is frequently malignant and illiberal. Even yet we have to hear from Protestant pulpits that Catholicism is a conspiracy of the purposes of our faith. But the day is gone by when they can hoodwink the eyes of the people of the United States. When the people look around them and see

THE SELF-SACRIFICE OF OUR PRIESTS,

laboring for small reward in this world, but for great reward in the next, they cannot but admire the faith that teaches them such self-denial. When they look around them and see the schools we raise and support, and the devotion of the good Brothers of the various religious orders to the purpose, they cannot but say, the finger of God is here. When they look around them and see the hospitals, reformatories, houses of refuge, orphanages and homes for the aged we build and that are cared for by the Sisters of the many congregations of the Catholic Church, from the Order of Charity to the Little Sisters of the Poor, where the noblest ladies of our faith devote themselves to lives of toil and poverty for the sake of others, they cannot but believe that a religion that does this is the religion of the charity of God's own love. The Catholic religion is hard to follow, for it is the religion of the crucifixion, but once followed, thoroughly, nothing is more easy. Our burden is made light by leaving it at the foot of the Cross. Our way is made easy by following the way of Calvary. "Make ye straight the way of the Lord," said John the Baptist, and Catholicity keeps up the cry of the great precursor of Jesus Christ. More than that, there are so many prayers that have reached the heavens for the United States that they cannot fail to make it Catholic. Columbus prayed for it at his first landing,

FATHER MARQUETTE PRAYED

for it when he discovered the Mississippi ; the sainted Bishop Brute prayed for it in his western home ; Madame Seton prayed for it when she brought the Sisters of Charity ; Archbishop Bayley prayed for it at his conversion and during his holy life that it should be Catholic ; and innumerable prayers ascend to the throne of God, day after day, from altars from Maine to Alaska, that the Lord God Jehovah will bless the United States by making it Catholic, and He hears these prayers and gives us evidence of His holy care of them day by day.

The National Bird.

A PATRIOTIC SPEECH ON THE FOURTH BY A WESTERN ORATOR—A CHANGE NEEDED.

[Chicago Times.]

The Hon. George W. Beck, in his Fourth of July oration at La Crosse, said: "It may have been noticed that thus far I have made no allusion to the American eagle, the national trade mark, patent applied for, but it is not that I do not appreciate the position that species of poultry occupies on those occasions. The poet, alluding to the eagle, says:

Bird of the broad sweep and flashing wing,
Thy home is high in heaven.

This is too true. He is a high old bird, and the committee that selected the eagle as a national emblem should have been arrested for disorderly conduct. O, great bird! You live no nice. You soar aloft on pinions airy, until you see a poor little mouse with one leg broken, and then you swoop down like a ward constable, and run him in. You are a nice old bird for a trade-mark, for a nation of heroes, you old coward. You sit on a rock and watch a peasant woman hanging out clothes, and when she goes in the house to turn the clothes-wringer, you, great bird, emblem of freedom, you representative of the land of the free and the home of the brave, you swoop down on the plantation and crush your talons in the quivering flesh of her little baby, take him to your home high in heaven, and pick his little eyes out. You bald-headed old reprobate, you would turn your tail and run at the attack of a bantam rooster. O, eagle, you look well on dress parade, but you are a unanimous coward, and you eat snakes, You are a fraud, and you were counted in by a vote of eight to seven. The bird that should have been selected as the emblem of our country, the bird of patience, forbearance, preeverance and the bird of terror when aroused, is the mule. There is no bird that combines more virtues to the square foot than the mule. With the mule emblazoned on our banners we should be a terror to the foe. We are a nation of uncomplaining hard-workers. We mean to do the fair thing with everybody. We plod along, doing as we would be done by. So does the mule. We as a nation are slow to anger. So is the mule. As a nation we occasionally stick our ears forward and fan flies off of our forehead. So does the mule. We allow parties to get on and ride as long as they behave themselves. So does the mule. But when any nation sticks spurs into our flanks and tickles our heels with a straw, we come down stiff legged in front, our ears look to the beautiful, and our voice is cut loose and is still for war, and our subscription and plays the snare drum or anything that gets in reach of us, and strikes terror to the hearts of all tyrants. So does the mule. When the country gets older, and Congress has time to get in its work, the eagle will be superseded by a national trade-mark, and in its place will rise the mule in all his glory, and *E pluribus unum*, our motto, will be changed to *You plurdibus mulum, sic, distooper, alapaco.*

Why Women Should Read.

Laying aside the thought of our own rest and comfort, let us look a little higher. *For the children's sake we must make the most of ourselves.* Many an unselfish mother has said, "Oh, I cannot take all this time, there are so many things to do for the children." She does not realize that she may do more for them in the end by cultivating herself than if she spends all her time on clothes and cooking. A generosity which makes the recipient weak or selfish is not a blessing but a curse. Have you not seen grown up sons who scrubbed their mother's opinions in the same breath with which they called her to bring their slippers? The meek little woman has "worn around" to wait on them so long that they have come to think that it is all she is good for. Their sisters keep "Ma" in the background because she "hasn't a bit of style," and is too uncultivated," forgetting that she has always worn shabby clothes that they might wear fine ones; that their hands have become horny with hard work that theirs might be kept soft and white for the piano, and that she has denied herself books and leisure that they might have both. And there are other children, too, noble for such base ingratitude, who feel a keen, though secret sense of loss in the kiss the dear, withered cheek and think how much more of a woman "mother" might have been if she had not shut herself away from the culture and sweet companionship of books. *S[illegible] for April.*

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