It was a peaceful little village in the North of Ireland, far away from the noise and tumult of the busy world; its inhabitants were simple people, interested only in their daily labor and the gossip and scandal of their immediate neighsipand scandar of their immediate neigh-borhood. They had very little connec-tion with the outer world, and, indeed, they had not much loss in being so far removed from it.

The summer sun shone on the village street, playing on the white-faced houses, and creeping through the Gothic windows into the cool, dark church, where a few of the little school children were plying a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament on their way home from school.

In this small village there were six different places of worship; for, besides the usual Catholic, Protestant and Pres-byterian churches, there were also Methodist and Unitarian meeting-houses, and one enterprising shopkeeper, not being able to satisfy himself with any of these ereeds, had founded a religion of his own. He declared he "had found the Lord," He accurred he had found the Lord, and forthwith he built a meeting-house, and forthwith he built a meeting-house, delivered sermons, and soon had a goodly number of disciples. Yet in spite of all this, there were two old women, who, every Sunday of their lives, trudged off two long Irish miles to divine service, not being able to suit themselves out of all the religions in their own village. It ertainly could not have been the desire of exercise which prompted them to go so far, for they were both very much be-yord the age when one walks for

Somewhat back from the village street there stood a rose-covered cottage, in a there stood a rose-covered cottage, in a trim little garden of its own, in which lived two old sisters, named Katy and Annie Byrne. They were about the oldest inhabitants of the village, and had lived in this little cottage for a great many years. Their parents were buried in the graveyard close by, and here also two of their sisters and finally their two of their sisters and finally their brother had been laid to rest; and they were the only representatives now of the family—they and their brother's son.

Jim had been brought up altogether by his aunts. He was a fine, clever young fellow, the pride and joy of their lives. When he finished his schooling. and it was time for him to think of turning to some trade, they apprenticed him to the leading village curpenter. For some time he did very well, and was thought a great deal of by his neighbors. But at the end of a few months he began to get restless; he grew tired of the quiet, uneventful village life, and longed to see something of the world, and at last one day he disappeared, no one knew where, and from that day his aunts had heard nothing of him.

The aunts were heartbroken at his departure, yet they always believed he would return. At first the kindly neighwould return. At first the kindly neighbors would drop in with the off-repeated inquiry: "Any word from Jim?" But the answer was always the same, and at last they gave up asking.

Month after month passed by until a year had flown, and still the old women expected him home; they kept his room ready for him, just as he had left it; all his little belongings were carefully dusted every day : nothing was moved. It was just as though he had gone out for the day and was returning home in the

Yet he never came. Three years had now passed since he left. Anne's eyes were dim with the tears night as she prayed for his safe return : and every day Katty found the few yards they had to walk to reach the church grow longer and more difficult to accomplish. They were both growing very old and feeble, and they began at last to fear that they would not live to see their boy come home.

On the opposite side of the street lived another old woman, Mary Fagan, the saint of the village. Most of her day she spent in the church, kneeling in front of the Blessed Virgin's altar, and her prayers were considered to be most efficacious. So one day Anne told Katty the was going over to Mary to ask her to pray for the safe and speedy return of their boy. Putting on her bonnet and long black cloak, she crossed over the street and knocked at the door of Mary's house. A feeble voice bade her enter, and, opening the door, she found the old woman crouching over the fire.

"Well, Mary, how are you to-day?" said Anne, taking a chair beside. "Indeed, then, I've been pretty poorly: this is the first day I've been able to put

on me clothes since Sunday." "Sure, I never heard a word of it, or we'd have come in to see you," Anne re-

marked sympathetically. "Aye, indeed; Father McConville was in with me to-day, and says he never missed me from Rosary on Sunday.

Which was, indeed, astonishing, for Mary was in the habit of saying her prayers with great fervor and in her very loudest voice, but not being able to keep pace with the little altar boys, she never got further in the response than "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray-" which she

repeated diligently throughout the Rosary.

"And I told him," continued Mary, somewhat indignantly, "that I might have been dead and buried before ever have been dead and buried before ever he'd hear of it. And says he, laughing, 'Well, indeed, Mary, that's not likely; you would be sending for me a dozen

times before that happened. Anyhow, you needn't be thinking of dying for these ten years." "Did he say that now, Mary?" Anne asked incredulously. "Sure, I was think-

ing you were looking greatly failed this

last twelve months." "Oh, sure, he's always making fun with me, and says he: 'Mary, what will You leave me when you die?' And the other day, as he was going out of the door, he turned round again and says he, 'Well, Mary, when you die, it's the fine corpse you'll make.'"

Mary announced this with a little touch of pride in her voice, and then she con-

"But with all that, he's a good man, so he is, and he gave me the wee lamp over yonder, to keep burning before the statue of St. Joseph.'

Anne duly admired the lamp and the statue, and then saked Mary if she would like her to make her a cup of tea.

tea, Anne. You'll find the kettle behind the wee creeple yonder, and the tea is in

that box before you."

Anne found all the necessary articles, and having made the old woman com-fortable, with her teapot in front of her,

she prepared to go.

'And now, Mary," she said, slipping a few pence into her hand, "I want you to pray for our Jim, that he'll come back to us soon, before we're dead and gone."
"I will, Anne, I will; and have you never heard no word of him yet?" "Never a line since he left," said Anne,

the tears standing in her eyes. "I'll pray for him, Anne, so I will, for

he was a nice boy, and I'm real sorry for It was just a week later that Anne and

Katty started down the sunny street for their daily visit to the church. Very slow Katty walked, clinging to Anne's arm, and, when they reached the shady porch, she stopped for a minute to rest. Then they passed on into the silent church. There was no one there except Mary Fagan, who was once again in her accustomed place, in front of the Blessed Virgin's altar, praying fervently with her beads in her hand. She said the fifteen decades of the Rosary every day of her life, and she was now "just giving it a last turn," as she expressed it her-

The two old sisters knell down in front of the high altar, and prayed earnestly for their boy, with just as much hope and faith as they had when he left them three years ago. Then after a few minutes they rose and left the church, Mary Fagan still remaining, wrapt in her de-

votions. As they got outside the church door, Katty heaved a sigh.

"I doubt it's not many more times I'll be going down there. Anne," she said.
"It'll not be long before I'm carried there in my coffin. I'm nearly spent. And Anne could not deny it, as she glanced at the bent, feeble form beside

"Maybe you'll get stronger," she said cheerfully, as she pushed open the gar-den gate and helped her sister up the little path.

To their surprise, they found the house door half open, for they always carefully closed it when they went out.

"Why, Katty, there must be someone within." Anne exclaimed as she hurried into the house, but she stopped amazed on the threshold of the kitchen. Seated by the fire, crouched close up to it, though it was a warm summer's even-ing, was a tall, thin man, with long moustaches.

He turned his head as Anne entered, then rose to his feet, and the next minute both the sisters had rushed into his

It was Jim come home at last. "Oh, man alive, where have you been, and what have they been doing to you? You're terrible failed. You just look fit to walk into your coffin, Katty cried in consternation, when at length they released him from their embraces and were able to see how thin and worn he

was.
"So I am, just fit for it," Jim answered with a grim smile, as he sank back into his chair again. "I've come home

to die.' Anne, being alarmed at this evident weakness, hurried off to get him some food; and then in the deepening twilight he told them his story of failure and disappointment—no uncommon one, in-deed; of how he worked his way out to America, full of expectation and conti-dent of success. At first he got some odd jobs to do, and then he was taken on at a livery stable, where he did pretty well for a time, but he got tired of it and gave it up; and so he went on from one thing to another, never doing any good, until at last his health broke down, and he had struggled home, weary and disappointed.

Later on he went to bed in his own little room, which had always been kept ready for him, and he never got up

again.
The old aunts nursed him day and night, but they could not save him. His constitution had been completely undermined, and he was sinking rapidly. Father McConville came to see him every day, and it was a great comfort to the poor old sisters that their boy was surrounded by all the helps that the Church could give him.

It was another lovely evening, about six o'clock; the little children were still playing in the dusty street, their shrill voices calling to each other breaking on the stillness. A few men were standing idly at their doors, enjoying their pipes in the cool evening air, after their hard day's work. Two of them stood together opposite the cottage where the old sisters lived. Father McConville had just gone in. Anne had thought that Jim was getting very weak, and sent one of the little boys who were playing about the street to ask the priest to come up. "I doubt he'll not last long," one of the

men remarked, nodding his head towards the little upstairs room where Jim lay dying. "He's greatly failed. I never saw anyone go so fast, and he a great strong young fellow when he went

"It would be as well he went soon," replied the other; "he'll do no good."

The Northerns are not a demonstrative race; they feel sorry for their neighbors when they are in trouble, but it is not in their natures to express their sympathy.

The two men stood silently watching

the little window for a few minutes, and just as the Angelus bell was beginning to peal, a withered hand went up to the window and drew down the blind. "May God have mercy on his soul," they exclaimed together as they stood with uncovered heads, for then they knew that Jim was dead.-L. M. W. in Irish Monthly.

THAT TIRED FEELING

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HOME RULE.

Tie Irish World Says the Elections Strengthened Its Position in Ireland,

Notwithstanding the unhappy dissensions, the recent elections have resulted in strengthening the position of the Home Rule cause in Ireland. This is frankly recognized as follows by a British Tory paper, the London Saturday Re-

view:
"Upon the single question of opposition to the existing system of government the Trish electorate has revealed itself to be more of one mind in 1895 than it was in 1892. Not only have two Ulster meats been taken from the Unionists, but in more than half the remaining seats in the North where there were contests the Nationalists have either increased their own majorities or diminished those of their opponents. With the exception of the two Dublin seats, where Mr. Kenny and Mr. Horace Plunkett more than held their own, the poll of the scattered Unionists in the three Catholic provinces is this time on the whole rather less imposing than usual. Indeed, in Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, and, in fact, every other borough or partially urban constitnency, except Galway, comparatively few Unionists took the trouble to vote at all. Upon the face of the figures, which show a total of eighty-two Nationalists of all shades, as against eighty in the late House of Commons, Home Rule has strengthened its position in Ireland."

Eighty-two Home Rulers and twentyone opponents of Home Rule. Such is the result of the latest appeal to the ballot box in Ireland. The total number of members that Ireland has in the House of Commons is 103. Of this number eighty-two are Home Rulers. In two provinces of Ireland. Munster and Connaught, not one opponent of Home Rule has been elected. The total number of members for these two provinces is forty. They are all Home Rulers. The province of Leinster has twenty-eight members, not counting the two for Trinity College. These two are not chosen by the electors of any district. They are elected by the graduates of the college, and this being a Protestant institution, the members elected are, of course, always Tories as well as Protestants. But of the total members in the state of the course, always are the college. twenty-eight Leinster members elected by the voters of the province in their respective districts, only two are opponents of Home Rule.

For three of the four provinces of Ireland, then, the result stands thus: Total members for the three provinces, 68; total opponents of Home Rule, 2. So af er ninety-five years of legislative union with Great Britain it has been found impossible to get in three of the four Irish provinces more than two supporters of that union elected to Parliament. In other words, after close on a century of so-called union, three-fourths of Ire and all but unanimously condemns hat union and demands the restoration of Ireland's Legislature.

As for the remaining fourth of Ireland. that is, the province of Ulster, it is not against Home Rule, though this is the constant claim of the Orange party. Ulster has thirty-three members in the House of Commons. At the recent elections in the province sixteen Home Rulers were elected, leaving the opponents of Home Rule only a majority of one for the whole province. A few years ago the Home Rulers had a majority in Ulster, but it was lost through the Parnellite dissensions. As the situation stands, however, it is, of course, ridiculous to talk, as the Orangemen do, about "Ulster" being "dead against" Home Rule. The enemies of Home Rule have hardly half of Ulster on their side. Against them is the other half of Ulster, with the three other provinces all but s. .i !-three and a half of the four parts of reland for Home Rule; only a half of and if the four parts of Ireland against

Such is the attitude of Ireland toward British rule-an attitude as hostile today as at any period since the union was carried in spite of the known wishes of the vast majority of the Irish people. The Tory Saturday Review sees the fact and declares it would be "simple folly" to ignore it. "In the face of the increased Home Rule majority in Ireland, it says, "it would be simple folly to ignore the prevalent feeling in that country and to proceed during the next few years as if nothing had happened." Perhaps Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour may proceed as if nothing had happened, but we think that in such case they may get some wholesome reminders, which it will always be in the power of the Irish people and their representatives to give when needed.

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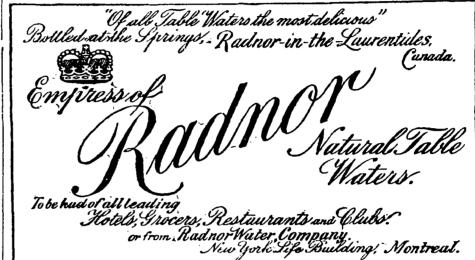
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