

MARY LEE

or The Yankee in Ireland

BY PAUL PETERGRASS, ESQ.

CHAPTER VIII.

LANTY ACKNOWLEDGES HIS WEAKNESS FOR FISHING AND FIELD SPORTS, BUT THINKS FATHER BRENNAN'S TABLE NOTHING THE WORSE FOR THAT.—DR. HENSHAW IS SUDDENLY PRESENTED TO THE READER, AND UNCLE JERRY DISCOVERED IN THE BOTTOM OF A BOAT, SUPPORTING THE NEGRO WITH THE BROKEN TOBACCO.

Castle Gregory, the family seat of the Petershaws, on the banks of Lough Swilly, was an old-fashioned place as could be seen any where in Ireland or out of it. Standing all alone, cold and bare, against the side of a mountain, it looked more like a Rhenish fortress, or soldier's barrack, than a gentleman's residence. To the traveller, whether he approached it by sea or land, it presented a bleak and desolate appearance. There was neither tree to shelter it from the storm, nor portico to break the blast from the hall door. It consisted of several piles of buildings, erected at different periods, and jumbled together without the least ornament or the slightest regard to congruity of outline. High dormer windows and tall brick chimneys rose up in remarkable confusion, and so closely packed together that all the swallows and jackdaws of the parish seemed to gather there in the season to build their nests. As to the pleasure grounds, if indeed they should be so called, they had neither gate nor stone wall to enclose them. All round about the place was open and bare; indeed, save a few acres of green lawn before the hall door, where the old sun dial stood between the two lions couchant, there was nothing to be seen any where but bent and sand hills. In front of the castle, Ballymastocker strand and rabbit warren stretched away to Rathmullen Head, from the brow of which Dunree battery pointed its guns across the narrows of the frith, and behind it Sugar Loaf Hill rose up like a pyramid with its little coast-guard station and flag-staff on top.

Approaching Castle Gregory by water, from the direction of Araheera Point, the immense precipices, which line the southern shore, completely hide it from the traveller's view, till he comes within an oar's length or two of the usual landing place. It was on this account, probably, that the occupants of a small sailing boat, which glided up the channel the evening after the painful events related in the preceding chapter, seemed quite unconscious of their near proximity to the place, for the steersman put up his helm, and sent the boat sheering away in an opposite direction, just as she had almost touched the nose of the quay.

"Hilloa, there!" exclaimed one of the passengers. "Where away, now? You're taking us over to Inishowen instead of Ballymastocker. Put her about, man; put her about directly."

"Why, sir, you must be mistaken," said the man at the rudder.

"Not very likely. After boating about here nearly every week of my life for the last fifteen years, I should know the lay of the land at least."

"Well, there's Doughmore, where you see the smoke; and there's Buncrana—"

"Nonsense, sir; don't you see the spars of the Water Hen here over the rocks behind us? Round with her, sir, and let us ashore."

"Begorra, I believe you're right," muttered the skipper, giving the helm a jerk when he saw his mistake. "You're perfectly right, Father John—what in the world could I be thinking of!"

"Some devilry, I suppose—what you're always thinking of."

"O, don't be so hard on me, yer riverince; you can't expect every one to know the place as well as yourself, after cruising about here on sick calls so many years."

"Hut, tut, sir; you're a pretty pilot, to carry us through these rocks and currents," continued the priest, in a half-bantering, half-serious tone.

"If you knew only half as much about piloting as you do about poaching, you wouldn't be amiss. There now—take care of the shoals here—steady that, steady; and the tide will set us into the basin."

When the boat touched the ground, the steersman stepped ashore, and drew up her bows as far as he was able on the hard beach, for it seemed the regular landing place at that time of tide was rather inconvenient for his purpose, and then prepared to land his passengers.

"Lane on me, yer riverince," said he, as the priest stood with his foot on the gunwale, ready to jump; "lane on me; the shore's rough."

"Yes; lean on you, till you break my neck, as you came within an inch of doing last week. Away—I'll never trust you again."

"But you'll hurt yer feet, Father John," persisted the skipper, with more concern for the clergyman's safety than the danger seemed to warrant.

"Never mind my feet—stand off—I'll none of your help."

"Why, these hard, rough paving stones,—they're terrible on the g—on zinder feet, I mane; plaze your riverince, just lane on me once more."

The priest, as he stood there with his foot on the gunwale, appeared to be a man of middle age and stature, and active enough, one would suppose, to jump twice the distance; but the skipper, who was evidently a humorous fellow in his way, had probably discovered his weak point, and seemed disposed to tease him about it in requital for the rebuke he gave him in the presence of strangers.

"You may take my word for it, I'll lean upon you some of these days, my good fellow," said the priest, pushing the skipper aside, and stepping ashore with the greatest ease imaginable; "I'll lean upon you the right way, too."

"But sure, yer riverince, accordin

to yer own words, we're all bound to forgive one another."

"Never mind, sir; I have a crow to pluck with you, notwithstanding."

"A crow!" retorted the skipper; "bedad, sir, that's tough pickin. But sure if y'd accept of a brace of grouse or wild duck, I'd bring them up—"

"Hold your peace, Lanty Hanlon," exclaimed the priest—for the skipper was no other than our quondam friend—"hold your peace, you're growin' quite too malapert of late. Perhaps if you thought I heard all about your treatment of Mr. Johnston's gamekeeper, last Monday night, you would hardly be so bold."

"Me, sir?"

"Ay, you, sir."

"Why, now just listen to that, gentlemen. May I never do harm, if it don't beat Banagher out and out. Upon my conscience it's the most astonishing—"

"O, you needn't affect all that innocent surprise," said the priest, interrupting him. "I know you too well to be hoodwinked in that way, Mr. Hanlon. So not another word now, but make haste to land your passengers."

"O, to be sure—av course—that's always the way with ye," muttered Lanty, making a show of hauling up the boat's side to the beach. "O, no, why should I be allowed to clear myself? Av course nobody in the whole parish does the haste harm in life, from Monday mornin till Saturday night, but Lanty Hanlon. But isn't it mighty odd," he continued, winking slyly at one of the occupants of the boat, "how bad entirely he feels about the gamekeeper, when, if report be true, he was himself, once in his days, the terror of all the gamekeepers in the barony! But it's not that that ails him—there's something else in the win, I'll wager he's angry about that salmon I sent him last week; and closing one eye hard, he looked with the other at a little man seated in the bottom of the boat. "Sure if I eud only be sartint it was that, I'd ask his pardon and promise never to do the lake again."

"Ha! ha! Capital! capital! Lanty," ejaculated the little man from under the thwart—"promise never to send him a salmon again if he only forgives you; he! he! excellent, I declare!"

"Salmon! What salmon, sir, do you mean?" demanded the priest.

"O, nothing worth speak of, yer riverince," replied Lanty, pushing up his rabbit-skin cap from his eyes, and giving the boat another pull; "nothin but a small twenty pounder I speared under Mr. Watt's milldam, and sent up to the housekeeper for your last Friday's dinner; but at coorse yer riverince niver suspected how it came, or ye wouldn't taste a morsel of it for the world."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the same voice; "that's it; give it to him, Lanty—that's just his deserving."

"Lanty Hanlon," exclaimed the priest, laughing at the joke himself—for he saw in an instant he had been made unwittingly to entertain those very friends now sitting in the boat to a stolen salmon, last Friday at dinner, despite all his public treats and denunciations against so unjust and mischievous a practice—"Lanty Hanlon," he repeated, "should you attempt such a trick again, you may depend on it I shall report you to the constabulary."

"Ha! Lanty, listen to that—eh, how very big spoken he is! why, I vow and declare, Lanty, I haven't seen a bit of game at his table these five years but he threatened to throw out of the window."

"O, it's wonderful, yer honor, how mighty tender his conscience is in regard of game! But isn't it queer, sir, this weakness niver comes over his riverince while there's a bone of it to be seen on the table afore him?"

"Hold your scandalous tongue," cried the good-natured priest, raising his cane, at last, over Lanty's head; "hold your impudent tongue, I say, or I'll be tempted to make this acquainted with your ears;" and shaking the weapon at the provoking fellow, he moved away from the shore, out of hearing of his voice.

"Mr. Henshaw," said Lanty, (now that Father John had gone off beyond earshot,) and changing his voice from the long drawl of the dry humorist to a more business-like tone—"Mr. Henshaw, be plazed, sir, to step ashore, till we thry and lift that cratur of a blackamoor out; he looks like a mummy, poor sowl, he's so quite and peaceable."

The individual named Henshaw had been attentively reading a book, through a pair of gold spectacles, all the time since the boat came in sight. So absorbed indeed was he in the subject, that he never raised his eyes even for an instant during all the previous conversation, not even when the boat first struck the beach and shook him in his seat.

"Come, sir," repeated Lanty, touching him on the shoulder, "step out, if ye plaze; we must hurry, or we'll be late."

"What's the matter now?" demanded the individual in question, in a deep, gruff voice, raising his eyes, and looking about him, as he spoke.

Lanty again repeated his request.

"Humph!" ejaculated the other, growling out his dissatisfaction at being disturbed; and limiting his reply to the monosyllable, he rose slowly up from his seat, and stalked over to the boat's side, with the book under his arm.

It may be as well to say a word or two here respecting this gentleman, since he happens to be somewhat concerned—though it be indirectly—in the moral of our story.

He was now a man about forty-five years of age, a Scotchman by birth, and an old college chum of Father John's. They had passed several years together at Oxford, where they lived on the most intimate terms of friendship, till the latter relinquished his studies for the bar, and returned home to prepare himself for the priesthood. Since that time, Father Brennan had entirely lost sight of his fellow-student, and probably never should have thought of renewing their former intimacy, had he not chanced to see, one day, in an English newspaper, a notice of the

conversion to the Catholic Church of David Henshaw, Esq., L.L.D., Barrister at Law, and a distinguished contributor to the Edinburgh Review. This led to the formation of a close and intimate correspondence between them, which, after a continuance of two or three years, at length resulted in the doctor's present visit to his college friend and classmate. But the good priest was both disappointed and shocked at the first interview; for he found his old acquaintance not only a "stronger and sterner" Catholic after three years' matriculation, than he was himself, though brought up almost within the sanctuary, but so ultra in all his views of religion that he began seriously to doubt whether the Church had last or gained by the conversion. Hence, Dr. Henshaw became a very despot in religion. Without the least pity for those who had grown up in the midst of hereditary prejudices against Catholicity, or compassion for those who would willingly have embraced it, if they could only be made to see their error, he consigned all beyond the pale of the Church—all, without exception—to unutterable destruction. Such was Dr. Henshaw. His head was Catholic, but his heart was that of a pagan philosopher—as cold and unfeeling as a stone.

After gazing about him for a minute or two, he walked slowly up to where the priest was standing, and folding his arms on his breast, turned his face again to the beach, and began to converse with his reverend companion. The attitude he assumed, and the air of self-complacency with which he pursued out his lips when he spoke, could hardly fail to impress the most careless observer with the conviction that he was a man quite conscious of his mental powers, and fully alive to a sense of his personal importance. But we must leave him, for the present, with the priest, and return to the remaining occupants of the boat.

"It's a bad case," said the little man under the thwart; "a very bad case. I'm afraid one great toe and two little ones are gone entirely."

"O, well, sure, if they're gone at all, your honor, he can do very well without 'em," replied Lanty; "two or three toes is neither here nor there. 'No; certainly alive to a sense of respect, I admit—but this is an extraordinary case, Lanty; you can't deny that. It's a very deplorable case, and calls for a world of sympathy;" and as the speaker raised his eyes up to Lanty's face, now bent over him, there could be no mistaking the mild, benevolent countenance of Uncle Jerry Guirkie.

Lanty looked kindly down for an instant on Uncle Jerry's upturned face. Not a word he said, for there was no need of saying anything; but the smile on his begorra, countenance was more eloquent than words. It seemed to say, as plainly as looks could say it, "God Almighty bless you for your kind heart—you're the best sowl in the whole world."

"I hope," said Uncle Jerry, endeavoring to draw up his little gauged legs from their painful posture, stretched out as they had been so long in the bottom of the boat—"I hope the poor fellow may be nothing the worse for the long voyage."

"O, begorra, there's not a bit of fear of him," replied Lanty; "the cratur's as strong as a bullock. But isn't it mighty strange, sir, ye tuck such a liking to him all at once? Why, one'd think you had Christians enough down there at the wreck to take your pick and choice iv, instead of carrying away a blackamoor like that."

"Why, the difference is only in the skin, Lanty."

"The skin! Bedad, sir, and that at all's no thriffo."

"Well, but he's a Christian."

"That follow?"

"Yes, indeed, that very negro; and perhaps a better Christian, too, than a great many of us."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Lanty, in spite of his stoic gravity—for he had never seen a negro before in his life—"ha, ha! Mr. Guirkie, I see you can joke as well as another. But come, sir, the's no time to loiter now; we must thry to lift him out any way, whatever he is."

"I don't joke, upon my honor, Lanty. He's really a Christian."

"O, it's no matter; sure I don't care a pin about it; he's good enough in his own way, I'll warrant. Let me help you out first, sir."

"Nonsense, Lanty; you don't seem to believe me; I tell you again, he's a Christian, like yourself; and perhaps, if the truth were known, a much better one too," repeated Uncle Jerry, slightly vexed at Lanty's incredulity.

"Well, bedad, yer honor," replied the incredulous Lanty, scratching his head, "I can't say the compliment's very flattherin, any way. Feth, maybe it's in regard of his strength of religion you like him so much, sir."

"No, not for that, either. It's because one of his race saved my life once in Alabama, at the imminent risk of his own; and I made a vow then never to forget him to the poor fellows wherever I met them. There's another reason, besides. I know their natures better than most of my neighbors here, and think I can nurse him with greater comfort to himself and pleasure to me."

The unfortunate African, of whom Dr. Camberwell had told so pitiful a story, was there indeed in proprio colore, sitting down low in the boat, and resting his back against Uncle Jerry's breast, while the kind-hearted little man's arms encircled the sufferer's breast with as much tenderness as if it were his own son he had rescued from the jaws of death, and was now bringing back in triumph to his paternal home. In this affectionate manner he supported the poor invalid all the way round Araheera Point by Ballehernan to Castle Gregory, a distance of

nearly ten miles. Often did he speak to him during the voyage in the kindest and most soothing tones. Carefully did he wrap the blankets closer and closer round his all but naked shoulders and stiffened limbs, and pour into his parched lips a mouthful of cordial from his leathera pocket flask. Once only did the party stop on their way, and that was at the lighthouse, to exchange courtesies with Mr. Lee and his fair niece, and inquire after the little cabin boy, whom the latter had carried home with her that morning in her creaking shell over Lough Ely. At the priest's signal, Mary came running down the steps to greet him, and receive his blessing—which indeed the good man seemed to give with all the fervor of his heart—whilst Uncle Jerry looked lovingly up in her face, stole her hand back, and kissed it with a tender respect that was in admirable keeping with his own modest character and the maiden's gentle nature. When the boat shoved off, the fair girl ran up the steps again, and stood for a while on the edge of the precipice, under which the boat passed, her face radiant with smiles, and her uplifted hand waving adieu like a spirit about to ascend into the regions of air.

During the remainder of the voyage hardly a word was spoken. The priest and Henshaw had been discussing literary subjects, all the way from Ballehernan to the lighthouse, and now, on resuming their journey, seemed to think they had said enough for the present, and turned to occupy the remaining time each after his own fashion. Father John opened his breviary and began to read his office. Dr. Henshaw drew out a number of the Edinburgh Review, and pulled down his gold spectacles from the top of his head, where he had put them out of his way. Uncle Jerry gave the negro a mouthful of wine, and gathered the blankets closer round him, and Lanty Hanlon took another hitch on the running sheet, and laid himself over quietly in the stern. In this way the little party composed themselves to rest after the fatigues of the morning, while the boat glided slowly up the lough. As they rounded Rathmullen Head, however, an accident occurred which might have proved of serious consequence to the whole party.

At this point Rathmullen Mountain runs out into the frith till it almost butts against Dunreem Bluff, on the opposite shore. On each of these headlands a battery of some ten or twelve guns protects the narrow channel, and so strong is the current here, particularly at half tide, that it is quite impossible for a sail boat to stem it, except under a strong breeze from the mouth of the lough. Lanty saw the eb tide was beginning to tell upon the helm and sheet fast, he stepped forward and shipped the bow oars to help him against the stream; but hardly had he pulled half a dozen strokes, when a large boat, rowed by four stout men and steered by a tall old woman, wrapped in a gray cloak, shot out from one of the dark corners under the head land, and passing close to the stern of the stream, he was endeavoring to make his way, struck his little craft so violently as almost to jerk his unsuspecting passengers into the sea. As it was, he lost one of his oars, which, breaking the thole pins, came within an inch of breaking his own head, as it swept round and fell overboard.

"Ha!" cried Lanty, when the boat righted again after the stem of the other had shaved its way down her side, and fell off across the stern into the stream—"that was near nickin."

"Who are they?" demanded the priest, turning suddenly to look after the boat.

"If she's living, that's Elise Curley of the Cairn, in the stern sheets," replied Lanty.

"What, is it possible?"

"The very woman, sir; and that's young Barry, the rebel, beside her."

"He is a very foolish young man, I fear," said the priest; "he must certainly be caught if he stay here."

After some little exertion, Mr. Guirkie succeeded in extricating his limbs from their disagreeable position, and, with Lanty's help, found himself safe at last on terra firma. The three gentlemen then came together, to consult about transporting the negro to Greenmount.

Uncle Jerry was for sending immediately to the next village for a horse and cart, and stretching him on a matress late on the bottom of it. Dr. Henshaw, on the other hand, thought he might do very well in the boat house, for the night, with some clean straw, and Lanty to watch with him; more especially as the boat house was close at hand, and the night pleasant and warm; while they could return home themselves, and send over an easy conveyance next morning. But the priest was of a different opinion from both, and thought it much better for all parties to sleep at Castle Gregory. "The night would be very dark," he said, "the roads both deep and rutty after the late rains, and, besides, 'twould take two hours, at least, to procure a suitable conveyance for the negro if they carried him home, or for themselves if they left him behind." As to accommodations for the invalid, he had no doubt Captain Petersham would cheerfully order him a comfortable berth, and send his servants to carry him up to the castle. After some objections on the part of Uncle Jerry, on the score of delay and the immediate necessity for medical attendance—objections which we fear very much were a little aggravated by the dread of Mrs. Motherly's grave displeasure at his long absence—and on the part of Dr. Henshaw, against what he called an unpardonable intrusion into a gentleman's family, particularly at so late an hour, and accompanied, as they were, by a notorious poacher and a half-dead negro, "hawking the latter about all day," he added gruffly, "in a most absurd and indecorous manner, from house to house and rock to rock, till he expected the whole country round should ring with it for the next twelve-month to come"—after these objections, we say, were made and disposed of, the party, at last, concluded to leave the negro with Lanty, in the

boat house, and put up at Castle Gregory for the night. Accordingly, they advanced to the house, and Father John, raising the knocker, knocked loudly on the door.

TO BE CONTINUED.

FRED'S NINE FRIDAYS.

BY WILL W. WHALEN.

The great coal-breaker whistles were filling the air with a din that was almost unbearable. The machinery of the large Girard Colliery had been set in motion, and its stiff wheels and cogs were screeching with an ear-splitting noise. Clouds of fine coal dust were beginning to arise, and lumps of coal were gliding down the smooth chutes. As the coal struck the loose pieces of sheet-iron in some of the chutes, they resounded harshly. The huge, round screws were groaning, as if they dreaded the working-day which was just beginning.

A long, irregular line of breaker-boys came surging up the rickety flights of dust-covered steps. Their dented tin lunch-pails and bottles bumped together, and gave forth a rather musical sound. Some of the boys whistled popular airs and hummed songs; others indulged in loud conversation.

In five minutes, everybody is at his working place, and the day's labor is begun. How patient the lively breaker-boys look as they throw out slate and "bony" coal from the good product! How often their hard little hands are bruised and cut by the sharp pieces of coal! The dust rises in heavy clouds, and almost conceals their little faces; it pours out through the open windows, and darkens the sunlight.

Outside, the birds are singing in the woods about the colliery; the sun is shining on the leafy trees and green grass; the purling brooks gurgle among the old rocks. How different is the working-day of the breaker-boy from ours! He seems to have left the glad-some earth, and penetrated to Pluto's regions.

Two little slate-pickers, the Donovan brothers, one about fifteen years of age, the other just turned thirteen, are sitting side by side working with great vim.

"Hurry up, Fred," says the older of the two, "the chute's almost clear. Sock the coal down. You need a rest."

When the chute is entirely empty, the slate-pickers leave their places, except the two Donovan boys, says John Donovan, "an' we'll have a talk. Say, Fred, I notice you've been kinder quiet ever sence breakfast; you'd rader not work to-day, eh?" Fred Donovan nods. "I'm sorry myself for yer sake that we are workin'. Why couldn't we work yesterday? Three days' work this week, Fred—Monday, Wednesday an' Friday; think of it! You wanted to go to Holy Communion this mornin', didn't you, Fred?"

"The older boy looks kindly at the gray eyes, with their vacant stare."

"Yes, John," Fred breaks forth, "I did want to receive Holy Communion to-day. This th' First Friday, you know, an' to day's Communion would uv made me Nine Fridays. I've been makin' no novena fer nine whole months, an' now it's broke."

"Don't mind, Fred; you kin start o'er ag'in. If you're makin' th' novena fer a happy death, you've lots of time; you're not goin' to die fer a long time yet."

"I wasn't makin' it fer a happy death, John; I was makin' it fer pap. Ye know"—and gloom settled down on the small face—"how bad he's been fer over a year—drinkin' an' not goin' to Mass, an' not workin' at all. I know the novena of the Nine Fridays to the Sacred Heart 'ud make him better."

"Well, Fred, you'd a right to stay home to-day, an' go to Holy Communion."

"I did intend to stay home to-day, John, an' I went to confession last night. When I come home from the church I went up-stairs quiet, an' in passin' by mam's room, I heard her cryin'. Her door was half-open, an' I listened for a little while. 'O, Mother o' God, she said, 'help me; I haven't a cent in the world. Mother Mary, intercede fer me husband.' I found out afterward, John, that the storekeeper had said he wanted her to pay something on her back bill, else he'd have to stop the store on her. How could I stay home from work to-day, an' she needin' money, an' the colliery workin' the broken time. But, oh, I did want to finish the Nine Fridays for pap."

Here the conversation is cut short: the screen is full of coal again, and now the chute is rapidly "blocking up." Soon all the grimy little faces are bent over their "tables" again, and are "sockin'" out the slate. One small chap is eating a piece of bread with his left hand, while with the right he pushes down the stream of coal. The noise is deafening—the hoarse grinding of the machinery, the "clink-clink" of the elevator-buckets, the rattling and rushing of the coal, and the loud, coarse voice of the boss as he shouts orders to the boys.

The great whistle shrieks. Twelve o'clock! The dinner half-hour has come!

All the boys, with one accord, scamper from their places, with their dinner-pails and rush down the steps into the open air. Some loll on the grass under the trees and eat their dinner languidly; others are engaged in earnest conversation and do not open their dinner-buckets, which by the way are empty, the boys having eaten their lunch while working. Some black, dusty little forms are perched on the high boughs of the trees and are singing as gaily as the birds; others of the boys have gone back into the breaker, and are playing "tag." We can, ever and anon, catch glimpses of their figures as they flit by the open windows.

"Come, John," says Fred Donovan, "the five minute whistles blew, an' the machinery's goin' pretty lively." He twists the rope of his tin coffee-bottle

about his can. "We'll take that short cut up be th' engine-house."

Fred, followed by John, runs rapidly towards a rear door of the breaker. They mount a short flight of creaking steps together. "Say, Fred, I don't like to go this way, it's so dangerous; we have to duck under so many o' those big belt-wheels. But hurry, there goes the whistle!"

The machinery was now running at full speed. Fred, in his haste, slipped on a piece of treacherous coal, just as he was about to stoop and pass under a huge flying wheel. He lost his balance and, with a faint cry, fell before John had time to reach his side. Fred threw out one hand to save himself and, in his excitement, grasped the thick belt. In a second his whole round and flung from the wheel's mighty grasp into another wheel, whence he fell to the ground below, a bleeding, moaning little figure.

As soon as John's horrified eyes beheld his brother caught in the wheel, he instinctively clutched a bell wire which ran near the steps and gave it a mighty pull. When the machinery stopped and one of the workmen came to John's side, he was holding his brother's bruised form in his arms and was whispering soft words into his ears.

The two boys were borne home together in the dark ambulance. Fred's lips were moving in prayer; his eyes were closed, and his forehead, where the coal dust had not settled so heavily, gleamed like marble. John was pale, too, and his lips were moving.

Mrs. Donovan shrieked when she saw the mine-ambulance and rushed to her boys.

She hurriedly led the way to a neat, but poor bed-room; and Fred's bleeding head was laid on a worn, snowy pillow.

John was now gone for the parish priest. Mrs. Donovan, tears trickling down her cheeks and falling on her faded calico gown, was making preparations for the coming Guest. The tidy table was soon prepared; with a great sob that came from her mother's heart, she fell on the bed beside her injured son, her hard hands locked together. One of the neighboring women was washing the blood and coal dust from Fred's thin face, another was removing his shoes.

John entered breathless.

"The priest, mam," he said.

Mrs. Donovan hurried to the bedroom door just as it opened, and the priest entered, preceded by a girl carrying a lighted candle.

Mr. Donovan, the father, could not be found.

After Fred had made his confession, he received his Lord with a face as radiant as an angel's.

His mother crossed back a sofa as she looked at the innocent countenance. "They will be done, Lord," she whispered; "if he must die."

The priest had scarcely administered the last Sacraments when a doctor and Mr. Donovan came into the room. The latter, who had evidently been drinking, with one stride reached the bedside.

"Fred!"

"Pap!" The rough little hands were clasped about the father's neck. "Pap, how glad I am that you've come!"

Great sobs were shaking the man's broad chest; he saw death in the boy's face.

The doctor then examined the patient little sufferer and shook his head.

John was bending over Fred on the left, the parents on the right.

"John, I've made me Nine Fridays," with an angelic smile. "Pap," a little hand was placed on Mr. Donovan's head, and two eyes, bright as stars, looked into his face. "Pap, promise that you won't drink any more."

"Fred! Fred, O Fred, my little one! are you really dyin'?" Mrs. Donovan broke forth.

Fred's eyes shot a look of love into hers.

"Fred," the father was calmer now, "I've drunk my last glass!"

The priest now began the final, sad, yet consoling office; the women had sunk on their knees, tears shining in their dilated eyes; the physician, with his arms folded, was standing near the door, biting his lips to repress his emotion; the mother had fallen, face downward, on the floor; tears were streaming down John's grimy cheeks, as Mr. Donovan caught Fred in his arms. Fred whispered in his father's ear; Mr. Donovan pressed his lips to Fred's cheek.

The warm rays of the summer sun are softly touching the tombstones and well-kept mounds in St. Mary's cemetery. The gate of the churchyard is open; and, as the faithful leave the church which stands near, many of them pay their usual visit to God's acre, to prey beside the tombs of "loved ones gone before."

Old men, stooped with the weight of years, are kneeling beside graves, thickly grown with long grass; women some young and fair, others faded and bent, with crepe veils, have sunk down beside other mounds, and are sobbing with the grief of mothers or wives; girls, with lovely fresh faces and long plaits, kneel near storm-beaten tombstones, their hands folded in prayer.

Near a little green mound with a pretty vine running round about it stands a trio, not unknown to us—Mr. and Mrs. Donovan and their son John. The three are well dressed and contented-looking. The husband is gazing fondly at his wife, as she wipes her eyes with her cambric handkerchief.

"Margaret," he says, "Fred's death made a man of his father. God was severe with me when He took Fred from me, but He knew best. He's a better father to me, boy, than ever I was."

Mrs. Donovan has dried her eyes and she turns to her husband with her wonted smile.

"Thomas, God's merciful even when He punishes. When He uses the rod, He doesn't forget how weak we are. He took Fred from us, but He left John to give us happiness, when He might 'a taken both our boys in punishment of our sins."—The Good Counsel Magazine.