

At last I had the pleasure of pronouncing little Phelim out of danger; and of a truth 'twas hard to say what heart in all the three families swelled with the most intense joy and thankfulness. The event made a deep impression on my mind, and I often quoted the tenants of No. 92, M— street, as an illustration of the respectability and happiness within reach of the poor.

I was passing in front of the Watch House about ten o'clock on the night of the Celebration, when it occurred to me that I might possibly be wanted there, as our public rejoicings rarely pass over without furnishing the Watch House with a number of broken heads, if not more serious injuries. I stepped in. "Anything doing Captain?" "Nothing yet, 'tis scarce time; but since you are here, you had better remain a while, for ten to one we may want you before the evening is over."

Having no very pressing business, I resolved to spend an hour with my friend the Captain. We had scarce fairly seated ourselves, and begun a friendly chat, when a prodigious tumult at the door announced customers. Shouts, curses, and screams, in mingled din fell on the ear, but high above the rest we distinguished the yells of a female: "He's dead, he's dead—murdered he is—my own darlint murdered!"

In another moment the whole confused throng burst into the room—men and women, old and young, black and white, watchmen and prisoners, hurrying towards the desk. The first figure that attracted my attention was the yelling mother. She was quite young, and though her clothes had apparently been nearly torn off her back, yet the fragments that remained were of good quality. They were evidently the tatters of a "best dress." Over her shoulders was flung a blanket, which she gathered in front, and pressed with both hands to her breast. Her face was flushed, her eyes suffused, and her gait unsteady. She had evidently been drinking.

Behind her stood another woman with dress less disordered, but so much intoxicated, that the supporting arm of the watchman was necessary to prevent her from falling to the floor. She was overwhelmed with drunken grief, and poured out a flood of senseless tears. The group was made up of the usual materials for such a scene—men and women, whose inflamed eyes, bloated faces, and senseless clamor, bespoke them the victims of the *Great Destroyer*.

With infinite trouble the captain silenced their brawling, and one of the watch had just begun the usual story, in which "drinking," "quarrelling," "fighting," were the most frequent words, when the woman, whose clamor for her child had almost deafened us, sprang forward to where I sat; "O! doctor dear, doctor dear, he's dead, he's dead—it's murdered entirely he is." I looked at the poor creature who thus claimed my acquaintance, but failed to recognize her. "I don't know you my good woman; what is your name?" "Not know me!" shouted the woman. "Not know me! why doctor dear, aint I Bidget Doyle; and didn't ye save the lie of my Phelim, and my own, and Dennis,

all the same, for sure we would have died with him, but he's dead, dead!"

I allowed the poor creature to run on with her lamentations, for I was struck dumb. If a thunder bolt had fallen at my feet, I could not have been more astounded. Recovering my senses, I cast one look on Bridget; another on those who surrounded her. I saw it all. There was Callaghan, the shoemaker, and his wife, and behind them their two boys, that had evidently been hurried out of bed with scarce time to huddle on their clothes. Farrel too, was there; and the poor drivelling drunkard, in the arms of the watch, is his wife.

While I made a rapid survey of the scene, poor Bridget pushed her way behind the railing, and coming close to where I sat, unfolded the blanket which I had supposed she wore only as clothing, and exposed the body of her child. A glance told me that hers was no groundless alarm. The little boy was dead. The blue contracted lips, the deadly pallid cheek, the sunken eye—all told of death. The sight of the corpse renewed the frantic grief of the mother; her shrieks filled the room. Suddenly she ceased, and with her dead child still in her arms, she made her way back to where Mrs. Farrel stood. "O! Mrs. Farrel, how had ye the heart to do it?"

Prepared as I am now by sad experience, at the sight of drunkenness, for every form and variety of consequent horror, I could not doubt that misery had turned poor Bridget's brain. Mrs. Farrel murder her child? Impossible!

After vain attempts to obtain from either of the parties an intelligible explanation of the sad scene before us, we had to resort to Callaghan's children. Their account I will try to condense into a few lines, for I have already far exceeded my proposed limits.

It chanced that the Celebration day fell this year on the anniversary of Callaghan's wedding. The happy coincidence was seized as an excuse for a family festival. The usual frugal limits to which all three families confined themselves, was, on this occasion, to be utterly disregarded. A turkey was bought, and roasted, and various other dainties were provided. The unwonted frequency of Mrs. Callaghan's visits to the grocer's, attracted his attention. He asked the reason, and when told of the proposed feast, he praised and recommended his Old Irish Whiskey so highly, that poor Callaghan was persuaded, instead of the single modest pint he had intended to buy, (for he and his friends were comparatively temperate,) to take two bottles.

Reader, need the rest be told? It were scarce necessary, but for the horrible catastrophe.

The feast began; joy passed to tumult; then came dispute, anger, blows, and a general fight. Farrel was beaten almost to a mummy by Dennis Doyle, whose wife (for the women as well as the men took their share of the poison, and of its fruits,) had her clothes nearly torn from her back by Callaghan. Mrs. Farrel, after fruitlessly struggling to free her husband from the iron grasp of Doyle, rushed up stairs, swearing vengeance on Doyle, his wife, and child.