GOODMAN DROP-OF GOLD. (From the French of Savinien Lapointe.) BY JOHN S. DUFFEY.

In 18--I visited one of the dilapidated houses of the village of Soucy. The master of that house was no more. The great gate, wearing away piecemeal, had finally fallen, then disappeared. The curb of the well was lying on the ground in a court-yard, which was the picture of disorder. Scarcely had my feet touched the top when four ragged little children, with haggard and unquiet faces, presented themselves to my view. Gnawing in turns a bit of black broad slowly raising her head, said to herand an apple, these children were breakfasting.

In the chimney-corner, under the mantel, and crouched, as it were, in the ashes, a poor old woman of nearly eighty years was shivering before some walnut leaves, which smoked rather than burned in the fire-place. The time-piece, a cottager's alarm-clock, had long since stopped. The hen-house was empty, the cellar and the stable almost desolate. One cow, however, still remained, the poor old woman being yet able

At the sight of so much desolation, of so much ruin, so much misery, my heart melted, and I burst into tears. The children, whom I strained to my breast-or was not for them to comprehend my words, when I cried out-

'Poor little ones ! Fate indeed punishes me cruelly, since I can do nothing for you.'

The first words of the old woman, when I had made myself known to her, were these:

Alas! my poor boy, it is easy to be seen that he is no more.'

In fact, six years had already passed since my grandfather had laid down to rest in the little cemetery of the place. It was in this very house that I had spent the first days of my childhood. I found there still, after many years of absence, my little stool, hewn from the trunk of a tree by my grandfather, my high bed, the great kneading-trough, a good woman, aged and avaricious. miserable, and, four misfortunes besides, four orphans. And at some paces from the house, there was a tombstone, on which one read-

· Francis Remy, husbandmon, Aged 79 years.'

Of these seventy-nine years, more than sixty had been spent in constant labor. No one was earlier or later in the field. How many times had I seen him in the sommer days word out with fatigue. How many times had I thrown into the fire-place, where his wife was now this vering, an armful of vine-branches, to dry his sweat-drenched clothes. How many times, while working as a farm-hand for some one of his neignbors, had he shamed his companions by his vigor, his activity. Ever the first at the end of others. They still remember it in the village of Soucy.

My grandfather belonged to the class of landed farmers, that is to say, of those who cultivate their small estates themselves, with the occasional assistance of their kinsfolk, wisely dispensing with the proctor, in order to avoid ruin. was rotting in neglect. To till the land, it had to go onbeen necessary to borrow; to borrow, it had been necessary to mortgage; the mortgage was about to bring on the usual results of such documents-the sale of the estate, ejection, and beggary.

In default of means and resolution, the family of my granutather were perishing of hunger by the side of their con uncuitivated fields.

Vainly they myoked, in their prayers at morning and evening, the protection of the Goodman Drop-of-Gold; the Goodsean Drop-of-Gold appeared not, responded not. The Goodman Dropof-Gold visited the fine slate-roofed castles, the mansions built of the red bricks of Burgundy, the houses of the great farmers; but he seemed blind to the thatch-covered cottages of the poor. Nevertheless, some of these unfortunates boasted of having seen him, of having spoken with him, of having received certain of those drops of gold which he so mysteriously scattered in his

They were called drops of gold, because falling to the earth under the semblance of dewdrops, they were afterwards transformed to little pieces of money in the eyes of those who beheld them, or, what was still better, in the hand of the person whom Goodman Drop-of-Gold wished to enrich or relieve.

It was pretended that Goodman Drop-of-Gold went about begging, at church doors, at banquets, at balls, at dwelling-houses, everywhere, and that, by the assistance of a mysterious word, he obtained whatever he asked for. His appearance in the fine castles, in the mansions of red turned pale. His palor did not escape the ob-Burgundy brick, and in the great farm-houses, servation of the notary, who, though somewas not with any other motive. However it what disturbed, endeavored to conceal his momay be, all this was very enigmatical. For al- tion.

though Goodman Drop-of-Gold might have had a real existence, no one had yet claumed to have made his acquaintance. Nevertheless, a multitude of stories of his benevolence were current in the country.

CATHOLIC

Hence it was that my grandmother and her little children had invoked him in their prayers.

One winter evening, her grand-daughter Bridget, a pretty girl of seventeen, was silently weeping in the chimney-corner. The opposite corof the three tottering steps of the doorway, her was occupied by my grandmother; and, as the vineyard? exclaimed Dapre, ashy pale with Bridget blew her nose frequently, and as fre- fear. quently rubbed her eyes, the good old woman,

'You are crying, Bridget?'

' Yes, grandmanima,' replied the young girl. 'You are tired of your poor grandmother?'

'Oh, no, no.'

' You are sick, then ?'

' No.

' Perhaps you are in pain?' ' No, grandmamma.'

My grandmother preserved a momentary silence, as it to recall far-off memories. Bridto drive her to pasture and to provide her with get's tears tell faster than ever. My grandmother resumed --

> 'You suffer, and yet you are not sick. Is it posible, my child, that you are in love with some lad of the village?"

'Yes, grandmamma.'

' Ah, well, my child, there is a remedy for that. I know you are too discreet to love any one else -is it not so, my daughter?'

· Oh, yes.'

'Let him come and see us then. If he is an honest lad, we will have a wedding. Let us see, who is this fine lad whom you love! What is his name?'

' James Dupre, grandmamina.'

At this name, my grandmamma gave an af-frighted start in her old wooden chair, and shook probability that his father would consent to this Remy? marriage. Moreover, the elder Dupre was very

' Your heart has made an unfortunate choice, my poor Bridget,' said my grandmother, stirring I then due.'

Bridget. James has this very moment left me, I er time?' crying himself. His father does not wish him to marry: he says that he is too young.

'Too rich, my child,' was the last word of my grandmother.

'I believe so, too.' was the last word of Brid-

:11.

It was Christmas Eve, and the full moon was shining in all its splendor. The rich farmer Dupre, having been detained late at the city, was returning to the village, at the hour of midnight, the furrow, he was ever the first to assist the with M. Durand, his notary. Intently chatting about business, they were pursuing the road which led to the little hamlet of Soucy, leaving the forest of Moutard on their right, and Joincy on their left. Suddenly the mare upon which Dupre rode stopped short; the horse of the notary started his ears and snored loudly. Both the notary and farmer Dupre whipped up their But, having died without male heirs, his estate beasts, but, trembling in every limb, they refused

The gray is frightened,' said Dupre, turning to the notary.

'My pony trembles like a leaf,' responded

Durand. 'Can it be that our animals imagine goblins or wehr-wolves about?' said the farmer, with a

loud and prolonged laugh. His laugh was repeated in the adjoining forest. Bah! perhaps these poor creatures believe in

ghosts, and fancy one has appeared to them,' replied the notary. The farmer and notary began laughing more

heartily than ever. Their merriment was again repeated in the forest of Moutard.

Did you hear that, Monsieur Durand?"

' What ?' interrogated the notary.

That laughing in the wood, youder.

'It is true, neighbor Andre, it seems to me

They listened a moment attentively, and heard the stroke of a pickaxe ringing in the vineyard of the late Francis Remy. This vineyard was situated between the forest and the road.

'It is that astonishes me,' said Dupre.

"Tis very strange, that's certain," replied the notary. 'One might say some one was working in the vineyard yonder. No doubt, be added, 'it is the spirit of Francis Remy. He was always fond of working.

with a paroxysm of laughter. This time Dupre the recital, she fell upon her knees, and prayed

echo of our own voices,' said he.

Nevertheless, the trembling horses were all m sweat with terror.

'Upon my word, Monsieur Durand, there is something supernatural about this,' exclaimed The mysterious pickaxe redoubled its strokes,

clinking among the flinty pebbles. A thousand girl Bridget-sparkles suddenly flashed under its blows, and as 'And a pre suddenly vanished.

'Doubtless they are' will-o'the-wisps,' replied the notary.

Still the clear click of the pick was heard, ment for the family." and the air grew bright with the corruscating sparks. Having tied their horses to a tree, the farmer and his companion resolutely marched in the direction of the mystery.

Then it was they perceived in the vineyard the figure of an old man, stooping down and digging up the earth, and casting to the right petticoat, and the water in the well." and left the clods which he trampled under his cold, the perspiration poured down his pale and wrinkled cheeks.

in that vineyard?' shouted Dupre. 'Come out, at once. Do not disturb our property, if you please. We know well enough how to cultivate And, loving her children, she will be good to her vanced a step or two towards Bridget's hod, it without your help.'

The tall old man straightened himself up at otherwise motionless, slowly turned his looks er, angrily. upon farmer Dupre and Durand. Two red know. Then, in a mournful tone, the old man

'Your property, neighbor Dupic! It is, then, her head. James Dupre was rich; there was no no longer the property of the widow of Francis

> 'This vineyard, burdened by a mortgage since Remy's death, will to-morrow become my own, the widow Remy nor being able to pay the debt

'Good neighbor Dapre,' resulted the old man 'That is just what I am crying about,' replied | can you not allow the poor wido x a little long

'No,' replied Durand.

yard of the widow, the mortunes of the or- a had action. Wheever dees evil brings phans. Mark my words, mark them well—so insferture on blanch. Therefore, good neighsurely as pin do, some unifortum will befull, bors, may not despair upon the house of the

quired the farmer, whose teeth chattered with son the hand of Bridget! Who are you? terror.

'Look at me,' replied the statet-like figure of the old man.

'If I were to judge by that frock of white linen, by that crimson waistcoat, by those gray gaiters, you should no - bot-no, ro - he is dead, quite dead-you should be --

"The Godman Drop-of-God," interrupted the

At that name, the farmer uttered a yell of terror, ran to the mare, sprang upon her back, and fled at full gallop. The notary followed him, assuming a hold face, but with deadly fear that that man was Francis Remy. at his heart. Terror is of a communicative nature. As the two fugitives fled along the rood, in the air, and that the oaks of the forest clashed their dry branches together with an engry Reiny.

The cock on a neighboring farm conwed load and shrill. The tall old man left the viney and, baying first fallen upon the earth, as if to embrace it affectionately in his arms.

O, earth which he so often dug, so often watered with his sweat, so much improved, so richly manured. Must it be, good mother, that thou shalt no longer belong to the widow of thy poor Remy. Dear vineyard which he pruned, and wedded with so much pains and with so much delight! Beautiful vines! when the autumn comes. his children will not be able to so much as aibble at one of your grape-seeds, without being called thieves. Accursed be ye, who, in passing here, announced to me such tidings. I thought that I was rendering fruitful the land of the widow, and I was but fertilizing the field of a usurer.

The crowing of cocks again rang out from farm to farm; at the sound, Goodman Drop-of-Gold quitted the vineyard, and plunged into the gloom of the forest.

And he burst into a fit of merriment that came On reaching home, the first care of the farmer And all the time he was unnear choking him. The forest also was seized was to recount his adventure to his wife. At ers, the farmer bept saying: earnestly to God, after which she said to her bottom of this !' husband---

He is so sad, he mopes so, he says nothing, is alwhere.'

Dupre, with an angry gesture. Your boy quits

' And a pretty girl she is, too!'

HRONICLE.

'Ah! A plague on her witch's beauty, say "Did you see those sparks, down jonder in I," was the farmer's ill-humored rejoinder. · And discreet, husband.'

' Yes-yes-discreet and beautiful. I advise you, wife, to ask her in marriage for our son.'

That would not, perhaps, be a bad arrange-* Oh! a very fine family arrangement, Mrs.

Depre-very fine, indeed, considering that the young lady will have but a single cow for her marriage portion, not an ear of wheat, besides, not a grape-seed, not an inch of land. And, for her entire wealth, what has she !- a worn-out | white linen freek, with a crimson waistcoat, and

* Bridget is intelligent and industrious. She straw-filled wooden shoes. Bitter as was the is an orphan, it is true, but she maintains her straw. grandmother and her brothers and sisters by her labor. She never goes to dances with the lads, my grandm ther. 'Hola! good man, what are you doing there, and is always busy with the cares of the household. She is orderly, and will be economical, counting. My grandmather took her resary and She is discreet-she will love her children .-husband, and not deceive han."

"That is as much as to say, then, that you this command of the farmer, and, still remaining also take sides with the girl? returned the farm-

I confess that I have gone a little too for in leaving the house. coals of fire seemed to glow in his pale face.—
giving reasons for my fear:—yes, hu-hand, i un | Good Heaven! exclaimed she, why is this Was it their terror that pictured the old man to afraid, she whispered, drawing nearer to him, and asion sent to me? Perhaps my dear husthem thus? Was it real? No one will ever and durting an uneasy glance at the window band asks a Mass of us. We shall have one which looked out upon the street.

· Afraid! of what !' inquired the former. We are threatened by some great mistirtime, dear husband,' she resumed, still in a whis-

Dupre cast a troubled glance at the window

indicated by his wife. "Let as see-speak! What is it?"

* A utile before you came home, about eleven o'clock, I should think, I haved some one crying out ander the window-- Laston to me, good neighbour Dopre, I beg of you. Little Bridger The former consulted the notary with a is very unhappy. She iever your son dances. view of such an agree oble acquisition, confessed on has sent, and set you forbid him to marry lar. Take care! James loves bridget, do * Neighbor Dupre, do not purchase the vine- last oppose his marrying her, for you will do widow thems, and mourning apon your own .-"Who are you, I should like to know?" m-I Sorrow shall visit it heardy if you refuse to your demanded. The voice redied - Goodman Drop-of-Gold!

> · Pshaw I wife, you are telling me a story.' "Oh I indeed not, busband. The proof is, that, on my going forward to reply, I saw there, opposite to that window, at the foot of Monsieur Courtigis' white wall, a knowing mon--a tall, old men, as he seemed to me. His hair almost concealed his face. He was clad in a frock of white linen, with a crimson vest, and he had on source of this money. It is yours, as are also grey gaiters, and wooden shoes stuffed with the cows in the stable, and the sheen in the straw. As true as I live, I could have sworn sheep-fold. Lift the mortgage from your pro-

"Ah! that is what associshes me," it aght the farmer. 'Wife,' he continued aloud, they fancied that they heard ominous whizzings have an idea. I really believe that that old

to him of I shall endeavour to move the heart of my hasband to promote the happiness of those prolonged tone, 'Thomas, aeighbors !' I made the last pile of silver in the cupboard. the sign of the c.o.s, and neither saw nor heard anything more.

Nevertheless, wife, you did wrong in making that promise."

'Marry! Listen, busband, if it should concern the life of my boy-

"Tis all one to me !

"The life of our James-it would really be worth while to thick about the matter. Let us see, husband, before we go to bed; how will you decide? If it should return, that troubled ghost, it would certainly be necessary to give it an answer.3

'Wife, we shall see about that to-morrow, in the daytime. Cover the fire, and let us go sleep.

And all the time he was unfastening his gait-Positively, there is some witchcraft at the

'I believe, my dear man, that come misfortune | For a very long time, my grandmother had is going to happen us. Have you not this long slept but little. That same night she was lying neighbor Dupre.

'Some one is mocking us; or it may be the time seen how pale and thin our boy is growing? awake thinking of her poor dead busband; of her vineyard, now about to be sold, because she ways sighing, eats scarcely anything, and avoids could not lift the mortgage; of her grandchilhis friends and comrades, to go one knows not dren, so poorly clad, so unhappy; of Bridget, so broken-hearted; and the poor old woman still "To go one knows not where I ejaculated found a tear to shed for their woes, when suddealy she heard a noise as of the trampling of the house to go and run about the fields with the many cattle, and the bleating of a flow of sheep, crossing the court yard. Then some one opened the stable, crying out as he nio -o-

. Come, little white ones, my beauties come,

The barking of a dog, who seemed to be driving the sheep into the fold, followed. My grandmother parted the curtains, with the intention of getting out of bed and seeing what was the matter in the court-yard. She suddenly stopped. The mova was shining full into the room. She distinctly saw an old man, who, bent over the kneading-trough, was silently counting some pieces of money, and arranging them in piles. He was a tall old man, clad in a he had gray gaiters upon his legs, and his feet was encased in wooden shoes stuffed with

" Spirit of my poor husband, is it you?" cried

The ald man oracle no reply, and continued his began to say her prayers. The old man adlaid his hand upon his heart, smiled, and made a gesture of adies, silently opened the door, slowly closed it after him, and my grandmother heard no more save the steps of some one deliberately

said to morrow.

Sleep floally came to close the eyes of the mannow Toca

The bright day shone forth. Farmer Dayre regarded as but folly the reasonings, apparations, and terms of the preceding night. The vineyard or Francis Remy lay side by side with one of his own. It was with supreme satisfaction that he saw this superb propert, about to be added to his neighboring estate. His wife, in that she might have been deceived, and concluded by agreeing with the avactoious designs of her husband. Dupre therefore set out from his farm to go and inquire of the Widow Remy if she was prepared to meet the notary's demind, and to aunounce to her his intention of purchasing the vineyard.

As for my grand-nother, the good lady wire firmly persuaded that she had seen the old man but in a dream. Nevertheless, she trembling directed her steps towards the kneads,g-trough. She rubbed her eyes, and believed berself still dreaming, on beholding a number of pieces of caoney arranged in little heaps. Having adjusted her glasses, she hurriedly ran her eyes over a note left among the gladdening piles .-This note read as follows:

Do not trouble yourself in the least as to the perty. Bridget is now sure of her marriage portion. I am your friend.

GOODMAN DROP-OF-GOLD.

My grandmother aroused Bridget, who ran man is the traubled ghost of our neighbor out to the stable and sheep-fold. Goodman Drop-of-Gold had listened favourably to their · I was also thinking that. For, when I said | petitions. The poor girl was crazy with joy .-My grandmother, lifting her hands to Heaven, was thanking God for the intercession of the dear chadren,' he raised his head towards me, good genius, when Farmer Dupre was heard at Looked at me with eyes that resembled glowing the door, knocking hard and speaking loudly .-coals, and then exclaimed in a low, hollow, and Before he came in she succeeded in depositing

'Good day, mother Remy,' said the farmer, as he crossed the threshold.

'Good day, neighbor. You are aboard in good season this morning.'

'Yes, mother Remy. Before going to the city, I wished to pay you a short visit.' 'Thank you, neighbor.'

'And to speak to you relative to a certain vineyard ;-by the way, what about the mortgage ? 'Ah! you want to purchase our vine-

yard ? 'Oh! well-yes-only, however, because it is adjacent to one of my own.

'I understand, neighbor. You wish to make twin-sister of the two, is it not so?' inquired my grandmother, with a half bantering smile. Dupre, who had looked for tears, was greatly

astonished at this smile of the widow Remy. He

therefore replied-'Yes, neighbor, precisely so.'

. You will do well to abandon that notion.