

SALLY CAVANAGH,

Or, The Untenanted Graves.

A TALE OF TIPPERARY.

BY CHARLES J. KICKHAM.

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

Josh took his fiddle—he always called it “the instrument”—from its green bag, and laying his white hat beside his chair, took a pinch of powdered resin from a tin box, and resized his boy. The instrument was soon tuned, and Tim Croak and his wife Betty were transported beyond all sublunary cares and hopes by the “Fox’s Sleep,” when the door opened and Shawn Gow presented himself.

“God save all here,” says Shawn Gow, in a voice which broke in upon the dulcet melody like the first growl of a thunderstorm on the song of the linnet. Betty placed a chair for him without interrupting the music. Shawn sat down and listened, with bent brows, for a few minutes. He was evidently one of those not-to-be-trusted individuals who are not to be moved by “concord of sweet sounds.”

“What are we delayin’ for?” he asked, turning to Tim.

Josh Reddy let down the first string, and returned the instrument to its green bag.

“Now Shawn Gow,” says he in an impressive manner, “do you understand the business we are about to embark in?” Josh Reddy had the reputation of being the best spoken man in the parish.

Shawn Gow only replied with a scowl. “Because,” Josh continued, “an imprecation, an oath in fact, a curse of any kind, must prove fatal to the success of our project.”

Shawn Gow was evidently bewildered by the fine language addressed to him, but the word “curse” gave him a clue to the rest.

“Do you think I’m a fool?” he growled.

“Very well, Shawn,” says Josh; “I only wish to warn you. I hope your presence won’t prove unpropitious. But I have my misgivings—I have my misgivings,” he repeated in his low, plaintive voice.

Tim Croak handed a lantern to Shawn Gow, and, taking a spade and shovel on his shoulder, all three left for the house.

“Have you the black-handle knife?” Betty called after him.

A reply in the affirmative came back like the growl of a bear.

When they reached the bank of the river near the ruined house, Shawn laid lantern upon the ground, and cut a circle around it about four yards in diameter. This was to keep off the Devil, or any number of devils that might appear with hostile intent upon the scene. For Old Nick is supposed to watch and ward over buried treasures, and to guard them jealously from mortal hands. This, if true, is a very unreasonable proceeding on the part of Old Nick, seeing that the gold above the ground the more glist to his mill. However, a buried “crock of gold” is sure to be guarded by a foolish devil; and to guard against danger it is absolutely necessary for the treasure-seeker to draw a ring round him with a black-handle knife, inside which ring no evil spirit can enter. He must also take care not to let a single “curse” pass his lips, or his labor will be in vain.

The intelligent reader will have divined from the foregoing, that Tim Croak’s wife, Betty, dreamt three nights running of a crock of gold hidden in a particular spot near the bank of the river, and that Tim, and Shawn Gow, and Josh Reddy resolved to “rise” it. Shawn came provided with a bottle of “mountain dew,” which made Josh despair of success from the outset. The mountain dew would be sure to draw out Shawn’s talent for swearing, and so all would be lost, Josh said. Everything went on well, however, for a time; and success appeared certain, when Tim announced that he “had a cave.” But then came the hollow noise from the river, which surprised Shawn Gow into letting fly the fatal “curse.”

Tim Croak continued to “implore his companions to say the “Daproudish” or the “Prayers for a soul departing,” or the “Litany for the dying,” and insisted that he was a dead man from hips down. Just then there was a crash through the bushes on the bank of the river (from behind which the hollow noise had come), and immediately a frightful bel- low caused Josh Reddy and Shawn Gow

to roar “murder” simultaneously; and running forward both fell into the hole where the unfortunate Tim Croak was moaning helplessly. This unexpected descent caused themselves and Tim to roar in chorus, and Brian Purcell, not well knowing what to think of the affair, hastened to their assistance.

“What’s the matter?” he cried out, trying to make his voice heard above the din. A series of groans, and moans, and growls, was the only reply he could get. He seized Josh by the shoulders, and pulled him out of the hole, where he had been wedged in between the other two. He flung him upon the grass at full length, and getting his hands under Tim’s arms, he hauled him up, too. The big blacksmith, having room enough now, was able to scramble up without assistance. Shawn sat upon the grass, and took a swig from the black bottle. But Josh and Tim remained stretched at full length, apparently incapable of motion.

“Take a pull,” says Shawn Gow, presenting the black bottle to Brian.

“No, thank you.” The ludicrousness of the scene made Brian laugh outright. He knocked off Josh Reddy’s white hat with a tap of his stick, and gave Tim Croak a poke in the ribs. Tim and Josh rose to a sitting posture. Shawn handed Tim the black bottle, and Tim took a swig. Tim handed Josh the bottle, and took a swig. And Shawn, and Tim, and Josh, began to look comfortable, considering. Tim looked down at his lower extremities, and finding them soaked with wet, he dragged himself to the brink of hole and put his hand into it.

“Begob,” he exclaimed, “’twasn’t dead I was at all, but drown- ed!” There was at least four feet of water in the hole. The fact was, the river had worn away its bank near the bottom where Tim expected to find the gold. What he thought was a cave, was the bed of the river. Of course the water rushed through the opening he had made till it found its level. And so Tim, feeling numbed with the cold, thought he was a dead man from the hips down. The hollow noise, and the bellow proceeded from a cow of Brian Purcell’s which had been attracted by the light of the lantern to the place.

“May the Devil fly off wud me in air- nest,” growled Shawn Gow, “if ever I go digging for gold again.”

“Here’s the same,” responded Tim Croak, rising to his feet with a groan.

But Josh Reddy put on his white hat, and said nothing. He was thoroughly convinced that it was Shawn’s cursing spoiled all.

As Brian returned home, a horseman rode furiously by him, like the ghost of some unhappy fox hunter, who could not rest in his grave. He was able to recognize Mr. Mooney. This brought Knockelough Hill into his head again; and by the time he had got home, that thought, which he attempted to banish with a puff of tobacco smoke a while ago, was hovering round and round him.

CHAPTER XV.

Brian Purcell sat alone by the fire in the old-fashioned parlor. He thought of many things; but that peculiar look with which she regarded him, while her hand rested on his shoulder, haunted him still. He was far from being a cox- comb; but he could not help thinking that her look had that dreamy fondness in it which is never seen in a woman’s eyes except when they are bent upon the man she loves. Yet, when he re- flected upon her conduct since the first moment of her becoming an heiress, he pronounced the notion that she loved him still an utter delusion.

“Perhaps,” he thought, “the hill and the scene all around us carried her back to the past; and for a moment she may have been the Jane Evans whom I knew and loved.”

He saw the fair young face softened into loveliness, too perfect for earth, by the grief and pity which made her bosom heave, and her beautiful eyes swim in tears, as he read of the poor school-master’s sorrow. In imagination he saw her so; and who will blame Brian Purcell for sighing a regretful sigh? He naturally thought of the letter he read in the evening on the rock of Knock- clough. He took the letter from his pocket, and read it a second time.

“For the last year, scarcely a day has passed that I have not determined to write to you the next day. But I always saw, or fancied I saw, some good reason for delaying the fulfilment of my pro- mise yet another day. The monotony

of my life, however, has just been varied a little by meeting accidentally with an old friend; and this has roused me to do what I have been so long thinking of doing. I am writing in my own little wooden house far away on the lonesome prairie. On last Sunday, as I was return- ing home after having heard Mass at a little village thirty miles from where I live, I saw a man lying on the ground by the side of the road. His arms were resting upon a box, and his face buried between his hands. A fine little boy lay near him asleep, with the man’s coat folded under his head. I at once saw they were immigrants, and from Ireland, who had left the railway, and were pro- ceeding on foot to some village or farm- house in this neighborhood.

“God save you,” I called out, pulling up my horse at the same time.

“God save you kindly,” he replied, raising his head and looking at me.

“Connor Shea?” I exclaimed; “surely you are Connor Shea?”

“That’s my name, sure enough,” said he. “But you have advantage of me.”

“I must be indeed altered,” I remarked, “when my old friend Connor Shea does not know me.”

“When I told him my name, he started to his feet, and was hastening towards me. But as he advanced I saw him reel and stagger, and before I could dismount and come to his assistance, he fell heavily to the ground. The boy told me that for several days back his father had eaten nothing but a few grapes which a lady had given him; and I at once concluded that Connor Shea had the fever. For- tunately my horse was not far off, and after bathing his temples and getting him to swallow a cooling draught, he was able to mount my horse, and half an hour’s slow walking brought us to the door. The poor fellow is now free from fever, but it will be some days before he will be strong enough to go to work. He begs that you will not let his wife know of his illness. Neddy is a fine fellow, and father has consented to leave him under my care. This is a great boon to me, particularly during winter, when all out- door work is suspended here. I hope to have Neddy sufficiently advanced to have him bound to some respectable business in the course of next year. Connor has given me a full account of the neighbors, since I left home. Alas for poor Ireland! And now, in as few words as possible, let me tell you what has happened to my- self since my arrival in this country.

“First of all, I found out the person through whom I had learned Rose Mul- vany’s fate. He accompanied me to the house where she had lived. With what mingled feelings of rage, and grief, and loathing I passed the threshold? It was one of those places where vice is decked out in tawdry finery. But I shall not disgust you with a description of it. The poor lost creature whom I sought had left place in ill health some months before. A dissipated looking woman remarked with a laugh, that the place was too fast for the young ‘greeny,’ and she broke down. This account excited my pity for the lost one, against whom I was begin- ning to feel something like resentment as I looked round on her brazen con- ceptions in shame. I was informed that Rose had gone to a city in the far west, and thither I started in search of her on the following day.

“I got employment in the great wes- tern city. My days were devoted to work, and from midnight till dawn I spent amid scenes the remembrance of which makes me shudder. Well, I found her at last—found Rose Mulvany in one of the very lowest haunts of crime and debauchery. The scene has left but a confused impression on my mind: music and dancing, the fumes of alcohol and tobacco, oaths and laughter and shrill screams of anger. And in the midst of this pandemonium I saw the once inno- cent Irish maiden with * * *

“I was quite claim. Do you not won- der that I was so? I even felt a sort of satisfaction, not at having found her, but at seeing her degradation with my own eyes. I felt as if the spell were broken, and my sufferings at an end. The thought that she was what I now saw her had made me miserable for years; yet I felt for a moment an impulse to laugh outright at my folly. I saw before me a creature too low for contempt, too debas- ed for pity, too loathsome to be hated. Turning away, not with disgust, but with utter indifference, I was hurrying out of the polluted atmosphere into the open air, when a thought struck me that made me pause.

“‘Is it not my duty,’ I asked myself—

‘am I not bound as a Christian to make an effort to save her?’

“My conscience whispered that not to make the effort would be a crime. I had a message sent to her that a person wish- ed to see her in an adjoining room. The door opened, and, with a smirk on her face, Rose Mulvany approached me. For a moment she looked surprised, but this was only because her reception was dif- ferent from what she expected. She soon, however, began to retreat slowly backwards, while her eyes were fixed on me with a wild stare. In this way she had reached the door, and was turning the handle behind her back, when I step- ped forward and placed my hand against the door.

“‘I believe,’ said I, ‘you remember me.’

“She moved away from me again, and asked in a low, hoarse tone to let her out.

“‘Not until I have first spoken to you,’ Rose, I replied.

“‘Don’t speak to me,’ said she.

“‘I wish to speak to you for your good.’

“‘Do you not see what I am?’ she asked.

“‘I do,’ said I, ‘and that is the reason I have sent for you.’

“‘Am I not lost?’

“‘But, Rose, you may be saved—your soul may be saved.’

“She covered her face with her hands, and the bright auburn hair fell down, as I so often saw it fall in the old school- house.

“‘Rose,’ said I, in a softened voice, ‘I do not want to reproach you.’

“‘Reproach me!’ she exclaimed, looking up quickly; ‘what right have you to reproach me?’

“The question took me by surprise, for I certainly thought I had the best right in the world.

“She put her hand to her throat as if she were choking, and said: ‘If it were not for you I should not be what I am.’

“‘Good God!’ I exclaimed, ‘what do you mean?’

“‘I mean,’ said she, ‘that when I was young and innocent—but why should I talk of that now?’

“‘I was confounded; for I thought she meant to accuse me of having led her from the path of virtue in some way.’

“‘Yes,’ she continued, after a pause, ‘you won my young, innocent heart, be- fore I knew I had a heart. And after winning it you despired it. You let me go, just as if I was a worthless weed. I did not care what would become of me. I joined in every folly I was asked to join in. Poor Mary was gone, and I had no one to warn me. Oh! if I knew the world was so bad, I might be able to take care of myself!’

“You can have no idea of the shock her words gave me. For the first time the thought occurred to me that in some degree I might be accountable for this poor girl’s fall. I was so moved I could not help saying:—

To be Continued.

A CURE FOR DYSPEPSIA.

In investigating the cause of this prevalent complaint, it is found to rest principally in wrong action of the stomach and impurity of the blood. These exciting causes are easily re- moved by the regulating, purifying tonic and digestive effects of Burdock Blood Bitters, hence the success of B.B.B. in curing dyspepsia in any form, no matter of how long standing or how severe it may be.

Oh, if we only knew what the purity of God is we should never leave off pray- ing for the holiest souls.

THREE PRACTICAL POINTS.

Three practical points: 1st. Burdock Blood Bitters cures dyspepsia by acting promptly on the stomach, liver and bowels. 2nd. Burdock Blood Bitters cures blood by the same specific action combined with its alterative and purify- ing powers. 3rd. Burdock Blood Bitters cures all diseases arising from the two first named, such as constipation, headache, biliousness, scrofula, etc., by removing their cause as shown and proved in thousands of indisputably recorded cases.

To have done anything by which you have earned money merely is to have been idle or worse—Thoreau.

VERY MUCH PLEASED.

Sirs,—I am very much pleased with the effects of Hagar’s Pectoral Balsam. Our family has been greatly troubled with severe colds, pains in the chest, etc., and have been promptly relieved by this valuable medicine which we willingly recommend. Clara A. McKenzie, Clarendon Station, N.B.

For one of the faithful to look as like an unbeliever as he can is a sight which never won a soul to Christ, or gained for the Church the esteem of an opponent. —Faber.