

"NO STOIRIN BAN."

By Cahal O'Byrne.

Is the hawthorn bough less white,
Are the azure skies less bright
Than they used to be in Erin in the
days gone by?

Oh, the May is just the same,
And the sunsets golden flame
Leaves a glory on the brown hills that
watch out across the sea;
And it's only my heart's moan
That makes drear the world, and
lonely.

There is wealth galore, they say,
In the strange land far away,
Where mo stoirin ban has gone to win
for me a golden prize;
But the gold for which I pine—
Would to God that it were mine—
Is hidden in his sun-kissed hair
and laughing Irish eyes.

Mine the black and bitter woe,
Here where Slane's waters flow,
Where the whispering willows hush to
hear my dirge of ceaseless pain;
For mo stoirin ban, machree,
(My heart's portion) shall I see
Back in Erin of the green streams never
more again.

The Dowry

By Ernest Legouve

CHAPTER I.

There was a time, as our old codes of law say, when the dowry of a young girl consisted only of a chaplet of roses. But that was long ago. Today the question of dowry is the main point in marriages, and it gives rise in family circles to more than one scene which may be pleasing, sad or affecting. It is one of these family scenes that I wish to reproduce here. Let us go, then, to Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, if you are willing to the house of M. Desgranges, a retired merchant. His daughter Madeleine is asked in marriage by a young architect, whom she loves and by whom she is loved. Nothing more simple up to this point. But M. Grandval is not willing that his son should marry a young lady with a dowry of less than 200,000 francs, and all Desgranges is willing to give is only 100,000 francs. His wife urges him to concede to the demand of the suitor's father; his daughter begs him sweetly; he refuses plumply. But the good Mme. Desgranges belongs to the tribe of soft-hearted mothers who cannot say "my daughter" without tears in her eyes; she insists, she supplicates, and seeing her husband inflexible, she rises and says to him with indignation: "M. Desgranges, would you like to know what I think? You are soulless and heartless!"

"I know it, my dear."
"You are not a father; you are an executioner!" then declaiming:
"Oh! slayer of your child, naught left for you
But bear her mother to the horrid view,"

as Clytemnestra said to Agamemnon when he came to lead Iphigenia to the altar of sacrifice.

"M. Desgranges!"
"Mme. Desgranges!"
"Understand, M. Desgranges, that with your sarcastic phlegm you succeed in making me forget myself."
"All the same, you do not forget to remember yourself," replied M. Desgranges, in a low tone.
"Ah! that is too much."
"Enough, mother, enough!" said Madeleine, rising in her turn. "I do not wish to be the cause of my mother and father talking in this manner. And since he does not believe that he ought to do what we ask of him," she added, beginning to cry, "since he refuses what we so much desire, though it would bring happiness to Henri and me."
"She is weeping," cried Mme. Desgranges. "Oh, my daughter! my little daughter! And that does not move you, monster. You can look on her tears; you can hear her say to you, with her gentle voice, that it would bring her happiness, and remain inflexible."
"What would you, my dear? When I see a woman cry I am always suspicious."
"What?"
"It is not my fault. I remember that when we were first married you cried so much when you wanted to get anything out of me that women's tears have ever since struck me as interested."
"Oh, father, father!" cried Madeleine, "how can you suspect my grief? You do not believe, then, that I love Henri?"
"Indeed, I do."
"Henri is good and clever; you say yourself that he has a fine future as an architect."
"That is true."
"His father, M. de Grandval, is a man."
"One of the most honorable."
"Well, then?"
"Yes, well, then?" added Mme. Desgranges.
"Well, then, let her marry him. I

give her my consent, and with my consent 100,000 francs for dowry; but 200,000 francs, as M. de Grandval demands—No!"
"Why?" began again Mme. Desgranges.
"Your question is amusing. Because I am not rich enough to give 200,000 francs to my daughter, without inconvenience to myself."
"There will be enough for you."
"Enough is too little."
"At your age one has not many wants."

"On the contrary, each year brings one want more. It is not an infirmity which may not be an expense. My eyesight weakens, I must have glasses; my legs grow feeble, I must have a carriage; my hair falls out, I must have a wig, and over-shoes and flannels. Why, my flannels alone cost me 100 francs a year."
"But—"
"No, no. Let youth be poor, it is just, it is fate. Has it need of anything? What matters good food or a comfortable home when one has youth? But old age—"
"You are not old," said Mme. Desgranges, amiably.
"Oh, if you say agreeable remarks to me the case becomes serious."
"Come now," she said, coaxingly, "let us reason together. What does it all amount to, after all. Some trifling reduction in our housekeeping accounts. For example, have one servant less."
"Exactly."
"Well, so much the better."
"So much the worse. I am an indolent man. I like to be waited on."
"And you are growing heavy, actually fat. While, if you waited on yourself a little, you would remain active, young—"
"I do not care for that."
"But I do care for it, for your sake. Now, to come to our table, we could reduce our dinner, let us say, one course—"
"Not a bit of it. That is just what I should not like. I am an epicure."
"That is a sin, father," said Madeleine.
"So be it, but a very agreeable sin, and there remains so few sins of that sort, I never hear the dinner hour sound without seeing float before me, as in a dream, the bill of fare, without saying to myself, 'what nice dish of sweetmeats has my wife invented for to-day?' Because I do you justice on that point, you have a great faculty for inventing toothsome side dishes."

"Yes, yes," replied Mme. Desgranges gently, much flattered by this compliment for her housekeeping abilities. "But what happens? You eat too much; you hurt yourself. You are getting in very high color. The doctor says that you will have to pay for it; while with simple fare, growing discreet—"
"Oh, discreet! tiresome word."
"You will remain cool, calm, clear-headed; you will be even stronger mentally."
"Yes, yes. Mens sans in corpore sano."
"That is to say, if you had exercised common sense you should thank Madeleine for the opportunity to give her this dowry, because thus you prolong your stay in this world, and assure yourself of salvation in the other."
"Oh, father, father."
"Now see," cried Mme. Desgranges went on, with more earnestness, perceiving that her husband was weakening a little. "Now see. I know you thoroughly. You have a good heart. All these little privations will be so many delights for you. Answer me. Would you not be too happy to bleed yourself for your daughter?"
"Yes, yes, I know. The pelican. But it seems that the story is not true."
At this moment the young suitor enters; mademoiselle perceives him. She runs to him and taking him by the hand, she says:
"Come, M. Henri, come. Join with us. My father is beginning to let himself be persuaded."
"If?" said Desgranges.
"Ah! monsieur, monsieur!" cried the young man with emotion.
But suddenly M. Desgranges, turning quickly towards him, says:
"Why, I am glad you have come. It brings me back to myself. Ah, you have no heart. What? You are loved by a pretty girl like her—good, educated, affectionate—and you are not willing to marry her if she has only 100,000 francs for her dowry?"
"But, father—"
"He haggles for you. But I, when I married your mother, though she was worth 50,000 francs less than I—"
"What?" cried Mme. Desgranges.
"Though she had 50,000 francs less than I, I did not hesitate."
"Nor do I hesitate," replied Henri, quickly.
"It is his father who refuses, my dear."
"Yes," said Madeleine, "it is his father. But he does not at all care for your fortune. He has told me twenty times that he would take me without dowry; that he would love me better if I had nothing."
"That is true," cried the young man.

"Yes, yes. They always say that. I said it myself—but to myself—"
"What," replies Mme. Desgranges, quickly; "it was not true then?"
"What is true is that I think the maxim that fathers should immolate themselves for their children is a stupid idiom."
"Immolate themselves!" says Madeleine. "Do I wish it? Do we wish it? Will not this money remain in your hands?"
"Ta, ta, money cannot be in two places at once. If I give it to you, I lose it; and if I do not give it to you, I keep it. That is as clear as day."
"But, father—"
"My mind is made up on that point. A father ought to be better off than his children."
"What matters it who is the better off?" says Mme. Desgranges. "Will not their home be ours?"
"Never! A father should never trust to his children for support, and for the sake of the children themselves so as not to make them ungrateful."
"Oh! father," bursts out Madeleine, "do you dare to say—"
"Your good little heart rebels at this word—"
"Oh, yes! You have hurt me so."
"I believe it. I believe in the sincerity of your indignation, but—"
"But," says Henri, "for what do you take us then, sir?"
"For children full of heart; of good sentiments. And it is for that reason that I do not wish to burden you. Have you ever heard of the play called 'King Lear'?"
"By Shakespeare?"
"The same. Well, do you know what sort of a man King Lear was? An old fool who was served just about right. And as for those precious daughters of his, Shakespeare, although he was Shakespeare, made a great blunder in painting them as wicked at the start. What he should have done was to show them corrupted by the idiotic prodigality of their father—led to ingratitude by bounty. That is the truth. Because, in fact, suppress bounty and there is no longer any gratitude. Now, as I have as much solicitude for your perfection as my wife has for my perfection, I squarely refuse to despoil myself for you, for fear of exposing you to temptation."
"But—"
"No buts. It is settled, Henri. Go find your father and try to make him renounce his claim. Hang it all, it is easier not to ask 100,000 francs than it is to give them."
"But," says Madeleine, "if he should not succeed in convincing his father?"
"It will be because he does not love you enough. In which case I shall not regret losing him."
"Monsieur, executioner, selfish man, materialist," cried Mme. Desgranges, "Go!"
"Good-by, forever, M. Henri," says Madeleine.
"No, mademoiselle, I shall return. Your father is right. I should not be worthy of you if I could not win you by a conquest."
"All in good time, young man. I think the better of you for those words. I will not give you a cent more on that account, but I admire you all the same. Go, and return."

CHAPTER II.

A month after this scene the young people were married; a year later Mme. Desgranges was a godmother; two years later M. Desgranges was a godfather. Three years rolled away and we again find the young and the old households, the parents and the children, installed in a pretty house at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges. I have said that Henri was an architect, but a young architect, which means too often, alas! an architect in partibus, as they say of bishops, that is, without a following. Of all artists the most unfortunate are certainly architects. A poet, no matter how poor, can always find a pen to write his themes; a painter, a pencil and a bit of canvas on which to throw his ideas of a picture; but stone, dressed or rough quarried, and a piece of land suitable for building, one has not ready at hand, and cannot find them at will. One does not build houses for the fun of it, and who intrusts a young architect with commissions? He has an art and no materials on which to exercise it; his profession is to construct, and he has no construction to make. Imagine a beaver with no opportunity to work! His sole customers are small house owners, who, having a crack to fill up or a window to cut through, take a young architect, as one takes a young doctor for slight illness, in the hope of saving money. Such was the lot of Henri Grandval.
To comfort himself for these ignoble tasks, which he called dinner jobs, he employed his genuine talent as a designer and water color artist in making drawings for a chateau, in competing for all the great public edifices, in sending to the proper quarter projects for building of general utility; and, as he had the full right to call himself a practical man as well as an artist, he joined to his designs specifications, sectional drawings, plans of interiors, which did great honor to

the thoroughness of his studies, but which had one great inconvenience, that of costing him too much money; because it was necessary to pay the surveyors, the assistants, the accountants who had made estimates, so that he employed for his projects of construction all the money that his repairs brought him, he spent in poetry all that he made in prose. His income was earned, as the reader knows, from the dower of his wife and his own, which made for him a revenue fully sufficient for what was formerly called a citizen of the Marais quarter in Paris, that is, for one who wished to maintain a certain state, but is compelled to exercise a constant economy.

But an artist! A man who loves the beautiful. It comes high to love the beautiful. You happen to find a beautiful piece of old tapestry; how can you resist the pleasure of buying it? You read the description of an admirable architectural work recently discovered; how can you avoid going to visit it? Artistic journeys are almost a duty for artists. What catches them more than anything else is the announcement of reduced fares, by means of big bills spread out on every wall, bearing in great red letters these cabalistic words: "Thirty day tours in the north of Italy, with the right to stop over in the principal cities, 150 francs."

A hundred and fifty francs! It is so cheap! Nothing so ruinous as cheap things! These big bills are as demoralizing as brokers' shops, and you are all the less able to resist the temptation since you have the look of being reasonable in yielding. One young household yielded so often, and if you add that the husband was very fond of his wife, and, consequently, wished her to appear charming and well dressed; if you remember that their three years of married life had been blessed by the coming of a girl and a boy, you will easily understand that when the second half of each quarter came round they were pretty hard up—so hard up as to break the heart of the good Mme. Desgranges and to bring down on the head of M. Desgranges a torrent of prayers and invectives.
"My dear, I beg you, increase their allowance."
"I shall certainly avoid doing so," replied M. Desgranges. "I think too much of myself for the course I have taken. My system is too good to make any change in it."
"How can you have the heart to see them and let them be so embarrassed?"
"They are embarrassed?"
"Frightfully, my dear."
"So much the better! My son-in-law will take all the more pains to find customers."
"But the customers do not come."
"All the more reason to make them come."
"Their expenses have been increased."
"You mean their happiness has been increased." And as Mme. Desgranges raised her arms to heaven, "See here, my dear, no exclamations, and let us reason together. Suppose that three years ago I had given my daughter 100,000 francs more, as you wished, what would have happened?"
"It would have happened," replied Mme. Desgranges, with a mixture of indignation and tenderness, "that instead of enduring privations, as they have been compelled to do for the last three years, instead of denying themselves everything—"
"Permit me, my dear, permit me. It seems to me—"
"It seems to you? Well, shall I tell you what I think? When I go to their house at the dinner hour, when I see their poor little meal, so modest—one kind of meat, one sort of vegetable and no sweet side dishes, the poor dears!—and returning home, I find you surrounded with good things—roast chickens, larded partridges, because you insist upon having them larded nowadays—"
"What would you, my dear? In growing old—"
"Well, that pains me! I reproach myself for all the good things that I eat."
"I do not."
"I think we are disgusting."
"My dear wife, be calm, and let us come to the point, because you have strayed away from it. Follow my reasoning closely, if you can. To-day is Nov. 15; our daughter, our son-in-law, their two children, their two servants, have been here in our country house since Aug. 13, say: three months and two days, and they expect to remain, they, their children, and their servants, until we go away, say Dec. 20."
"Well, do you want to reproach them for their stay here now? Are you going to complain of the cost to you of their presence? Do you ever intend to banish them from your house—from my house? Oh, come now, stop there."
"My dear wife."
"Deprive me from the sight of my children; the sole consolation left me in this world."
"Thank you."
"I know you well. It is just like you to think that the children make

too much noise, poor chubs, their little voices are so sweet, their little feet are so delicate and pretty."
"But who has said they were not?" said M. Desgranges, impatiently; "let me speak, and again follow my reasoning. Why have our daughter and our son-in-law remained with us three months and two days, and why will they remain until Dec. 20?"
"What a question! Because they love us. Because they are pleased to be with us. Because they know how to please us. Because they are affectionate, tender hearted—"
"In fine, quite the opposite to me, are they not?" said M. Desgranges, laughing. Then going to his wife, "There, come and kiss me. I love you because you are still a child."
"What? A child?"
"I mean because you are and always will be the good creature, innocent, confiding, credulous, whom I married with so much pleasure."
"What? Innocent, credulous," replied Mme. Desgranges, a little offended. "Do you pretend to say that our children are not—"
"Yes, my dear, they are all that you have said, and still more. But do you think that your daughter, with her pretty face, that she takes pleasure in showing, because others take pleasure in seeing it, that your son-in-law, with his artistic tastes and his imagination, would leave Paris and the early winter amusements behind; even more, that he would go there every morning on his business and return every night, all for the happiness of making one at a game of piquet with a father who is beginning to be a little deaf, and a mother who would, perhaps, be better off if she were a little dumb?"
"But what do you suppose, then? What motive do you assign to their prolonged stay with us?"
"My dear," replied M. Desgranges, laughing, "do you remember when you were young and had very beautiful hair, that you were delighted to go into the country to save parting your hair—to give your comb a rest? Well, our children are delighted to remain here to give their purse a rest."
"Ah, you unhappy man; can you suppose—"
"I do not blame them I accuse them of neither ingratitude nor indifference. I am sure that if they had 20,000 francs income instead of 10,000, they would still love us, but for shorter periods. Now, in fact, I do not know a son-in-law equal to mine; no father-in-law has more deference, more attentions—he does not let pass one of my anniversaries, birthday, day of marriage without hastening to bring an enormous bouquet."
"And you believe that self-interest only—"
"Ah, no, my dear! Not self-interest alone. No, a composite interest, half affection and half calculation—an unconscious calculation of which he makes no account, but which I divine; which is due to the fact that he has need of me, and from which I profit without wishing him any harm."
"There, you are nothing but a wretch. You debase, you sneer at everything. One must be capable of such sentiments to ascribe them to others. It is monstrous."
"Not at all, it is natural. Old folks are very tedious. They must make up for it in some way. I make up for it by hospitality."
"Say at once that our children take our house for an inn."
"Oh, yes, no doubt of it; the Golden Lion Inn. Entertainment here for man and horse, for hard-up children who have to economize. Have they spent too much for amusements, balls, concerts? Go and pass a week with papa. Have they a scheme for saving enough for a little journey? Go and spend a month with papa. One of the children is ailing; send it in the country to papa. And they send it and they come with it. And as they are received with open arms, and they are found in everything, as the father has a good establishment and a good table, as they find there good foods and good partridges that the selfish father is delighted to share with his children, they come again, and they take pleasure in remaining."
"Ah, miserable man. He turns everything to selfishness—even fatherly love."
"But suppose the contrary," went on M. Desgranges, without appearing to hear his wife; "suppose that I had doubled my daughter's dowry, as you wished, what would have happened? To-day our children, considering my son-in-law's somewhat impulsive disposition, perhaps would not be any better off, while I should be much poorer. I could not have them visit me so often, or take care of them so well, while here, and the would come less frequently to my house, because they would be so much more comfortable at home. Ah, matters are best as they are, my dear. For if my children were richer than I my daughter would have thought Villeneuve-Saint-Georges too damp in the autumn. Six weeks ago she would have feared the river fogs for her children's sake, and my son-in-law would have declared that these daily trips to Paris were affecting his

health. Here, then, is my conclusion, which I dedicate to all fathers who have marriageable daughters: "Would you keep your children, hold on to your money? Because, thanks to his money, the father remains the head of the family, the paternal mansion remains the family fireside, that is to say, an honored and comfortable resting place for the old, a place of refuge and of pleasure for the young, and for the little ones a nest where they come to find health, and sometimes more intelligent care than that which their own mothers dispense. For all, in fact, a centre, a sanctuary where successive generations grow up and come to old age; where, in fine, are perpetuated traditions of respect and tenderness. Call my foresight calculation and self-interest if you will; I call it genuine fatherly love, that which consists in making the children happier and better. Because, note it well, my dear, my son-in-law, I am willing to believe, had the happiest tendencies towards making a charming son-in-law, but, in fact, without my forethought, these good qualities would have remained, perhaps, in a state of germ, buds only. To whom, then, owe they their full development? To me. Moral: I shall not add a sou to my daughter's dowry."

CHAPTER III.

We are now at Nov. 30, fifteen days later, but still at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges; because if, in this sketch, I have a little violated the unity of time, I have at least respected the unity of place. M. Desgranges' house is in a state of joyfulness. Never has it appeared so gay, so happy. It is the twenty-fifth anniversary of his marriage.

"My dear," he said to Mme. Desgranges, "this is a day which must be worthily celebrated. No economies to-day. Spread every sail. Have a dinner as if I were a gourmand. I have expressly recommended to our daughter who has gone to Paris on business—I don't know what—to return with her husband on the 5 o'clock train. She will find in her room a pretty new dress, which I want her to wear to-day. As for yourself, if you still love me a little, in spite of my faults, prove it to me. Make yourself as charming as possible at dinner and to-night, because I have invited all the neighbors. Put on the diamonds that were my poor mother's. They represent to me those whom I have most loved in this world—her who gave them to me for you; you, who have worn them for my sake and for hers; your daughter, who will wear them for the sake of us three."
And thereupon M. Desgranges went away, in order to conceal a little emotion.

Why did not Mme. Desgranges not answer him?
Why did she remain for some time motionless, with her head lowered? Why did her daughter, on arriving, draw her into her chamber, weeping all the time? Why was the son-in-law so sober? Why did the dinner bell make all three tremble? Why, on entering the dining-room, was the mother so disturbed at the sight of her husband? Why, indeed? The exclamation of M. Desgranges is the answer. "You have not your diamonds!" he cried.

The mother and the children were silent.
"You do not answer," continued the father, in a more severe tone. "It is for me, then, to speak. I know all. You have sold them! sold them to pay for your son-in-law's imprudence. Yes. Because it has pleased him to associate himself with an ill-judged enterprise, because he was fool enough to become surety for rogues who have deceived him, you had to pay half of his debts, since he still owes 12,000 francs, you must snatch from me the dearest remembrance of my poor mother, the most precious evidence of our tenderness; you must poison, in fact, the pleasure of this beautiful day. Ah! it is too bad."
The mother attempted to stammer some excuses.
"That will do," replied M. Desgranges, interrupting her. "Here are the servants, go, take your places."
Mother and children went silently towards the table; but suddenly, unfolding her napkin, Mme. Desgranges uttered a great cry. Her son-in-law echoed her, and both ran toward M. Desgranges, their eyes filled with tears. The mother had found her casket of diamonds and the son-in-law the 20,000 francs of which he was in urgent need.

"Ah! my dear husband."
"My father."
"Very well, very well," replied M. Desgranges, releasing himself from their embrace.
"You will no longer call me selfish, now. Well, my forecast was right; and do you understand a last that it is necessary for a father always to remain richer than his children, if for no other reason than that—to be able to come to their assistance at a critical moment, and to save them from a catastrophe? Only, my dear son-in-law, don't do it again, because I may not be able to repeat my performance."
"THE HORSE—robust of the brute creation—when suffering from a cut, abrasion or sore derives as much benefit as its master in a like predicament, from the healing, soothing action of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil. Lameness, swelling of the neck, stiffness of the joints, throat and lungs, are relieved by it.