

[FOR THE NEWS.]

THE FELON.

PART FIRST—(Continued.)

I lost the each one of Irish birth As the vilest worm that crawls the earth. —CALLANAN.

XXIII.

The hermit heard, or seemed to hear, And waking from his trance of fear— "Timely, old man, thy blow was dealt, Or my poor breast the steel had felt: Were't not for thee thy furious foe Had laid O'Neil's last relic low. Time was I would not dread to see The flower of Saxon chivalry, Nor quail to hear the cannon's boom Between me vibrate and the tomb. This hand could once uplift the steel Responsive to the shout—'O'Neil!' This heart—oh! 'twas a heart of fire— Could dare undaunted dangers dare, Could face the blazing culverin, Or thro' to mingle where the din Of armour, hoofs, and swords, and shields, Rang out o'er blood-besodden fields: Then knew this finger, now though small, To loose the dead, unerring ball. Yes, thou—ah, then, there was one blade Whose every blow set free a shade, (17) Whose terror ran among the foe, 'Beware! beware!—'tis Riocard Roe!' But let that pass—'tis of the past, From youth to age doth rarely last (At least it lasted not with me) The spirit of the brave and free, That love of fame and chivalry, Choice scene of which the battle-field, And proudest deed the sword to wield, This world's in truth 'a fleeting show,' From daily change to chance we go:— I had my friends—those friends are gone, We had our day—that day is o'er: Above their graves a marble stone Tells that they were, but are no more. I am of all that gallant band The last sad vestige that remains; The flower of old Tyrconnell's land Sleep far and wide o'er Erin's plains.

XXV.

I left the world, its woe and weal, Life's latest hours in peace to steal, And close my eyes and lay me still On this sequestered, crazy hill; But peace in life? not even for me, Earth is a turmoil, and will be. Here was—and 'tis but yesternight, Sole dwelling of an anchorite, To-night beholds my lonely grave, A hermit's home, a soldier's grave, The refuge of— I know not whom— Perchance th—

"Herald of the tomb.

Enough, good father, thou shalt know, Prepare thee for a tale of woe, A record writ with crimes and throes Whose page shall soon for ever close;— Hast heard of Shawn McTwhillbe? Behold that wretched man in me!

XXVI.

I am, or rather was, the son Of one who was a son of toil, Whose father was son of the soil, And so my ancient race has run. The blood of royal pedigree Ne'er flowed in vein of mine or me, An old, but not illustrious, race We bore nor stigma nor disgrace, But lived and labored in our place; We never knew of rank or fame, Of wealth we knew it but by name, And thus it is I cannot claim Renown my fathers never won.

XXVII.

My sire, whose only child am I— Or was—God thought fit he should die, And then (the phrase) his little lands Fell on my widowed mother's hands; Said I that she was void of wealth? 'Tis true, and in declining health, Alone and helpless—for, who would Help destitute widowhood? Yet, still, with more than woman's might, She strove and labored day and night Until her very life was spent, To live, and pay the landlord's rent: For, as she said, it gave her joy To struggle that her baby boy May have, however poor, a home; And not be forced away to roam, To beg his bread at stranger hands, And travail in far foreign lands Where life drags drearily along, And hope is weak, despair is strong. (18)

XXVIII.

Our lord, that is, he of our land (Not he whose work this world fair, Whose power and divine command Gave free to all earth, ocean, air), Was as foul tyrant as on earth E'er lived, or had of woman birth. He was a soulless wretch, in sooth, A hard, relentless heart had he; Nor age o'erwrought, nor helpless youth, Nor death, nor dearth, nor misery, Could touch his adamant breast, Or claim a gentle word, or have a wrong redressed!

XXIX.

I grow, and she declined, We strove With cold and hunger and despair— O God! is there with mother's love A sentiment that can compare? Philosophers! where have you got Dame Nature's knowledge? say you not Ambition is the highest feeling Can be conceived in human heart? Nay, then, if this you call revealing, I scorn and I disdain your art: And you, ye lovers, whose pure flame Is fed by lips and beaming eyes, Think ye it is, and dare ye name It purest love where passion lies? I know of one both these above, 'Tis filial and maternal love.

XXX.

How oft, how oft the hot, hot tears Bedewed my infant brow! And though they've trickling ceased for years, I think I feel them now;

What voice is this—what accents sweet That lull me to repose? What lips are these my lips that meet? What face so gladly glows?

What pallid form is o'er me bent When I am still in sleep? By whom is my young face besprent? Who doth above me weep?

It is my mother—mother dear! No, 'tis not, but 'twas she Who shed the bitter, boiling tear In torrents over me.

XXXI.

O mother, couldst thou see that child To ripen manhood grown, Thou couldst have cried, but never smiled To think he was thine own.

The limbs so oft by thee embraced Strong iron sinews have bouned, And thy sweet child has been encased In dungeons under ground.

Peace to thy dust—thine honored dust, O dearest mother mine! This heart is cankered now with rust That idol was of thine!

I've had my share of woman's love: A faithless wife was she, And yet if I were free above, My soul would fly to thee.

XXXII.

We lived and labored, she and I, We slept upon our cabin floor; That hut, though low and rude, was dry, Of comforts we could boast no more, The years flew on; and on flew we, O'hone! we neither flew nor ran; Time—lingering time passed wearily That ripened me into a man, And though there be who say or sing 'Time's ever active on the wing, Time runs—' I contradict, and say At sad, slow pace, a weary way.

XXXIII.

At length I was a man, Alone I toiled, for old and feeble grown, Withered with care, with hardships bent, Oppressed with woe and discontent, Was she who hitherto with me Had worked and toiled unceasingly; Alas! her days were numbered now, Upon her deeply furrowed brow And on her ghastly, wrinkled face Time left a deeply graven trace, Which but too sadly, truly told Her wrecked too prematurely old. 'Twas plain to see ere long that she Who, like a reed, 'twixt life and death Was shaking, calm and still should be Where lord is none and land is free, Where is no low nor high degree, The cold, green grave beneath.

XXXIV.

I watched her and I saw her pine Away day after day; I took the boy hand in mine, Its touch was cold as ice, Her eyes methought had lost their light, I missed their wonted rays; They looked far into empty night With dim, broad, vacant gaze, With grief I saw the moment nigh, I sat me by her side, I spoke, but there was no reply, Those lightless eyes were turned on high, And without moan or pain or sigh The best of mothers—died!

XXXV.

I wept—what could I else but weep? I scooped a narrow grave and deep, Wherein I found my father's bones, Within a little square of stones, (19) I moved them, and beneath there lay A layer of inorganic clay, My soul grew chill to think the fate Of all the proud, the good, the great, The gay, the beautiful, the grand, The worthless, nameless of the land, Was thus to share the common lot, By general laws regarded not, To crumble thus and thus to rot In their inheritance by birth, Their own impure, primeval earth, Contemplate God's great ways, who can? Oh, what a mystery is man!

XXXVI.

Where lay my father's bones at rest My mother's last remains I laid; Upon them clay and turf I pressed, And then I wept, and then I prayed, I wept because in hallowed ground, Nor ancient abbey was their grave, No weeping willows bent around; The thorn and birch only wave Above their nameless mound On the green slope of Ross-na-lave, (20) Where summer breezes blow, and winds of winter rave.

XXXVII.

The world grew dark, I knew not why, I would I could—but could not—die: I sat within my cabin door, My buried mother to deplore; 'I hate thee, life! What art thou now? Can I endure thee? No—Yes—How? What art I?—who?—what would I be? Man—Shawn McThi—'

"What! Shawn machree, Why thus indulge in reverie? I am thy Sheelah come to thee, Make good thy promise now to me,"

"What? ho, my Sheelah!" "Yes, agra," "My mother!" "No, your"—"Life! ah, ha, I hate you!" "Shawn abourneen, what?" "And death!"—"Dreig-pal, an-thore,, just list, Athis machree agis oinise mhannua!" "I do defy you—come! Hanuma! (21)

"Well, wonder not, there is that power Within us—grief must have its hour— Which, one by one, and in their turn, Lets every passion chill or burn, My soul is sad and sorely moved, I've lost my all on earth I loved, Save thee, to whom my promise free, Do as thou wilt do by thee, Thou claim'st?"

"I claim: 'tis time"

We meet to part in life no more."

XXXVIII.

Father! she was the fairest maid On which my eyes I've ever laid.

Her striking mien, her artless grace, Her well-proportioned, smiling face, Her eyes which spoke ten thousand things In silence, while in murmuring Her lips played on the passing thought She loved to utter, yet would not. Oh, why is beauty woman's crown To claim the love man owes to heaven? Why those electric, subtle darts Which pierce the stoutest, haughtiest hearts?

XXXIX.

In nature's naked loveliness, Without the trashy pomps of dress, Without the perfumes, powders, paints Of jills and coquets—holy saints! Hard task for me the arts to name Of every ruffing Miss and Dame, Of garret-bred baboon, sho-wit, For window, niche, or museum fit; Without that sour, contemptuous pride, Esteem of self, and the allied Conceits with which we are appalled By belles and beauties so miscalled, That graceful rustic maiden shone By all my eyes have looked upon Unvalled, unadorned— Alas! that flower so fair should fade Ere fully blown— O matchless maid!

XL.

We joined our lands, Our hearts and hands, And I might say our souls: We thought to sup Contentment's cup, Not life's most bitter bowl; We entered on the world anew With all our might and main; To prosper we resolved, tho' few And small our means of gain, Our land was now of fair extent, And fertile soil could be, And tho' we paid a heavy rent, Yet we were young and free, Nor vain was our resolve, for soon We found ourselves improve With honest toil's reward, the boon Of mutual peace and love.

XLI.

Alack-a-day! we soon found out That where the tyrant reigns There is, except for servile scout, Nor peace, nor life, but chains, Scarce had we been two summers wed, When, by misfortune hither led, Our despot lord—oh, how! Came with a dark, demonic soul; "And who by you, my man?" said he, With emphasis, confronting me, "And who your wife?—my soul be blest, What beautiful bird in rural nest!" "My lord, Pat Keena's daughter she, I son of Thige McTwhillbe," "McTwhillbe, Pat Keena's daughter— Papias, Popes and holy water? Well, well, that's rhyme; but, my good man, Explain, and answer if you can, How came this land, two years since bare, To be so green, so fresh, so fair? How came this hut, I wished removed, So much enlarged and so improved? God bless my soul! and what is here? A pig, two cows, a goat—oh dear! Some chickens, eh? what number? nine, Is that a goose or gander? Swine! Ye powers, what grunts in yonder sty? Let's see—sublet the door—oh—why, As sure as daylight shines, I think You're found good fortune's missing link, Truth, I command you, have you found A hidden treasure under ground? Declare by what means you and wife Enjoy the luxuries of life "Where food is scarce, and paupers rife?"

XLII.

My most benign and gracious lord! (It grieved my soul to call him so, My daughter's name were the word, But there are times we must forgo What we believe, and call black white, And play the smooth-tongued hypocrite.) In cliff concealed, by genti stored, Not mine to find the magic hoard, No miser's treasure have I found Hidden above or under ground, Yet (thank the donor) I have wealth, My wife, two babes, and best of health, Ours is an humble, lowly lot, Of life's luxuries know we not, When Winters freeze and Summers broil We work our living from the soil; Clad by exertion, we are led, By daily toil with daily bread."

XLIII.

"'Tis true: and so I should have known, You've got the philosophic stone, I see it all—"

"My lord!"

"Now, now,

Let's hear no more—"

"Will you allow—"

"Enough, the devil self's not fit For all you Irish and your wit: Your whining and your begging tones, Which well-nigh would draw tears from stones, Are counterfeits: your sigh and moan Serve but to hide your hiss and groan, The system works, what could it mar? Among you not a few there are Who in their purses close have pent What I should have received in rent; But let that be, there is a way To regulate these things, good-day!"

XLIV.

He went—hard fortune in his track! He went, I say, and soon came back With valentors to impose Fair, equal track-rents on those Who held his land or next to nought, And higher lived than peasants ought, Who were the judges, need I say? Two tyrant blockheads bribed were they, Of his own kindred, kith and kin, Who thought it neither shame nor sin To say, unsay, do and undo, Call blue red and red call blue, Declare truth was false and pronounce falsehood true.

XLV.

I was the chief, of course the first, O wretched fortune's bubble burst, My rent, already much too high, To three times its amount they raised: "My lord, and gentlemen," said I, They checked me—"What! art thou amazed? Why, man, 'tis worth ten times as much, In the estate there's none else such;

If you, however, think it dear, Why, who is to detain you here?" "Not I, in faith," the landlord cried, "Scattered as far as winds can blow, Deep in the dust laid side by side, Or headlong to the devil go, I could have seen with placid face That hated class—the Irish race, If to act as to think were mine, To the vile dust I would consign Those Spanish vipers, ill-begot, Milesian dogs,—detested lot! Hear you, (to me) I want my rent In three months hence,"—away they went. (22)

XLVI.

Milesian dogs! my heart it smote, "Thou best, thou reptile! in thy throat," I shouted, as he turned away, "Nor vipers vile nor dogs are they, But men whose sires and race were known Long, long, you dastard, 'fore your own, (23) Men, the sons of sires who stood Where slaughter rolled o'er fields of blood, Where iron, lead, and bomb, and ball Razed turret, battlement, and wall, Where blazed the fortress wide and high In one vast column to the sky, Undaunted by the brunt and shock, Which made the ground beneath them rook, The block, the gibbet and the stake, The hold and keep have failed to shake The firm soul, or check the pace Of the unconquered Irish race, Some odd and seven hundred years Of bondage, blood, and widows' tears, Of desolation, plague and war Have passed—behold you what we are; Retract, proud man, what you have said, It may wreak vengeance on your head."

XLVII.

Turning, he shook his clenched fist, "Hark thee, megal, vassal list! Of British lord the will, word, way, Let never Irish slave gainsay, Bethink thee well what thou hast spoken, For less have many necks been broken: Mighty the arm of the great! Who dares its force, defies its weight, Buys death at much too dear a rate," "I do defy you; do your worst, Your ire restrain not, let it burst, Here is a heart for you prepared, You're spurned, contemned, and doubly dared,"

Montreal. "DUNBOR."

NOTES.

(17) Shade—Soul or spirit. (18) Strong—The Irish peasantry are totally adverse to emigration; let no man say, as some malicious individuals have said, that they are "an idle, roaming people." Saxon! cease thy hold, give them their own laws and rights in their own land, and where is their rival as a nation? The great life-aim of Irish parents is, "To do something" for the child, the cradle, the cause anything at home, barrin' starvation, is better nor so far service to strange spallpeens across the watur." In doing this "something" which generally is by over-exertion to meet the demands of some rapacious landlord, it often happens that the parents suddenly break down, and make their exit from a world of care to an untimely grave.

(19) Square of Stones—Who has travelled the Irish glens and uplands must have observed these several tumuli at which the peasant reverentially uncovers his head. What is there beneath them? There is a square or rectangular sort of sarcophagus of uncermented stones, covered with a slab, and containing the dust of some famished victim of the "Black '47."

(20) Ross-na-lave—Comprised the modern townlands of Derryckhawn, Moulkeive and Breeneymore, in the parish of Bantry, County Cork.

(21) Shawn machree—Joy of my heart; agra, love; anourneen, darling; dreig-pal, bright sun; an-thore, at his mother's side; oinise mhannua, joy of my heart and ecstasy of my soul; hanuma! your soul! (expressing welcome and surprise.)

(22) There are in Ireland two classes of bad landlords—the one, totally ignorant of the condition of his tenantry, sports over Europe, and cares not so long as he gets his rack rent; while Lord No. 2 is not satisfied with getting his rent; he hates the Irish, simply because they are Irish, and avails himself of every opportunity to work the ruin of an old-stock Paddy.

(23) Own—For politeness and respect to superiors, as well as for hospitality to strangers, we are ready to back the Irish against any nation; but woe to the arrogance that ventures adorning with the national character of Milesian Pat! Pat is extremely sensitive, and is roused by the first sting of aristocracy, when he instantly loses all sight of rank, pours out a vehement retaliation, or disputes the fame and name of his ancestors at the risk of his life.

DID SHE DIE?

"No!" "She lingered and suffered along, pining away all the time for years," "The doctors doing her no good;" "And at last was cured by this Hop Bitters the papers say so much about." "Indeed! Indeed!" "How thankful we should be for that medicine."

A DAUGHTER'S MISERY.

"Eleven years our daughter suffered on a bed of misery "From a complication of kidney, liver, rheumatic trouble and Nervous debility, "Under the care of the best physicians, "Who gave her disease various names, "But no relief, "And now she is restored to us in good health by as simple a remedy as Hop Bitters, that we had shunned for years before using it."—THE PARENTS.

FATHER IS GETTING WELL.

"My daughters say: "How much better father is since he used Hop Bitters." "He is getting well after his long suffering from a disease declared incurable." "And we are so glad that he used your Bitters." A LADY of Utica, N.Y.