

SALLY CAVANAGH,

Or, The Untenanted Graves.

A TALE OF TIPPERARY.

BY CHARLES J. KICKHAM.

CHAPTER VII. Continued.

"Bless me," says Matt Hazlitt, looking surprised and innocent. "I believe I bolted the gate." Mrs. Hazlitt's vexation blew over on seeing Brian; and after saying something about spreading green rushes under his feet, she went on to tell him that if he happened to be five minutes sooner he'd see something worth looking at; and Mrs. Hazlitt became quite eloquent upon a theme which, of course, had no interest whatever for Mr. Brian Purcell.

"Shut up, woman!" says Matt, "and don't bother us about her."

"Shut up, yourself, and let no one tell me that that young lady is either proud or haughty she is not."

"And who says she is?"

"Who says she is? Every one says she is, and every one says a confounded lie." Mrs. Hazlitt was getting into a towering passion, when Brian stood up to go, remarking that he was on his way to Sally Cavanagh's.

"Ah, poor Sally!" said Mrs. Hazlitt, instantly changing her tone; "there's her dresser there—pewter, and china, and all; and Saint Patrick baptizing the king of Leinster, or Ulster, or Munster, which? pasted on the side of it. I'd like to know"—turning to her husband—"I'd like to know what Mr. Stephens'll say to that if he takes notice of it. You hung the sieve over it the last time he was here."

"Don't you mind what Mr. Stephens or any one else says. There's no harm in the picture, and I'm able to prove it from the Bible if he says anything about it."

"We bought the dresser, and a few other things, Mr. Purcell, from poor Connor when he was preparing to go; and bare enough the poor fellow was obliged to go, I'm afraid. Oh! may God help the poor people of this country—what's to become of them?" Brian saw the tears start into Mrs. Hazlitt's eyes, and the sight did not make the clasp of his hand less warm as he bade her goodbye.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Why, Brian, is it turning to the poetry you are again?"

These words in the mellow tones of Father O'Gorman's voice roused Brian from a deep reverie as he leant against a rock, under the wood, on the mountain road.

Father O'Gorman made a great mouthful of the "poet-three," which he rendered in the richest brogue. "Wooing the Nine," he continued reining in his horse, and holding out his hand to Brian:

"Tu Tityre, lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas."

"So you have got rid of the little minx at last?" The little minx was our little friend Fanny, and it was plain her uncle connected Brian Purcell's gloomy looks with the fact to which he alluded. It was plain, too, that the connection was not disagreeable, for the good man's gray eyes twinkled with pleasure while he spoke. Brian told him of the letter his sister had from Fanny that morning, and Father O'Gorman spoke of paying a long promised visit to his brother in Dublin, as soon as the "statutes were over," but, on learning that Brian should be in Dublin about some law business in a month or two, it was agreed that they should go together.

"And knock the deuce out of a dozen or two of Ned's claret," says Father O'Gorman; "and that reminds me—when will you come and try some of the last hamper he sent me? I haven't unpacked it yet. Father Shanahan is a teetotaler, and you know I keep my wine till I have a friend to share it with."

"Here she is again!" he exclaimed, suddenly turning round in the saddle, and looking up the mountain.

"What, sir?" asked Brian in surprise.

"My heart is broke with that woman, and her Bibles and tracts. I spoke to Parson Stephens, but he could get no good of her. Yet, as she gives something in charity, I don't like to fall out with her."

A little carriage, drawn by a mule, came rattling down a narrow by-road, and an old lady, who whipped the mule with considerable energy, bowed stiffly to the priest as she passed, after turning into the main road. The old

sister to Mr. Oliver Grindem, and his senior by some twenty years. She had spent her long life in maiden meditation, and now, in her seventy-fifth year, was not overburdened with the milk of human kindness. There was a warm corner in her heart, however (we suppose there is a warm corner in every heart), which glowed with real affection for her nephew, Captain Dawson, whom we saw ride away from Ballycorrig in a brown study upon his newly purchased hunter. The old lady had taken to proselytizing among her brother's wretched tenantry, or rather the poor wretches who had been deprived of their patches of ground, but still clung—the Lord knows how—to the mountain side.

"She's after disturbing that poor dying woman now." Father O'Gorman was turning up the by-road, when he pulled up his horse suddenly.

"Could you manage to give a few days' work to Mick Dunphy?" said he. "His wife is dying and his children starving, and, as he says himself, he didn't get a stroke of work these six weeks."

"I can give him work for the winter," said Brian, "as I am just commencing some draining."

"That's good news for poor Mick and for the poor woman, too; and Father O'Gorman was about putting spurs to his horse to hurry with it to them when he stopped again.

"Come up yourself," said he, "and hire him at once. 'Twill cheer the poor fellow's heart."

They reached Mick Dunphy's miserable cabin, and found four famishing children watching a pot which their father had just placed over a few embers on the hearth. The man was on his knees, trying, with his breath, to kindle the scraps. He stood up and bade his visitors welcome. They heard a weak voice ask:

"Is that Father Paul?"

"It is, Kitty, his reverence and Mr. Purcell."

"Come here, Mick, and stan' near me." She was obliged to gasp for breath after every word.

"Father Paul," said she, "I'm going to ask a dyin' request of the husband that never gave me a hard word or a black look since the first day I met him, an' I know he won't refuse it."

"What is it, Kitty?" said her husband, stooping low over her.

"Mick Dunphy,"—raising herself upon her elbow, she spoke in a firm voice that surprised them all—"I want you to promise me, in the presence of the priest of God, that you'll never let a child of mine into the poor-house."

"Never," he exclaimed in a husky voice, "as God is above me. Let 'em die first."

She fell back upon her bed, with a languid smile upon her face, and holding her husband's hand, she said: "I'll die aisy now, Mick. I was afraid you wor losing heart."

"Sure, here is Mr. Purcell," said Father O'Gorman, "who will give Mick work for the winter."

"Yes," said Brian, seeing that poor Mick thought the priest had invented a little fiction to ease his wife's mind.

"You may go to work to-morrow, if you choose."

"God is good!" exclaimed the dying woman, as fervently as if a miracle had been wrought in her behalf.

At this moment who should step into the cabin but Mrs. Hazlitt. She laid a little white bag on the floor, and tucked up the skirt of her gown. "What's this?" says she, going to the pot on the fire, into which the children were anxiously peering. "O Lord! O Lord!" Here Mrs. Hazlitt took up the pot, carried it outside the door, and flung the contents—a few turnip tops and cabbage stumps—into the dung heap. Coming back, she placed the pot on the fire again, poured some clean water into it, and opened the bag.

"Now," says she, nodding her head at the children, "now for a good big pot of stirabout." There was not a face there, not even excepting the pallid face on the miserable bed, but was lighted up with a smile, as Mrs. Hazlitt proceeded with the stirabout making.

"O Lord! I'm in for it," exclaimed Mrs. Hazlitt. "What'll I do?" She looked about her as if she wished to hide herself somewhere. She then seized the bag, apparently with the intention of throwing it under the bed, but before she could do so, Matt Hazlitt walked in the door with his back stooped, and his two hands under his coat tails. He appeared considerably confused when he recognized Father O'Gorman and Brian

Purcell through the smoke. But when his eyes rested upon his wife, Matt Hazlitt started bolt upright with a jerk, and down fell something soft but heavy from under his coat tails. Brian at once recognized the bundle which Matt dropped out of the back window among the laurels. Mrs. Hazlitt pounced on it immediately.

"Here's a hypocrite," she began, opening the knot with her teeth. "And my new apron, too. Well, I knew the few handfals I'd give away couldn't empty that chest so often. And I pledge you my word, Mr. O'Gorman, that deceitful man was forever scolding me about it. And here was the work he was carrying on all the time."

Mrs. Hazlitt spread out the apron, making the meal look as big as possible. The detected culprit made several attempts to tell her to "shut up," but his discomfiture was too overwhelming. Just then, Father O'Gorman, in obedience to a gesture of Mick Dunphy's, who continued to hold his wife's hand, moved softly to the side of the bed, and knelt down. They all knelt down. The priest, after praying for a few minutes, stood up.

"God rest her soul!" said he. And Matt Hazlitt, staunch Protestant though he was, responded, "Amen."

"Amen, amen," says Matt Hazlitt, rising from his knees, and giving a defiant glance at his wife, who used to hint suspicions of his orthodoxy sometimes. But when he saw her eye rest on the little heap of meal, Matt's countenance fell again, and he shrunk away, completely crushed.

The winter day was drawing near its close, when Brian reached the little white house at the foot of the mountain.

"Oh, let them all be talking.
My little boy will soon be walking;
Oh, let them all be talking.
My little boy will soon be walking."

And so on, over and over again, to the air of "Nora Crona."

It was Sally Cavanagh, holding her youngest child as high as her arms could reach, and shaking him till the little fellow kicked out his fat legs, and thumped his nose with his fist in the excess of his delight, while the other children ran round, holding hands to "ketch him."

"I'm glad to see you in such good spirits, Sally," said Brian.

She never looked round till she had tossed the child into the cradle. She knelt by the cradle for a moment, and Brian heard a sob or a two. Then Sally Cavanagh threw back her dark hair, which had fallen down, and said, laughing through her tears:

"Spirits! Don't you know, sir, I'm paying a woman in Cork sixpence a week to fret for me?"

Brian told her that he had news of Connor since his arrival in Liverpool; and that he was able to pay for Neddy's passage. He thought it better to say nothing about the ring. This news was a great comfort to poor Sally, who had been very uneasy lest her husband should be obliged to leave the boy behind him in Liverpool, to the "man-catchers." When Brian asked some questions about the landlord, she showed an evident desire to avoid the subject, which rather surprised him.

On hearing the sound of a horn, Brian hurried away, hoping to meet Captain Dawson, and learn how the hunter did his work. He thought, too, as the transaction of the morning was a "dry bargain," that he would ask Captain Dawson to take pot luck at Coolbawn.

We leave Sally Cavanagh to struggle against her accumulation of trials; now battling energetically with despair; now wrapped in such a stupor of woe, that the children were obliged to climb upon her knees, and up the back of her chair, and twine their arms round her neck, to rouse her out of it. Sometimes Mr. Oliver Grindem was heard approaching the house. Then the backstick would be put to the door, and retiring with her children to the little room, Sally Cavanagh would not reply by a word to the oft-repeated knock of the landlord. When the sound of his horse's hoofs died away in the distance, Sally would take her infant in her arms and hush it to sleep with snatches of Connor's favorite song. And flinging her apron over her head to hide her face from her little ones, the poor woman's over-charged heart would find relief in a flood of tears. But it is not in human nature to bear up long against suffering like this.

TO BE CONTINUED.

"I was deaf for a year, caused by catarrh in the head, but was perfectly cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla." H. Hicks, Rochester, N.Y.

THINGS IT IS WELL NOT TO DO.

Never fail to keep an appointment.
Never delay in answering letters or returning books.

Never tell long stories of which you yourself are the hero.

Never inconvenience people by coming in late at church, theatre, lecture or concert.

Never stop people who are hurrying along the street and detain them for ten or twenty minutes.

Never call on people just at bedtime, or during dinner, or before they are down-stairs in the morning.

Never, when you see two people engaged in earnest talk, step in and enter upon a miscellaneous conversation.

Never begin to talk about "this, that and everything," to one who is trying to read the morning paper, or a book, or anything else.

Never speak disrespectfully of your parents, nor of your sisters. People may laugh at your wit, but they will despise you for it.

Never talk when others are singing, or doing anything else for your amusement, and never the instant they have finished begin to talk upon a different topic.

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"I can't help but rejoice on account of your downfall," said the parched grass to the rain.

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