

EFFECT FOLLOWS CAUSE - MATTERS OF GENERAL IMPORT.

Passing over an interval of ten years, we will once more raise the curtain, and give our readers a parting look at the different personages who have been "playing their parts" before them.

First in our affections are the Flanagan family, and we have written for nothing if our readers, too, are not specially interested in their welfare. Let us, therefore, begin with them. I wish it were in our power to introduce Tim Flanagan at the head of his family, as we have done on former occasions.

But neither brother nor sister took it much to heart. Their old Irish father and mother were persons of no great consequence in their estimation, and any one of the young Blakes or Thomsons, precocious little ladies and gentlemen was worth more in their eyes than father and mother put together.

Indeed, Mrs. Blake had received more than one gentle hint (before she chose to take them), that her visits were not over and above agreeable at either house. Eliza put it off with: "I wish, when you wouldn't come into the parlor when there are any strangers in it. Can't you go to the nursery and stay there till I come to you? You know I'm always glad to see you myself, but really my visitors don't seem to understand your way of talking. If you would only try to get over those vulgar Irish expressions, you might do very well, but you don't seem to try."

"No, indeed, Eliza, nor I never will, please God. I know it's too bad altogether for me to intrude on you and your fine company, but I'm getting old now, Eliza, and I hope wiser too. If I had done like your father long ago and given up troubling you at all, I'd have saved you this trouble, but it's never too late to mend. If there's anything wrong, you can send for me, but till then you'll not see me here again."

"Why, now, ma, you're not offended, are you?" said Eliza, with real or pretended anxiety. "You know I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, but just only fancy how awkward I felt when you came into the parlor the other day so unceremoniously, when the honorable Jonas Seaton and his wife were there. I should think yourself must have felt as bad as I did."

"It's of no consequence, Eliza, whether I did or not. If you choose to be ashamed of your mother, it's best for me to keep away altogether, and then I'll be sure not to disgrace you. Here are some little toys I brought for Samuel and Rebecca, and there's an ivory rattler for the baby."

"But won't you go up stairs and see them, ma?"

"No," said Mrs. Blake, in a husky voice, "I can't wait now. Kiss the children for me, Eliza, and give my compliments to Mr. Thomson."

"Well, I'll send the children to see you some day soon."

"Oh! I don't trouble yourself, Eliza, don't trouble yourself, there's no necessity for paying so much respect to old people like us. Your father and I are so rough, and so old-fashioned in our ways, that the children can learn nothing good from us."

Eliza followed her mother to the door, begging her not to go, and expressing her sorrow for the misunderstanding that had arisen.

"Nonsense, girl, nonsense," said the old woman, losing patience altogether; "go and mind your business, if you have any, and let me go in peace. You first give the wound and then try to lay on a plaster, but it won't do. Go in, I tell you, and let me alone."

living, but it would be no easy matter to recognize Mary in the tall, thin, care worn old woman, who seemed already bending beneath the weight of years; and as for Miles, though he stood it somewhat better, he had as many wrinkles on his brow as though the silvery hue of his hair were the effect of age, which unhappily it was not.

Well might Henry T. Blake and Mrs. Zachary Thomson have exclaimed, with the penitent *Cœur de Lion*, as he stood in the presence of his dead father: "The silver hairs I see, so still, so sadly thick! And, father, father, but for me they had not been so white."

But neither brother nor sister took it much to heart. Their old Irish father and mother were persons of no great consequence in their estimation, and any one of the young Blakes or Thomsons, precocious little ladies and gentlemen was worth more in their eyes than father and mother put together.

Indeed, Mrs. Blake had received more than one gentle hint (before she chose to take them), that her visits were not over and above agreeable at either house. Eliza put it off with: "I wish, when you wouldn't come into the parlor when there are any strangers in it. Can't you go to the nursery and stay there till I come to you? You know I'm always glad to see you myself, but really my visitors don't seem to understand your way of talking. If you would only try to get over those vulgar Irish expressions, you might do very well, but you don't seem to try."

"No, indeed, Eliza, nor I never will, please God. I know it's too bad altogether for me to intrude on you and your fine company, but I'm getting old now, Eliza, and I hope wiser too. If I had done like your father long ago and given up troubling you at all, I'd have saved you this trouble, but it's never too late to mend. If there's anything wrong, you can send for me, but till then you'll not see me here again."

"Why, now, ma, you're not offended, are you?" said Eliza, with real or pretended anxiety. "You know I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, but just only fancy how awkward I felt when you came into the parlor the other day so unceremoniously, when the honorable Jonas Seaton and his wife were there. I should think yourself must have felt as bad as I did."

"It's of no consequence, Eliza, whether I did or not. If you choose to be ashamed of your mother, it's best for me to keep away altogether, and then I'll be sure not to disgrace you. Here are some little toys I brought for Samuel and Rebecca, and there's an ivory rattler for the baby."

"But won't you go up stairs and see them, ma?"

"No," said Mrs. Blake, in a husky voice, "I can't wait now. Kiss the children for me, Eliza, and give my compliments to Mr. Thomson."

"Well, I'll send the children to see you some day soon."

"Oh! I don't trouble yourself, Eliza, don't trouble yourself, there's no necessity for paying so much respect to old people like us. Your father and I are so rough, and so old-fashioned in our ways, that the children can learn nothing good from us."

Eliza followed her mother to the door, begging her not to go, and expressing her sorrow for the misunderstanding that had arisen.

"Nonsense, girl, nonsense," said the old woman, losing patience altogether; "go and mind your business, if you have any, and let me go in peace. You first give the wound and then try to lay on a plaster, but it won't do. Go in, I tell you, and let me alone."

"Oh! I don't trouble yourself, Eliza, don't trouble yourself, there's no necessity for paying so much respect to old people like us. Your father and I are so rough, and so old-fashioned in our ways, that the children can learn nothing good from us."

Eliza followed her mother to the door, begging her not to go, and expressing her sorrow for the misunderstanding that had arisen.

"Nonsense, girl, nonsense," said the old woman, losing patience altogether; "go and mind your business, if you have any, and let me go in peace. You first give the wound and then try to lay on a plaster, but it won't do. Go in, I tell you, and let me alone."

But the truth is, he doesn't care. Still, you'll hear him say, now and then, that he means to bring his children up Catholics. It's the queer Catholics they'll be," she added, bitterly. "I'm afraid they'll be worse than their father, and worse is needless—God knows that, and I know it, and a sorrowful heart it leaves this blessed day. But I was forgetting to ask you, won't you all come over to-morrow evening? Miles told me to ask you, and you know we're so lonesome that it's a real charity to come. I'm afraid Miles is breaking down fast. He's far from being the man he used to be. And, sure that's no wonder—it's a greater wonder that he stands it as he does. Poor man! he's as cross, at times, as a bear, and I find it hard enough to humor him. Conscience is stinging him now when it's too late. But won't you come?"

"Evening, and Henry and Jane set off with Ebenezer for the theatre, calling on the way to take up Zachary and Eliza. The cold was no better, Eliza said, "worse, if anything. Why did she venture out there, she asked. Oh! she was sure it would do her no harm, and she always felt better in the theatre. She was so nervous that she did hate to sit moping at home when Zachary was out. She had with her a pretty girl of nine or ten, the eldest of her four children. Arabella-Selina was be-trilled and be-cursed at such a rate that she might suppose that she was to figure on the stage herself. She was a little prodigy in her way, and was quite conscious of the fact, as her very look denoted. Young as she was, her large, bright eyes were ever roaming around, canvassing for admiration, and no matter how grave or important the subject under discussion, Arabella-Selina was never at a loss for something to say. It was her mother's boast that she was "quite the lady," and so, indeed, she was, for there was a natural grace about her that made her very charming, notwithstanding the load of frillery airs and graces put on by art. On the way to the Park Theatre, Arabella held a critical conversation with her little cousin on several plays which they had seen performed. Her tone was quite patronizing, as she initiated her attentive listener into some of the secrets of criticism. "There was a horrid old nun," said she, speaking of an old play, "and you know, Ebenezer, nuns are always such atrocious, strange sort of people. But this old nun—she was called an Abbess—oh, dear! she was so wicked, just like the nun your ma was reading about the other evening; but only think, Ebby, the part wasn't well done."

"What did you say?" asked Ebenezer, opening his eyes wide.

"Why, you know it wasn't a real nun that was there on the stage, but Mrs. Ackland that took that character. I shall never like Mrs. Ackland again, for, oh dear! she played so abominably bad that she quite spoiled the part. Grandpa and grandma thought so, too, I assure you."

"Don't they ever have giants there?" demanded Ebenezer, his head full of the marvellous story of Jack the Giant Killer.

"Lor no! you silly boy!" said the precocious young lady; "what put that in your head?"

"Why I thought when they had nuns and all such queer people, they might 'like have giants, too. I don't want to see nuns. I'd rather see soldiers or giants. I don't like nuns."

"Fie, Ebby," said his mother; "why will you talk so, child?"

"Why, ma! I often heard yourself say the same, and it was only yesterday grandpa told me that nuns and priests were such very wicked people that he couldn't hardly tell me how wicked they were."

"Ebenezer," said his father, "you must never let me hear you speak so again. Remember that! if you do I shall be very angry with you."

"But I suppose I may speak so to ma, and grandpa, and grandma," said the child, merrily. "I'm a papa!"

Henry turned away his head to hide a smile, and the others all laughed heartily. Zachary patted the boy on the head, and paid him a well-merited compliment for his smartness.

When Kitty got the master and mistress out, she went up stairs to let her have Master Sam down stairs with her a while to keep her company. Nurse consented, nothing loath, and away went Kitty with her prize to the kitchen. Kitty had plenty of sweetmeats at command, and Sam was always well treated when he went of an evening to the kitchen, for he was Kitty's prime favorite.

"Now, Master Sam! ain't I a good girl—don't you love me?" The answer was slow in coming, for Sam's mouth was full at the moment. At last he got out what he wanted to say.

"Yes, you good girl—you give me goodies all the time, but Sam not love you."

"But we never heard a word from them since."

"You are not long out, I think," said Edward. "Have you a family?"

"Yes, sir, I have a wife and two children, all strong and healthy, thanks be to God. We're only two days in New York; and indeed, myself, I'm tired of it already, for I can't get any account of poor Betsy or her family, an I'm just fairly worn out. Is it true, sir, that you know anything about my poor sister?"

"It is, my poor man, quite true. I only wish it was in my power to tell you anything satisfactory. Your sister is dead."

The man was at first stunned by this intelligence; but after a little, he coughed slightly, and cleared his throat, and then spoke.

"Well! that's bad news to begin with. But God's will be done! And what about her husband, sir?"

"He died some three or four years before she did. They had a son, too, a fine young man, who died—or rather, was killed, soon after his father's death. They had, also, two daughters, who are, I believe, still living."

"This was a ray of hope. 'Ah! then, thank God for that same.—And where are they, if you please, sir? I'd give anything to see them, and poor Nancy—that's my wife, sir—will be ever so glad to find them out.'"

"I would not have you depend too much on them," said Edward. "I am very sorry to have to disappoint you, but you may as well find out the truth now as at a later period. Those daughters of Mrs. Dillon are, I assure you, no credit to their family. One of them married a young man named Sullivan, who is, I am told, a lazy, idle, good-for-nothing fellow, to say the least of him, and the other you must excuse me from saying anything about. Sullivan's wife you might, possibly, do something for, at the present, I think you had better leave her alone." He then proceeded to give a short sketch of the family history, ending as follows:—

"Poor Mrs. Dillon was a very worthy woman, and I trust, both she and her husband fully expiated, by their patient sufferings, the grievous errors they had committed in the bringing up of their children. Your sister ended her career with my mother, who had given her a shelter for the last years of her life. When you are settled in some employment, I will send a person to show you her last resting place, and that of her husband. You will have no trouble in finding it out," he added, with a smile, which the stranger could not then understand.

"Thank you, kindly, sir." May the Lord reward you and yours!"

Edward then inquired what situation his new acquaintance was competent to fill, and finally engaged him as a porter to the great joy of Brian Maloney, who went home in high spirits to his wife, telling her he was sure he had got in with a real gentleman, and a good Christian.

Brian and his wife paid an early visit to the Catholic cemetery, in Eleventh street, where, after some searching, they found a handsome head-board in the form of a cross, bearing the simple inscription: *In your charity, pray for the souls of John and Elizabeth Dillon.*

"Now," said Brian, after they had finished their long prayer, kneeling by the two graves; "now, didn't I tell you, Nancy, that we had God's blessing to get in with such a family? See what a fine handsome head-board they have put over poor John and Betsy. Glory be to God for all his mercies!"

TO BE CONTINUED.

what this is) and who does not know his own wealth—tell Michael's people of Dhrimgra. That, plus the cheque that fell out on being opened, is the American letter. It is not written in a copper-plate hand; the orthography might be improved upon, and it is probable that an irritable grammarian might carp at some of the forms of expression. Yet, that letter is dear to the hearts of all who read over again and again for the benefit of everyone whose name, or friend's name, is mentioned in it, and for the benefit of neighbors and friends who, simply because they are neighbors and friends, have a right to hear the full contents of it. And if there had been no cheque in the letter it would have been welcomed and read, and reread, and read over again, as longingly and as carefully, and treasured as dearly as if the wealth of the Indies had been transmitted with it, and the writer, would, at night, in the privacy of the Rosary, be mentioned with a renewed fervor, and prayed for with a renewed energy and heartiness that would rouse a jaded recording angel and cause him to speed his stubby quill, and spread ink with zest that he had seldom known since, on the first day of Adam, he wrote a wanton flourish and curly cue (begot by novelty in the blood of youth) initiated his title page.

Here is a specimen of "a letter home," which I take from my novel. "A Lad of the O'Fries." The writer of it is Toal a Gallagher the Younger, more familiarly and more widely known as the Vagabone, who after many mischievous pranks played upon long-suffering neighbors, blew up the little cabin of Corney Hagarty, the pensioner, and escaped the wrath, not merely of Corney, but chiefly of a stern father, flung far away from home. The letter has been delivered by Pat the Pedlar, to the elder Toal a Gallagher, as he sat upon his work bench. The letter is being read by the elder Toal to his wife, Susie; to Billy Brogan, his big-hearted apprentice (Toal is the shoemaker), and to Pat the Pedlar. Here it is in its own reading:—"My man, dear father and mother, Toal began, "I take up my pen and ink to write you these few lines, hoping it will find you in the same state of health, thank God, it leaves me, and wants to say I have hired on board of the 'Lizabth Jane as a cabin boy to go out to the States, and sails this evening with God's help, and wants to say I forgive both of you for all old scores, and wants to say to Corney Hagarty I forgive him, too, and goes away without no grudge against him or against anybody, and wants to say, too, that I'm going to settle down in the States when I reach them, and make my fortune, and please God, I'll send you lots and lots of money, and I'll send my mother the best dress of all sick and satin that money can buy, and a blue cloak with a hood down to her heels—"

A tear blazed right down upon the very line Toal was reading. "My man," said he, stamping his foot and looking up to where Susie bent above him, "will ye haul' your tongue, I say?"

"Poor Susie had not spoken, and did not speak—perhaps could not.

Toal, after a moment's hesitation, during which he drew a long breath, resumed—

"And a bonnet like Father Dan's flower garden, and I'll send you a prayer-book and a castor hat, and Billy Brogan—"

"God bless him," Billy blurted.

"A watch and a chain that'll go eight days like Matthew McCourt's clock—"

"May the Lord bless the generous poor fellow," Billy said, in a voice that trembled.

"And a castor hat like yours to Father Dan, and a history book of all the great wars of the world, to Corney (who I forgive), and a parrot that can speak the seven languages to the Widow's Pat, and another castor hat and a book of the most wonderful prophecies to be had for money to John Burns, and presents of all kinds to ever one else, tell them all, and when I come back, a gentleman, with a gold watch and chain and a nice black suit and grand talk, like Patrick Brogan of Ardhan, they'll be as nice as I could tell you, and isn't it you'll be glad and proud to see me, and I'm praying for everybody, and I forgive and forget everything and everybody with all my heart and soul, and tell them that, and tell Corney, and God bless you all, and now I must lay down my pen and finish your affecting son, Toal, P. S.—"

And don't forget to tell Corney I forgive and forget him and everybody, and I'll write soon and send you plenty of money when I land."

From the nearest big town (of seven-hundred and fifty inhabitants) the mail is borne out to the country post-office, by Pat the Post, twice a week. Pat on plays no horse or car for the purpose, but carries the mails in a water-proof bag on his back, and seldom hurts his back thereby. Sometimes there are thirteen letters for the country post-office; and on extraordinary occasions, eighteen and even twenty letters have been known to be delivered. There is a tradition that Pat brought thirty letters in one mail; but this legend is related only when, as at wakes, men are telling of ghosts and other wonders, and a certain latitude of speech is allowed them that would not be tolerated on more matter-of-fact occasions.

The country post-office is usually run by a post-mistress, who receives for her services the dazzling salary of five pounds, \$25 per year. The post-mistress, besides providing the country-side with letters, sells sugar and tea, and starch, and matches, and stamps; and when Pat the Post arrives at her office with a mail she is all flurry and excitement. She leaves her little customers, who are sitting gossiping around the fire, preparatory to delivering their orders for a box of matches and an ounce of tea; while she

THE IRISH COUNTRY POST-OFFICE.

SEUMAS MACMANUS, IN DONDIHOE'S MAGAZINE.

Next to the country chapel and the country school-house, the country post-office is, I suppose, the most valued possession in Ireland. To many, many thousands of our poor people in distress, it is the only door of worldly hope; and one or more times during each year it gladdens the hearts of some millions of them, for a letter in the post-office means for nearly all of them a communication from a dear one—a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister—far away, a communication all the more welcomed because of its rarity. Our boys and our girls are not yet infected with the correspondence habit, and so, if they write letters home, one in each quarter of a year, they think they have done well.

A great many send half-yearly letters, and a vast number of the exiles there are, who with much toil, mental and physical, contrive to send one letter every twelve months.

In their letters home from our boys and girls in America (for, sure, that is where all our boys and girls are, and a letter in the post-office" always means an American letter) they never manage to cover with ink more than four pages of newspaper, and all of these four pages too, do not contain news of themselves, and their doings, and their whereabouts. The first page is taken up with an announcement that they are going to write a letter, and then a prayer of thanks to God for the health they are in, be the latter good, bad or indifferent; and a prayer to God also, for the present and future good health and prosperity of the addressee. The last page and a half is devoted to messages of love and affection that are to be conveyed to all neighbors and friends, each of these being individually indicated. A page, or a page and a half, in the centre of the letter, constitutes the kernel—tells what sum of money is to be found enclosed; informs the home ones that the writer is still in the same place (a place about which there has always been a grand indefiniteness); that the master or the mistress is very kind indeed; and that the subscriber saw Mary Ellen Trammell, last week, and that she looked well and was doing well, tell her people; and also saw an uncle of Michael Hagarty's of Dhrimgra, who has been in America forty years, who is in the Express business (there is grand scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to

scope for country-side speculation as to