

MARY LEE

or The Yankee in Ireland

BY PAUL PEPERGRASS, ESQ.

CHAPTER XXV.

MRS. MOTHERLY, BEFORE QUITTING THE HOUSE FOREVER, WISHES TO LEAVE SOME DIRECTIONS ABOUT HER MASTER'S FLANNELS.—MR. GUIRKIE IN THE MEAN TIME, SEIZES TEARS OVER THE PORTRAIT OF MARY'S MOTHER.—HIS FIRST LOVE AND HIS LAST.

It was now approaching noon—the hour at which the neighboring justice of the peace usually assembled in the little court house at Tanney, to hold their petit session once a fortnight. Already the court-yard was filled with men, women, and boys, (a thing of very rare occurrence in that remote and peaceable district), eagerly talking in groups, here and there, about something in which they seemed to take more than ordinary share of interest. Two or three policemen, whom Hardwinkle had ordered from the next town, to take charge of the barrack in the absence of its proper occupants, now in search of his sister among the glens of Benraven, were pacing up and down before the grated windows, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the magistrates. To judge from the smothered impressions of some among the crowd, and the more significant gesticulations of others, one might easily suspect there was mischief brewing. Here and there a stalwart fellow might be seen hitching up his pantaloons, and spitting on his shillelagh, as he clutched it in his brawny hand; and now and then a boy would jump to a seat on the low stone wall that enclosed the court-yard, and with pockets well stuffed, and more than usually heavy. The fear of the law, and the presence of the police, small as the force was, had the natural effect of preventing, for the present, actual breach of peace; but still it was easy to see that something serious was likely to take place before the close of the proceedings. One individual in particular seemed very busy amongst the crowd, apparently giving orders and directions. This was a woman of tall stature, wearing a gray cloak, with the hood drawn over, but behind which, notwithstanding its depth of shade, several white elf locks were plainly visible. The reader will at once recognize in this personage our old acquaintance, Elise Curley, of the Cairn. Still erect and lithe as a sapling, though the snows of eighty winters had passed over her head, she made her way through the throng of men and women, with a step as firm as when she trod the fields of the heights of Madaira, forty years before. Nor had she lost entirely, either, that imposing presence, which in her younger days made her stamped her as a remarkable woman. Age, it is true, had furrowed her skin, and pinched her cheeks with its iron fingers; but the bold forehead and the deep-set gray eyes were there yet, to tell of her resolute and indomitable will. As she turned from side to side to deliver her commands, the women and boys fell back and gazed at her with fear, and the strongest men there shrank from her touch, as they felt her hard, bonny hand upon their shoulders. Suddenly a horseman appeared in sight, cantering on from the direction of Greenmount cottage; and instantly the cry rose that Captain Petersham was coming. Then the crowd began to sway to and fro, the boys to jump from their seats on the low wall, and the policemen to shoulder their muskets. But they were doomed to be disappointed; for the horseman, on nearer approach, proved to be only one of the captain's groves, who, riding up to the gate, beckoned to a constable, and handing him a warrant, commanded him, in his master's name, to execute it without delay.

But sure it's all past and gone now, any way. "Hold your peace, woman, and go to your room instantly. Mr. Guirkie is too good for you. Away, and thank God you have such a master." "O, it's little yer honor knows about him, captain. Ay, ay, it's little you know about him, poor man. Och, hoch, dear, if ye lived in the same house with him, as I did these five long years! But no matter now, sure, God forgive him as I forgive him; and that he may live long and die happy is all the harm I wish him. And now I wash my hands of him forevermore. I'll never—"

"And this very portrait now reveals the whole mystery." "The mystery! There, you're as it again. Mystery!—Good Heavens, sir, can't you tell me what mystery you mean? Excuse me, Mr. Brennan; but you know how deeply interested I feel in every thing that regards this girl—and then you're so tedious." "Have patience a little longer and I'll explain," said the priest, smiling. "You are already aware that Mr. Guirkie has been for the last five years in the habit of visiting, once a week, the old churchyard of Rathmullen, and that nobody could tell his reason or motive for so doing." "Certainly, every one in the parish knows that—well?" "And you remember to have heard Mr. Guirkie tell how he saw a young lady quitting the churchyard several times, as he entered?" "Yes." "And that he thought, or fancied he thought, the figure of that lady greatly resembled Mary Lee. Well, it now turns out, that our dear old friend and Mary have been all along visiting the same grave."

"—drop?—listen! You can almost hear them falling on the canvas." "Tears?" "God bless me; I don't like to see him weep. Shall I wake him up?" "No, no," said Kate; "let him weep on." "But, Kate, what portrait is that—eh?" "The likeness of a long-lost friend—Mary Lee's mother." "Long-lost friend—Mary Lee's mother?" "Yes; the only woman he ever loved. Old Roger, here, will tell you all about it, some time when he has more leisure." "It's only now I could recognize him, your honor," said Roger. "I thought I seem him many a time this twelve-month past. Tears, you know, make a great change in us." "Kate, I must try to rouse him," said the captain; "I cannot bear to see these tears falling there so silently on the canvas—it's very unpleasant." "Not yet—not yet," remonstrated Kate, motioning back the captain with her hand; "let the faithful soul indulge his rapturous reverie. These are not tears of anguish, brother, but of love. O, think of the love of that heart, after an absence of twenty years! Surely, surely such love is not of earth, but of heaven; so pure, so gentle, so enduring. A wanderer over the wide world, seeking solace for a widowed heart, he returns to his native land, and after years of patient search, discovers her lowly tomb at last among the ruins of Rathmullen Abbey. Week after week, for six long years, he has visited that tomb. Every stain which the midday had left on the humble slab that bears her name has been obliterated, and every letter the moss of years had filled up he has lovingly renewed. O, tell me not, Father John," continued Kate, her cheeks flushed with the emotions of her heart, "tell me not, that the pure, gentle, blessed love of the olden time has all died out of the hearts of men. Na, no, no—God is love, and God never dies. Noble, generous, faithful heart," cried the enraptured girl, bursting into tears, and falling at Uncle Jerry's feet, she removed his hand from his forehead and kissed it with enthusiastic affection. "O that I had but studied this book more carefully! how much more I should have learned of the beautiful and the good. How cold and inspired are all printed words, compared with the blessed teachings of a heart like thine!" Mary Lee, Mary Lee, angel or woman, whatever she be, it would to God he could now look on the seraphic face, and press thee—"

answer, one little balloon tumbling down from her sky at this plain presentation of an unsuspected fact. "But I'll take your name, and if—" "Oh, don't say you'll send for me!" she cried, more impulsively than was her wont. "Well, really, I haven't anything for you," he said. "My list is full. However much I might appreciate you, I couldn't place you without knocking someone else out, and that would hardly be fair, since, they're rather a decent lot just now." "Oh, no," she agreed, "I wouldn't think of such a thing! But surely there's always a chance for the person who is on hand? Just let me come in every day or two, to see if something hasn't turned up for me." "Sure," was Jenkins' ready response. "Come early and often, my dear young lady, and if the president's wife wants to be interviewed, or somebody's new frock comes begging for description—why, there you are!"

The next day found her abroad early drink in the life of the city streets and intoxicating her heart with the richness of it all for literary purposes. Before 1 o'clock she was presenting herself to Mr. Jenkins, in company with a dozen or more men receiving their afternoon assignments and promptly setting forth to thresh the news out of them. For all her brave speeches, she was but a convent girl, sheltered hitherto in the safe nook which cloistered teachers are apt to build for their pupils. The sight of this busy life, unwinding its intricacy before her eyes, abashed her. Before these hurrying men, some of whom had gray shadows in their hair, she suddenly felt very young and inefficient. Mr. Jenkins, too, was a little worried that day, and spoke rather shortly to the solitary lingerer after the men had gone. "Nothing to-day, Miss O'Brien!" Then, as he realized the pathos of this small atom in the world of work, a sudden chivalric motive prompted him to add, a trifle more gently: "But come to-morrow—something may turn up."

He is the great hero of this, the sublime art. Thon among whom it was a favorite great painter, the moment when the nounces to the purdrous future. In he is represented as hearing a sceptre in the right is extending toward the drooping of the Virgin. If Gabriel, the was given the great the birth of the Sav in a sense the patron dom, St. Michael is whole race. He is man's arch-enemy, of casting from hea Lucifer. He is the torious armies of Go in his pictures of dragon over whom the plain and simple or of Siegfried. It sent Sin rather than bright fallen one, terror. Consequen generally not a dra with bestially huma

"The man seemed to hesitate for a moment after reading the document. "The captain's orders are, that you proceed to Crohan House instantly," said the groom, "and bring the boy into court." "Yes; but I don't feel at liberty to quit my post," replied the constable. "Our force is small." "As you please," said the servant; "I have delivered my orders;" and wheeling round, without further parley, he galloped back to Greenmount. "Well, Thomas," demanded the captain, meeting the groom at the door, "you handed the warrant to one of the guard—has he gone to execute it?" "No, sir; he has the servant rode off; about quitting his post."

"What's the matter?" "The mischief's the matter. Between Father Brennan's mystery, and Mrs. Motherly's importunity, and those confounded constables, I'm almost crazy." "Well, well, brother Tom, you're so impatient, you know, and so impetuous. Hush, now not a word. Listen—I have something to tell you." "What?" "About Uncle Jerry." "Well, what of him? Has he had a fit he is dying? is he dead?" "No, not exactly that—but, there's a—mystery—in it."

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THE MIRACLE AT ST. ANNE'S. BY GRACE M'LEROY IURS. It was 12 o'clock. As Miss Mercedes O'Brien noted the fact, she quickened her steps to the sharp trot of business exigency. Her lips were firm, her eyes were brightly lit, and a casual observer would have set her at once in a niche among the city's responsible workers. Yet she knew that in all probability the striking of the next hour would see her recrossing City Hall Square unsuccessful, rebuffed, and turned forth to the company of an idle afternoon.

Miss Mercedes O'Brien was honored guest of the year from the Academy of St. Clement. Through all the four years, her talent had shone with steady increasing brightness, her career in the world of letters seeming finally so assured that classmates stored pages of her composition book among their dearest treasures, to be preserved eternally. Within a week after commencement day she was speeding toward New York City, to her room at the Academy of St. Clement. Through all the four years, her talent had shone with steady increasing brightness, her career in the world of letters seeming finally so assured that classmates stored pages of her composition book among their dearest treasures, to be preserved eternally.

She was scarcely disappointed at Jenkins' shake of denial, which had become familiar to her by this time. Instead of going forth immediately to seek fresh material for the growing heap of new manuscript on her table, she strolled to one of the office windows, to gaze out at the hurrying crowd below. Standing there, she felt, rather than saw, a tall man emerge from an inner room and stride to the city editor's desk. "There is a pilgrimage to some church to-day," the tall man said to Jenkins. "I saw the crowds as I came down town and heard people talking about it. It seems some miracle has been reported, and a lot of cripples are coming to be cured."

When she laid her pile of manuscript before Jenkins, two hours later, this slip formed themselves into a whistle of dismay. Mentally he cursed the necessity for boiling down the three-column "story" before him, and it was with no gentle hand that he slapped aside the first page. But as he read, his eyebrows went gradually higher until they were lost in the lock of hair overhanging his face. When he finished he flashed a keen glance at Mercedes, who sat near him, nervously awaiting his verdict, then gathered up the heap of closely written pages and took them to the manager's office. He was gone for some time. When he came out, Mercedes, who had written most of her elation and all of her strength away, approached him timidly. "It wasn't quite what I wanted," he said a little dryly, as she looked up at him almost piteously; "but I'll fix it up for use."

"Indeed, then, I will, sir; I'll never sleep another night in this house. My heart's been a-breakin with him every day in these five years, but it's broken now, out and out. O, wabastur, wabastur! I and this is the thanks I'm gettin after workin and slavin for him early and late, night and mornin, every hour since I first darkened his doors."

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