

ped in a large, dark cloak was seen slowly to wend his course along the Funcheon towards the well of St. Molaga. It was Shamus Oge O'Keefe in whose favor Mary Fleming declared herself as above related.

At that time he was a tall, commanding figure, where strength and agility finely blended. His family were in decaying circumstances at his birth; but he received a liberal education, for he had been brought up by his uncle, a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic, who dying when he was young, left Shamus no other inheritance than poverty; and he returned to his widowed mother's cottage to share her scanty means, and assist in the cultivation of a few fields which remained from the reck of their ruined fortunes.

When her father heard Mary's abrupt declaration in favor of Shamus Oge O'Keefe, he stood aghast with surprise; for though that young man immediately after his return to his mother's cottage, was fortunate enough to preserve Mary Fleming from drowning, a stranger to the warmth of gratitude himself, he hardly reflected on the extent of the obligation due to Shamus Oge, or thought that his daughter's intimacy with her deliverer exceeded the bounds of mere acquaintance. He procured one whose influence ought to have been directed to better ends, to tamper with the simplicity of the untaught girl, who, by authority and persuasion, so wrought upon her religious feelings that she was induced to believe that entertaining a secret passion for any person contrary to the wishes of her father, was in direct opposition to the laws of God; and that to atone in some measure for her crime, and to avoid eternal misery hereafter, she should promise to marry the husband of her father's choice. The weak girl, terrified by the artful representations of one whom she was taught to look up to as the interpreter of every doubt, yielded reluctant consent—promised to abandon Shamus Oge O'Keefe forever—and the day was already fixed for her marriage with the wealthy stranger to whom we before alluded.

During the progress of this baleful proceeding, her unfortunate lover made frequent attempts to see her, but his endeavors were baffled by her father's vigilance. The ruin of his hopes, the rumored inconstancy of the maid he idolized—the consuming restless flame that burned within his breast—all preyed with fatal activity upon his constitution. At length he heard that the day had been fixed for Mary Fleming's wedding; he resolved to see her once more, to bid her eternal adieu, to catch a part-

ing view of one he loved so tenderly, and then return to his bed of death, or to eternal exile from his native land. Let fate do its worst, he was prepared to suffer. For this he sought an interview, and Mary promised to meet him by the twilight hour on this day, at the well of St. Molaga. When Mary Fleming arrived in the haze of the twilight gloom at the appointed place she could scarce believe that the emaciated figure which bent before her was the gay and accomplished youth who delighted her eye a few short months before. The calm despair that sat on his marble brow; the death-like paleness of his cheek—and the faint glance of his glazed and sunken eye, appalled her, and flinging herself upon the chilly snow, wild and broken bursts of feeling seemed to convulse her very soul.

"O Shamus Oge! is this the reward of your faithful love? Are that sunken cheek and hollow eye Mary Fleming's gifts for rescuing her from certain death, on that day when the waters of the rapid Funcheon were closing over her head? O! had I then died I should not now be the ruin of your health, and the destruction of my own soul."

"Surely you do not apprehend that to trample on my sacred feelings, and, with more than woman's inconstancy, despise that honorable passion which you yourself approved and encouraged, can merit the exemplary punishment you mention?"

"O, poor bewildered heart?—did not Father F——, the priest of God, who know more than a thousand like me—did not he say there was an eternity of pain for disobedient children?—that I could not innocently have a liking for any young man, unless with my father's approbation;—that what young people call love is but a snare of the tempter's to lead souls to perdition. O! he bewildered my brain—every night in my dreams I saw hell open to receive us; and last Sunday I swore to renounce you for ever; and marry Myles Mahoney."

"Mary," said he, with a calm and collected tone, "I forgive you; and may God forgive them that practiced on your simplicity of heart. My feelings are not like those of other men, my love has been as fierce as the lava-fire which burns in the bowels of Etna. It has consumed the marrow of my bones; this is the last time I shall obtrude my accents on your ear. Never, never more shall this unfortunate wretch cross the pathway of your future life. Mary, farewell for ever."

The wretched Mary Fleming gave her re-