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THE LAST OF THE CATHOLIC O'MALLEYS. A TALE. BY M. TAUNTON.

CHAPTER XXIX. Once more Grace has pronounced the words which give her to another; but how different this time! Whatever the future had in store for her, the present seemed all that she could desire—all that her heart had longed for. By her side, clasping her hand in his, stood the husband of her own choice, one whose looks of love she could fondly return, and feel: "here, weary heart, you can rest, here be sustained, here lean upon in trustfulness! You are no longer alone. Here is one in whose strong, loving arms you will find shelter if the stormy world rage ever so fiercely. Give yourself up, Grace, to his comforting assurance, that whatever fortune may have in store for you, either of evil or good, here is one who will help you to bear the evil, or render more delightful, by his sharing it, the happiness in store for you." You know enough of life to be aware that it is made up of good and evil. You have had experience enough, even in your short life, to know that what an old legend says is true. "That there stands two urns at the side of Jove, out of which he doles to all mortals alternately good and evil, but often both together."

"Grace has promised to have me over in England as soon as she is settled, to try and get some of those diamonds we talked about. You know, mamma, that Englishmen often take a great fancy to Irish girls. Now, don't they?" asked Eliza. "Well, I believe they do. The liveness of an Irish girl often attracts. The contrast they are to the starchy propriety of some, and indeed of most, Englishwomen—especially those who have never been out of their own country—gives the Irish girl an attractiveness, especially to timid men, which throws in the shade the perhaps more solid qualities of our English sisters." "O, mamma, that is to bad! Then you insinuate that we are light and frivolous?" "No, I do not mean that altogether, though I must own we are lighter-hearted, more frothy, if I may say so, than are the English. We do not endure so well as they can the troubles of life—we are less patient—we have more temper. But don't suppose, girls, that I am going to run down my own countrywomen—for I believe that no more pure, more devoted, loving wives and mothers can be found—still, I know that English women are, as a whole, more solid, more sensible, better home companions, than we are, who want excitement and can hardly settle down into humdrum married life, as Englishwomen can—content with their nursery, their daily walk, their stiff dinner party, their quiet month at the sea; that they go on in this jog trot style until they come to spectacles, and knitting needles, and their game of whist, feeling that they have gone through the usual routine of married life respectably. Now, an Irishwoman keeps young all her life, and does not, could not, sink down into such a dull life, as I have been describing. To be condemned to it, she would feel as if she had been a naughty child, and had been put in the corner to punish her. And so, I must repeat, the Englishwoman is more solid, more practical, than we Irish. But what a length my subject has led me on." "I can tell you, mamma," answered Eliza, "that I would rather have my Irish feelings than all these solid ones, as you call them, for life is dreary at the best they say, then why not try to make it as gay and light-some as possible, and put as much sunshine into it by keeping as young as you can?" "A mixture of both characters would make the most perfect, consequently the happiest; so try, girls, to acquire those qualities you admire in English girls, and get rid of your own bad ones; that is the best advice your mother can give you."

not the courage a sailor's wife ought to show. What distresses me, and puzzles me also, is to decide where you will stay during my absence, for it may be a short or it may be a long one. Would you prefer to return to your aunt's, or to go to my mother and sister, who live about twelve miles out of London?" "Where should I be likely to hear from you the soonest?" said Grace, her voice faltering and her lip quivering, but striving with all her might and main to keep down the rising tears, so determined was she to do her best to show her Robert that she could be a true and brave sailor's wife; and that she would be a help to him and not a hindrance. "Why," replied Robert, "of course, the nearer you are to London." "Then, I should like that best, Robert." "So should I like it best for you, Grace. My mother would take care of you, and you are sure to like Agnes. I must write to her at once, for as we have orders to sail so soon, it gives little time for arrangement, does it?" The young husband sat down and wrote his letter there and then, with a white and stern face; for he, too, was keeping up to encourage his wife. And then they bustled about to collect his things for his man to pack, and to see what was requisite to add to them for a lengthened absence. His captain had considerably told him not to come on board until the following day at noon; and as he had requested his mother to come, or send as soon as she received his letter for his wife, he hoped to know that they were together ere he had to leave. Poor young couple, what a night that was for them! They sat talking until the small hours, and hardly liked to retire to rest, to put an end to their last night together, for how long? "You will not be well to-morrow, dear Grace, if you do not get some sleep." She looked up at him, but feeling that she should break down if she stayed a moment longer, did as he bid her; that is, went to rest, not indeed to sleep—how could she? No letter came by the morning post, and no messenger either, before poor Robert's time drew near for embarkation. So Grace promised him that, should no messenger arrive from Blackheath that day, that all the same the next she and her maid would go to his mother's— "For," said he, "I am sure that she will make a home for you, Grace; and not having any answer from her makes me think that she may be out." Grace promised all he wished, and moreover, as the ship was not expected to sail before two the next morning, she added, "that if any news from his mother came in the course of the day, that she should send a messenger to him with the tidings."

was shaken by the vehemence of her grief. Maruth sat by her side holding her hand, not speaking a word, and by degrees the sobs lessened into, now and then, a sigh; and the girl's faithful heart was gladdened by finding that her mistress, utterly worn out by the excitement of the previous day, the no sleep during the night, and now the exhaustion from the passion of grief she had given away to, was fast asleep. How glad Maruth was! and after awhile, when she was sure that she should not disturb her, she crept away to the sitting-room there to watch, lest anyone coming to the house and knocking at the door might disturb the poor sufferer. CHAPTER XXXIII. Grace slept for two or three hours, and woke up refreshed and strengthened. Maruth was at her side immediately, and judging wisely that it was best not to give Grace time to return to her sorrowful thoughts, she at once gave her a note, "which had been brought about an hour ago, mam." Grace rose in haste to take the note, but a shade of disappointment came over her face—she had hoped that it was from Robert—indeed, who else could it be from, as the post was gone by for that day? But it was not in Robert's handwriting, and, like many of us, she sat turning the note about in her fingers examining it, instead of seeking the easiest solution to her puzzle, and also the simplest; namely, by opening it! "Who brought this, Maruth?" inquired she, "A tidy sort of a man, mam; and he said that he should call again in an hour's time." Hastily now opening it, Grace found that it was from her sister-in-law, "regretting that mamma was keeping her bed with a severe cold—was therefore unable to do as Robert wished, namely, go down to Sheerness for her; but that they had dispatched an old man-servant, who was very trustworthy, to take charge of her, and bring her to their house, where they should most willingly welcome dear Robert's wife, and be very pleased to make her acquaintance. They had desired the man (Barber) to consult her wishes as to the time she would wish to come, and had desired him to place himself at her disposal. She begged to remain her affectionate sister-in-law." AGNES NOEL. This was not a very cordial style of welcome to a relative, and it chilled poor Grace to think that she had to seek her home with persons who could write such a letter under the circumstances; but she tried to persuade herself that Robert would not have asked her to go there, if he had not been sure that they would be kind to her, and then were they not his mother and sister? Well, perhaps, it was the English cold style, so different, as she had always heard, from the Irish, so hearty and warm, and probably she should find that it was merely manner, and not any real want of interest in her. Well, she would not send the letter to Robert to read, lest it might vex him, by its want of warmth and cordiality; but she sat down and wrote him a long letter, so long—wonderfully long—considering that it was only a few hours since they had parted! But what difficulty has a loving heart in expressing its feelings to the heart that understands it? When can it satisfy itself in loving words? The only difficulty is to leave off; and well for the writer and the receiver that the page is limited; and that, therefore, Grace was obliged to reserve a space to say, that she had arranged to leave Sheerness by nine next morning, and that she should write to his sister by that day's post to say so. To hear this was great relief to Robert's mind, and he detained the messenger, whilst he read his letter as well as he could—blinded by tears of fond sympathy with all she said in her great love for him. He scribbled a few lines in pencil to thank her for it, and to promise that the pilot should take her a letter from him. The next morning, quite by six, Grace and Maruth were at the water side, to see if the ship was still there; but no, only a space where it had before been. Nor was even a speck perceptible in the distance, even by the aid of a telescope. Alas! alas! he was really gone! She turned away, feeling now quite alone, and desolate. As long as she felt and knew that he was near, she did not realize the fact that she should not see him again for a long time. Ah, indeed—far how long? She walked back to her lodgings, longing for nine o'clock, to be going too. She could not have remained there. No, how thankful she was that she had arranged to go to once to Blackheath. CHAPTER XXXIV. When Grace arrived at Beechwood Lodge it was about four in the afternoon, for you must remember it was in the coaching days. The trim servant-maid, who opened the door, informed her that Miss Noel was out, but would be in in a few minutes; that she had desired her to say so, should the lady arrive during her absence; that Mrs. Noel was in bed. But would

the lady be pleased to take a chair; and was there anything she could get for her? Grace thanked the young woman for her civility, but preferred waiting until Miss Noel should come in. I shall leave Grace waiting in the parlor. I must own she was low, and anxious as to what her new friends would turn out, and very chilled and depressed at not having found a warmer welcome. However, she was one of those who always tried to think the best of every one, so she said to herself, "Perhaps Miss Noel could not help being out." Well, I said that we should leave our heroine waiting, and during the time describe the people with whom she was to make her home. Mrs. Noel was a lady above sixty years of age, who had led an active and busy life, having been left a widow with five or six children, without a very ample provision for them. Still, by great prudence and economy, she had contrived to bring up and give good professions to her two sons, and to marry two daughters well and happily. The eldest remained unappropriated, and lived with her. To a woman who had led such an active life, and who was naturally of an anxious, overbearing temper, the comparative idleness which was now her lot was not one which rendered her temper more amiable or gentler: on the contrary, she was quite the reverse of amiable—peevish and worrying; and having really been a good and a painstaking mother, very devoted to her children, was very exacting and jealous of the slightest appearance of not being the first in their thoughts, and any fancied want of confidence was sure to be the source of endless reproaches and demonstrations of being ungratefully, unnaturally neglected by her children; she was constantly saying, "children who ought never to forget what she had done for them." Nor did they forget; but as most of them had by this time formed other ties, they could not be so entirely hers as before. Had she been reasonable she would have accepted her natural place, and have enjoyed the position of a loved mother and adviser, which they would all have considered her; but no, she could not see, nor consent to see, that she was in a different position to those who were married than to them when they were single. The eldest son, Captain Noel, had been in India some years, holding a post under Government; nor had he married; so that when Robert wrote one week to tell her that he was engaged, and in a few days added that, on account of the order to go to Sheerness, he was to be married on the following Thursday, she was extremely angry. He had not even waited to hear her opinion; and, to add to his wrong and hasty determination, he was marrying an Irishwoman. Although Robert had told her Grace's age and her fortune (small though it was, it was better than she had been able to give her own daughters on their marriage), yet she had worked herself into the conviction that "Robert was throwing himself away. Well, he must abide it, he has made his own bed"—a saying I cannot endure to hear. It always appears to me, however true, to be so very cruel because you have done a foolish, an inconsiderate thing, which even takes from you that blessing which often enables the most afflicted to bear their misfortunes, namely, their comfortable bed and rest, you, who have by your own act deprived yourself of an easy bed, are not to be pitied because you have strewn that bed with ashes, with hard lumps, which gail you and take away your ease. You are not to be pitied! Why, surely it is *une raison de plus* to excite commiseration, and to obtain from others the more sympathy and pity.—Away with such cold-hearted sayings! So, you can imagine that it was not with any pleasure or satisfaction that Mrs. Noel received Robert's letter, asking her to receive his wife, and give her a home during his absence. At first, she was determined to write and say that she must decline doing so; but Agnes Noel, by dint of putting before her that it would be no expensé (Robert had assured her of that), and also that it would look so very bad to every one, that when her son was going off to the war, that she had without any reason, refused to receive his young wife under her roof—and Mrs. Noel was very sensitive to what the world said—and by also promising, that her mother should not be more troubled, with her daughter-in-law than absolutely necessary, she allowed Agnes to write the note we have already seen. And Agnes, what was she like? Would she be likely to make up to Grace for her mother's shortcomings? Well, on one very essential point she would, for she loved her younger brother with a devotion which was truly unselfish. Therefore, although she knew that Grace had taken away a heart which had been entirely hers yet it had not made her love her brother less—he still reigned in her heart supreme! so that to have any way shown her how she could prove her love to him, was very