

HER IRISH HERITAGE

BY ANNIE M. P. SMITHSON

AUTHOR OF "BY STRANGE PATHS"

CHAPTER V—CONTINUED

"Awfully good chap, right enough," agreed Farrell, adding with a half smile, "and he certainly will never need a champion to speak for him, Pat, while you have a voice."

"Oh! Dr. Delaney is a sort of demi-god to Pat," said Shamus, "but to my mind the man might be a little more Irish in his view."

"Oh! you blessed God!" exclaimed Nora, before Pat could answer, "what on earth do you think Dr. Delaney should do? Walk down Grafton street in hilt, I suppose, and look as silly as a lot of Gaelic Leaguers at a Feis?"

"A girl who panders to the Saxon taste in dress, and goes about in hobble skirts and a glad neck will hardly appreciate the national costume," replied Shamus in scathing tones.

But Nora only laughed, and helped herself to more jam.

"We expect Mary and Dr. Delaney tomorrow evening, Tony, will you take a look in too?" said Mary, as they were rising from the table.

"If possible, I will," was the prompt reply, "I should like to see Mary Carmichael again, and I always enjoy a chat with Delaney."

On the following evening Clare found herself an interested spectator and an eager listener, as she sat in a corner of the old-fashioned sofa in the Blake's delightful and homely drawing-room. All the family were present, and also Dr. Delaney, Mary Carmichael, and Anthony Farrell. Mutual greetings were exchanged—bits of news and harmless gossip about friends and acquaintances followed, and then by degrees all the room settled down to a long conversational evening. Such evenings were quite common amongst them, but Clare found herself listening in genuine amazement as topic after topic of intelligent interest was passed in review and criticism. Everyone had something to say, some remark to make, from Mr. Blake in his shabby, but cosy old chair, down to Angel on her comfortable couch near the fire—for this was one of her "downstairs" nights.

Art, literature, social problems, the stage, the latest concert, the Academy—all were discussed. And then for what Irish gathering of any kind could refrain from this theme—the political situation was gone over, and criticised in all its latest aspects.

And here it was that Clare found herself listening with most interest and surprise. For the first time in her life she found herself hearing such things discussed from the Irish point of view—for the first time she heard the Irish ideal of a separate race, separate government, separate nationhood, and she listened in astonishment as English methods and English forms of government were criticised with all that keenness of observation and quickness of perception which is found so highly developed in the Celtic race.

Above all she was struck with the fact that these people undoubtedly recognized themselves as a distinct and totally different race from their neighbours across the channel, and to Clare, brought up to consider the Irish as a sort of second-rate English—not quite as civilized or up-to-date as the latter, but capable of improvement under English administration—an aspect of Ireland which, ridiculous as it may appear, is still quite common in the mind of poor, stolid, John Bull—for her then to listen to a little genuine Irish criticism was an awakening indeed.

She listened as though in a dream to Mr. Blake's quiet logical utterances, to Dr. Delaney's slightly sarcastic comments, to the earnest Carmichael's eager speech, and to the impassioned tones of Shamus with a feeling of bewildered surprise. Her presence was overlooked for the moment. She recognized that very soon, and was content that it should be so. These were her mother's people, her mother's race—and she wanted to learn all she could about them.

"No, Delaney, I don't agree with you and never will!" Shamus was saying, gripping the arm of his chair, and leaning forward in intense earnestness, "we don't want the Home Rule that the English would offer us! What is it? A shadow—a skeleton of self-government—only fit for a child to play at! We want complete separation—and by heaven we will get it yet!"

His eyes were blazing, his whole face transformed. Dr. Delaney smiled quietly, and the little sarcastic droop of the lips became more noticeable.

"Perhaps,—but I doubt it very much," he said, in his even tones,—"as for me, I am no extremist."

"No extremist!" exclaimed Shamus passionately, "that means you are blue-warm—tepid—without ideals even! Bah! I'd rather have a red hot Orangeman than one of your milk and water sort!"

There was a ripple of laughter at this, and then Mr. Blake took up the argument, touching with quiet, but unerring logic, on some of the flaws of the Bill under discussion.

"I'm afraid this must be all very uninteresting to you," said a voice beside her, and Clare looked round

to see Anthony Farrell seating himself quietly beside her.

"Oh! No!" she cried eagerly, "on the contrary, I am interested beyond words! I have always wanted to get to know the people of my mother's country—to really know them—and now I have the opportunity."

He smiled at her with his honest, gray eyes.

"You have indeed," he said whimsically, "for—I am afraid to say it!—but for the moment they have forgotten your very existence!"

"Oh! of course—I know that!" she said, adding confidentially, "That is why I am listening so eagerly, because, as a rule, they are afraid of hurting my feelings or seeming rude, on account of the 'English half of me,' as Angel expressed it! So I hear very little of their opinions of my father's country, or indeed of their political views at all—so I am most awfully glad to be here now! And it's rather amusing too to think that they are talking away and have forgotten all about the English coast!" and she laughed in such a whole-hearted girlish way that Anthony found himself laughing in sympathy.

And so they sat and listened while the talk went on, Anthony putting in a few words of comment or explanation now and then to help her to a better understanding of the topics under discussion.

When at last supper was announced—Mary Blake suddenly caught sight of Clare and her companion sitting so quietly together on the sofa.

"Oh, Clare dear!" she cried in repentant accents. "What will you think of us!—why we quite forgot you, and there we have been talking away without giving you a single thought! Oh! I am sorry!"

But to Mary's surprise her cousin laughed gaily, and more happily than she had done for some time now.

"Well! you see everyone didn't forget me!" she said softly, and she turned her blue eyes towards Anthony.

"So I see," said Mary smiling, "Tony you are a dear! and I am so glad you were with Clare—what wretches we all were! But, as she says—everyone didn't forget her!"

Anthony Farrell turned to look at the sweet face beside him.

"It would be hard to forget Miss Castlemaine," he said quietly.

Clare felt her colour suddenly rising, and then as Mary turned away, she met Tony's eyes as they sought her's. Heart spoke to heart, and from that moment there was no forgetting for either of those two till the end of time.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE SLUMS

"What are your thoughts, O pallid boy—
A dream in a stylish street
With the rain on your rags and gaunt young face,
Where hunger and want have left
their trace,
And the mud on your stone-bruised feet?"

It was nine o'clock on a foggy November morning, damp and disagreeable like November days so often are; and down the Rathminne Road was hastening the usual stream of business and professional people—all going citywards for their day's work. Walking, cycling, or in the trams they hurried along—the lawyer, the clerk, the typist, the shop assistant—men and women, old and young—all hastening to their various avocations. Some of the more prosperous by in motor-cars, poney cars or "Shank's mare" takes the more humble toll.

Bride Blake and Clare Castlemaine were walking too, but from choice. It was the morning on which Bride was fulfilling her promise to Clare to take her around that part of the Dublin slums in which she spent so much of her time, and they had started early as Bride had a good many of her "people" to see.

"I always prefer to walk to my work in the mornings, if you don't mind, Clare," she said, "it is really more pleasant than the way I will bring you; but if you would prefer it we will take a tram, as far as it will take us I should say, for there are no trams where I am going this morning."

"Oh, no, please," exclaimed Clare, "I want you just to proceed as if I wasn't with you at all—just do exactly what you would do if you were by yourself."

"Very well," said Bride smiling, "only stipulate for one condition, Clare, and that is that if you are tired you will tell me at once, because I know that slumming to one who is not accustomed to it, must be very exhausting."

Clare promised, but she felt so full of interest in what lay before her, that she was sure she would not feel tired at all.

Hitherto she had known only the prosperous and fashionable parts of the city; she would find her way to Grafton street and on to O'Connell Street, but north of the "Pillar" was unknown ground to her, and so also were most of the numerous streets on the south side of the city—especially in the poor neighbourhoods.

The Coombe vicinity offered up an entirely new vista to her, and at first she was half frightened, half repelled, at the dirt and squalor and the glaring poverty which she now found around her. But Bride

passed serenely along as one who was quite familiar with her surroundings—and indeed she was so accustomed to it all that she felt no distaste for even the worst phases of slum life.

"Some of the people look dreadful," said Clare, half fearfully, as they were subjected to a severe scrutiny from two very dishevelled-looking ladies standing at a rather unsavoury doorway.

Bride laughed.

"They are quite harmless, I assure you!" she said, "but they don't know you, although they are quite used to me, and they are probably wondering if you rank as a sanitary inspector or a health visitor, or a baby club lady, or indeed in what guise you are come to visit them!"

As they turned in the direction of Meath street she continued.

"Now I am going to take you to some of my favourites, and you will, I think, have a better opinion of this neighbourhood before we finish our morning's work—not that they are all saints," she added ruefully—"I will have to let you see a few of my hard cases too!—just for the sake of contrast."

She pushed open a very shabby door as she spoke and Clare found herself in a dark, evil-smelling hall. The door immediately banged to of its own accord when free of Bride's detaining grasp, and they mounted two flights of very rickety stairs.

Then Bride knocked at a door on her left, and a rather high-pitched voice asked quickly.

"Who's that?"

"It's Miss Blake, James. May I come in?"

"Come in, come in, Miss—and sure you're welcome twice over!" came the answer in the same high-pitched tones—the voice of the blind.

Bride turned the handle and they entered.

Clare found herself in a small but bare and scrupulously clean room; the boards were scrubbed white, and the walls were covered with pictures from the pictorial papers, interspersed here and there with prints of religious subjects. In the window a gold-finch sang his song to a minute patch of blue sky just appearing through the fog, and which he could see from the place where his cage hung.

On a poor but clean bed, covered by a gay patchwork quilt, lay an old man, with white hair and sightless eyes.

"Well, James," said Bride, taking the thin old hand in her own, "How are you this morning?"

"Grandly, Miss—grandly, thanks be to God. And how's yourself?"

"I'm very well James, and I have brought a friend to see you today."

"Aye, I heard another step besides your own. And who is it, Miss?"

"It's an English cousin of mine, James."

"English is it? Ah, well, sure she can't help that same. But maybe now she wouldn't mind letting me hear her speak?"

Feeling rather shy, Clare went over and shook hands saying a few words of greeting as she did so.

The old face lit up at the sound of her sweet, girlish voice, and he turned his sightless eyes to where he knew that Bride was sitting.

TO BE CONTINUED

IN THE EYES OF YOUTH

"Are you sure you are comfortable, Mrs. Wilder?" Anne Whelan asked anxiously.

"As snug as a bug in a rug, thanks to your kind heart. I hope I shall be able to repay you in some way when I get on my feet again, Lord love you, child."

Anne tucked her patient in carefully, fixed the fire for the night and still lingered, hesitating to bring up the subject on her mind. At length she took courage and said:

"Mrs. Wilder, don't you want to notify your sons; they might be angry if they thought you sick and they were not told about it?"

"Oh, no! no!" she answered quickly, "I will be all right in a few days, as soon as I get over this attack, so what is the use? John has a big family and a sick wife and it would worry him if he could do something for me, and Philip—" she hesitated; "Philip, you know, married a society girl and it costs a lot to keep up in society in a big city. His wife would think a hospital was the place for me, and I couldn't bear to leave my home."

She sat up in bed, a frightened look in her eyes, and scanned her young companion's face.

"Anne, dear," she begged, "please have patience with me, I will be better soon and able to help myself."

The quick tears came to the girl's eyes.

"Mrs. Wilder, of course I shall be patient. I love to help you."

She placed her hand with a sympathetic touch on the elderly woman's arm and said:

"Now lie down and keep covered. I was only thinking of your good."

The woman sank down and then, half apologetically, began to make excuses!

"They are both good sons, my dear; John can't help very well and Philip is so far away I suppose he never thinks. A lot depends upon the wife, you know, and you

might say Phil's wife is a little thoughtless."

Anne answered never a word; she had her own opinion of "Phil" and "Phil's wife." Phil could well afford to keep his mother in comfort, not leave her to the charity and good-will of her neighbors.

The old lady surmised something of the thoughts running in the girl's mind, and began a defense of her son.

"Just a wee bit thoughtless, girleen; but he never forgets to send me fifty dollars at Christmas."

"Fifty dollars!" Anne repeated; something choked up in her throat, but she managed to murmur, "very kind of him, I'm sure."

With words of Goding words of cheer, she betook herself off, promising to look in again the next morning.

"Mother," she said a little while later when she was seated in her own cozy home, attractive with books and pictures and cheerful heart fire, "can't something be done about Mrs. Wilder? Someone ought to tell her son Philip what a miserable position she is forced into through his neglect. It's a shame to show such ingratitude toward such a darling old mother as Mrs. Wilder."

That night Anne thought long and deeply, and as was her custom when a problem grew too big for her, she stole out to the chapel in the square and poured forth her troubles before God's altar. She prayed earnestly, begging God to send His grace to Philip Wilder's heart that through it he would realize his duty to his mother.

Every day she found time to enter the little church and pray.

Miles away in another chapel, just as small as the one in which Anne now prayed with bowed head, Father James O'Connor was preparing for the evening service.

When he was a young boy he had seen in a parish where Father Murphy, now pastor of the Sacred Heart Church at Allentown, was a curate. The saintly curate had done much to help the young altar boy toward his holy ambition and he never forgot. Now and then, though many months often elapsed between, he paid his friend a visit. Tonight he was Father Murphy's guest and had offered to preach the sermon, to the old priest's delight.

You will find the congregation very small, Father James, but it will be a treat for them after so many of my dull discourses."

"What matter if the discourses be brilliant or dull, if they reach the heart?" was the quick rejoinder.

A short distance from the church was the Allentown railroad station. Its lights could be seen through the rain and mist. Tonight a man in a heavy coat with his collar pulled up about his ears strode up and down. He had come across country by automobile to connect with the main line of the railroad. Some accident delayed the train, and it would be two hours before it would come, the agent informed him. Although he was impatient at the delay, he was well pleased with himself, for he had made a wonderful sale which would mean thousands in commissions.

I will be able to buy Natalie that pendant she has been teasing me about," he thought complacently. "Gad, it's a nasty weather; I'm glad that Natalie and the youngster are down at Miami out of this miserable wet and cold."

There was no hotel in the place, and though he hated the long wait the outside was preferable to the dismal, ill-smelling waiting room. Once as he turned he caught sight of the church, lighted for the evening service, he decided to step over and enter; at least it would be clean and bright.

Father O'Connor was just coming on the altar as he entered. He slid into a back seat. Although nominally a Catholic, he was not a good one. His wife was the daughter of a mixed marriage, and her faith was not particularly strong. He himself had not been overzealous of late. The young priest blessed the congregation and announced the text, "Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother."

As the priest began to speak his voice, sympathetic and vibrant, appealed to the listener in the back seat.

After Benediction Philip Wilder went out of the church with a stinging conscience. His pride in his successful business deal was forgotten. His pride in his beautiful wife and child brought him no comfort. Before his mind came the face of his mother. He remembered her untiring love and care. He remembered how kind and gentle she was in sickness, her pride in his clever brain—and then his neglect.

Once more he strode up and down in front of the little railroad station, thrashed the whole thing out in his mind, and when the whistle of the locomotive sounded down the track and the glare of the headlight shone through the mist he had made up his mind.

The following afternoon was bright and clear. Anne was late returning from school and it was 5 o'clock before she was free to call upon Mrs. Wilder. She entered the house with her usual cheerful call, and was surprised to see she had a visitor. Apologizing for her abrupt entrance, she was about to retire when her friend, love-light in her eyes, called her back.

"Anne, dear child, my son, Philip, Philip, this is my young friend who has been one of God's ministering angels to me."

Anne acknowledged the introduction with a stiff nod and "How do you do." She did not offer to shake hands. She took in every detail of his carefully tailored suit, and she noted the expensive coat, hat and gloves on a chair near by, and her eyes grew scornful. Philip Wilder was as conscious of her scorn as if he liked her. His mother had been fortunate indeed to have her for a friend.

Anne would not sit down in spite of all her friend's pleadings.

"I just looked in to see that you were all right, Mrs. Wilder. I know you want to have a nice chat with your son—you so seldom see him," was her parting shot.

The next day she did not call at the Wilder cottage, the first time in many months, and she told her mother of Philip Wilder's visit to his mother.

"Well, I hope he will do something for the old lady," was her mother's rejoinder.

Anne did not answer. At first she had been very angry, every time she thought of Philip Wilder, but now a thought came which made her tremble. Her life was so builded on faith that she saw in his visit an answered prayer.

Saturday morning Philip Wilder appeared at the Whelan home. Mrs. Whelan invited him inside, wondering at his visit.

"I want to have a talk with you and your daughter, Anne," he said when he had seated himself.

Anne came in at her mother's bidding and with a cool "Good morning," took a seat.

"I want to thank you both," he began, "for your kindness to my mother."

Mrs. Whelan smiled and murmured some conventional words, but Anne sat stiffly upright, a heightened color in her cheeks. She was awaiting developments. Perhaps he was disposed to do what was right, or perhaps she would have to tell him a few facts.

Philip Wilder, seeing her uncompromising attitude, addressed himself to Mrs. Whelan.

"I realize I have shamefully neglected my mother, but I hope you will believe me when I say I always intended to do well by her sometime. I was always looking forward to the time when I should be in a position to make her comfortable for life."

I now see it was a mistake. My mother has suffered, and the time I looked forward to might never have come. She might have passed away leaving me to be tormented by remorse the rest of my life. Thank God, that shall not be.

Two nights ago a sermon by a young priest in an obscure parish opened my eyes. He preached on the Fourth Commandment—and the result is that I am here to do anything in my power to help her."

Anne rose to her feet. It was like Anne to be impulsive and to say what was in her mind. Her face flooded with color and her eyes shone with faith:

It was the grace of God which brought you, Mr. Wilder. I had been praying every day for God's grace to enter your heart, so that you might see how much your mother needed you, and two nights ago I asked your mother to pray for my intentions."

Philip Wilder bowed his head on his hands. His heart was filled with many emotions, but shame was uppermost. Underneath, was a deep thankfulness. Mrs. Whelan sensed something of what he was undergoing, and she tactfully sent Anne out to attend to the pies she had left in the oven. She placed her hand on his bowed head.

"Don't take it so hard, Mr. Wilder, the eyes of youth are inclined to be scornful and the heart hard in its judgments; it does not realize the weakness of human nature. There is time left to make amends."

He raised his eyes and said gratefully:

"Thank you, Mrs. Whelan." A moment later he added, "hard as it seems, Mrs. Whelan, your daughter is justified in her judgment."

When Philip Wilder returned to his home a few days later his mother was comfortably situated in the little cottage below the Whelan homestead. There were several tons of coal in the cellar and the deed of the house had been made in her name. In addition he had settled an annuity upon her which would keep her from want the rest of her days.

As the train drew away from the depot, he leaned out and waved his hand. His mother stood there smiling and waving and by her side stood a tall young girl with flushed cheeks. The girl waved her hand too, and her shining eyes were no longer scornful.—Church Progress.

SILENCE UNDER TEMPTATION

Those who can be silent when they are tempted to say something cutting or reproving possess a strong sword of defence against things to which others yield in a way that means their defeat. It is a great thing to have such perfect control of the tongue that one will not allow it to lead one into talking when it should keep still. A very serene old woman once told me that she felt that she had kept a great deal of anger out of the world simply by not answering back."

"You see, if you never answer back an angry person's wrath will die out lots quicker than if you

answer back in his own kind. Keeping still yourself is one of the best ways in the world to keep mad folks from getting madder and madder."

Nothing is more useless than to try to argue with an angry person. Serene silence on our part will surely lessen the angry words of others.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

FAMINE-STRICKEN RUSSIA AND THE CHURCH AMONG THE SLAVS

The Christian world has been shocked by the reports of the extent of the famine in Russia. Countless deaths have occurred and the despair of the stricken people has moved our Holy Father to appeal for physical aid. Catholics have responded generously. Now the Sovereign Pontiff requests the Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer to join in earnest petition to God for the spiritual needs, not only of the famine-suffering Russians, but of all the Slav races.

In our explanation of the Intention for September, we limit ourselves to geographic Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia. It is difficult to classify scientifically the various branches of the Slav family, for philologists disagree as to the number of languages which have a claim to be termed Slav. We prescind from any scientific discussion and confine ourselves to those countries known as Slav, even though they may have a large percentage of people of other races.

Of all the Slav countries, Russia has most need of our prayers. Her religious history has been a sad one. Previous to the schism of Constantinople, the Russians appear to have had only a limited knowledge of Christianity and, after the schism, we find Russia a fertile field for the labors of the rebellious clergy of the Eastern Church. Although strenuous efforts were made from time to time by the Holy See to unite Russia to the one true Church of Christ, all attempts were unavailing. In some provinces there was great missionary success, but the Russians, in general, clung to their schismatical leaders. Being mainly an agricultural people, steeped in ignorance and dominated by an ignorant, schismatical clergy who were but tools of a despotic government, Russia drifted on to political and religious ruin.

Aroused by the sufferings, incident to the World War, and led to look upon their rulers as tyrants, the Russians allowed themselves to be led by a dozen or more Bolsheviks into a form of government that was nothing but slavery. The results of Bolshevism, following upon the War, have been misery, disorder, famine and death. The spiritual props have been swept away to a great extent by the anti-Christian leaders, who aimed to extirpate Christianity entirely from the land.

No pen can describe the situation that has recently existed in Russia. The great Volga valley, upon which the bread supply of Europe in large measure depended, has been the principle scene of the famine. Other regions in the Russian Empire have experienced like shocking conditions. The absence of food and medicines have caused the death-toll to be appallingly large. Witnesses tell of refuse carts, piled high with the bodies of the dead famine victims, whose only food had been grass and the bark of trees. Reports of cannibalism have been authenticated. It is shown that parents, in the mad frenzy of starvation, have killed and eaten their children, while the bodies of the dead were dug up by the wandering and insane hunger victims, in their search for food. War, drought and Bolshevik misrule brought this ruin upon Russia.

The Russian peasants, as a class, are serious, sober and diligent. They know little of the theories of the present form of government. They are law-abiding and are disposed to accept any form of government imposed upon them. In religious matters, they followed their schismatical priests and, now that the Russian Church is a failure, they grope blindly in the dark. A fertile field for Catholic missionary labor may yet be found among these unhappy people who are enduring such material and spiritual sufferings.

Catholic Poland, another of the Slav nations, deserves our prayers. It has long been a storm centre in European political and religious agitation. Until Poland recently acquired her ancient rights as a free nation, her people had suffered much for their loyalty to the Catholic Church. The Poles have ever been firm defenders of the Church. As sturdy warriors, they have more than once been the saviours of Europe against the inroads of the fanatical Turks. Europe forgot the heroic sacrifices of the Catholic Poles. One voice alone was raised in protest, when the civil governments of Europe bowed before force and permitted the suppression of Poland's political personality. That protest came from the Holy See.

Scarcely had Poland freed herself a free, though penniless, nation when she was forced again to be the saviour of Europe. The Bolsheviks' attempted invasion of Europe was stopped by the Catholic Poles.

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