

AN OLD MAN'S REVERIE.

By the Late Mrs. O'Brien.

The sixty years when first beneath this

tree a boy of ten,

And how that time has left, or made of

me,

I stand again.

Let me retrace the path which I have made,

A path too quickly found;

For it is marked by many a cypress shade,

And rising round.

I was the youngest of a group whose mirth

Made us a merry hoard;

I sat alone beside my silent brother—

Where are they gone?

Father and mother long have fallen asleep—

The grass grows on each breast;

Brothers and sisters I have had to weep;

They are at rest.

A gentle wife upon my happy heart

Reposed her golden head—

I watched her fade and silently depart,

And kissed her dead.

Three little children clung around my knee,

Bright-haired and earnest-eyed;

But none of them doth now remain to me,

They, too, have died.

The friends of youth no more with tales of

old

The pleasant past recall,

In dreamland sleep they lie serenely cold—

I've outlived all.

Yet, as I sit while shadows to and fro

Around me softly steal,

I live again the happy long ago,

And happy feel.

Again, with playmates, on the velvet lawn

I triumph strive to gain,

And climb the mountain at the break of

dawn,

With throbbing vein.

I swim the lake, and roam the leafy wood;

Soft was the setting sun,

Ab' nowhere did I find this solitude;

My heart was young.

And, golden time! again I woo my bride,

My wretched pulses stir,

Among the fairest in a world so wide

Who was like her?

How well I see her, that soft summer even

When in the bending skies

The stars stole out, how bright to me in

heaven.

Than her dear eyes.

I spoke my love, and her quick-waving

blush

Her own to me confessed;

Well, well, perchance 'twere better I should

have

Such thoughts to rest.

After the dust and heat of life's long way,

Now when the night is near,

The stars shine out, that had been hid 'y

Divinely clear.

By them I see life's silver cord held fast

Clasped by a wondrous hand!

The deep sign—ancest' gift at last

I understand!

—Irish Monthly.

THE GHOST AT THE RATH.

By ROSA MULLHOLLAND.

Many may disbelieve this story, yet

there are some still living who can re-

member hearing, when children, of the

events which it details, and of the

strange sensation which their publicity

excited. The tale, in its present form,

is copied, by permission, from a

memoir written by the chief actor in

the romance, and preserved, as a sort of

heirloom in the family whom it con-

cerns.

In the year— I, Miles Thunder,

Captain in the 1st Regiment, having

passed many years abroad following

my profession, received most unexpect-

edly notice that I had become owner of

certain properties which I had never

thought to inherit. I set off for my

native land, arrived in Dublin, found

that my good fortune was real, and at

once began to look about me for my

old friends. The first I met with

quaintly, was an old man of about

seventy, who had been a sergeant in

O'Brien's, who had been a sergeant in

my day. I was in a year's time with

him. He was curly-headed still, and had

some, as he had promised to be, but

careless and poor. During an evening

spent at his chambers, I drew all

his history from him. He was a bril-

liant barrister. As a man he was not

more talented than he had been as a

boy. Hard work and anxiety had not

brought him success, only broken his

health and soiled his mind. He was

in love, and he could not marry. I

soon knew all about Mary Leonard,

his fiancee, whom he had met at a

house in the country somewhere, in

which she was governess. They had

now been engaged for two years; she

active and hopeful, he sick and des-

pondent. From the letters of hers

which he showed me, I believed she

was a treasure, worth all the devotion

he felt for her. I thought a good deal

about what could be done for Frank,

but I could not easily hit upon a plan

to assist him. For ten chances you

have of helping a smart man, you have

not two for a dull one.

In the meantime my friend must

regain his health, and a change of air

and scene was necessary. I urged him

to make a voyage of discovery to the

Rath, an old house and park which had

come into my possession as portion of

recently acquired estates. I had never

been to the place myself; but it had

once been the residence of Sir Luke

Thunder, of generous memory, and I

knew that it was furnished and pro-

vided with a caretaker. I pressed him

to leave Dublin at once, and promised

to follow him as soon as I found it

possible to do so.

So Frank went down to the Rath

The place was two hundred miles away;

he was a stranger there, and far from

well. When the first week came to an

end, and I had heard nothing from

him, I did not like the silence; when a

fortnight had passed, and still not a

word to say he was alive, I felt decid-

edly uncomfortable; and when the

third week of his absence arrived at

Saturday without bringing me news, I

found myself whining through a part

of the country I had never travelled be-

fore, in the same train in which I had

seen Frank seated at our porting, when

I reached Dublin, and, shouldering

my knapsack, walked right into the

heart of a lively wooded country.

Following the directions I had received

I made my way to a lonely road, on

which I met not a soul, and which

seemed cut out of the heart of a forest,

so closely were the trees ranked on

either side, and so dense was the twi-

gling dream. In spite of my very

wakeful sensations I believe I should

have endeavored to convince myself

that I had been sleeping, but that I

perceived light shining under my door

and through the keyhole from the pas-

sage. I got up, lit my lamp, and

dressed myself as hastily as I was

able.

I opened the door, and the passage

down which a short time before I had

almost groped my way, with my lamp

blinking in the dense, foggy darkness

was now illuminated with a light as

bright as day. I walked along it quick-

ly, looking right and left to see where

the light proceeded. Arriving at the

hall, I found it also blazing with light

and filled with perfume. Groups of

choice plants, heavy with blossoms,

made it look like a garden. The

music floor was strewn with costly

carpets. Soft colors and gilding shone

from the walls and ceiling, and the

light was so brilliant that I had to

close my eyes for a moment. I had

been black-garbed for weeks, and now

women looking brightly from their

burnished frames. Servants were run-

ning about, the dining room and draw-

ing room doors were opening and

shutting, and as I looked through each

I saw vistas of light and color, the

moving of brilliant, or the waving

of festoons, and the glancing of bril-

liant dresses and uniforms. A festive

air pervaded me, with a feeling, sub-

dued, as if I were listening with

stuffed ears. Standing aside by an

angle tree, I gave up speculating

upon what this might be, and con-

centrated all my powers on observation.

When I heard suddenly, and a

resounding knock banged at the door,

it seemed that the festive air had

been driven away. A festive knock

from a hundred glowing fires, Her

black hair went curling about her head,

and cooched around the braids was a

jewel not unlike the head of a snake.

She was flashing and glowing with

gems and flowers. Her beauty and

her brilliance made me dizzy. There

came a faintness in the air, as if her

breath had poisoned it. A white

smoke came from the ceiling, and

the chime of a bell rang like the

chime of a bell. The plants

shuddered and shed their blossoms,

and the lights grew dim a moment,

then flared up again.

Now the drawing-room door opened

and a gentleman came out with a young

girl leaning on his arm. He was a

fine looking, middle-aged gentleman,

with a mild countenance.

The girl was a slender creature, with

golden hair and a pale face. She was

dressed in pure white, with a large

ruby like a drop of blood on her

breast. They advanced together to

receive the lady who had arrived. The

gentleman offered his arm to the

stranger, and the girl who was dis-

placed for her fell back and walked

behind them with a downcast air. I

felt irresistibly impelled to follow

them, and passed with them into the

drawing room. Never had I mixed with a

gay set before. The costumes were rich

and of an old-fashioned pattern. Dan-

cings were going forward with spiri-

teness and country dances. The

stately gentleman was evidently the

host and moved among the company,

introducing the magnificent lady right

and left. He led her to the head of

the room presently and they mixed in

the dance. The arrogance of her

manners and the fascination of her

beauty were wonderful.

I could not attempt to describe the

strange manner in which I was in this

company and yet not of it. I seemed

to view all I beheld through some fine

and subtle medium. I saw nearly, yet

I felt that it was not with my ordinary,

naked eyesight. I can compare it to

nothing but looking at a scene through

a piece of smoked or colored glass.

As I just in the same way, as I said

before, all sounds seemed to reach me

as if I were listening with ears im-

perfectly stuffed. No one present took

any notice of me. I spoke to several,

but they made no reply—did not even

turn their eyes upon me, nor show in

any way that they heard me. I plant-

ed myself straight in the way of a

fellow in a general's uniform, but he,

observing neither the rim of his hat

nor the left by an inch, kept on his way,

as though I were a streak of mist, and

left me behind him. Every one I

touching seemed somehow substan-

tial as they all looked, I could not

contrive to lay my hand on anything

that felt like solid flesh. Two or three

times I felt a momentary relief from

the oppressive atmosphere, but it grew

more and more oppressive, and I

was told that an alternative medicine

was necessary. Ayer's Sarsaparilla

was recommended.

"Ayer's Sarsaparilla is the best

blood-purifier,"—W. T. McLean,

Manhattan, Kansas.

"I have sold Ayer's Sarsaparilla

here for over thirty years and always

recommend it when asked to name the

best blood-purifier."—W. T. McLean,

Druggist, Augusta, Ohio.