

"Well, then, Brian, as you must be weary and hungry, wait here until I bring you something to eat, for I dare not let you enter the house, for fear of disturbing her. The least noise disturbs her, and if she wakes up now and finds you without the priest it might prove fatal to her. I am sure it would. So wait for a minute, and then, in the name of God, go on your errand."

"No, Mabel; I will not eat or drink until I see Father John. I feel fresh enough for the journey and don't mind it if I can attain my object. But I want to look upon my mother's face; it may be for the last time in life, so don't deny me the request. I will not ask to enter the house, but gaze through the window and look upon her as she lies sleeping. As I said, it may be for the last time."

Poor fellow! he knew not how prophetic his words were.

Noiselessly and together they approached the window, the only one that gave light to the cabin. The moon shone full upon it with calm and mellow light, and revealed within the look of sorrow upon the careworn face of the sufferer. Brian Mullen gazed long and earnestly upon the sad and pale features. His eyes were dimmed with tears, and the quick heaving of his heart told of the terrible agony he endured. At length, tearing himself away, he turned toward his sister and found her on her knees. Rising, she threw herself into his arms and sobbed upon his breast. A brief interval elapsed, a few whispered words were spoken—and one went off on a mission of love and mercy, which, perhaps, would bring death to him—and one to watch and pray by the lonely bed of a dying mother.

CHAPTER II.

Our country first, their glory and their pride,
Land of their hopes, land where their fathers died;

When in the right they'll keep thy honor bright,

When in the wrong they'll die to set it right.

J. T. FIELDS.

While the priest was singing the Midnight Mass,

The troopers were gathering near,
And soon their blood stained the mountain pass,

And the priest met a bloody bier. W. C.

JOHN MULLEN, the father of John and Mabel, whose death has been accidentally mentioned in the preceding chapter, once owned and occupied a well-stocked farm near the beautiful and romantic falls of Asserve. Here for ages his fathers lived and died, and it was his boast that he could trace his descent back through the mists of a thousand years. Like all old Irish families they were patriotic, and clung to the old faith with a devotion that nothing could destroy. They had followed the banner of their chiefs, the O'Donnells, in many a raid and foray through the Pale, and in Tirowen's rebellion had done good service on many a well-fought field. The confiscations which followed the downfall of that chieftain are well known and are called in history "The Plantation of Ulster." The Mullens shared in the general ruin and devastation of the period. All but a portion of their lands were wrested from them and given to foreign adventurers. Still they clung to whatever was left them, and to the hope that at some future day they would win back 'their own again.' The year 1688 found John Mullen in possession of a farm of about one hundred and twenty acres, and the father of three bright and blooming children. Owen, the eldest, was the pride and joy of his father, and whom all the people loved for his spirited nature and manly beauty. Brian was the second and last son, and though but young at the time, gave promise of a bold manhood and a bright future. Mave, or Mabel, as she was named after her mother, was two years younger than Brian, and but a prattling infant when the eventful year 1688 dawned upon Ireland. Rumors of a warlike character began to spread around the peaceful homestead of the Mullens. Stories of strife and blood were rife, and every breeze was laden with tales of vengeance and of blood. Soon it became known that James and William, the two rival claimants of the Crown of England, were to contest their strength in arms, and Ireland was the chosen battle ground. The story of that contest is well known and needs no repetition here. John Mullen, leaving his wife and children under the protection of Father Dominick O'Farrell, a relative of his wife, bade them farewell and en-