

THE OLD BLIND BEGGAR.

AS I was walking one day in the vicinity of the city of V—— I overtook a beggar who was walking before me. He was an old man, with white hair, blind, and led by a dog. I said to him:

“White hairs are a crown of glory,” Solomon says, “if found in the way of righteousness.” Is it so with you my friend?

“I suppose sir,” he replied, “that you wish to know if I have gained my soul; (a common expression among Roman Catholics in Ireland which signifies the salvation of the soul by works, such as prayers, penances, pilgrimages &c.)

Well, yes, my friend, is it your case?

“Alas! no sir,” said he, “I am very much afraid that I am not all right; I have passed through two orders, the order of Saint——, and the order of Saint—— but if I were able to enter the third order I believe I should die happy.”

And what have you to do in order to enter this order?

“Well sir, in the first place the penance is very severe; besides, father X—— is very hard, he says he cannot receive me for less than three shillings, and I do not see how I can get so much, for times are not good sir, and it is not an easy thing to provide at the same time for the needs of the body and the soul, with what the good people are able to give me. However, I have been able to save nearly a third of the sum,

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