

by Barny and hidden to "hurry for Father John." When the good priest arrived, his long experience of the sick showed him that the Spalpeen was near his end. The cause was not at all obscure. The emaciated frame told his tale of voluntary starvation, neglect, fatigue, that he might not lessen the little store he wore in the small wallet round his neck. But the waning life in him flickered up into wonderful vitality as the gentle and genial priest addressed him in the familiar Irish tongue, and in the little room in which they laid him made him sensible of his condition and received the supreme confidences which his situation demanded. His thought, his care were all for others—for his wife and boy first of all, and then for his hosts and for the trouble and expense he all unwittingly had brought upon them. Reassured on this latter point by the priest, he gave such particulars as enabled the good man to hold out hope of having his own to kneel around him at the last or at least to lay him in the grave. Forthwith he despatched approved parishioners in various directions to carry out his purpose. Meanwhile the dying man grew slowly worse through the night and all next day. Those that tended him with such kindly care noticed that he often wandered in his speech, talking much in Irish, apparently to his wife, but oftenest about one "Mihauleen," who seemed to represent the care nearest to his heart. At times he would rouse himself and break out in English, in a tone of mild triumph—"I have it here, yer hanner, I have it here." And then again the clouded brain would clear, and as he knew the Barony faces round his bed, he would salute them with a faint "God bless vees."

In the still dawn of the following morning, as Barny was watching

the rising sun turn the lake below him to gold, he heard the rumble of the gig and knew that the Spalpeen's wife had come. A little woman with red petticoat and shawled head, she had beside her a small wiry boy in faded corduroy. Her first word was, "Am I in time?" and being told she was, "thanks be to God for all His marcies"—she was led forthwith to the room. There, with natural delicacy, the stricken family were left alone.

An hour later when they entered to offer the poor woman some refreshment, they found that the Spalpeen was dead. His wife was kneeling by the bed rocking herself to and fro and crying very quietly. By her side the little boy in wide-eyed awe was looking for the first time in his life on the solemn face of Death.

Next day they buried him. In the afternoon little groups of country people gathered near the door, and soon it became evident that all the neighborhood had turned out to swell the stranger's funeral. The procession to the grave was so striking as to be long after spoken of in the Barony. First came companies of grave men, walking four or five abreast, and either silent or conversing in hushed tones, and of themes arising out of the sad occasion. Then came a string of vehicles from the gentry and strong farmers around, and then the coffin, swathed in snow-white cloths and borne by willing relays of men and youths. Behind it walked unobtrusively the poor wife and child, and with them their sympathetic hosts, Barny leading the prayers that were kept up uninterruptedly by those around the dead. At the gate of the graveyard they were met by Father John. According to the old Barony custom, they carried the coffin all around the enclosure before laying it in the new-made grave. The rites at the tomb were