

THE NOVELIST.

THE PATRIOT'S FATE.

The past, the past, like a mournful story,
Lies traced on the map of thought.

In the year 1798, a year which brought destruction and devastation to many a happy home in this unfortunate isle—when every hour proved

'The death bed of hope, and the young spirit's grave.' And when the ruthlessness of those in command, urged onward the coward slaves who basked in the sunshine of their favour, to sanguinary and revolting acts of bloodshed and cruelty. It is painful to dwell on such a picture—enough.

In a remote part of the south of this island, the union of three valleys forms the bed of an extensive and magnificent lake, from one side of which issues a small river navigable by boats, and communicating with the mighty expanse of the northern Atlantic; the sides of the mountain nearest the lake are in the extreme precipitous, and among their towering heath clad cliffs and solitary caverns afforded many a secure retreat for those who outlawed themselves by a public adherence to the insurgents of the day, and were obliged to fly their altars, friends, and firesides, to escape the fury of their persecutors. The side of one of the hills was a beautiful verdant slope, and the decline of an opposing hill was wooded to its summit; the lovely green of the herbage, contrasted with the various tints of the trees as they appeared at different heights and in different groups, produced a delightful effect, and gave an air of gladness to this otherwise apparent solitude; but how much more was it enhanced, when the wearied traveller happened to espy the blue turf smoke curling gracefully upwards, amid the embowering trees, giving evidence of a human habitation. It once presented a sheltering spot, where a night's rest for the weary might with certainty be obtained—when warm hearts were sure to give cheerful welcome, and think their hospitality well repaid to see their guest happy. This lonely sheeling had stood here in humbleness for ages, and was now tenanted by the lonely descendants of the builder. They had one lovely daughter; she was their only comfort, and principal assistant. The father, although the hoariness of age was his, retained all the alertness and vigour of a mountaineer—he tended his scanty flock, and tilled his few acres for his family's support—while the mother with her daughter kept every thing within doors in the most perfect rural order and neatness. The well-scoured dresser was decked out with glittering pewter vessels, ranged one after the other; the polished warming-pan, a substantial part of domestic comfort, now nearly exploded, and the culinary utensils, glittered in the recesses beneath it.

A wicker-work two-arm-chair, in one corner of the ample fire-place, was the cozy seat appointed for the patriarchal owner, and the peat or turf piled on the hearth, diffused its comfortable warmth around the well white-washed apartment; nor were the usual ornaments of cottages in the shape of highly coloured flaring paints wanted, and the air of their every day apartment bespoke the enjoyment of every simple luxury which the contented minds of cottagers could wish for, and that entertainment for an unexpected guest, that chance might make an inmate of their happy home, would be sought for not in vain.

Mary had the imprint of health upon her face, her eyes sparkled with good-nature; and, though naturally vivacious, her innate modesty threw a veil of reservation over her every action, which charmed not less than the perfect symmetry of her form. Such a rustic beauty could not be long without a train of admirers, but one more especially won his way to her affections, and his ardency in the cause for which all then strained their very heart-strings, was additional recommendation in Mary's eyes.

Charley Driscoll was esteemed by all who knew him: he was industrious and prudent, and, though not wealthy, he was independent. He tilled his little farm with care, and lived comfortably upon its produce; but he had a warm humane heart, and was therefore not inaccessible to the principles which had now gained ground in Ireland; the triangle and lash had done more for the cause of the disaffected than any abstract notions of political rights; and when listening to the tales, too well authenticated, of individual wrongs inflicted by the minions of government, he burned with impatience for an opportunity of wreaking his vengeance upon the wretches, who, like the ogres of the east, thought no music so fascinating as the cries and groans of tortured men. Happy and thoughtless he had no idea of gaining any thing personally by successful rebellion; but, with a chivalry consonant to the feelings of the Irish bosom, he was anxious to embark his all in the hazardous enterprise, which had for its object the liberation of the country from the grasp of those, who now, like the fabled vulture, lived upon its very vitals.

Woman feels more acutely than man for

the sufferings of others; her heart is less callous, her imagination more active, and Mary's fine eye, 'clear as the morning's first light,' would kindle with virtuous indignation at the recitals of those horrors which were then perpetrated almost everywhere throughout the country. Dearly as she loved Charley, she felt no apprehension for the future; she knew the cause into which he had deliberately embarked, and the ardency and impatience with which he spoke of the approaching experiment, served only to endear him still more to one by no means insensible to the claims of rustic valour and heroism. She thought not of danger; she looked forward to victory; and longed to hear the tale of her lover's 'deeds of arms,' recited at the fire-side of every hamlet.—Charley was already celebrated as an expert hurler, and renowned for athletic exploits; and Mary fondly thought, one known to local fame, required only a more enlarged field of action to deserve and acquire still greater notoriety. The course of their 'true love,' ran on sweetly enough for some time; and, on the first agitation of the country, by the moral volcano of *ninety-eight*, every thing wore a favourable aspect; but, the reverse was sudden, and, with the downfall of their hopes, came fears and anxieties, which their inexperience did not dream of.

During the eventful contest, Charley performed the part of a daring insurgent; he was foremost wherever danger tempted valour, and when 'the day was lost,' he returned home 'wan and faint, but fearless still.' He was an outlaw; but was not without companions in his peril; and, amongst others, O'nevy Sullivan sought with him the security of the hill and the dale, the wood and the recesses of the shore. A common danger reconciles slight differences; O'nevy had been Charley's rival; and had formerly drawn upon himself Mary's anger; but all cause of anger or resentment was now forgotten, and he was hospitably received, along with others, by her, whenever the absence of their pursuers rendered it safe to venture from their places of concealment. Here they found some alleviation of their sufferings; and Charley still sanguine, cheered the mind of his mountain nymph with prognostics of happier days, and undisturbed quiet domestic enjoyment. The times, however, were fearful; the progress of martial law had left its revolting traces in almost every village, and the gallows, like a pestilence, remorselessly prepared its victims for the chilly grave. Under these circumstances, even the national gaiety of the Irish character had but little room to display itself; their conversations were necessarily gloomy; and at length weary of a life of anxiety and hardship, the outlaws resolved to solicit the interposition of their landlord, a nobleman of great political influence. O'nevy Sullivan undertook the mission, and as he had some distance to travel, he set out, properly disguised, early in the morning. His comrades waited with anxiety for his return; the day passed away, and O'nevy did not make his appearance; but there was no apprehension of treachery; he might have fallen into the hands of the enemy, but no one dreamed of deceit.

The evening was now fast falling, and Mary, at the request of her father, went out to see if she could discover the approach of friend or foe; Charley followed her; and both of them took their station on the ruins of an old abbey, which had stood for ages on a beetling rock, towering over the lake,

Mossed and grey,
A desolate and time-worn pile,
With ivy wreaths and wall-flowers.

They strained their eyes over the heath-clad hill, but no human being appeared; all was silent; and under other circumstances they would have felt the sweetness of the mellow evening, and the increasing breeze which the declining summer's sun seldom fails to call up to refresh, as it were, the living things which his fervor had nearly blasted. The scene too was as lovely as ever. Nature is not influenced by the crimes or madness of men; the summer calls forth flowers, whether they bloom to 'waste their sweetness on the desert air,' or to gratify mortals, be they good or vicious. All know this, and feel grateful for it; its evidence of Omnipotent wisdom; and amidst cares and perils reminds us of that beneficent Being who has placed us amidst created wonders, lest we should ever forget, insignificant as we may be, that the eye of superintending Providence is always upon us.

As Charley and Mary looked around them, upon the hills above, and the rippling waves of the lake below, they felt, unknown to themselves, the influence of such a scene and such an hour; they regarded each other with the chastened sentiments of virtuous love, and descending from the ruins upon which they were standing, they strolled carelessly along the bank which immediately overhung the water. In that sweet hour they forgot the business upon which they were sent, and the evening darkening around them, warned them in vain of the anxiety of their friends in the cottage; they surrendered themselves to the witchery of the moment, and 'all forgetting,' they continued to walk forward, until turning an angle of the strand, the rising moon, which had been hid by an inter-

vening hill, burst suddenly upon them. Reminded of home, they turned round to retrace their steps, and, at that instant, a wild shout, and the loud report of fire-arms, were heard. It was a moment of terror; their fears told them too truly that their friends had been betrayed, but it was no time for reflection; they hastened to a neighbouring eminence, and saw the sky above the cottage red with the flames that now ascended from its roof. Regardless of their personal safety, they made for the scene of terror; but, as they drew near, they became sensible of the danger, if not of the folly, of proceeding further. With much persuasion Charley prevailed upon Mary to remain where she was, while he went cautiously forward to learn what they both feared to ascertain.—The firing had ceased; the shouting subsided, and, when he returned, the only answer he made in reply to Mary's enquiries for her parents, was, 'The Hessians are in search of us.' The mention of these martial ruffians acted like an electrical shock upon the nerves of the unhappy girl; she trembled violently; and as their treatment of the female peasantry was notorious, she forgot every consideration but a sense of her own insecurity.

Throughout the confusion of the period, the insurgents paid manly respect to female honour; there is not a recorded instance of their having forgot the deference due to the helplessness of beauty; and on every occasion they acted one and all like men, conscious of being the husbands and brothers of virtuous wives and sisters. Far different was the conduct of their adversaries; and the horror it excited was a melancholy testimony of the sense in which female purity was held by the Irish peasantry. Amongst the most atrocious in such proceedings, were the mercenary troops of Germany; the very mention of their name filled Mary with apprehension; and, in her dread of unmanly violence, she thought of nothing but flight; no time was to be lost—a circuitous path led to the margin of the lake; where, in a narrow inlet, screened from the closest observation, was moored a small boat; and, lying near the mouth of the river which communicated with the sea from the lake, a small skiff was moored, belonging to some fishermen in the neighbourhood, who, along with their usual and professed avocation, carried on contraband trade on every favourable occasion.—As an only resource, Charley thought of this; but they had to cross the lake ere they reached the stream which would convey them to the sea, where the vessel lay. The night had now completely set in, but 'the moon on high, hung like a gem on the brow of the sky,' beamed upon their path; the fastenings of the little boat were soon loosed, and they entered in a state of indescribable agitation; every rustling of the wind through the heather on the hill, or the flags or rushes which flourished on the border of the lake, filled them with apprehension. The boat was at length pushed from the shore; and now secure in having escaped from his pursuers, who, like bloodhounds, would glut their fangs in the gore of any fated victim they might seize on, Charley vigorously tugged the oar, and the boat rode swiftly over the waters. The breadth of the lake being more than three miles across, the distance he had to row, unassisted, was considerable; but his situation added new vigour to his frame; nor did he think for one moment of fatigue; the innate courage of his Mary began to rekindle upon her lovely countenance, and for one smile what would he not undergo? The horror was banished from her mind, but her parents, who were behind, were now the principal objects of her solicitude. What would she not have endured with them? How could she suffer separation? Were they even alive? But, again, there was an all-seeing Power who would protect them, she thought, as she was conveyed farther away from them; under the protection of one who loved her, who, although outlawed from his country, was dearer to her than life. The conflict of these different sensations of her mind was, even in the wan light of the moon, visibly pictured on her face, although she endeavoured to conceal her emotion from her lover, who undauntedly and firmly sought for himself and her a place of safety.

But hopes of happiness are not always realized, and dreams of joy are often dissipated by causes which are the least suspected; they who know the uncertainty of the gusts of wind which occasionally blow on inland lakes, are aware of their danger; and unfortunately it was the fate of this faithful pair to encounter one, which suddenly arose from the northeast. Its suddenness and its fury quite disconcerted Charley's skill; the boat twirled about in spite of his utmost efforts, and the plashing of the waves as they dashed against its frail sides began to fill it with water. Mary sat fixed like a statue in the stern; she was perfectly paralysed with alarm; and Charley himself felt too much apprehension to attempt the task of a comforter; he spoke not; he hardly breathed, but he desisted not in his efforts to propel the little bark through the angry surge. Still the storm abated not; and presently the sky was overcast; the moon hid its pale light behind a dense cloud, and the lightning 'leaped about,' as if in mockery of the elemental

strife. There was no time for the interchange of thoughts; Charley laboured with great energy, and he acquired new strength when he heard a prayer, slow, solemn and impressive, breathed from Mary's lips. One so good, so innocent, was he thought, like an angel's presence, there could not come harm to any thing near her; and this opinion seemed to receive confirmation from the elements; for, on her obtesting Heaven, the storm seemed to subside, and the moaning of the wind through the neighbouring hills was distinctly heard. This sound, which at another time would have filled them with melancholy, proved most delightful; it intimated that they were not far from land; but the gladness which suddenly arose within them was as suddenly dashed with fears. A blast from a bugle burst upon their ears, and the voice of men as if in reply, was heard indistinctly from various points. Charley for a moment suspended his toil; and, looking up towards the moon, which was now emerging from the cloud that had obscured it, he perceived that, in the confusion of the darkness and the storm, he had mistaken his course, and was now close upon the shore from which he thought himself receding.—There was not a moment to be lost in rectifying his error; and, lest he should give alarm, he pulled his oars cautiously; but forcibly. His fears were but too well grounded; a cheer long and deafening struck terror into his soul; and Mary dropped upon her knees in the bottom of the bark. Charley now saw that there was no chance of safety but by distancing his pursuers, who had already launched a boat, and he exerted all his remaining strength with the energy of a man conscious of being in the mouth of danger. His little skiff, though half filled with water, literally flew over the lake, but his enemies were as determined to capture as he was to escape; the report of a musket was re-echoed from the distant hills, and, by the flash of its pan, he saw that they were at no great distance from him; and, on another shot being fired, the bullet rebounded from the water just under his helm. This did not cause him to relax; he strained every sinew, and reached the opposite shore before they could overtake him. As the prow of his boat ploughed up the strand, he gave a triumphant cheer, and extended his arms for Mary to leap into them; but at that moment his pursuers fired a volley; a ball struck him; he reeled, groaned, and expired. A wild, and almost supernatural, scream from Mary announced to the pursuers that part of their object had been accomplished, and in an instant the wild Germans were hustling each other, in the general eagerness to seize the poor forsaken creature, who now thought of nothing but her dead lover, whose spurned corpse was clasped in her arms.

'Azy, boys, azy,' said a voice, which Mary recognised for that of O'nevy Sullivan, 'you mustn't injure this girl.'

'Save me, O'nevy,' she cried, wildly abandoning the dead body, as if suddenly awakening to a sense of her situation.

The soldiers gave a loud ironical laugh, and one of them seized her roughly by the arm.

'You shall not,' cried O'nevy, 'I've sould the pass, 'tis true, but it was because I loved this girl—you shall not injure her.'

Another laugh was the only reply he received; and, when he attempted to release Mary from the rude grasp of the Hessian, a blow from one of his comrades stretched him upon the ground, and

Three days after this a sad procession, with two coffins on men's shoulders, entered the cemetery of the ruined abbey; they contained the remains of Charley and Mary.—After the usual form had been gone through, they were both committed to the same grave; and their hapless fate, even in this hour of peril, excited more than common sympathy. It was fortunate for Mary that she did not survive the brutal treatment which she experienced at the hands of her lover's murderers; the world no longer contained any one of those who had made life joyous and happy; her parents had fallen in the attack upon the cottage; her lover was no more, and she herself—Heaven, in mercy, did not permit her to survive her honour.

The wretch who had 'sould the pass,' who in a fit of jealousy betrayed his comrades into the hands of their enemies, had shame enough left to hide his face for ever from the eyes of all who knew him. He quitted the country, and was never afterwards heard of, by those who detested his treachery.

A LACK OF WIT.—Mr. Crosby, being one evening in the boxes of Drury-lane, a gentleman behind him was very troublesome in his noisy observations, and false attempts at wit. "Why, you measure out your wit wholesale," said a person at hand. "True, sir," said Mr. Crosby, "the gentleman measures his wit, as in the East they do rupees—by the *lakh*."

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