

HER IRISH HERITAGE

BY ANNIE M. P. SMITHSON

AUTHOR OF "BY STRANGE PATHS"

CHAPTER V

"IN DUBLIN'S FAIR CITY"

Clare Castlemaine was surprised to find how quickly she adopted herself to her new surroundings, and how perfectly at home she soon felt. On their part the Blakes became genuinely fond of their cousin, and each in his or her own particular way did all that was possible to make her new life happy and interesting. Owing to her mourning she could not, of course, join them in their various social pleasures. Nora bemoaned that she could not go to a dance or the theatre, and Shamus spoke of the "Abbey"—the only place of amusement that his principles would allow him to visit—but he assured her that she would be better able to understand the plays there later on, when she was more used to Irish life. Ursula, however, took her to a few literary lectures, and Bride to social ones, and promised her a typical day's "slumming" in the near future. Tom accompanied her to one or two recitals of sacred music, and Mr. Blake spent an afternoon with her in the National Gallery, and another in the Academy—pictures were his hobby.

Altogether Clare was very glad that she had come to Ireland, although there was much in her present life that puzzled her—and much that gave her "furiously to think."

A letter which she wrote to Mrs. Webb, after she had been six weeks with the Blakes, expressed some of her doubts, and showed her growing affection for her cousins very clearly.

"Darling old Webbie,

"I was pleased to get your letter and to learn that you were feeling stronger, and your cold nearly gone. As for me, I am in robust health! and really I cannot tell you how much better in every way I feel for the change, and how glad I am that I came over here. My cousins grow more delightful every day, and the more I know of them, the more I appreciate them. Oh! Webbie dear, they are good! I don't mean in a goody goody sense at all for they never preach but they—practise which is far better. Nearly all the family go to seven o'clock Mass every day. Fancy, Webbie, getting up those chilly mornings at 6.30 a. m. and going out without a cup of tea or anything! Can you imagine yourself doing it? I really feel quite ashamed when the housemaid brings me my early cup at half-past seven. Breakfast is at 8.30, such a cheery meal—not like the rushing breakfasts I remember at the Wilsons, when father and I stayed there. Like the Blakes, nearly all the family had to go into business every day, and they used to rush down at the last moment, bolt some breakfast, and fly—no time for a civil word to anyone. Here my cousins come in from Mass looking so fresh and happy and gather round the table in such a pleasant homely way. Webbie dear! if there is any good in any religion I am beginning to think that must be in theirs—although it had never been mentioned in any presence. They are most particular in this respect. Not that they hide their religious beliefs or practices. They speak openly amongst themselves in a perfectly plain matter of fact way, and that is what strikes me too—religion is such a definite reality—not a thing to be imagined. Heaven and its inhabitants to be a sort of next-door neighbour well known to them all! But they never ask me any questions as to my own religious opinions, and never suggest that I should accompany them to any of their services.

"Uncle James is a perfect dear, and they all idolize him, which is no wonder. I see a good deal of him because he says the evening Mass generally at home in the evenings, and of course I go out socially very little at present. But we three have such pleasant talks, and they are such good company that I hardly miss the others. And then I told you about Angel. If one feels lonely or sad, an hour with this real little angel would dispel one's gloom and make one ashamed to be discontented in her presence. I cannot describe her to you, Webbie; but I am beginning to understand the almost reverential love the others have for her. Bride is going to take me slumming soon—so look out for a letter telling you my adventures on that day. Pat is as great a tease as ever, and Shamus is up to his eyes in Gaelic League work—he says the winter session has commenced. I mentioned this to you before, didn't I?—a sort of society for reviving the old Irish language and customs, and to encourage Irish industries. It seems that Ireland used to have any amount of industries, and manufactures of her own in the past, and the English got them all stopped, as they were interfering with the English trade, and it is only recently they are trying to revive them again, now that better times have come. I think that was awfully unfair, don't you? And I think the English of today must be ashamed of such laws, as we are never taught much Irish history in England, and we don't know how the Irish suffered in the past. It is only in bits and scraps I am picking up my knowledge. Shamus can

give date and Act of Parliament for all these laws, but he won't say much before me. Fancy, Webbie, Mary won't use anything in the house that is not of Irish manufacture, if it can be got at all. She says "Shamus would kill her" if she bought English goods. (That's the way they have of talking—they don't mean anything by it—they say a man is killed dead, and he will only be a little bit hurt.) But the other evening he found a box of English matches on the mantelpiece and I only wish you could have heard his remarks. He forgot I was in the room—he is always so scrupulously polite for fear he might hurt my English susceptibilities—and I did enjoy listening to him! I had to laugh out at last, and then he saw me and suddenly broke into laughter himself; that's the way with them too, Webbie—but the despised box had gone into the fire.

"Ursula is going to become a nun—she is to 'enter' as they call it in the spring. I heard them talking about it by chance one day, and oh! Webbie, I could have cried. She is a lovely girl and so clever—she is the musical one of the family and sings—such a voice! It made me feel almost physically sick to think of her buried alive in a convent—and believe it is a very strict order, where they are up all the night praying, and never get a decent meal. I could not help speaking of this to Mary. 'What a pity, I said, for a girl like Ursula, too! Oh, Mary, couldn't you stop her from doing such a foolish thing?' Webbie dear, you should have seen the way she looked at me. I felt quite small when she turned her surprised eyes on me. 'Stop it!' she said. 'Why we consider it an honour, and it makes us so proud of Ursula!'

"So you see that is their point of view.

"Mary has a great friend—Mary Carmichael—a nurse here in one of the district homes. She knows London well, as she worked there for some years. She is a convert to the Catholic Church, and I fancy before her conversion she must have enjoyed life in London in a rather frivolous manner. We have had several chats, and she struck me as being a very strange mixture. She is an ardent Catholic, and on account of her being a convert, she speaks to me much more freely on religious matters than any of my cousins would ever dream of doing. But Miss Carmichael has all the zeal of the convert, and is not ashamed to show it. On the other hand, she is devoted to the theatre and all other kinds of amusements, and is awfully keen on dancing. Of course I know that from an ordinary Catholic standpoint there is no harm in any of these things in moderation, and when one's duty is not neglected in consequence; but somehow Mary Carmichael always gives me the idea of one that—using a rather strong expression—would sell her soul for pleasure if she was much tempted, and I fancy too, that if ever any great trouble overtook her, she would not care what she did, or what happened to her. I wonder would she still stick to her religion in that case? I would be curious to know, for I honestly believe nothing else keeps her on the straight path—I suppose some people are built that way. I understand that she is practically engaged to a Dr. Delaney—a sort of demi god in Pat's eyes—and as they are apparently devoted to each other, she will probably settle down with him alright. According to the family verdict, he is an epitome of all the virtues and without one fault. I have not met this paragon as yet, but he is coming to tea to-morrow with Miss Carmichael, and I confess I am rather anxious to see such a unique specimen of the opposite sex! The only person who does not go into raptures over him is Tom—and somehow I would trust Tom's estimate of a person's character about the same as anyone else's.

"Now, Webbie dear, I have no more news to tell you for this time, so will say good-bye with heaps of love from your loving Clare.

"P. S.—I am becoming quite a housekeeper—on economic lines too, under Mary's supervision. I had no idea how interesting it could be. Mary says I will make an ideal wife for a poor man—but I have to find him first!

It seemed almost prophetic that the very evening that Clare posted this letter she should meet Anthony Farrell for the first time.

She was sitting in the dining-room alone, reading by the fire-light. It was half-past six, and the table was set for seven o'clock tea, but as yet no one was in except Mary, who was upstairs. It was getting dark, but Clare had not yet switched on the light, and as a tall figure entered the room, she barely glanced up from her book, as she remarked, "Is that you, Tom? The others have not come home yet. Come over to the fire—it's a bit chilly I think."

The tall figure advanced, but the voice that answered her was not that of her cousin.

"I think you must be Miss Castlemaine. You see I am not Tom! I must ask your forgiveness for coming in like this, but I am always regarded as one of the family, and your cousins are kind enough to allow me the run of the house."

Clare had risen by this time, and found herself confronting a tall, rather slight young fellow, with

dark grey eyes, and hair almost black, so dark it was.

"Oh! I beg your pardon," she said, "I thought it was my cousin Tom."

The intruder smiled.

"May I introduce myself?" he said, "I am Anthony Farrell, one of Tom's greatest friends—you may have heard your cousin mention my name? I have been away in the country, or you would have had the doubtful pleasure of my acquaintance before this."

Clare extended her hand in swift friendliness.

"Oh! are you Mr. Farrell?" she exclaimed, "yes, indeed I have often heard Tom, and the others too, speaking of you, and am very glad to meet you."

"That is very kind of you, Miss Castlemaine," said Farrell, and taking a seat near her, the two were soon talking away in quite friendly manner.

"Oh! are you Mr. Farrell?" she exclaimed, "yes, indeed I have often heard Tom, and the others too, speaking of you, and am very glad to meet you."

"That is very kind of you, Miss Castlemaine," said Farrell, and taking a seat near her, the two were soon talking away in quite friendly manner.

Clare had seldom met anyone who interested her so much, and indeed Anthony Farrell was one of those whose personality will always make itself felt. A university man, well-educated, cultured, but not well off, he had entered the ranks of journalism some years ago, and had made rapid strides in that profession. He had travelled a good deal also, and had developed that broad outlook on the world, which your stay-at-home never attains.

He knew London well, and he and Clare were engrossed in the discussion of a recent play just produced on the London boards, when Mary entered the room, followed by Tom.

Farrell received an enthusiastic welcome from them, and also from Mr. Blake and the younger ones, all of whom were shortly gathered round the tea-table.

Conversation was brisk and gay. Anthony, it had appeared, had been down in Co. Limerick "doing" some special articles for one of the "weeklies," for the past two months, and he had many questions to ask about mutual friends and interests.

"And how is Mary Carmichael?" he inquired presently. "Is the affair with Dr. Delaney still progressing?"

"Rather!—like a house on fire!" said Pat. "They go about everywhere together now—theatres, pictures, concerts, and all those National Health Meetings and debates that they are both so keen about."

"Well! I am very glad to hear it," said Anthony, "Delaney is a decent fellow, and I think he deserves Mary Carmichael—and I can't give higher praise to any man, because as you all know, Mary is a very dear and old friend of mine, and I think a lot about her."

"All the same," said Pat, "she is a jolly lucky young woman to have got the right side of Delaney." There was a murmur of approval from several, but Clare noticed that Tom Blake was silent. Pat continued, "Why, I know dozen of girls who would give anything to be in her shoes—and any girl might be proud of her place!"

TO BE CONTINUED

THE OTHER GIRL

The station master waved a flag, a whistle sounded, the train moved slowly past the lowering shrubs and evergreens that adorned the embankment of the railroad that ran into and out of the small country station at Balston, and Mrs. Leighton gave a sigh of relief and sank back among the cushions of the first-class carriage. The lady was beyond middle age and the newness of her mourning and the intensity of grief upon her white, drawn face told of recent bereavement.

"I am so glad to get away—to get home, where I can grieve unnoticed," the lady cried. "Oh, Jack, Jack! my boy! my boy!"

The carriage was untenanted but for herself. She sobbed hysterically for some minutes, but the very violence of her grief had its reaction. By and by her sobs ceased; she wiped away her tears and lay back white and still as the train drew up at a large and crowded station. The men and women who boarded it belonged to the laboring classes, and Mrs. Leighton had become assured that her solitude was not to be invaded, when the door was thrown open by an irritated porter, who was muttering something about the other carriages being filled up.

"There you are, miss," he said to the girl in nurse's uniform at his elbow.

The girl was breathing quickly as she deposited a small handbag in the rack overhead. She was evidently young, and the strings of the ugly bonnet she wore encircled a face pale and oval. Little tendrils of soft golden hair lay around her blue-veined forehead and the great violet circles around her eyes made them look almost luminous. She perceived at once that her companion had been weeping, and that she evidently resented her intrusion.

"I am so sorry," she said, after a moment or two, "that I could not find a seat in a proper carriage."

The girl's voice was low, clear, and singularly sweet, yet the woman was conscious of an under-note of sadness. It made her answer less stiff and reserved than she would otherwise have been.

"I am afraid that you wished to be alone," the girl remarked simply. Then she leaned back in her seat and closed her eyes. There was

something pathetic in the droop of the lids and the blackness of the long lashes resting on her cheeks. She lay perfectly still and motionless till the train next drew up, and then she rose.

"I must find another carriage," she said.

"Oh, no, my dear," Mrs. Leighton said, "don't go. I am in great trouble and you don't look very happy; let us be companions while we may."

The girl's lips trembled and tears rose to her eyes. "People in trouble of my like to be alone, but if you don't mind—"

"I like to have you," Mrs. Leighton interrupted.

"Thank you. Yes, some one very dear to me was killed lately in this dreadful war."

"Oh, poor child! poor child!" Mrs. Leighton put out her hand and laid it gently on her companion's, as she gave a short, dry sob. "I have lost my son, my only son, there, too."

"Oh, I am so sorry."

"Yes, he was my only child. I think I should like to tell you of him. He was always a gay, merry little fellow, and as his father died when he was a child of four years he was everything to me. After leaving school he joined the army. His father had been a soldier. He and I never thought differently but once." Mrs. Leighton clasped her hands. "And now I wish we had not."

"There is always remorse," said the nurse in a low voice, "oh, always!"

"He was supposed to be his uncle's heir, and his uncle was anxious that he should marry suitably. The girl he selected for my boy was very beautiful and young and wealthy. It would have been right enough, I dare say, only my boy cared for someone else. However, he and the girl became engaged."

"Which girl?"

"Oh, the suitable girl. You see his uncle's property was not entailed. The engagement was announced a few weeks before Jack set out for the seat of war."

Mrs. Leighton gave a short, thoughtful laugh. "No, she could think of her frocks, of her trivial engagements, of a hundred different things. I went to her room the first night—I could not sleep. I could not rest—I thought we might wet together; but she was asleep—sleeping like a baby. And she had not forgotten to apply some cosmetic to her cheeks—her complexion was wonderfully fair. And her little hands were encased in kid gloves; she was vain in her habits. I could have struck her. I was ill for a day or two. Yes, they were kind; but I felt that my grief was a bore, even to Geraldine." Mrs. Leighton paused a second. "And now my boy is gone—gone—lost to me forever."

"Oh, no," the nurse protested, "not lost. Hereafter you two shall meet."

"That is vague," Mrs. Leighton answered. "I can't get comfort that way. I have thought indeed, that Jack has escaped trouble. I never thought women, nice women, played cards for money for big stakes. Geraldine did. And she was vulgar at times and she fancied she was smart. If I could believe that Jack and I shall meet!"

"Oh, you shall. I'm a Catholic and Catholics have one great comfort. They can pray for their dead."

"How?"

The nurse explained the doctrine of purgatory and Mrs. Leighton listened with shining eyes.

"Oh, it is beautiful! If I could pray for him! Could suffer for him! But is it true?"

"We Catholics believe it—on the authority of the Church and the teaching of the Old and New Testaments."

"Jack might have been a Catholic. He cared for a Catholic girl, and wished to marry her. I don't know if she would have married him."

"She couldn't," the nurse said. "I mean few Catholics would unless he had become a Catholic."

"I wrote to the girl and showed her how it would mean ruin to Jack if she married him. I put it all very plainly—his uncle's anger, my own grief, and Jack's poverty. Jack asked her to marry him, but she wouldn't."

"Well?" the speaker's voice grew suddenly tense.

Then Jack saw a good deal of Geraldine. His uncle urged the match, and urged it, and Jack yielded. And now he is dead." Mrs. Leighton moaned. "And Geraldine doesn't mind so much. Of course, she is sorry in a way. Jack was such a nice young fellow, every one liked him. And her mother is already thinking of another match for her—Lord Laveburn. My poor Jack! The other girl, the Catholic girl, might have loved him better. She would have prayed for him."

"She will pray for him," the nurse said quietly, but emphatically. Mrs. Leighton started.

Just then there was a sudden swaying motion, then a grinding, a shock, and the two women were thrown forward. The engine had left the track and turned over an embankment. The carriage occupied by the two ladies was toward the rear end; after a momentary period of unconsciousness, the younger realized that neither she nor her companion was seriously injured.

"What has happened?" asked Mrs. Leighton.

The carriage lay on one side. The nurse made an effort to get to the window. A volume of smoke met her.

"I don't know," then—"I—oh, the train must be on fire. Are you hurt?"

"Not much. My foot is crushed by some woodwork. And you?"

"My head was struck. There is something across the window. I am afraid we can't get out."

"Both women were calm, and the younger tried, but without avail, to push aside the obstruction from the window. Outside there were cries and shouts and the confused murmur of many voices.

"We will soon be released," the nurse said more hopefully than she felt. The smoke above was thicker and the sparks fell faster and nearer. Soon the heat became unbearable and Mrs. Leighton moaned piteously. A face appeared at the window.

"We are getting the people out of the front part," a voice strained and unnatural cried.

"Will God forgive me?" cried Mrs. Leighton, "for—for everything?"

"Love God and trust Him and believe in Him. Oh, you do, you do! And you are sorry for all my sins because they offended with me."

Hand in hand the women prayed for pardon. As the last word was said, the obstruction across the window was thrust aside, and blackened and eager hands were put forth to drag them from their dangerous positions.

"You first!" Margaret O'Donnell gasped. The smoke was stilling. "Take her first."

When the girl recovered consciousness she was lying on a rough couch in a farm house kitchen, and Mrs. Leighton in a chair near was having her foot examined by a doctor.

"It is merely a bruise," he said. "Luckily the woodwork did not press more heavily."

"Can we—the nurse and I—travel?" Mrs. Leighton asked.

"Oh, yes." The doctor glanced round. "The young lady is recovering. Are you traveling together?"

Mrs. Leighton hesitated, and put a query. "Margaret, will you come with me?"

"I must return to the hospital," Margaret objected, "to London."

"I am going to London also. My home is there. Will you share it and be my daughter? The elder lady asked, and Margaret gave a grateful assent.

Two weeks went by. Margaret gave up her work in the hospital. Indeed, she would not have been equal to it; and Mrs. Leighton's bitter grief found solace in the girl's sympathy and in the knowledge she had loved Jack in far different fashion from Geraldine Brissett. Together they talked of the dead soldier or sat silent, thinking of him. One day a cablegram came to Mrs. Leighton. She opened it, and gave a cry that brought Margaret to her side.

"Oh, Margaret, Margaret! Read! Tell me I am not dreaming! Jack is alive!"

Such was the news the cablegram contained. Later they learned how Jack's name and a brother officer's had been confounded. Jack had been sorely wounded; how sorely they did not know till he came home gaunt and pale with the left sleeve of his coat empty.

On the day prior to his arrival Margaret left Mrs. Leighton.

"He is bound to Geraldine," she explained. "I will come to see you by and by." A week after a letter came to her.

"Oh, Margaret, I must write to you," the letter ran. "Geraldine has broken off her engagement with Jack. And I am not angry—but pleased—pleased. And so, I feel, is Jack. He is going to Scotland for a time, and you must come back to me. And Jack is a Catholic. Isn't it wonderful! There was a priest attached to the hospital, and Jack and he were very friendly—but he will explain. And when he asks you to be his wife and my daughter, you will not say him nay, Margaret!"—Margaret Rock in Benziger's Magazine.

ARE IRISH CATHOLICS DYING OUT

James J. Walsh, M.D., Ph.D., in America

The question as to whether there are enough children in the Irish Catholic families of this country to replace their fathers and mothers and keep up the representation of the race among our population would seem to be gratuitous. Everybody seems to presume that the Irish are a prolific race and are beyond all doubt not only reproducing themselves but besides that distinctly adding to the population of the country. In spite of some notable modifications of racial tendencies in the matter of large families, due to conditions of one kind or another here in America, it is felt by the great majority of people that to use the characteristic expression of my dear friend Tom Daly, the national bird of the Irish is still the stork, and our race is following quite literally the Biblical injunction "increase and multiply."

group among the Irish in practically any part of the country and see what has happened to them in the course of three or four generations. The first generation out from Ireland, usually beginning its career in poverty, had an average of a little more than six children in the family who lived to adult life. The child death-rate was very high seventy-five years ago, and the infectious diseases, cholera, typhus, typhoid, as well as the children's diseases carried off a great many of their younger years. Of these six who reached adult life not more than half, as a rule, married. This may be astonishing considering the usual Irish attitude toward marriage, but it will be found to be true. In some of the cases there was a priest or two in the family and not infrequently one or more of the girls entered the convent. In others the apparently inevitable old maids and old bachelors, so commonly to be found in Irish families of the better-to-do classes here in America accounted for the rest. It is an exceptional family strain and history when there are more than twelve children in the next generation. That would make two to replace each one of grandmother's six and an average of four children in each of the second generation's families. This is multiplication, though by the smallest factor possible, and whenever there are but four, diseases and accident are so prone to reduce the number that the multiplication does not work out in practice. As a rule, however, family results among the Irish Catholics in this country are not so good as this.

To a great many people an assertion of this kind would seem to be an exaggeration on the part of someone who had a pet theory and an axe to grind with regard to it. Almost universal impressions which surely must have some foundation in fact are very different from this and would seem to contradict it absolutely. In a matter of this kind there is only one way to reach definite reliable conclusions and that is to take a series of family records for four generations, and choosing representative families in groups as large as possible from the various parts of the country so as to make the statistics really worth something, to set down in black and white just what is happening to the Irish Catholics in centers of population where they are the most numerous.

I have gone to a good deal of trouble during the past three or four months to secure data for the setting forth of actual conditions and have taken pains to have the data as exact as possible. If what I have found is at all true, then the outlook is alarming. The Irish Catholic families are not only failing to reproduce themselves in our generation, but they are disappearing rapidly. It is not an unusual thing to find that a family of six or seven children, born as the first generation in this country, are represented by fifteen to twenty-five children in the third generation, but present no more than four or five, sometimes less, in the third generation born in this country to keep up the family stock. There are a number of better family statistics in the matter of children than this, but they are comparatively few in proportion to the families that are running out.

I have come to the point in the investigation where I realize that I must ask a number of people in different parts of the country to take account of themselves and those around them and to send me the results of their research. It is just possible that by some chance I have struck in six different parts of the country just the groups of families whose records are unfavorable. I should be glad to think so, but in spite of reiterated inquiries cannot find the more favorable families in any reasonable number. Here, for instance, are six typical examples of how Irish families run down. They are taken from definite records of family life in six different parts of the Eastern States and represent families whose grandfathers or great-grandfathers came out from Ireland and made a distinct success in this country so that they were able to send the children or grandchildren of the family to boarding-school. Everyone will understand from that that they are chosen from the "F. I. F.'s., the First Irish Families," who had become prosperous beyond the reed-organ or melodion stage of family life up to the piano, though, of course, their descendants now could not possibly get along without a piano.

Here are the typical families: (1) Father and mother, both from Ireland, had nine children. In the next generation four of these nine married and three had children, nine altogether, just equaling the second generation in number and maintaining the first advance in population. Of these nine, however, only three married, and altogether they had but four children and probably will have no more. One family has none after fifteen years of marriage, the other two have two each, the youngest over ten years of age. (2) In the first generation out from Ireland the grandparents had seven children. Four of these married and all had children, seventeen in all. A definite satisfactory increase. Of these some dying in early youth, four becoming priests or Sisters, five remained old bachelors and old maids, five married and to date have five children, with only the slimmest hopes that there ever will be even

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