Blackwater River.

Blackwater woods are fresh and green,
And sweetly flows my native river
By many a well-beloved scene,
Remembered oft, though lost forever,
As when its dark romantic stream
Could tempt my thoughts to future glory,
When life was like a golden dream,
And love was still "the old, old story."

Ah, rich and radiant summer days
That lie my passive boyhood found me
A dreamer in my flowery ways,
With all of life and beauty round me—
The sweet sky blushes of the dawn,
To find the lighted hill tops glowing,
The earth's first song above the lawn
The fragrant winds beneath them blowing.

Or in the drowsy noontide calms,
Upon some lonely heath extended,
To listen to the summer psalms
That lie mine ear so softly blended
With other tones, remembered still,
When, rarely, evening dews are falling,
And weirdly o'er the moorland rise
I hear the doleful curlew calling!

Oh, nights of summer, thick bestrew
With silver flowers, by angels planted,
What dreams of beauty, all mine own,
Those still psalm hours of thine have haunted.
What tender fancies, light as air,
This restless heart of mine has cherished,
What foolish visions, bright and rare,
That to the dust of years have perished!

The dim grey dust of bygone years
That veils in sleep the long departed,
Too aching grief, the hopeless tears
Of sorrow dumb and broken hearted.
The dear ones who have gone before,
Too voices that are hushed forever,
The hearts that loved in days of yore,
Thy bonnie braes, Blackwater river!

Ah, but to wander once again
Along the fields at hush of even,
When woodlands ring with many a strain,
And sunset gilds the west'rn heaven.
Ah, but breathe the twilight breeze,
The new moon hay across the meadows,
And watch the moon behind the trees
With silver edge their ebon shadows!

To hear the deep-tongued Sunday bell
Along the vale at early morn,
To kneel beside some holy well
Ere yet the summer's day is born;
To list the chimes at eventide,
The vesper music softly pealing,
As faintly down old Corrin's side
The shades of night come quickly stealing.

* * * * * * *

It may not be, I only dream,
For fate is strong, and fate has spoken;
My heart would fain prolong the theme
Tho' all its finer chords are broken.
'Tis better thus the years roll on
And in the past we may not linger,
While Destiny with eyes of stone
Before us points her mystic finger.

But oft in Mem'ry's bright domain
When dreamlight fills its radiant bower,
Once more I'll dream old dreams again,
And on them live long vanished hours.
Of faith and friendships gone forever,
As ripples fading far and wide
Upon thy breast, Blackwater river.

—*John J. Gormly in the Cork Examiner.*

MOY O'BRIEN.

A TALE OF IRISH LIFE.

By Miss Skeffington ("Meluish.")

CHAPTER II.—(Continued).

'Oh, she takes cartloads of cabmen and coster-mongers and their wives and children down to Hampstead Heath, and sets them to play games. I believe she would like to have them in the drawing room in Eaton Square, but her mother, Lady Margaret, would 'strike' them.'

'Is Miss Wentworth clever?'

'Very. There is hardly anything she does not understand, from cookery to mathematics. She attended a course of lectures on cookery at South Kensington.'

'She must, indeed, be very fascinating,' said Moy, much amused.'

'She is, my dear child, for, with all her cleverness, she is very handsome, and has charming manners. She has refused many good offers. Indeed, I often think she will never marry, she is so hard to please. I am telling you about her, because I mean you to know one another. I shall write and tell her to call upon you, and then you will be asked to some of their nice parties. They know every one worth knowing, and are very musical.'

'But don't you think it will be rather a bore for her to call?' said Moy.

'Not in the least, she drives every afternoon. She will be sure to be near you some time or other. Let me see—where are you to be?'

'At Sir Ralph Windsor's in Grosvenor street.'

'Ah, one of those nice old houses. But tell me, have you ever seen Lady Ann Windsor?'

'No,' said Moy, rather anxiously, for the expression in her friend's face was not reassuring.

'Don't look unhappy, Moy; but I've heard a good deal of her, and have no wish to make her acquaintance. I know she can be so intensely rude; but never mind, Sir Ralph is a dear good man; he will take care of you. And here we are close to London!'

Lady Arthur woke up, smiled sweetly at the two young ladies, let them take her shawls and roll them up, and put up the books and newspapers; and before many minutes were over the train steamed into Euston station.

'Sir Ralph not yet returned!' said a peevish voice coming from some one in the very depths of a particularly large sofa—large as least for a fashionable London drawing-room. It was the month of May, so, though past six o'clock, it was still broad daylight. There was no fire, though the evening was chilly enough to have made one desirable.

'To lose our drive and three or four afternoon parties, and sit here alone!' continued the same discontented voice. 'And all for what! To receive a girl from Ireland whom no one in our set knows or wants to know! Really your father was too absurd to word his answer as he did, though of course no one with any sense of what of right would have come after what I made him put in about leaving her alone in the evening! It stamps the girl at once. I do not approve of people getting out of their own groove.' This was a favorite expression of Lady Ann's.

'Pray, mater, are you talking to me?' asked a shrill young voice, and a pretty girl of eighteen or nineteen came laughing from the inner room. 'Because if you are I have not heard a word you were saying, simply because I was not in the room.'

'Of course, I was talking to you, and you know it,' said Lady Ann Windsor, in an aggrieved tone of voice. 'But I am accustomed to your bonne manners, Gertrude.'

'Well, my dear mater, bonne manners are used at home, just as a home made dress made at home; not that I ever wore one, thanks to my French dress-maker.'

'I should say thanks to my father and mother, if I were you,' said Lady Ann. 'I don't believe there is a more ex ravagant girl in London.'

'Bet you two to one there is,' cried Miss Windsor.

Lady Ann simply replied by a sort of impatient groan, and returned to her first subject.

'I think the absurdity of your father going to Euston to meet that girl has rarely been equalled; as if a footman or maid would not have been quite enough, and a cab for a girl coming, no doubt, in a second-class carriage, in charge of the guard; but no, nothing but the best carriage would do, and he must go himself! I dare say he would have liked me to refuse the invitation for this dance to-night; but he did not venture to ask that, though I am sure he has made eight or nine solemn requests to me the last few days in connection with this girl's visit.'

'Poor papa!' laughed Gertrude. 'He has evidently had a time of it. But he knew where to draw the line—didn't he, mater? By-the-bye, is Harry Finch coming to go with us to-night?'

'Yes, of course. I asked him. I thought if this Irish girl was in very bad style we could explain matters to him. I really did not like to ask any one else.'

'Papa says Miss O'Brien is rather pretty,' said Gertrude; 'at least he thought so some years ago—but 'prepare to receive cavalry'—here they are.'

Lady Ann never rose from her seat till Sir Ralph, leading Moy, had advanced to the very middle of the drawing-room. Then she got up slowly, and as she was a very fat little woman, it was not any easy matter for her to extricate herself from all the cushions and shawls she had been lying in.

Kind Sir Ralph gave his wife an imploring look, and she remembered his first request and her own promise, which was to kiss Moy and say that she was glad to see her. She certainly kept her promise in the letter, if not in the spirit; but poor Moy felt terribly chilled. She looked toward her first friend, but he was just speaking to his daughter, whom he now brought forward.

'This is Gertrude, my dear Moy. I hope you will be great friends.'

The only human being in the world whom Gertrude cared for except herself, was her father; so she sometimes did things to please him, and now she came forward very graciously and (when they had all had a cup of tea) offered to take Moy to her room; but once there she left her to help herself, not even sending her own maid to assist her, as she would have done for any special friend.

Thanks to hints from Lady Catherine Arthur, Moy's wardrobe was in good order even for a fashionable London visit, and when, after dressing for dinner, she found her way back to the drawing-room and walked in, Lady Ann, who was the only person there, was rather startled. Moy looked simply lovely. Her dress was in the most excellent taste, of delicate color, and fitting her graceful figure to perfection.

'Come and sit down by me,' said Lady Ann, moving her own stiff brocade to make room for Moy. 'How did you get such fine clothes, child?'

'My grandfather likes me to be nicely dressed,' replied poor Moy, blushing deeply. 'A very good dressmaker in Dublin has my pattern; I always write to her when I require anything.'

'But how did you know what to wear to-night, coming, as you do, from such a wretchedly out-of-the-way place?'

Moy's cheeks burned as she listened to these impertinent remarks, but she was far too truthful not to say:

'Perhaps you are right, and I might not have known the proper dress to wear when you had no party; but I have a very kind friend, who is accustomed to the best society, and she told me many things she thought would be useful to me.'

'And who is she, my dear?' said Lady Ann, more kindly than she had yet spoken.

'She is Lord Arthur's daughter, Lady Catherine.'

'Lord Arthur? I never heard of the title.'

'He is an earl,' said Moy, a little proudly.

'Oh, only a Irish title,' suggested Lady Ann, with a sigh of relief.

This was too much. Moy could not be angry. The sublime impertinence had become ridiculous, and the girl began to laugh. Lady Ann laughed too; she had surpassed even herself, and she felt it. She began to talk more kindly altogether, and before dinner was over Moy had made up her mind that of the two—mother and daughter—she preferred the mother. Her vulgar bluntness (if it is allowable to use such words when speaking of a member of the English aristocracy) was not so trying as the daughter's covert sneers.

About ten o'clock they all went off to the ball, Mr. Finch with them. He was rather struck with Moy (whom he had sat opposite to at dinner), and felt much disappointment when he found that she was going to stay at home. When they were all gone Moy wrote to her grandfather, and then she sat and thought of her dear, dear Ireland, and of all the warm hearts she had so lately left there; of 'The God speed you!' The saints preserve you!' that had sounded so sweetly in her ear; and then she thought of how far the now was from Dermot's grave, and great tears rolled slowly down her cheeks.

CHAPTER V.

"Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness,
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind."

—P. B. Shelley.

'How much attention Mr. Finch paid Miss Wentworth last night!' said Gertrude, as they all sat at breakfast, and while Moy was wondering if it was her Lady Catherine's "Miss Wentworth."

Sir Ralph's said to her, rather archly, 'but Mr. Finch was regretting your absence the whole night, Moy.' The young girl smiled brightly into her kind friend's face. 'And he is a poet, dear,' continued the baronet: 'over his door in the Temple is written, 'This room is dedicated to poetry, the arts, and love!'

'I know there is a good deal of art in law,' said Moy, laughing, 'but I don't think that inscription states his profession plainly enough to bring him much practice.'

'Oh, he does not want practice,' said Gertrude; 'he is heir-presumptive to a rich old uncle.'

'You are quite mistaken,' said Lady Ann, testily. 'He was telling me last night he particularly wants something to do for a few years; in fact, as long as the old man holds out.'

'What a happy release it will be when he dies!' said Gertrude, dryly.

'Finch evidently does not find poetry a paying business,' said Sir Ralph; 'and I don't wonder, for I read something of his once about the noon, and being out of tune, and dying soon, and I did not think much of it.'

'He does make some money, but he spends it as soon as he gets it,' said Lady Ann—'like some of your spendthrift countrymen, my dear,' she added, turning to Moy. Sir Ralph looked annoyed, but Moy laughed it off by saying she did not think they got much either to spend or save in Ireland.

'Oh, my dear, now don't you begin the old story of Irish distress,' cried Lady Ann; 'there is none except what is caused by those dreadful Home Rulers.'

'I am sorry to say I could tell you of some very real distress,' began Moy, her color rising.

'I sincerely hope you are not a Home Ruler?' said Lady Ann, sharply; but before Moy could possibly answer, Sir Ralph interposed, laughingly, 'I won't have politics at breakfast, the only meal in the day—according to Lady Blessington—when people are not conceited. Come, my dear Gertrude, can you not think of some subject as interesting, and not so painful?'

'I want to go to the dentist's, papa; perhaps that is less painful, in its effects at least.'

They all laughed, as Gertrude continued, turning to Moy—'I waited till you came to go with me to the dentist's; mamma and my maid get faint at the very idea; so I hope you won't mind.'

'I will not say I'll go with pleasure,' said Moy, smiling; 'for I'm very sorry you have to go; but I am not afraid of feeling faint.'

'Then my mind is made up—I'll have my mouth stretched to-day,' said Gertrude, rising from the table.

When Miss Windsor, and Moy O'Brien drove up to the dentist's door there was already a carriage there and when they were shown in they were told they would have to wait a little, as the dentist was already engaged. So they sat down, and Miss Windsor began studying the first column of the *Times*, while Moy glanced over some of the many other newspapers left on the table to distract the thoughts of the unfortunate people who, as Miss Windsor said, 'came to have their mouths stretched.'

They had not waited long when a hansom drove up to the door, and a gentleman sauntered into the room they were in. He seemed very much surprised when he saw Moy's companion. 'Miss Windsor,' he exclaimed, 'I can't say this is a delightful surprise, for I'm sorry to see you here; I suppose the ices last night found out a weak tooth?'

Gertrude laughed, and then they began discussing the ball the night before, where they had evidently danced together several times. Moy, standing looking out of the window (for Miss Wentworth took no further notice of her) saw the hansom driver return, take a nice looking umbrella out of his cab, and come up to the dentist's door with it. Presently a servant-man entered the room where they were all waiting. 'The driver says you left this in the cab, my lord.'

'Ah, so I did; honest fellow!' taking the umbrella as he spoke. 'Give him half a crown, my lad.' The servant did not receive the half crown from the nobleman, but he left the room at once.

After awhile a bell rang and Gertrude said to her acquaintance, 'It is your turn now, I suppose.'

'It is just the time I appointed,' said he, looking at his watch. 'I am sorry to take precedence, but I have to catch a train about two o'clock. I must be down in the country this evening.'

'Don't mind,' said Gertrude. 'I made no appointment, so it's my own fault I have to wait.'

The servant at this moment summoned the nobleman, and off he went.

'Wasn't it beautiful, the way that man rewarded the cabman and saved his own pocket?' said Gertrude, laughing, the moment she found herself alone with Moy.

'I thought he had no change. Of course he will pay the servant or the master.'

'Not he; he isn't such a fool,' said Miss Windsor, shrugging her shoulders. 'And why should he pay it? These dentists and other people like them make a great deal more money than they can possibly spend. They have no style to keep up, while we, poor 'upper ten,' have no end to our expenses, and can't afford to throw away half a crown.'

For a moment or two Moy was silent with astonishment. Then she said, 'Perhaps the man has already told his master, and the master will ask your friend for the half crown.'

'Oh, never!' cried Gertrude; 'he dare not. Lord Edmonston would tell all his friends how mean the dentist had been, and his practice would be gone.'

Moy did not say aloud what she was thinking—that it was not the dentist who would be the mean person in such a transaction.

The servant returned to ask if Miss Windsor would make an appointment for the next day, or would wait another quarter of an hour. Gertrude decided to wait. 'By all means,' she added, when the door closed; 'it will be some compensation for all my sufferings to see Lord Edmonston come back with his mouth stretched.'

(To be continued.)

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