

terest to the account of her meeting with Roger.

"His wild passion will wear out betimes," observed he; "let us pray for him, poor fellow—the near kinsman of our gallant Sir Alexander—God rest his soul—it cannot be that he should prove false to us."

"The Father is going to preach to-night here, Mary," said Lady Elizabeth.

"We have been ever so busy in your absence, clearing the stables. 'Tis the largest place we have, and the back entrance is so handy; and it seems a good many are coming, for," quoth the Father, "poor folk, they say 'tis over long since anyone ministered to them of the word of God."

"How wonderful, Father," said Mary, "is the faith of our people. I have been to-day amidst scenes of such misery. Men worn by poverty, women with sore sicknesses, tempted on all sides, and yet resisting bravely under death."

"It is the work of God and his Saints," answered Father Fitzsymons; "the blessing of St. Patrick rests ever on the land, and I methink me that neither fire or sword nor yet English gold shall make them sell their birthright; albeit you know my child, I am the advocate of the Saxons."

"Yes, Father," said Lady Elizabeth, "we know how dear are your converts to you; have you had the happiness of reconciling any lately?"

"Yes, God be for ever praised," answered the priest, with a beaming smile, which lit up his whole countenance, "I am afraid to mention the names of the last even here, for the proverb saith walls hath ears."

"Methinks if it get wind I run a pretty chance of having a taste of prison life again."

"Oh, Father! I hope not," said Lady Elizabeth, looking alarmed. "You—or, rather, we—had enough of that before, when for five long years you were imprisoned, and we had no news of you. I believe you did not mind it, but we did!"

"No, verily," said Father Fitzsymons, laughing; "'twas a good long retreat for me. 'Tis easy to make a Dublin prison into a Manresa."

"I so often think, Father, of the days

before you were imprisoned. Mary, can you imagine the days when the Father actually had High Mass said in Dublin?"

"Is it possible?" answered Mary, in astonishment.

"It was so indeed; High Mass, with beautiful music, the first time for forty years that such a thing had been known in this city; and then, Mary, we had a sodality of the Blessed Virgin, and well do I remember our meetings, and the exhortations we used to receive. Oh, Father, how that band are scattered now. Your Henry, dear mother Mary, was ever by my side in those days."

"Not a few of those dear souls," remarked the Father, have gone to serve in the heavenly court. Ah, well, children! when we all meet there, how little shall we reek of the storms and billows we have passed through. But a truce with my tongue. I must go and prepare my discourse, or I shall talk such nonsense none of you will understand me."

"Well, Father," said Mary, as she went to open the door for him, "we should only be in the disposition of our good Biddy. We asked her what she thought of Father Nugent's last discourse, and she said it were mighty grand; it was not for the likes of her to understand it."

Laughing merrily, Father Fitzsymons betook himself to Lady Elizabeth's private oratory.

Night fell, and stealthily creeping along the unlighted streets a number of persons made their way by a little back door which led into a long stable in the outer yard of Lady Elizabeth's house. Every available space was filled, and the atmosphere was oppressive. Indeed, none of the modern church-goers would have been able to endure it; but to those who were not, like us, accustomed to hear so many sermons, that instead of attending to them we only criticise, they who for many months had not heard the voice of a priest, were ready to undergo any inconvenience to receive words of strength and encouragement in God's service. Father Fitzsymons stood on a table in the midst of the people, and, with a face glowing with divine love, spoke in powerful words to his faithful and afflicted flock. He was