

A Ruse De Guerre.

[THE CATHOLIC WORLD.]

Telegram for you, sir—reply pro-

Dick Baylor was standing in the hall of the Four Courts in Dublin, with his hands behind his back, clutching a scroll of official paper, which might be mistaken for a brief by the uninitiated.

Up into the majestic countenance of Sir Colman O'Loughlin's marble effigy he was gazing, as though lost in admiration of the sculptor's work, but in reality he was cogitating whom his next "case" should be to come from, as his landlady had that morning given him a latitat, in the shape of a notice to quit.

The words of the telegram messenger roused him from his reverie only partially. Like Abraham, he would fain be left to work out his problem before undertaking any other business of a disagreeable nature, as he was sure this telegram meant. Fortune had so long been froward that he looked for nothing but fresh disaster at every turn of her wheel.

"Telegram for me?" he echoed mechanically as he faced around.

"All right, wait a minute," Dick Baylor was one of a numerous tribe who hang on to the law in the Irish capital. He was half a lawyer, half a pressman, with little to do at either profession. He held a junior barrister's degree, with more than the average ill luck of that often luckless army; his legal education had been costly, and the return for the outlay up to the present next to nil.

The parental resources were utterly exhausted in the effort to gain this education, and supplies had long been cut off. Now and then one of the newspapers would help him to prolong a life of involuntary association by taking from him a special short-hand report or a bit of lively description in some famous case, but his first "brief" had not come to him as yet.

"Sir! He did not despair. He was a bright young fellow, and the sanguine spirit of youth kept him alive more than his homely fare. He felt that if his chance ever came to him he would be able to seize it and stick to it.

The chance seemed to have come at last. There was a general election in progress and the circumstances of the fight involved a good deal of stuffing of the cards. Dick Baylor had taken sides with the Nationalist party, and this was the chief reason why his brief-bag had been so long empty. To win the fight a good many changes had to be made in the popular press, which was still heavily leavened with the old order and its hangings on. Some papers were bought out, and amongst these an old-established one down in the South.

"We want you to take charge of The Recorder during the fight. Will you come at once? Say yes, and fifty pounds shall be sent on to meet expenses."

This was the text of the telegram. Dick Baylor lost no time about saying "yes." He pulled off his wig and gown, assumed his street dress, and rushed off to his lodgings instantly.

When the maid-of-all-work came up in answer to his summons she found him executing a pas seul on the battered piece of carpet in the middle of his room. He told her the cause of this extraordinary fit of temperamentalism, and the poor girl felt delighted, for she knew that when he got the money her mistress's bill would be paid and then she would get her own wages.

No time was lost in packing the "Gladstone," and Dick Baylor, flying off on a jaunting car, was just in time to catch the mail train at the Kingsbridge, and before nightfall he was landed at his destination, a country town which we shall call Knockphail.

On his arrival he was met by the parish priest, the Rev. Mortimer Daly, and a couple of the leading lay politicians of Knockphail, and greeted with true Celtic fervor. "We're going to have a glorious fight here," they cried, "and you've come in the nick of time. All our hopes are centred on you. You are the man in the gap."

Dick Baylor's conception of the obligations of a man in the gap had been derived from metropolitan experiences chiefly. There, at election times, a good deal of speechifying and cheering and noise prevailed. Sometimes, too, perhaps a few windows were broken and a few men mobbed in the streets. He had no idea of the magnificent scale on which the game of political war was played in the country, or the resources in cunning and audacity which the bucolic politician had at his command.

He smiled and answered cheerfully that he would do his best not to disappoint their expectations, that he felt proud of the honor conferred upon him, that he was glad to have the opportunity of seeing their very interesting town, so full of historic memories, and so on. Then the question of lodging came up. One decent hotel was all that Knockphail possessed, and this, it was found, was held by the enemy in force. Then the parish priest, who was a fine example of the old big-hearted, hospitable race of Irish gentlemen, solved the difficulty by declaring that the stranger should take up his quarters in his house until the election was

Although Dick Baylor did not relish this proposal, because he thought it seemed to strain the idea of hospitable obligation, he had no alternative, being a total stranger in the town, but to accept. "I'll hand you over to Mrs. Halloran, my housekeeper, said Father Daly, and I'll warrant she'll take good care of you."

The presbytery stood on a hill, and the parish church stood beside it. It was understood that the church should be a bold and handsome feature in the picturesque environments of Knockphail, but this intention had not so far been realized. For the church had not been finished, only the stump of its intended steeple had emerged from the architectural chaos, and the work on the ornamental portions of the edifice presented a ramshackle appearance. It wanted the venerable character of a genuine ruin, while it fell short of the semblance of a finished building; so that it, marred the effect of the landscape rather than dignified its outlines.

In the presbytery the spirit of hospitality did not reveal itself in luxury. The prevailing tone of the place was simplicity, together with immaculate cleanliness. Only one of the rooms had any approach to a carpet. This was the parlor where the priests received the more distinguished visitors, and the carpet was only a square piece of large enough to cover the centre of the floor. An old-fashioned harp-shaped piano was the chief feature in the room, whose decorations consisted of a large colored engraving of the Sacred Heart, a lithograph portrait of the Pope, and a photograph of the O'Connell Council.

Three curates had their quarters in the house, besides the parish priest. This was the entire spiritual force of the parish, but it was sufficient. There was a steady monotony about the piety of the good people of Knockphail. Like all rural Irish places it was deeply religious. Of course there were a few black sheep in the town, as in all other places; and it was sometimes necessary to refer to these from the altar to bring them to repentance. In this process terms were generally used which outside would have furnished matter for a rousing action for libel, but in such simple pastoral communities these admonitions are taken not so much, happily, in their letter as in their spirit.

It was over this establishment that Mrs. Halloran had mundane control as "housekeeper." Her duties were not light; yet they were got through in such a way that none noticed their performance. She was one of that rare species, a woman who could keep silence irrefragably when silence was necessary.

A firm, sedate, yet kindly woman was Mrs. Halloran. Her task in dealing with the many people who called at the presbytery was one that at times required the exercise of all those qualities. The presbytery is sought by many besides those who have genuine claims on the priest's time—siders and ne'er-do-wells, and mere gossip mongers. She had learned to differentiate all these with unerring accuracy, so that the good-nature of Father Daly and his helpers should not be abused. To those who were in genuine need of help she displayed a motherly sympathy, but while giving all the practical help in her power, took care that they should not engross her time to the neglect of her other duties.

Mrs. Halloran was a widow without any children of her own, but a niece of hers, her brother's daughter, was almost constantly with her, and the love which subsisted between the pair was almost that of mother and child. Yet there could be no greater dissimilarity in tone and temperament than between these. Nellie Halloran was as gay as a linnets and as elfish as a sprite. She was the soul of mirth and drollery, and the chief trouble her aunt had in her regard was to keep her ebullient spirits from making the housekeeper's quarters at the presbytery remarkable for hilarity.

Sedate and sober-minded as the housekeeper was, it required all her self-command at times to refrain from giving the rein to her latent spirit of merriment in a way unsuited to her position as she regarded it. The recital of the impish pranks which her niece had played upon some of the simple swains who beset her, especially upon a soft-hearted fellow named Mike Donovan, the priest's "boy," from the neighboring parish of Ballinacroy, was a thing that she could hear with a serious face. Nellie's delicious brogue as she told the tale with all the abandon of a benign little witch, the spirit of fun dancing in the dangerous Irish eyes, and the contagious peal of her musical laughter, forbade all attempts to preserve a serious countenance.

"Troth, you'd make the saints laugh, you unbridled lussy," Mrs. Halloran would say, as confessing defeat, she sat in her wicker arm-chair and looked the offending "ringleader" head on her lap to try to smooth down its wilful curls. "There, stop your tongue now, and don't make me laugh any more, else I'll bring disgrace on the house. Lave Mike Donovan alone and tell me what the Sodality, and who you saw at the last meeting." Go on now; that's me darlin' girl."

With such artifices would the good woman seek to lay the spirit of mischief in her niece, but not always

with success. Mike was an institution, apparently, at Ballinacroy, and as long as Mike lasted the fun was sure to last for Nellie Halloran.

Mrs. Halloran very cheerfully accepted the new charge given into her hands by Father Daly. Dick Baylor was an engaging young man, and a diffident, shy kind of manner which he had at once aroused all the motherly instincts in the good woman's heart. She judged at once that he was not much of a man to take care of himself in regard to social comforts, and she determined that he would be well taken care of while under her wing.

"Do you know exactly how the land lies here—politically I mean?" inquired Father Lavery, one of the three curates, when the quintette were seated in the parlor waiting for the summons to dinner.

"Well, I've got a rough idea. I believe a good deal of uphill work has to be done to recover lost ground."

"You're not far out there. The paper we have just bought has been run in the interest of the opposite side for some weeks. All the effect of this has to be undone."

"That may not be easy, but it must be tried. The bold course is perhaps the only winning one. The people are too wide-awake to be imposed on by any trimming process. Better to take the bull by the horns at once."

"It is the safer way," chimed in Father Dixon, the senior curate. "But there will be some awkwardness about it. Perhaps you are not aware that half the paper for this week is already printed, and it contains some things highly favorable to Taylor. The former owner is a great friend of Taylor's, but he was so hard up that he was glad to get the offer from us to buy the whole thing. He thinks he is powerful enough to get the sheet run in Taylor's interest still, although it has changed owners."

"He must have a good deal of confidence in his powers of persuasion," remarked Baylor, with a laugh. "But he will find his mistake pretty quickly."

"You will require all the courage and skill you can command, I venture to say," said Father Timmons, the shrewdest of the curates. "You see the paper is still printed on his premises, as we have not had time to get our own prepared, and it cannot be transferred for some weeks. His sub-editor, whom I suppose you will have to put up with for the present as there is no other to be got in town, is a rabid Taylorite, and you will have to put your foot down pretty firmly at the beginning to have things done as you want them."

"Oh! I can answer for that," said Baylor. "I have had to deal with men of that stamp before."

"Well, you may manage the sub. But Burke is the really formidable obstacle. Though he has parted with the paper, he believes he has some control over it still as long as it is in his house. He's a sort of boss here, and was treated by all while he ran the paper. You will have to watch him."

"Oh! I don't fear for the result by any means. As you have given me full control, I'll take care that nobody interferes any further. But how about the general situation outside?"

"Well, it is simple. The townspeople here are all in favor of Taylor. He is a clever man and an able speaker, and he spends money freely. But he has not much of a following in the country. The man we have adopted is supported by all the men of any standing. He has the backing of the National party, and that's enough for us, for we are all with the tenant-farmers here, and we care nothing for the opinions of the townspeople, for they are not able to see beyond their own noses. There is a small section of the poorer class of farmers who may be in doubt, and it is these we desire to reach through the paper. Now, do you understand?"

"Oh, perfectly! We must insist on the absolute necessity of supporting the choice of the party, the priests, who are the natural leaders of the people in this struggle, and the men who are the backbone of the tenants' movement. It ought to be plain sailing enough."

In the office of The Recorder Baylor found a primitive condition of affairs. The printing arrangements were of the most backward and antiquated kind. The place was miserably small, and the printing staff consisted only besides the foreman, of three men and two boys. There was only one machine, a crazy thing of the last century, and the motive power of this was hand labor. A strong man was employed to turn the wheel on the printing mangle.

Burke, the former editor and proprietor, was this man's employer. He found work for him as a farm laborer and doing odd jobs the rest of the week; for Burke combined the agricultural with the editorial life, besides taking the leading hand in local and imperial politics. He was a burly, truculent man, who could use both the suaviter in modo and the fortior in re as the occasion suited.

He was seated at the desk in the office writing leading paragraphs, when Baylor entered and introduced himself. He received him blandly, and Baylor, producing his credentials, demanded a sight of all the "copy" that had been sent in for the second side of the paper.

Burke handed him over what he had written, and set a boy out to the printing office for the remainder.

"Merely a few squibs," he said, "showing up Molly's political antecedents, and some smart hits at the county bosses; just the sort of thing for election times you know."

"They will not go in," said Baylor calmly. "Boy, tell the foreman to stop in here."

"The foreman entered. 'Please understand,' said Baylor, 'that no copy is to be taken in the printing office in the future, save what passes through my hands. I take entire charge of this paper now.'

At this point Mr. Muldoon, the sub-editor, who also acted as local reporter, came in. Baylor lost no time in making known their mutual relations. "What have you got here?" he asked, looking at some of S. which Muldoon had taken from his pocket.

"Notes of a speech of Mr. Taylor's at the assembly rooms to-day."

"Put them in the fire. Not another word about Mr. Taylor goes into this sheet."

Muldoon looked at Burke, and Burke looked at Baylor.

"I've undertaken to give this report," he said, "and in the interests of fair play—"

"I did not undertake it," said Baylor sharply, "and this is electioneering. I will have no controversy about it."

Burke's face grew purple, but he managed to control himself. He bounced out of the place without saying a word.

"Now," said Baylor to the sub, "you will please sit down there and write what I dictate." Then he plunged at once into a rattling "reader," setting forth the change in the paper's policy and the urgent reasons for it, and appealing to the patriotism of the farmers on behalf of the adopted candidate.

As the slips were written he caused them to be carried to the printing office and set up as quickly as could be done. It was late ere this task was got through, but he went back to his quarters satisfied with his day's work.

Next morning his troubles commenced. When he arrived at the office he found the foreman with a very long face. Two of the printers, he announced, had left the town, and there was not one to be got to fill the gap.

"Never mind," said Baylor. "I'll see what can be done without them."

He seized a telegraph form and wrote a message to Dublin asking a large printing firm there to say if they could set up three pages of The Recorder and send them down in stereotype, if he sent on the "copy," by working all night? "In an hour he had an answer in the affirmative."

In the meantime the town was in a state of commotion. Bands were out on the streets, and Taylor was addressing meetings from the hotel windows and other places. Crowds stopped occasionally before The Recorder office, and hooted and yelled and groaned. The printing office was in the rear, and inaccessible, so Baylor didn't mind. He merely took the precaution of barring the front door and closing the window shutters.

In due time the stereotype plates arrived from Dublin, and Baylor did not quit the office until he had seen the paper put to press and made arrangements for its despatch next morning in the usual way.

What was his astonishment when on going to his office early next day he found that not a single sheet had been sent out or even printed! Two causes were assigned by the trembling foreman for the miscarriage. In the first place the laborer who turned the wheel had refused to work, and not another man in the town could be got to undertake it. All were partisans of Taylor. In the second, the machine itself had collapsed through the breaking of an important screw, and not a smith could be got to repair it, through the tradesmen's loyalty to Taylor.

Here was a dilemma indeed! Baylor felt nonplussed for the moment.

He hurried off with the intention of taking counsel with the parish priest. He met him a little outside the presbytery. Burke, the former editor, was just coming out of the assembly rooms, which were close by, as he came up. On his face there was a malicious grin.

"This is your doing, Mr. Burke," said Father Daly, when Baylor had hurriedly whispered how things stood. "Do you think it fair to take our money for your property, and then prevent our utilizing it?"

"Oh! this is electioneering, Father Daly," replied Burke in a tone of sly triumph. "Everything is fair under these conditions. My responsibility ceased when I sold you the property, you know. This gentleman got full control."

Baylor turned away in disgust. If an argument were got up in the street, it would be certain to collect a crowd, and this would lead inevitably to a scene. So, taking Father Daly's arm, he went with him into the presbytery, and went more fully into the details of the escapade.

Mrs. Halloran was a listener while he was explaining the position of affairs to Father Daly. An eager look was on her face, but she did not feel herself privileged to speak until the

good priest, noticing the peculiar expression, turned towards her.

"What is it, Mrs. Halloran?" he said kindly. "I think you want to say something."

"If I might make so bold, your reverence," she replied, "I would say that I think that The Constitution people, although they are Tories, would lend their machine to print the paper, if they were asked. Mr. Denham, the owner, was talking to me to-day, and he said they all admired Mr. Baylor for the courageous fight he's making."

"That's very nice and very good," said Father Daly; "but whom can we get to turn the machine? We're completely boycotted in the town."

"If you please, your reverence, there's Mike Donovan down stairs, talking to Nellie. He's as strong as a horse."

"Why, woman, he's the maddest Taylorite of them all! He'd rather cut off his hand than do a stroke of work against him."

"Oh! I leave that to Nellie and me," she answered, a gleam of roguery twinkling in her eye. "You'll find we'll manage him somehow, your reverence." Mrs. Halloran was as good as her word.

It was not through any of the arts of Deilah that these wily women contrived to neutralize Mike's violent political antipathies. Much as he loved Nellie he would not, even for her sake, be false to his principles. It was simply because of his defective education. He could neither read nor write, and was kept in ignorance of the nature of the work he was requisitioned to do. Thus he was betrayed into the hands of the enemy.

Mike Donovan was a strapping young fellow, and one of the best wrestlers and hurlers in the county. This athletic bent of his helped to counterbalance the stooping tendency which his work in the fields was calculated to give. He was rough looking, but by no means ill favoured; and that his temper was fiery was easily discernible from his excitable blue eyes and his very high cheek-bone, if the tawny beard and still more reddish hair furnished no clue to it. He was engaged in a wordy war with Nellie when Mrs. Halloran entered—all about politics. Mike was vehemently upholding the claims of Taylor and denouncing the system of the caucus which thrust an undesirable representative upon the people, as he declared, giving them no choice whatever in the selection.

The more he stormed the more Nellie teased him by her skillful comparison between the rival candidates, to the disadvantage of Taylor in every case; and the poor fellow was not sharp enough to see that she was only sporting herself at his expense.

At the height of the discussion Mrs. Halloran put in an appearance.

"Give over, children," she began; "we're tired of politics, sure enough. 'Tis nothing but the one old thing over and over again; we've heard it so often, troth, we ought to have it off by heart. Mike, like a decent boy, will you do a little turn for me? Have you to go back to Ballinacroy to-night?"

"No; not until to-morrow, ma'am. I have to wait for a saddle that the harness maker says is mendin' for the master; only for that I'd be goin' to-night. An' what's the turn you want me to do for you, Mrs. Halloran?"

"Well, just to turn the wheel up at The Constitution, for Mr. Denham, for a couple of hours."

"An' sure that's Dan Brady's job?"

"True enough, but this is an extra job. Dan's usual work was finished early to-day, an' he's gone home tired an' hungry of course after such a heavy spell of work. 'Twill be a rare charity for you to do it. There's ne'er another boy in the town strong enough to stand up to it."

"Yerra, let Mike alone, aunt," interposed Nellie, tauntingly. "Don't you see that he's ashamed to tell you that he won't do it because he can't do it? There isn't another boy in Knockphail or for twenty miles round that could turn the wheel up at The Constitution for two hours runnin'. Dan Brady is the only one fit to do it."

Nellie knew nothing of the importance of her interferences; it was just a fortuitous piece of goodluck that prompted her usual spirit of rail'ery just then to assert itself. It was the one thing needed to the success of the project in hand. Mike's temper was aflame in a twinkling.

"This is more of the lies an' the humbuggin' that's imposin' on the people here," he exclaimed bitterly. "It 'ud be a rare day that I couldn't stand up again Dan Brady, or again any man on this side of Keeper Mountain. I tell you what I'll do, Mrs. Halloran. I'll go up now an' turn the wheel at The Constitution, and when that's done I'll wrestle with Dan Brady; fresh out of his bed, hurdle with him, or throw stones with him—ay, an' the best man in the parish next to him, after that. That's what I'll do—an' I'll stake the five shillin's I'm got to air on it. Now I'm off to The Constitution."

"Lave us a look o' your hair!" cried Nellie with a taunting laugh, as the young giant strode angrily from the door. But Mike, consoled with thoughts that he would soon cover his detractors and disparagers with confusion, vouchsafed no reply, but went his way.

The astonishment of the town politicians when the paper came out in good time was only equalled by their rage, for they had deemed the boycott complete. But the general anger was, in its entire volume, not half that of the individual bitterness of Mike Donovan when he found to what base uses he had been put. He was afraid to trust himself near the presbytery next day, lest his anger should break all bounds and make him say and do things to be regretted all his lifetime.

When the polling day came, and the votes were counted, Mr. Taylor found himself a very disappointed man. Contrary to what his friends all along assured him, he failed to get a single vote outside the town. Dick Baylor's logic decided all the rural voters, and there was a great triumph for the National party.

It needed all Mrs. Halloran's diplomacy to repair the damage she had done to Mike's affections. Achilles sulked in his tent for nearly three months, and would have continued to sulk were it not that Mrs. Halloran drove over to Ballinacroy on a day and soothed his ruffled feelings in her own irresistible way. But what clinched the matter was her undertaking to restrain Nellie from laughing at him when he should come over to see them at Knockphail.

But Nellie, who was no party to this treaty, tore it to shreds, and quizzed him mercilessly when he appeared there looking rather sheepish and abashed. She laughs at him still, and often tells the story of the discomfiture of the Taylorites, and the unconscious part that Mike had in bringing it about.

A FAMOUS MAN!

What His Researches Have Done for the World. All successful and distinguished men have imitators, and Dr. Chas. the well-known author of Chas. Chas. Recipe Book proved no exception to the rule. Dr. Chas. Chas. discoveries have many pretended rivals, but no equals.

Long scientific researches produced Chas. Chas. Kidney-Liver Pills and Chas. Chas. Ointment, the first certain cure for all kidney, liver, stomach, bladder and rheumatic troubles; the latter an absolute specific for chronic and offensive skin diseases. Among his other discoveries were Chas. Chas. Catarrh Cure and Chas. Chas. Linseed and Turpentine for colds and bronchitis.

During 1895 the Canadian manufacturers, Edmondson, Bates & Co., 45 Lombard street, Toronto, gave away free 500,000 samples of Chas. Chas. Kidney-Liver Pills and 100,000 samples of Chas. Chas. Ointment. The return they brought proved how much they were appreciated. The same free distribution of samples will be continued during 1896. Those at a distance should enclose a 5-cent stamp and also receive a sheet of the latest music in return.

Long absences extinguish all the false lights though not the true ones. The lamps are dead in the banquet-room of yesterday; but a thousand years hence, and the stars we look on to-night will burn as brightly.—Bulwer.

Let the memory of those oversights by which we have suffered instruct us, for though past moments cannot be recalled, past errors may be repeated.—A. De Musset.

Free and easy expectation immediately relieves and frees the throat and lungs from viscous phlegm, and a medicine that promotes the use of the best medicine to use for coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all affections of the throat and chest. This is precisely what Bickel's Anti-Consumptive Syrup is a specific for, and wherever used it has given unbounded satisfaction. Children like it because it is pleasant, adults like it because it relieves and cures the disease.

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