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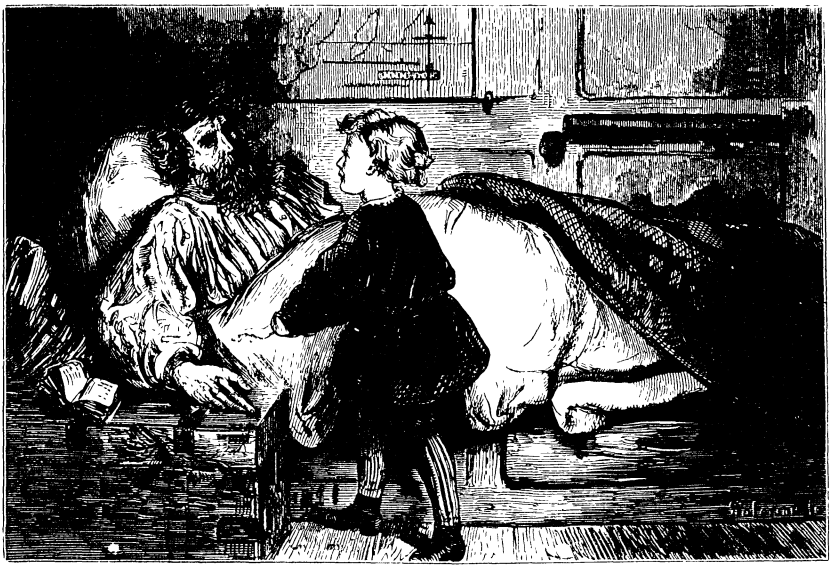
THE

OLD AND THE NEW HOME.



THE BABY PHYSICIAN.

"'Will you let me kiss you, sir?'—The haughty man was brought low, and the strong man was humbled, and a little child, with a few simple words from the Scriptures, had vanquished him"—*Page* 35.

THE OLD AND THE NEW HOME

A Canadian Tale

By J. E.

"But may dishonour blight our fame,
And quench our household fires,
When we, or ours, forget thy name,
Green island of our sires!"

—PRINGLE

TORONTO
JAMES CAMPBELL AND SON
1870

and a little child, with a few simple words from the Scriptures, had vanquished him. —*Page* 35.

PREFACE.

I ONCE turned over the pages of a volume of engravings for the amusement of my grandchild, a little lady in her third year. From time to time she expressed her pleasure or disapproval, as the picture pleased or disappointed her. At length we reached a cleverly-drawn likeness of one of our statesmen, which evidently aroused her delight and surprise. When I fancied her curiosity satisfied, I prepared to turn over, but her little dimpled hand was pressed on mine as a detainer. Presently a tiny finger ventured cautiously to touch the cheek, the lips, the eye: then came a pause,

with a puzzled look; next, a petulant coming down of the whole plump palm on the despised print, with the scornful comment—"Oh! I know; 'tis only a bit of paper." Such discovery may easily be made regarding my little book; but what I have endeavoured to portray is "Truth in her everyday garb," and I would ask my readers to look for the likeness with some care, and to prize the picture for the sake of the original, although it is but "a bit of paper."

J. E.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Leaving the Old Home to Seek the New.

"A rippling wave—the dashing of an oar—
The flower-scent floating past the open door.
A word scarce noted in its hour, perchance,
Yet back returning with a plaintive tone;
A smile—a sunny or a mournful glance—
Full of sweet meanings now from this world flown;
Are not these mysteries when to life they start,
And press vain tears in gushes to the heart?"

"THIN, ma'am dear, the weight's heavy on my heart since I heard yourself say thim same words; an' shure enough but Murty's all as bad. An' why, thin, what for wouldn't we go along wid ye, wheresomever ye're goin' to."

This from poor Biddy, a comely young girl, who, with her brother Murty (Mortimer), had been at service in Mrs O'Brien's family for several years. Her mistress had, a few days before, told the faithful creatures that she grieved to part with them, but found it unavoidable, as Mr O'Brien, her husband, had finally arranged to leave Ireland the following month; and the family, thinking their arrangements

for the voyage, &c., could be more satisfactorily and economically made in Cork than in any of the smaller towns in their neighbourhood, had decided on going to that city as soon as their little store of household goods could be disposed of; and the kind mistress had been anxiously endeavouring to find suitable homes for the two faithful domestics ere her own was broken up. The first announcement of this to Murty and Biddy had so overcome them, that they had uttered nothing but a few broken exclamations of dismay and sorrow. But now Biddy recurred to the subject, hoping to bring about a change to suit their wishes.

It was very painful to Mrs O'Brien to give up the two young people, in whom she had long taken the greatest interest, and who had proved to her family most faithful and useful assistants. As their names denote, they belonged to the Roman Catholic peasantry; their homes had been in "the beautiful west," amongst the wild noble mountains there, and their ramblings had never led them farther than from the heads of the cloud-capped giants to their feet—where the mighty waters of the Atlantic formed deep bays rich in the choicest fish, which, with the flesh and milk of goats, and the indispensable potato, formed the entire sustenance of the simple people. The district had been for ages in a state of primitive simplicity—we had almost said barbarism; but there were a few characteristics which in some measure redeemed it from this stigma.

Dotted about at wide distances were fine old country-seats, the residences of families of connexion and import-

ance in their counties; and around these there were circles of civilisation which gradually widened, and, to a considerable extent, influenced the whole. But at the time we write of there had been no extensive efforts made for the evangelisation of the west! Even Popery, usually so energetic and active, had been long lethargic, and looked on the heathenish darkness of the land with comparative indifference, until its jealousy was aroused by the gradual successes of a few faithful ones, who found it their happiness, as well as duty, to labour in the wilderness; and a few lambs had been gathered in and tended with loving care,—then the lion came down on the fold, raging for prey, and seeking whom he *might* devour. The O'Brien family had been earnest in their efforts to ameliorate in every way the sad condition of their poor neighbours; but their means were limited. Unsuccessful speculations by some members of Mr O'Brien's connexion had plunged him into difficulties, and reduced his family to very straitened circumstances. Still they laboured heartily, and sought a blessing on the day of small things—feeling that it was for them to cultivate the soil in faith, leaving results with God—nor were they denied fruits. In a little school, which they had established and supported for some years, her own sons and daughters aiding Mrs O'Brien as teachers, poor Murty and his sister had acquired their first knowledge of the English language. The Irish tongue had been industriously studied in the family, in order to be used as a medium of conveying scriptural truths to the benighted ones around them. But they gladly pushed their teaching as far as opportunities admitted; and as the

brother and sister, with a few others, seemed very desirous of acquiring a knowledge of their kind teachers' language, they were patiently taught it, and with great delight made use of it by reading with avidity all the instructive little works lent them; but the benefits of their training did not cease there; the faithful husbandman had sown good seed, and it brought forth abundantly; and this work of the Holy Spirit's was soon apparent in chastened tempers, gentle charity, patience under severe provocation, and a desire to return good for evil.

Although at that time few had thought of recommending to, or requiring from, converts to Protestantism, any public declaration of their change; yet such change seldom failed to be discovered by some spy employed by Popery, which was now fully awakening to the necessity of resisting the encroachments of truth, if darkness were to be upheld in its dominion. It was under this state of things that Mrs O'Brien's *protegés* were subjected to much suffering, and eventually driven from their wretched homes by their terrified parents. Superstition, of course, formed a large ingredient in the unenlightened minds of the neglected people, and of *this* Popery (as ever wily and unscrupulous) took care to avail itself. Deep and dark were the threats used to reduce the poor benighted ones to unquestioning obedience, and but too well did they succeed, even to the crushing out of natural affection, and substitution of heartless cruelty. Under the instigation of this tyranny the poor priest-ridden people laid down their most cherished things to be ruthlessly trampled on by a bloodthirsty insatiable system. The little I have related

of the ties existing between the O'Briens and the young brother and sister, who had found a warm welcome beneath their roof when driven forth from their parents', may enable my readers to understand the regret with which the separation was contemplated by both. But Mrs O'Brien felt the necessity for it so strongly, that she did not allow herself to waver even when the appeal with which our chapter begins was made to her. Her manner retained its firmness whilst poor Biddy stood before her, but as the weeping girl left the room the mistress wept also.

Then came a sad time of unrest. The home in which the whole of their married life had been spent by Mr and Mrs O'Brien, where their children had all been born, and several of them had died,—the home endeared to them by past joys and griefs, by sunshine and shadow,—this they were about to exchange for a lodge in the wilderness, where they could not hope for the greeting of one familiar friend, where all was new and strange. Oh, how often did the wife's heart grow still, as she thought of her beloved husband, with his richly-cultivated mind, his former life of ease and enjoyment of refined society, his unfitness for manual labour and infirmity of constitution; how often, when all this was present to her mind, did she sigh over the thought of the vast change which he must experience in the wilds of Canada; and yet he it was who had first proposed emigration, though far from blind to the difficulties which awaited him in the new country. For herself she never complained, though to leave her home and native land was like the uprooting and casting forth of the cling-

ing vine, with its wounded root-fibres and torn tendrils. Sometimes, when under the influence of the deep depression incident to her wearied frame and harassed mind, her heart would cry out, "Oh, why is this? How long, O Lord, how long?" but she was not often subjected to such bitterness; the Comforter was at hand to raise her up; she was bruised, but not forsaken. "Light was given unto her that was in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul."

When difficulties had thickened around them, and debts became their crushing burden, she rejoiced that she had something to offer towards meeting all lawful demands, and cheerfully resigned her claims to property which had been settled on her, and which, without her consent, was unalienable. Many of the connexion opposed this, calling it an unnecessary sacrifice arising from an overstrained sense of honesty; but she could not so regard it, and with her husband's approval she effected her purpose, and paid the debts as far as her means permitted. Then, in gold and silver, there remained but a scanty pittance, scarcely enough to settle the family in their new home, but in peace they were rich indeed. She believed that in acting thus uprightly she was honouring God, and she feared not to throw into his treasury the last mite.

All the more valuable of their furniture had long since been handed over to the creditors, but there remained some unpretending articles which they wished to dispose of, so as to add a little to the small sum intended for the family outfit. This effected, they were free to indulge in a last farewell to their humble friends around, and then turn from their early home for ever. Little had been done for

A SIGHT ON BOARD SHIP.

"A hand is timidly laid on her arm, and a well-known voice, rich in Connaught accent, pleads, 'Arrah, plase, ma'am dear, won't ye be afther forgivin' us the thrick we played—me an' Murty?"—*Page 7*

the last week by the young people but visiting the beloved haunts of their childhood. Each mountain path, each rock and valley, the wild rugged shore, the sweet shady nooks of the pleasure-grounds and gardens,—all were wept over, all bidden a sad adieu. The poor warm-hearted occupants of the scattered cottages sobbed out their sorrow for the loss of such true friends, but did not dare to utter the blessings which rushed to their lips, "for shure, wouldn't we have to tell the priest every livin' word of it, and wouldn't he break us down entirely with the pinnance, for wishin' good luck to *the heretics.*"

In Cork the family happily found so much to occupy them, that their minds were spared many of the pangs which would else have assailed them. But when once fairly on board the vessel which was to carry them to a far-off land, their occupation gone, no human faces for their eyes to rest upon but those of strangers, there was a sad sinking of heart, a yearning after the loved and lost, and a repugnance to the future. They seated themselves on the deck, so as to catch the last glimpse of their forsaken country; but now, as the darkness closes around them, they turn to descend to the gloomy cabin and seek their first night's rest on the wide waters. A sight, however, awaits them that they are little prepared for. At the head of the companion ladder stand two figures of familiar outline to Mrs O'Brien's eyes, yet her mind rejects the possibility of the idea suggested, and she almost smiles at her fancy as she says sadly to herself, "My poor children, they are weeping for us far away;" but it is not so,—a hand is timidly laid on her arm, and a well-known voice, rich in

Connaught accent, pleads, "Arrah, plase, ma'am dear, won't ye be afther forgivin' us the thrick we played—me an' Murty. 'Deed an' 'deed, ma'am, we didn't mane a ha'porth of harm; only just it was out of all raison, beggin' yer parden, to think of us two stayin' behind afther the family. Ah, thin, now, misthress dear, say ye forgive us this blessed night, and me brother and meself will think nothin' of the voyage at all at all, though, savin' yer presence, ma'am, 'tis goin' agen my stomach already. Oh dear, but wasn't that a big toss? Oh, Alannah, but I 'm gettin' rale bad. Ma'am dear, just say the word afore I 'm gone intirely. Och, but I 'll have to run jist, jist"—— And poor Biddy ran, leaving Murty terribly abashed; now that he had lost his screen he could only stammer out a few incoherent words, which he doubtless meant as an apology for the step they had taken.

Mr and Mrs O'Brien were overcome with contending emotions,—real pleasure at discovering dear familiar faces near them, but surprise and anxiety as to the manner in which the young people had carried out their affectionate resolve not to be separated from them. They turned to Murty for an explanation of this, but at the moment he was rudely pushed away by Captain Kurtz, who exclaimed in a gruff voice, "I say, who gave you leave, you steerage varmint, to poke yourselves up here? Off with you, and let me not see your faces again on this deck, if you don't wish for more than will agree with you." Then turning to Mr O'Brien, he continued, "I 'll have no rules of my ship broken to please gentle or simple; so take notice." And with this uncivil declaration he turned on his heel, leaving

his auditors distressed and disgusted at his very gratuitous rudeness.

To the O'Briens it was particularly disappointing to find the commander of the vessel in which they had a prospect of spending several weeks so uninfluenced by Christian courtesy, or even common civility; and they feared there would be little comfort in their intercourse with their poor young friends in the steerage from this unpromising beginning. They retired to their cabin, saddened by the incident, but resolved to lay this, with all their other troubles, before the throne of Him who judgeth righteously and upholdeth the faithful. They had sent their young people down, a short time before, to prepare for rest; and now they drew them all around them, and fondly sought to brighten the gloom of the first night on board ship. They had (by paying a sum in addition to the regular charge) been permitted to enclose several of the berths with thin plank partitions, forming a kind of state-room, in three compartments, but all adjoining. Within these defences from the public eye they hoped for the privilege of some little privacy, and were thankful for it; indeed, its value was soon felt. Here they could kneel and join in family worship, and hold sweet intercourse with each other, undisturbed by the outer crowd. The night was calm, and the bright moonlight fell in silvery rays on the Bible, which lay open before the head of the family. There was silence for some moments,—then the children were told of the unexpected blessing God had given them in the presence of their dear faithful attendants in the ship. This announcement produced the most un-

feigned pleasure, and all expressed a wish to call Biddy and Murty to prayer; but, with a sigh, their father explained to them that this could not be, just yet, at least. Many questions were asked regarding the reappearance of the brother and sister, but, of course, no satisfactory answer could be given. Nevertheless, their hearts were lightened, and they found it all the easier to hope, as well as pray, for future comfort.

Here I had better describe our party more minutely than I have hitherto attempted to do. Moira was the eldest daughter, and had attained her twentieth year. She was a tall, slight, thoughtful-looking girl, without any striking personal beauty, but possessing that type of face which grows increasingly interesting with greater intimacy. She had a brother two years her senior, but he was not of the present party, and for a time we must leave his name unspoken. Next to Moira came a brother, whom God took from the little circle in happy infancy. Dora, the fourth child, was a lovely girl of sixteen; then a robust, merry youth of fourteen, called Edgar; then followed another that found a home in the skies ere he had learned to love earth; next, the third daughter, Maud; and now Master Willie, the cricket on the hearth, comes in last, and least in stature, but filling a very large place in the family heart. Of exceedingly delicate constitution, he had been always treated with vast tenderness by all. The mother had never to urge the elder ones to bear with the fragile child's little exactions; they tried unbidden to meet his every want, and soothe the fretfulness consequent on suffering. It was beautiful to see their gentle unselfish manage-

ment of the tiny invalid, and often the contemplation of it filled the mother's heart with joy and gratitude, even while it ached with anxiety for her darling. The first flowers ever found their way to Willie's cot, and tenderly were the fingers of the little sleeper opened to receive the scented primrose or sweet wild rosebud, which was carefully deprived of its thorns, lest Willie's precious wee hands should suffer; then they would keep watch till the bright eyes should open, and discover with delight the fragrant treasures; or often would they surprise the child with a treat of straw-strung berries, or a beautiful new-laid egg; then no one thought it a trouble to take him on his favourite walk, or remain at home with him when the sharp wind forbade his leaving the house. It was their pleasure to read to him his "pretty stories," or tell him of what they had themselves enjoyed. All this, of course, was encouraged as safe training for them in the ways of self-denial and thoughtful love; but many a whispered reproof and injunction reached Willie's ears from dear mamma's lips. To him she was as faithful as to the others in rebuking sin, and pointing out the necessity of repentance. She prayed with as well as for him, and carefully guarded against all that would tempt him to evil; leading him, by precept and example, to Christ, the beginning and the end of our salvation.

The second day of the voyage arose in splendour. Our party were all on deck, to behold the glorious sun rise; and in mute wonder they gazed on the grand spectacle. Mr O'Brien was the first to interrupt the thoughtful silence; but his voice uttered no light comment: he spake the

words of the holy David :—"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

He held little six-year-old Willie in his arms, well wrapped up in his mamma's shawl. The child looked awed, and clung to his papa's shoulder, but when he heard the beautiful words of the Psalmist repeated, he whispered, "Is this one of the wonders of the deep, pa; had we not the same bright sun at home in the mountains?"

"Yes, my boy; God made the sun to light the whole world,—the land as well as the sea."

"But when there were no ships to want light, what good was it over the great water?"

"My child, God has made nothing in vain; and although I cannot show you the thousands of creatures that swim in the deep, and enjoy the bright sun in many ways, nor can I make you understand how all nature benefits by the action of the heat on these dancing waves, yet I would have you, like David, praise the Lord for His goodness to the children of men, and never forget that, through this goodness, He gave unto us His only-begotten Son to die for our sins, that we might be saved from destruction in hell, and brought to dwell with Him for ever in heavenly places."

"And, papa, will heaven be more beautiful than yonder golden sky."

"Ah, my boy, it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the glory of the place where God dwells; but

we shall behold it, and dwell in it, and spend eternity in praising God for it, if we give our hearts to Him now."

"Well, papa, I wish God would take my heart, and keep it always, for I cannot help naughty thoughts getting into it very often, and then I am afraid Jesus will put me away, and not have me to live with Him up on high."

"My darling, you and all of us must constantly ask Him to give us new hearts that will love holiness and hate sin, —the Holy Spirit to dwell within us—and then we shall be near God here, and with Him for ever when we die. See, Willie, do you know who that is down there, standing near those large barrels."

"O Murty! my Murty! Papa, let me go to him."

At first, the father's fear of cold restrained the child, but after a moment's reflection, he set the little boy on his feet, tied the shawl firmly on, and said, "Yes, you may run, but do not stay more than a few minutes."

The delighted child sprang towards the young man, who, with a quick glance around, rushed forward to meet him, and, seizing him in his arms, kissed him repeatedly; then called Biddy. "Biddy, come if you can at all. I've got Masther Willie, the darlint."

After a short delay, poor Biddy staggered up, looking ghastly. She had been suffering terribly from sea-sickness almost from the first hour the vessel was in motion. Now, on seeing her beloved nursling, she burst into tears, and wrung her hands, crying out, "Oh! the thief of the world, that won't let me be wid ye, me heart's darlint. What'll I do at all? Can't the masther no way pervint his onmannerly goin's on? Shure, an' didn't we—Murty and me—

pay him down our good money over and above the order the dacent man in the office giv' us, and now the chatin' desayver 'll not as much as let us walk the same ground as hisself, and bars us off from doin' what we want for the family, not to talk of the starvation below; but that's neither here nor there at all at all, if he'd just have the dacency to give over thim ship's rules of his that he's always dinnin' into our ears. My heart's bruk wid thim same."

Here Biddy ceased from pure exhaustion, but another hindrance to her eloquence presented itself in the person of the much-dreaded captain. In her excitement, she had spoken without any attempt at controlling a naturally strong voice, and thus had attracted the attention of the mate, who soon carried the intelligence to his superior officer that the Irish beggars were getting up a row. This brought him quickly to the lower deck, where stood Biddy with the frightened child in her arms, and her brother beside her. "Well, what's up now, you beggarly set? Didn't I tell you I'd make you smart for it if you dared to break the ship's rules. Take this as a foretaste of the rest;" and so saying, he lashed the poor girl with a rope's end which he had just caught up.

The acute pain it caused her drew forth one sharp cry; but on finding the child clung to her convulsively and uttered terrified screams, she thought of nothing but soothing him, and, in spite of the captain's unmanly efforts to prevent her, she rushed forward to Mr O'Brien, who was hastily approaching them, and placing the little boy in his arms, she sobbed as if her heart would break. Mr O'Brien said,

in a tone of decision, "Go, Biddy, go immediately to your brother, and stay below until you hear further from me; I must try what can be done for you." The girl obeyed with difficulty; the little strength excitement had given her now failed, and she tottered back painfully.

Her master placed the child in his wife's arms, and then walked down deliberately to the part of the lower deck on which the captain still stood. In a perfectly calm voice he requested some conversation with him, and, apparently somewhat subdued by Mr O'Brien's self-possession, and perhaps conscious of having committed himself inconveniently by his act of unwarrantable violence to one of the unoffending passengers, Captain Kurtz gave a gruff assent, and walked with the gentlemans to his cabin, when he turned, locked the door, and stood at bay.

"Sir," began Mr O'Brien, "I perceive you are irritated. There is no occasion for it; I am here merely to ask your interpretation of these rules." So saying, Mr O'Brien produced a printed paper which had been handed him by one of the steerage passengers, a witness to the outrage just committed. The man would not venture himself to recall the captain to a sense of justice by alluding to the laws which were to regulate his conduct towards his passengers both fore and aft, and a copy of which had been given to each individual who obtained a free passage and certificate in the emigrant office, but he seized the opportunity afforded him by the confusion, to place this document in Mr O'Brien's hands. This that gentleman now held forward.

Captain Kurtz grew livid with rage; he attempted

in vain to seize the paper; but could not give utterance to a word, so overpowering was his passion. Mr O'Brien waited quietly till he was somewhat cooled, then again requested his ideas in connexion with the paper, but finding that this only exasperated him, he said, "I am really distressed to have the appearance of interfering. I fully acknowledge for myself your right of governing on board your own ship, and see the propriety of sustaining your authority, *unless when it is pushed too far*, as I conceive *it was* just now. You must know that such conduct is an infringement of the laws to which you are answerable. I greatly wish to see order maintained, but have no hope of its being so, unless you abide more strictly by the spirit of those regulations which most of your passengers are shrewd enough to study and understand."

Whilst Mr O'Brien was thus speaking, his companion had gradually backed up to the table, supporting himself against it as if exhausted by his recent outbreak of temper.

He had made one or two ineffectual attempts to speak, but at last, with a thick, imperfeet articulation, he asked if *this meant mutiny.*

"No, I should hope not; that indeed would be a terrible result of your unreasonable severity; but I believe it only needs prudence and justice to restore and maintain order. If you will kindly listen, I will explain to you why it was that two of your steerage passengers passed from the limits you seem to wish them to keep within. They have been for years our faithful and attached servants, and thinking there was no objection to their moving about in any part of the vessel, they gladly came towards us as soon as they

perceived my family on deck, and, as we shared their ignorance regarding the distinction to be observed by the different classes of passengers, we met them with pleasure, and were about to engage in conversation with them, when you expressed your disapproval, and this morning, as I had resolved not to infringe on any of your regulations, I suffered my child to go to his friends below, rather than allow any attempt on their part to come up to him. This, sir, is simple fact, and I do hope it will be received as an apology for any offence we may have given."

The word apology was the only one of any weight with the hard, exacting man, who listened impatiently to what was said, but concession gratified his pride, and produced a spurious sort of good temper; so his reply was rather milder than Mr O'Brien expected, and he inwardly thanked God that the foolish man's wrath was turned aside.

His next wish was to obtain permission for Biddy to remain with them in their quarters as personal attendant, offering a small sum in compensation for the privilege. This was granted, though not very graciously, and the money pocketed; the door was then unlocked, and Mr O'Brien set free with the growling admonition, "Mind you don't calculate on getting anything more out of me with all your soft words."

But soft, wise words had done a good work, as they rarely fail to do, and most welcome was their result to poor Biddy and the family. Murty too was delighted to see his sister amongst her kind friends, and found it much easier to bear the many privations of his own position, now that

he felt sure of her exemption from them. Thus, through God's tender mercy, a great additional comfort was granted to these children of faith.

From Biddy it was easily gleaned that the quarters of the poor emigrants were terribly overcrowded, ill-ventilated, and scantily supplied with necessaries. This greatly surprised and distressed the O'Briens, who knew little of the usual hardships of a voyage in an emigrant ship. Their idea was, that the master of the vessel was bound to provide sufficiently, in every respect, for each individual sent on board by the agents employed by Government, and subject to a severe penalty if this duty was neglected; and as to *numbers, that* they thought was strictly regulated by emigrant laws also,—the numbers being always proportioned to the size of the vessel. These ideas were further confirmed by the papers given to the poor people at the office; but there were many ways found out by unscrupulous captains of evading or exceeding the prescribed rules, and in the hurry of embarkation, or before the day appointed for sailing, numbers of poor creatures were smuggled on board, and hidden away, on handing over such sums from their hard earnings as seemed a sufficient bribe, and for these they were made large promises which, alas, were rarely kept. Scarcely had they lost sight of land when they began to learn the deception they had subjected themselves to, and though at first they remonstrated loudly, they soon found that this was worse than useless, for it invariably led to some cruel act of despotism, which greatly increased their misery.

The O'Briens, and most of the first cabin passengers, had

supplied their own provisions, and fortunately this was done with liberality.

After a time, Biddy gained strength, and proved herself most useful to her beloved mistress; her hands busied themselves in every department. She still continued little Willie's special attendant, and comforted the weakly child wonderfully. Then, her young ladies must not be neglected; she insisted on exempting them as far as possible from disagreeable offices, and laid claim to the whole management of the cooking operations. This possessed a peculiar attraction for her, as it gave her frequent opportunities of meeting her brother: and a diligent use they made of these meetings, Biddy delivering kind messages from the family to Murty, and always sharing with him, by her mistress's orders, the provisions she was preparing. Then the young girl would modestly venture to remind her brother, though older than herself, of the lessons they had been so carefully taught by their pious employers, and as an apology for such dictation, she would artlessly say, "Oh, Murty dear, don't think I'm growin' set up wid meself, and am takin' in hand to tache my betters; 'tisn't that at all at all, but jist becase ye see I'm gettin' it fresh an' sweet all the time up there, where the good God gives no stint of blessin', an' I want ye to have a share. 'Tis jist all a wonder to me how the mistress an' them all keeps up, but shure it's God that does it. Ye never seen happier faces than the family has on them when they're all gathered up in the little hole of a box they call their state-room: there they sit on trunks or bundles, quite paceable, listenin' to the masther readin' the Holy Book, and thin they talk

a while, and brighten one another up wonderful; and thin they pray, and the little dungeon doesn't seem like the same place at all at all. Ah, thin, is it any wonder I 'd be bringin' ye some of the fine words they tache me, an' that 's all I mane, for shure you are wiser out-an'-out than meself." These were sweet moments of godly intercourse for both, and their fruits proved their value.

But our travellers were not always exempt from sorrow, —sad reminiscences often dimmed their views of peace, and fears for the future would intrude. At such times there was but one safe resource, and lovingly did they exhort each other to resort to it. God's promises were wide and deep and never-failing strongholds, abundant in supplies of the bread of life, the waters of eternal salvation, the armour of righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit; no good thing was lacking; in these towers of defence, they were safe. And here they grew strong and hopeful, but the enemy was not sleeping; he was preparing such instruments of attack as he thought would bring him conquest. Days had grown into weeks since their vessel (the *Hecla*) had left port, and still vast tracts of ocean lay between them and their destination, without having anything which the sailors would call storm. The weather had become unfavourable, the winds adverse; there were frequent squalls, which greatly tried the poor people comfortlessly huddled together in a dirty, dark part of the ship. Provisions from the first had been scantily supplied; even in quality they were unwholesome, and little could be done to render them at all palatable. Weariness and dispirited indifference began to show in the pallid faces

which gathered round the cabouse, and Murty spoke of many as being too weakly to come up at all: on these the kind-hearted young fellow waited with tenderness, sharing with them gladly the more tempting food sent to him by Mrs O'Brien; but there was progress in the miseries of the poor, and ere long they increased to an alarming extent.

One morning, to his master's great surprise, Murty entered the cabin, and, with much agitation of manner, told him that he came there to prevent his sister from visiting the lower part of the ship, as there was "bad sickness amongst the people." Three women, who had been ailing for some time, were now in raging fever, terrifying their neighbours by their wild delirium.

This appalling news spread terror around. When it reached the captain's ears it stirred up his wrath. He called angrily for the young surgeon, to whose care the health of the passengers had been entrusted. The poor young man seemed shocked and bewildered as he listened to the mad reproaches and awful imprecations of the officer. He was ordered to go below instantly, and set all to rights, or fear the consequences of failure. No one offered to accompany him, till Mr O'Brien, coming out, inquired the particulars of the captain's orders; and said quietly, "If you allow me, I will be glad to go with you. I have felt it a disappointment all along to be prevented from trying to make myself useful amongst my poor fellow-passengers. Have you any objection, captain?"

A surly "Do as you like" was the only reply. So the two gentlemen went down.

The scene was quite new to Mr O'Brien, and struck grief and horror to his heart. All was confusion. The young medical man groaned as he beheld such a field for his inexperienced labours. He was an ingenuous, truthful lad, fresh from his books, and wholly unused to such serious responsibility as now awaited him. Mr O'Brien, whilst he admired the simple candour with which this confession was made, felt deeply the impropriety of selecting such men for so important a post. However, he hastened to stir up his courage, and make use of any skill he possessed. He asked, "Will you not at once examine the patients most in need of care?"

CHAPTER II.

Captain Kurtz's Glimpse of the End.

"Ah! the weariest and most loathed load of life
That age, ache, penury, imprisonment,
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what I fear of death."—*Shakspeare.*

"Faith turns fear to hope."

DOCTOR BAYNES was indefatigable, and he evidently had considerable knowledge of his profession, as far as it could be derived from books, but he had not had time for practice; consequently was without experience. He found Mr O'Brien and Murty most useful and willing assistants. Day and night they watched over the sick and dying. The fever had spread rapidly, and appeared for a time to resist all medical treatment. Fortunately, the weather had become mild and settled. Of this the careful attendants of the sick availed themselves, by setting all those who were at all able to the most needful work of cleansing the cabins. Some swabbing was attempted, but there was little

room for the operation. There were sad and frequent interruptions, too, to all their sanitary occupations. The claims of the dead must be met. There were gloomy gatherings on the deck. The captain had declined reading the burial-service, but signified his approval of Mr O'Brien's doing so; and often was this sad office his portion. Amongst the sick, Mr O'Brien and his valuable servant laboured incessantly for the salvation of souls; and laboured not in vain, it is trusted. Every few hours, when they could best be spared, they visited their own loved ones, for a few minutes generally at a time. As yet the disease had not appeared beyond the steerage, but there was much debility evident everywhere; and Mrs O'Brien, with her elder daughters and son, though themselves relaxed and feeble, tried hard to cheer up those about them, and seized every opportunity of reading the Scriptures, praying, and conversing seriously with their companions in distress. In the day of trouble they were heard gladly; and, as they laid their own burdened hearts before God, hope sprung up, and peace was sustained within them. Yet the mother's fears for her youngest were aroused. She could see a gradual wasting and weakening: his tiny arms, as they clasped her neck, were mere reeds,—so frail, so fleshless; his voice was lower than ever; but oh! so sweet to her ears, as it poured forth the infantine treasures of texts and hymns. Often, as he lay exhausted in his little cot, which they carried up on deck for him, his family listened breathlessly to the wondrously sweet music of his voice whilst he lisped forth his favourite Psalm—the twenty-third. His ear had exhibited the nicest

accuracy from a very early time in his little life; he caught up any melody that pleased him with ease, and his great delight was to find pretty words to suit. Sometimes, as a means of refreshing his soul, the poor harrassed father would kneel by the cot, and listen to the sacred songs of his child. There was no impatience, or even restlessness, about the little creature. A sigh of exhaustion was his only plaint, and he would look up and smile after one of those. He often spoke of the first sunrise and sunset he had witnessed at sea, and seemed to remember with delight his papa's few words regarding the greater glory of heaven.

As Biddy walked up and down with him in her loving arms, he would kiss her, and whisper, "And my Father will have a beautiful house *there* for you, too, Biddy; and it will be brighter than the sun, and shine more than the moon; and I think we may sing our hymns there; and there will be no more sea. Ah, Biddy! I cannot love the sea, it swallows up so many of our poor people. I should be sorry to be let down into the deep waters. Oh! how much better I should like a little green grave, near a pretty church. Do you think God will let me wait till we get to the lovely mountains again?"

No reply to these touching words could poor Biddy ever give; but her heart would sink within her, and silent tears course down her cheeks. To his mamma the child invariably spoke with remarkable cheerfulness; not with any attempt to put away the thought of his death from her mind, but as if commissioned to soothe and reconcile her to it. And nothing fell so softly on her heart as

his own sweet words, though they spoke often of his departure.

"Darling ma, won't it be very nice to think of little Willie up in heaven? Then I cannot be naughty any more, the way I often am now; and I cannot be sick, and trouble poor Biddy; and pa won't be sorry to look at my little white face; and Dora, and all of them, will think of the beautiful songs I am singing near God's throne.

The disease was abating; and now returning health demanded nourishing food: from whence was this to come? The O'Briens' stores were ever open to the needy, but they got low, and the other passengers, in general, seemed afraid to part with more than they had already given; for still, after five weeks, the *Hecla* had not sighted land. What was to be done? Mr O'Brien asked the doctor to come with him to the captain. They had not seen him for nearly two days. The mate said he was worn out, though his fatigue certainly was not caused by his attendance on the sick. He had, as the sailors said, "worried around terribly." And when the fever got in amongst them, and carried off the cabin-boy and second mate, he was in "an awful fluster." But nothing of a subdued, repentant spirit was apparent in him. The only softened feeling he had exhibited was towards little Willie. One day he stopped in his pacing of the deck, and looked long on the child's wasted form, and, pointing to him, asked Biddy, "Has *he* had the fever?" "No, sir, not the fever; but I'm feared God's whisperin' to him to come away from this airth; he's like an angel already." A large orange was dropped in the cot, but no word further

spoken. On awaking, the child was delighted to see the orange, but pressed his papa to take it down to some one that was sick; and he was with difficulty prevailed on to eat it himself.

But we must resume at the point at which the doctor and Mr O'Brien had resolved to visit Captain Kurtz. They inquired from the mate whether he thought it would inconvenience the captain to receive them just then.

"Well, I guess one time's about as bad as another for any business you have with him; but I'll knock, and I suppose he'll open if he wants to let you in."

"Like master, like man," suggested the doctor, as the knock was given. There was some delay before any notice was taken of their efforts to obtain entrance; then a growl, and after a little more time the door was opened, and they stood face to face with a pale, terror-stricken man. The captain was ill, and feared he had caught the fever. The very confession of this overcame him. The doctor stepped forward, felt his pulse, questioned him carefully, and endeavoured to reassure him, saying that he believed he was suffering merely from over-excitement and fatigue.

"Pooh, man! what do you know about it? You did well enough for the miserable pack below, but don't think I believe in you. If you did know anything, why did you let them die like dogs, and make a charnel-house of my ship? I'll have none of you about me. I'm sick of it all."

Here Mr O'Brien interposed in his own firm way, saying—

"Captain Kurtz, if you feel ill, you cannot be so un-

reasonable as to refuse to use remedies such as have been the means of restoring several of the passengers and some of your crew to health. Indeed, it was because of their returning health we are here just now that we might induce you kindly to increase and improve the rations, for they need good nourishing food, and I fear if it be not afforded to them, there will be many more deaths on board before long."

"Always the same whine! Death must come if something is not done that cannot be done."

Here, with fierce voice and jesture, he ejaculated words which cannot be repeated, and then sunk down into a state of perfect insensibility. They did all they could for him, relieving him of his cravat, and lifting him into his berth. In looking about for some restorative they opened a cupboard, and there beheld a goodly store of bottles labelled "Brandy," "Port Wine," "Sherry," &c. The cork of a wine bottle was drawn, and some of the liquid poured into a cup and held to his lips. He swallowed a little and revived, but looked anxiously towards the locker: the door still stood open, exposing the bottles. He gave a quick glance at the gentlemen and groaned. Again he was induced to sip a little wine, and having nearly recovered from his deep swoon, he said testily—

"I suppose you'll expect to take possession of my private stores for the benefit of your set below, but I tell you you're mistaken."

"Well, captain, I confess we should be very glad indeed if you would kindly share with the weakly ones, but of course it rests altogether with yourself. Gladly would I

supply them myself were it possible, but I have just given my little dying boy the last drop I had."

As he uttered the last sentence the captain shuddered and put his hands over his face. Presently he looked up with a strange expression in his eyes, and said, in a low tone, "She said 'he had not the fever, but God was whispering to him to come away,' and yet the child looked, as she said, like an angel. And now his father speaks of his dying without any horror. How can this be?"

Mr O'Brien listened with astonishment, and the thought suddenly occurred to his mind that little Willie might be permitted to work a little more for his Heavenly Father before he was called away; so he said, "Yes, sir, my child is going fast *from us*, but I trust to God. He is a simple helpless babe, but has been taught by God's Holy Spirit to love Him, and now he has no fear of death, nor do we fear it for him. All of us may cast out fear, as he does, by trusting God."

"I don't believe it. A harmless child may not know what fear is, but a man who has fought his way through life, and had many a hard tuzzle by the way, he cannot think of death without fear and hatred. I can't."

"May I bring my little boy to tell you his own story sir?"

"No; it would only make it worse. I'm afraid of the child, I tell you. You may go and take some bottles with you, and come back if I send for you."

They obeyed him literally, and gladly carried down brandy and port wine to those who so much needed such medicine.

That night, the mate brought a couple of bottles of wine to little Willie from the captain, and said he had received orders to deal out double rations of the best to the steerage passengers.

"God be praised for His goodness to the children of men," was Mr O'Brien's mode of thanking the captain.

Willie's pleasure was very great when his papa explained to him all that had occurred in Captain Kurtz's cabin, and asked him whether he would like to pay him a visit too.

"Yes; oh yes, very much: you know he frightened me and hurt poor Biddy greatly. I would like to go to him."

"But, my child, do you not forgive him for those things?"

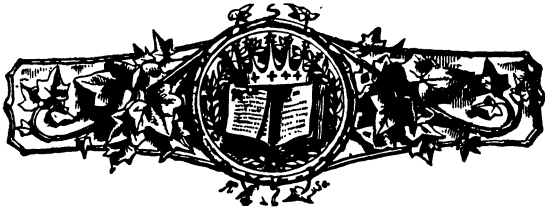
"Oh, to be sure, but I want to love him and do him good."

"And how do you suppose you could do him good, Willie?"

Here there was a pause; the child was puzzled for a minute or two, but then, smiling brightly, said—

"Ah! I know now. I would say God's words to him, and tell him to come to Jesus; wouldn't that do him good, pa'?"

"Yes, darling, I trust so, and if he gives us leave we will take you to him. Will you not have a little of his nice wine now?"



CHAPTER III.

The Baby Physician.

"There 's music in the sighing of a reed,
There 's music in the gushing of rill,
There 's music in all things; if men had ears,
The earth is but an echo of the spheres."

"Lo! *Truth* is harmony,
Tho' but lisped by infant tongues."

THE next morning the doctor told Mr O'Brien that, although he did not fear the fever for the captain, yet he considered his health much shaken, and he was in such an irritable state of temper, that there was no doing anything for him; and yet he really needed medical treatment and care.

"Well, doctor, I have been thinking of a prescription for him, which I will now consult you about. I believe the poor man's disease is more in his mind than body, and you can see the difficulty of dealing with him. Now, my idea is, that he will receive medicine more readily from my little son than any one else."

"Perhaps so," said the doctor, "but what physic do you propose sending him?"

"Oh! that I must leave altogether to Willie. I do not intend to interfere in the slightest degree with the little fellow."

The doctor looked incredulous, but said, "Well, sir, I have every confidence in your judgment, and shall await results."

"But I want your help in the meantime," said Mr O'Brien, smiling. "As yet I have not obtained permission to send my little physician, and I think you might help to get it."

"How, sir? I shall do all I can, but we must not risk the dear child's own welfare."

"No; but neither must we lose an opportunity for him to do his Father's work—I mean his Heavenly Father's."

The whole plan shone in on the young doctor's mind, and he was quite ready to further it. At noon, he called again to see his patient, and found him very languid and despondent. For a few moments he spoke professionally, and the captain gave little heed. Then he said suddenly, "I must go to little Willie; he has not long to live now; and we must do all we can to smooth the road to the grave. Not that the child fears it; he seems to live in a glad expectation of great gain by the change."

"How can you tell me you believe this? or do you think that any but little children could think of death without trembling?"

"Well, sir, I am not a good person to answer such questions. I would advise you to ask Mr O'Brien; he

understands all about it; and I believe his little boy knows more than any of us. He is certainly nearer God, I should say. Perhaps you would like to have the little fellow come to you. He is such an humble, simple babe, that it quiets one down to listen to him."

"Well, I don't care if the child comes; but I won't have the father to lecture me, though I will say he behaves like a gentleman."

The doctor bowed and retired. He hastened to his friend, and Mrs O'Brien was called into council by her husband. All agreed that dear little Willie should go on his mission if he had no fear of it. The child was told all that was necessary, and again he begged to be allowed to go. So his father carried him to the door, knocked, and, on its being opened, he set the little fellow down, just inside, then closed the door, and paced up and down outside. Willie looked shy, and did not venture to move or speak for a few minutes. The captain was moved by his gentleness, and said kindly, "Well, my little man, what may you want with an old chap like myself?"

"Are you old, sir? I did not know it. Your hair is not white, like my papa's."

"Well, come and sit down near me, and I will tell you how long I have been in this world. What is your age?"

"I believe I am just six, sir; but I never grew big, because I'm often sick. But I think God won't mind that, because He will give me a beautiful new body, and make me like Jesus."

"When do you think He will do that, my boy?"

The child looked up in surprise, and said, "Oh! you know, when Jesus comes again He will do it; but I will stay with Him till He has my bright new body ready."

"How do you think you will get to Him?"

Again there was a surprised look. "Why, you know, sir, I am going to die very soon, and then this little sick body will be buried, and I will go up to God."

"And are you not afraid to die?"

"No, no, sir. I will be glad to die, because I want to see Jesus very much. But there is something I don't like to think of: I can't love the sea, and I don't want my poor little body to sink down in it. Sure you wouldn't, sir?"

This home question sunk into Captain Kurtz's heart, but he did not answer it. After a time, he tried again to draw out the child's thoughts. "Tell me, how can you be sure of getting to heaven? Is it because you are such a good child?"

"Oh no, sir; no, I am not a good child. But then, you know, Jesus died to save me, and God loves me because Jesus loves me. He will let me go up to Him."

"But every one has not as good a chance as you have. I am sure I have not."

"Indeed, sir, you have. Jesus is able to save everybody that comes to Him; and, sir, haven't you come to Him long, long ago, when you were a little child like me?"

"No, my boy; I never came to Him, I believe; and maybe it's too late now."

"Too late, sir! How's that? I don't know; but

God's Holy Book says, 'This is the day to come and be saved?'"

"Are you sure?"

The child looked startled; he had never heard a doubt expressed on those subjects, and it frightened him now. The tears started to his eyes, and his little hands trembled. "Please, sir, let me go to papa and ask him. Or I will bring mamma here, and she will be able to tell you everything."

"Well, then, come close to me, and don't be afraid. I will not hurt you."

"You hurt poor Biddy once."

The man started. "Then you don't forgive me for that yet, and all the rest is sham." The little boy gazed on the angry face before him, and wondered what he had said that vexed him. He had now but one wish, and that was to get away. Still, God's little messenger had some few words to speak for his Master, and they were given to him in that hour. His sorrowful look once more softened the rough man, and he asked, in a milder tone, "Why did you talk of Biddy and the rope-end? Did you want to spite me?"

The little one did not understand the latter part of the question in the least; but to the beginning of it he replied meekly—"I said about Biddy because I want to love you."

"To love me because I beat her!"

"Yes; God told me I was to love you because you were my enemy; and I will love you and do you good. Will you let me kiss you, sir?"

The haughty man was brought low, and the strong man was humbled; and a little child, with a few simple words from the Scriptures, had vanquished him. "My God! my God! have mercy on me! I am a vile sinner. I see it *now!*" exclaimed the convicted soul.

Now little Willie looked up brightly. The confession of sin, and prayer, were to this infant of days familiar words, for he had been taught by the Holy Spirit.

He stroked the weather-beaten face with his little hands, and said, "Now, I know God loves you, and I will love you too. Oh! mamma and papa will be so glad!"

"Why, child, what will make them glad?"

"Oh! because you have come to God to tell Him you are bad, and want Him to forgive you. That always makes them very happy, for they like a great many to go to heaven with them; and I will like too very much to see you there, and I know Biddy will be glad also."

These childish words brought home weighty truths to the poor captain's mind, more by far than he could understand just now; but he had entered the school of the Lord, and all would be made clear to him in good time. Mr O'Brien knocked; he thought his child had stayed long enough, and came to carry him away. "Come in," was his permission to enter. He found Willie at the side of the low berth on which the captain lay, and a coarse brown hand thrown caressingly over him. "I thank God!" was the father's inward exclamation. Then he took his boy in his arms, and with a kind, short farewell, he left the captain to his newly-awakened conscience and his God.

CHAPTER IV.

The Thoughts that Came with the Storm.

"Blast and surge conflicting hoarse,
Sweep us on with headlong force;
And the bark which tempests surge
Moans and trembles at their scourge.
Yet should wildest tempests swell,
Be Thou near, and all is well.
Saviour, on the stormy sea,
Let us find repose in Thee."

ANOTHER heavy gathering of clouds, and many of the signs the sailor so well understands, led all hands to prepare for stormy weather. It seemed to threaten more than a mere squall this time, and the anticipation of hard work had the good effect of arousing the captain from the debilitated languor which had been oppressing him for many days. He repaired to the deck, looked anxiously at the sky, and hurriedly gave various instructions to his crew, but not in his usual tone of ferocious tyranny. No oaths escaped his lips, though the force of habit brought them so far—he was evidently curbing his spirit—and the men quickly perceived this with astonish-

ment, but were well pleased at the change, and obeyed him all the more readily for it. The vessel was a fine one, her commander a first-class sailor, and the crew well up in their business, yet fully did the O'Brien family, and a few others, realise their entire dependence on Him who walked on the troubled waters of Galilee's sea, and subdued the raging storm by His word, "Peace be still." To Him they looked, in Him they trusted; but none on board used the proper means for safety dictated by the commander with more promptitude and diligence than those of the O'Brien party who were fit for the work. The expected storm came and raged fearfully for a day and night; few on board could cling to the hope of escape, so imminent and apparent was their danger, and various were the effects produced by the immediate prospect of death amongst the people.

Here you found one who had through life put away God from his thoughts, rejected convictions, scorned means of grace, and despised the followers of the Lord. Now that the end was near at hand, what was his condition? Mr O'Brien had been entreated by Murty to come with him and try if he could give any comfort to one of this class. He came, but so great was the man's agony of mind, so fearful his despair, as rejected convictions and abused opportunities rose up in judgment against him, and his conscience pointed at the just reward of his sins, that he was incapable of hearing anything. He lay writhing on the floor and uttering heartrending groans; beside him knelt his wife, wringing her hands and calling on every one around for help for herself and her wretched husband, but she sought not for it where alone help can be found in such a time of

need. She tried to talk of mercy, and claim it for herself as a right, for had she not been very different from the despairing man. She had done much that the world applauded, and that gained her the good opinion even of the religious. Her neighbours knew how strictly she had observed the outward ordinances of the Sabbath, how frequently she had attended meetings, how careful she was to place her name on every subscription-list for charitable purposes, how much she talked on serious subjects, and, in fact, how fair a profession of Christianity she had made, and how was it now that all these things failed to give her comfort? She was almost as badly off in this hour of peril as that man who had openly despised all that she had been careful to observe. "Was this justice?" she asked, and Mr O'Brien quoted, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not *charity*, it profiteth me nothing." The woman turned fiercely on him, asking if he meant to say that she had not been charitable; then came a boast of her alms-deeds. But a clearer view of true charity—*love*—was presented to her, as it stands in 1 Cor. xiii., and she shrank away from the test and joined her husband in his despair.

A poor old man sat crouching in a corner, from time to time sighing out, "Oh, 'tis too much, 'tis too much to expect."

"What, my friend, do you think too much to expect? Can I do anything for you?" said Mr O'Brien.

"Oh no, sir, not you, though I thank you. It is from God I want help, but how can I expect that He will pardon such a sinner as I have been. I have done nothing for His

glory. I have nothing to recommend me to Him, and yet I feel I cannot give Him up. Oh, this is distracting."

"My friend, you are right not to give God up, but I would entreat you to give up all thought of bringing before Him anything to commend you to His mercy. Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, wholly unfit to wear in the King's presence."

"But you see, sir, I used to think I was in a safe way, and I believe I tried in earnest to live well, but now everything I ever did seems so worthless that I dare not offer it to God, and how can I come naked before Him?"

"Jesus saith, 'I am the truth and the life: no man cometh to God but by Me.' Reckon you yourself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 'Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up, but by the deeds of the law no man can be justified.'"

"Thank you, thank you, sir; the words are blessed words, but you remember that verse which says, 'Cast out the unprofitable servant.' Oh! this is the thing that weighs me down."

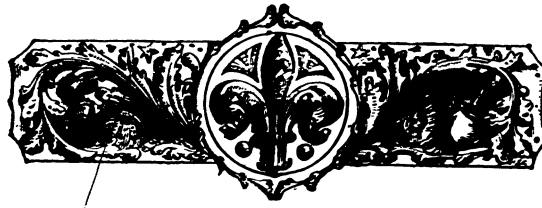
"It was not until Job acknowledged himself vile, and abhorred himself and repented, that he found peace with God. All his righteousnesses were cast behind him. His sufficiency was in God alone, and *then* he found rest for his soul, and so it must be with all. Christ our passover was sacrificed for us; His blood was shed to wash away our sins; and, clothed in His righteousness, we shall find reconciliation with God. We have all misspent our talents—buried them beneath our sins. There is none righteous,

no not one. But, blessed be God, those that repent of their sins and come to Him through Christ Jesus shall be saved. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, yes; how can I doubt it—it is written in God's Book. Oh, sir, from my heart I thank you. It was growing very dark with me indeed, but you have brought light. Do not let me keep you from the others; many a one of them need a word of comfort."

Mr O'Brien turned away with a heart filled with grateful joy; his thought was "A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble spirit."

Hours were spent in severe labour at the pumps; in the intervals his family were visited, and built up in their faith in their Heavenly Father's loving care for all His children. With them he enjoyed the most refreshing intercourse, and he found it hard sometimes to tear himself away, but they would not hinder his usefulness to others, and even his little darling boy, though now sinking very fast, would whisper, "Pa, try if you can tell somebody else about Jesus; I want more to come."



CHAPTER V.

Willie's Farewell.

"Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

—2 Kings iv. 26

A DAY and night of danger and alarm on the stormy deep had given way to a calm, bright morning; the water was glassy in its stillness. The wet sails flapped idly overhead, and the wearied men lay listlessly about. The captain had spoken applaudingly to them of their brave conduct during the tempest, and recommended rest after their wearing fatigue. Looks were exchanged during his short harangue, and many expressions of surprise and satisfaction escaped the lips of the sailors after he had gone to his cabin.

"He has turned over a new leaf, I say, and it's to be hoped he'll not go back again," said one.

"What's up now with our Cap.? Has he turned saint, I wonder?" laughed another.

"Well, I for one have no manner of objection to the sort of religion that treats one's fellow-creatures a little better than dogs; but, you see, I'm fearing we won't have time to get used to the new way,—it's likely it's just a calm before a storm, and we'd better 'look out.'"

Mr O'Brien, whose mission had not ended amongst the suffering people in the steerage, was passing at the time these comments were being gaily bandied about. He paused for a moment, and said, cheerfully, "Well, with you, my men, I hope the improvement will be lasting; and more than that, I *believe* it will, for I trust it is the Lord's work, and He will not leave it unfinished."

The men looked grave. The solemn impression made by the storm had not quite passed off, and they did not dare to scoff when the Lord's name was mentioned. Mr O'Brien hoped, too, that there was something more valuable in their solemn reception of his remark than a merely transitory sobriety of manner. After he had passed some time with his family, he repaired to the captain's cabin. He found no difficulty now in obtaining admittance—he was always welcome.

"Well, sir, how is my wise little friend to-day? I have not been to see him yet. How has he borne the storm?" was the introductory speech.

"Thank you, captain, my dear child is well—very well, though his little frame is fast breaking up."

"Oh, I know what you mean, sir; but if all had as fair a passage to eternity before us, and as much certainty of a

safe harbour, we needn't care much how soon the ship would go to staves. I'm weary of myself, and would be glad to think my voyage of life would soon end, if I could only believe it would end well. Your boy is one in ten thousand, I fancy. Would to God I had died when an innocent babe like him."

"But, my dear sir, my child's safety does not rest on his innocence; we are all born in sin, and even the infant could find no salvation had not Christ died for him. All have come short of the glory of God. There are none of any age righteous—no, not one. None independent of the sacrifice offered on the cross."

They conversed together for some time on this important subject, and then Mr O'Brien asked the captain to come over to them to see little Willie whenever he was at leisure. He came late in the afternoon. The child lay in his mother's lap. He was weaker than ever, and apparently asleep when Captain Kurtz entered their humble state-room. There was no chair to offer him, but he seated himself beside Willie, on a sea-chest. For several minutes there was nothing said, all gazed on the dying boy. The cabin was close, and the poor little fellow breathed with difficulty. The captain asked them to take him into the open air; the mother feared it would chill him; but he opened his eyes, looked around him, and said faintly, "Yes, take me up; let me see the sky." They carried him on deck, made a little bed of shawls, and laid him down. He looked long on the clear arch above him; his pallid lips moved, but gave forth no sound; his converse was with his Father in heaven. After a time his eyes fell on the

captain; he stretched out his little wasted hand towards him. It was tenderly pressed between the rough palms.

"I am glad you've come now. I am going up, I think, and I want you to promise to come too; won't you? I'd like it so much, and God always wants people to come to Him; that's the reason He sent His Son. You know that's the reason Jesus died. Wasn't it good of Him? Oh, I love Him so."

These broken sentences evidently cost the child much painful effort, but he was trying to do his Father's work. They had all come up with him, and now they knelt around him, endeavouring to catch each tone and look. His eyes passed from one face to another, till all had been fondly gazed on. Then they turned towards his mother, and his countenance immediately lighted up with joy.

"Tell them all to love Jesus. I often ask Him to love them, and I think He will. Oh, He can love so many, and love them always. See, papa, 'tis bright there again" (pointing to the setting sun), "but you said right—'tis brighter here!"

The little form was slightly raised, the arms thrown up, the lips moved once more and uttered "Jesus"—then all was profoundly still. The storm had indeed passed, the port was gained, and all was perfect peace!

CHAPTER VI.

How Love Steals into a Hard Heart.

"'Tis but a little thing,
Yet my heart sends it."

DO, madam, do, I entreat you, accept this poor service. It will be a great favour to me. It will be an honour." This was Captain Kurtz's manner of asking Mrs O'Brien's acceptance of his cabin as a resting-place for her child's remains during the rest of their time at sea. Land had been sighted, and it was expected that in a few hours they would enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This was joyful news to all, and gave the poor parents a hope that they might fulfil their child's wish to be laid in a little green grave. They accepted the captain's kind offer most thankfully. Within their own limits there was such a crowd that they had thought with pain of the

difficulty attending their best arrangements for their dead, but relief had been most considerately afforded them, and they thanked God for raising up this friend in need. A little sofa was arranged with the nicest care. Their best treasure of snow-white damask was drawn from its chest, and used to overspread everything around; then they carried their darling in, and laid him gently down with folded hands resting lightly on his pulseless heart. There was unspeakable sweetness in his face,—so calm, so grand!—those who gazed on it felt a spirit of reverence filling their hearts, and found it hard to turn away. Captain Kurtz lingered beside it hour after hour, only withdrawing through respect for the relatives' greater claims on the privilege.

The wind had so died away that the vessel made little progress, and it was feared it would be longer than they had hoped ere they could reach land, but the captain would not allow the O'Brien family to be distressed by this. He assured them that he felt confident that all in good time they should carry their precious burden to a quiet resting-place amongst the waving trees and verdant fields. There was a large amount of sympathy expressed by almost every soul on board, and by none more than the kind young physician who had shown the utmost devotion to the little sufferer, and had become a particular favourite with him.

The last hours of the voyage were closed, land gained, the disembarking commenced, and the seven weeks of travel across the Atlantic blended with eternity. What will they reveal at the judgment-day?

CHAPTER VII.

A Faithful Labour in God's Harvest.

"Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing more courageous, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in Heaven or earth. Because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God. Love is active, sincere, affectionate, courageous, patient, faithful, prudent, long suffering, manly, and never seeking itself; suffering, believing, hoping all things,—'God is love.' And so far as his image is reflected in man, so far is man of a loving mind."—*Thomas a Kempis.*

DOCTOR BAYNES landed in the pilot-boat, and hastened to make arrangements at the hotel recommended to him for the family of his friend. He then ascertained the residence of the clergyman, and requested him to come to the wharf to meet the O'Briens with their dead. The reverend gentleman was conversing at the time with a venerable-looking old man of simple earnest manners, who listened with interest to the request, and begged to be permitted to attend with his friend to the place appointed. This, of course, was complied with, and the little party wound through the strange steep streets descending to the river. They were just in time to meet the party

who came in the captain's boat. Little Willie's remains had been wrapped in a flag, and were borne by his father and brother along the wharf; then the captain and doctor begged to be allowed to take their places; and this was the manner of the O'Briens' arrival in Quebec.

There was no lack of sympathy for the afflicted family, for they had fallen amongst a kind, warm-hearted people, and the kindest of the kind was the good Bishop Stewart, the venerable old gentleman who had gone down with the doctor to meet the mourners. For many years he had in all lowliness and holy zeal delivered the gospel message to hundreds—nay, thousands—of Canadian settlers. He had left a home of wealth and luxury, companions of the highest rank, and opportunities of rapid promotion in the Church, all to fill the post of humble travelling missionary in the wilds of Canada, and faithfully did he discharge the important duties of his office. He loved the truth with his whole heart, and was diligent in season and out of season in propagating it. His unostentatious liberality was only bounded by his means of extending it, and when the Church deemed him a fit successor to the lamented Bishop Mountain, he assumed the office in all humility, and was known to the end of his holy career as a meek man of guileless spirit, much given to prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. His attached servant could truly tell of his master's prayerful habits, for often had he found him on his knees, with his Bible open before him; but the discovery rested not with him; all men around him took note that he had been with Jesus—it was marked in his daily walk. There was one who—coming to this Northern

Province in the depth of a severe winter, and but ill-prepared for the inclemency of the season—found a happy home beneath the hospitable roof of the good bishop, and had many opportunities of experiencing and witnessing his simple loving habits, and their pleasing results. When he discovered a want, arising from ignorance of the demands of the climate, in the most thoughtful, yet modest, way he contrived to supply it. Should he suspect that narrow means deprived his missionaries of essential comforts, his purse was ever at their disposal, and his fatherly counsels comforted and sustained them through many a trying hour. All men should pray the Lord to raise up such labourers for the harvest.

The little green grave was found, and Willie laid down there, in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection; then the family thought over the next steps to be taken in their long journey, for they purposed making their way to Upper Canada, and seeking a home somewhere on the shores of Ontario. Yet their ideas were indistinct; although they had read with interest many of the works of the day on the provinces, they had obtained no really practical views regarding their own settlement. Their chief object in going west was to ascertain, if possible, some tidings of a much-loved one from whom they had been separated by most distressing circumstances. In an early chapter we alluded to the eldest son of the family, but have not since mentioned his name. It was a subject never openly discussed before the young people, Mr and Mrs O'Brien deeming it wiser to refrain from exciting hopes which might never be realised; and, moreover, there were peculi-

arities in the case which they thought it better not to draw attention to—until they might be better understood, at least. Moira was the only one of the children who was fully aware of the facts of the case, or rather of such facts as had transpired. She was but two years younger than Darcy, the first-born, and had been his loving and loved companion from childhood, until they were separated by Darcy's going to an English school, and afterwards to Cambridge University; but gladly was the affectionate intercourse renewed on every possible occasion, and much were his vacations longed for as seasons of peculiar enjoyment in the family. It was usual for Darcy to ask and obtain permission to bring home with him one of his favourite fellow-students, to join in his sporting excursions among the mountains or on the bay, and many a day of pleasure was spent by the youths, with Murty for their attendant; climbing the steep sides of the lofty peaks, more in pursuit of adventure and scenery than of game; and great was Moira's delight as the returned ramblers spread before her splendid specimens of her favourite mountain flowers, or enriched her collection of the curious weeds of the ocean. But a time came when all this happiness was to end. The long vacation, as usual, brought to Cliff Lodge the two light-hearted young men. Darcy had been very successful in his studies, and came home rich in the honours of his college. George Forrester, too, had done well; and both were in the best spirits, and met with a hearty welcome. Their first evening, however, was interrupted by a visitor whose arrival did not appear to give much pleasure to any of the party; nevertheless Mr M—— seemed de-

termined to enjoy himself, and certainly was bent on monopolising Moira's society. This disconcerted more than one of the company. Forrester evidently did not approve of it, and was pleased to find his friend Moira ill at ease and dull, whilst courtesy constrained her to entertain her visitor.

On Darcy's finding himself alone with his mother he asked, abruptly, "What brings that worthless fellow here? Does father ask him?"

Mrs O'Brien said gravely, "No, Darcy, he comes without any invitation, and I think without any welcome, but he is persistent, and will not take a rebuff."

"Then he shall have a stronger one, which he cannot avoid understanding," said Darcy.

"Nay, my son, beware of rashness. I have no doubt your father will arrange it all well. I prefer much, too, leaving it in his hands."

Her son shrugged his shoulders and looked dubious, but said nothing more.

The next day, as he was setting out with his friend and Murty for a long sail, he whispered Moira something which brought the bright colour to her cheeks; she looked at him pleadingly, but could not say a word, as Forrester stood beside her. She watched her brother and friend from the door-step as long as they were unhidden by the cliffs, and then returned slowly to her room, where she remained long in silent meditation. Dora came to tell her that Mr M—— was in the drawing-room, but she declined going down. She afterwards heard that his vexation at this was undisguised, but she heeded it not.

The young men were not expected till six or seven o'clock in the evening. The day was as full of occupation as usual, and soon passed over. Then there were little extra preparations made for the sailors, and an abundant supper awaited them, but they came not. There were numerous surmises as to the cause of their delay, but none of them very satisfactory, for Darcy had promised certainly to be home at seven at furthest, and they had not gone in the direction of any friends likely to detain them; however, the family tried their best to quiet fear, and retired to their beds expressing a hope of being roused by the truants; but no—morning dawned, and the missing ones were unheard of. Mr O'Brien, now seriously alarmed, called several of his men together, and told them of his anxiety. They immediately volunteered to go out in search, some in boats, others across the high point which lay between the cottage and a small inlet, which abounded in fish, and might possibly have tempted the young sportsmen to linger. Mr O'Brien climbed the highest cliffs along the shore, and turned his telescope in every direction, but in vain. He then returned to hear of equal failure from others. Biddy fully shared in the anxiety, not only for her brother but her master's son and young guest. She, however, unselfishly concealed her own fears, and tried to allay those of others. She had made several excursions during the day in pursuit of information, if nothing else; had looked into numerous cabins to make inquiry, but gained no satisfaction; and now the second evening was closing in, and the friends continued in a state of the greatest alarm.

Several gentlemen had been called on, and made acquainted with the circumstances, and all joined in the search. At length a meeting was held before a magistrate to decide on what had better be done, and George Forrester's mother was written to on the subject. The young man was the only child of a widowed mother. Whilst the gentlemen were sitting in consultation, Murty rushed in and gave utterance to the wildest and most incoherent exclamations of grief and terror. It was long before he could be calmed. His sister had met him in one of her wanderings, and insisted on his accompanying her to the house in which she knew her master was. She had gleaned little from his broken statements, but was anxious to save her mistress the shock of seeing him till more was ascertained. The moment the poor lad beheld his master all his fortitude gave way, and he literally raved and writhed until exhaustion quieted him, then they drew from him all he seemed to remember clearly. It was this, that as the sail-boat, in which were his young master, George Forrester, and himself, had neared the opposite shore of the long, narrow bay, about four miles from the lodge, they perceived a small row-boat putting out and approaching them. There was not much wind under the shelter of the high shore, so that they made little way, and the boat soon reached them; then they perceived that it contained young M——, who stood up and used most insulting language to them. They were irritated, but unwilling to engage in a serious quarrel; so took no notice of the rudeness, but prepared to steer out into the current, which they knew would soon carry them beyond the sound of his voice. This

appeared to increase his anger, and just as the larger boat had crossed his bow, he flung an oar violently at young O'Brien, but in doing so lost his balance and fell overboard. The moment O'Brien and Forrester perceived the accident they made every effort to afford assistance, but in the strangest way lost sight of M——, after having seen him rise once above water. Whilst their boat was in the powerful current it was almost impossible to stop it, and it took a few moments to get again into still water, and in that short time M—— had entirely vanished. The dismay of the three young men was very great. They wished with all their hearts to discover and rescue the unfortunate M——, but nothing of him was to be seen, and his boat had drifted down towards the open sea. In this sad dilemma they were glad to hear voices on the cliffs, and called loudly to several men, and waved their hands towards them, telling them to meet them on the nearest spot at which they could land. This some of them did, but in such a furious mood that the young gentlemen were alarmed. As they were preparing to leave the boat, accusations of murder were hurled at them, and so much violence threatened, that they changed their minds, and pushed out once more into the current, and were quickly out of hearing, but much depressed and harassed.

What was now to be done? The first idea was to make the best of their way home, but this must be a tedious business, for both tide and wind were against a return. Next they thought of landing and walking home; this seemed the most feasible plan; but scarcely had they decided on it when the idea struck Darcy that the men

who had so loudly accused them of murder would probably seek them at their own house, and sad trouble might arise; so they decided on concealing themselves for a time, and sending Murty, if possible, to the lodge with an explanation of all that had happened. Accordingly they landed him, gave him instructions, and drawing up the boat into a little secluded nook, they sat down on the bank to consider further how to dispose of themselves for some hours. They had brought lunch with them; this they ate, and were preparing, after an hour's pause, to start towards some remote shelter which Murty had recommended. It was agreed that he was to look for them there as soon as it was advisable for them to show themselves. They reached the cabin—a miserable one—composed simply of mud walls and a very imperfect roof of heather, in which was a large opening to answer the purpose of chimney, and a square of rough pavement immediately beneath. On this burned a few pieces of drift-wood, probably from some wreck, and crouching over the embers was an emaciated old woman, the only inhabitant of the hovel, which was miles away from any other human habitation. There was not anything very inviting in this prospect, but the young men saw nothing they could do just then but to sit down patiently, and hope for speedy relief. But although relief came not with him, Murty soon made his appearance, long before he could possibly have accomplished the run to the lodge and back again. The poor fellow was in the greatest agitation, and told them to flee for their lives, for the constables were out after them, accompanied by a crowd of men far more to be feared than the law officers, led on as

they were by the same fellows who had first called them murderers.

But what do they mean? 'Tis better for us to face them at once and throw their accusation to the dogs, than skulk here like real criminals. Such was the feeling of both the gentlemen; but poor Murty prayed and begged them to lie hidden.

"Shure, yer honours, they swear they saw ye throwin' Mr M—— into the wather, and thin sailin' off, and who's to prove that ye didn't? My word nor yer own won't vally a thrawneen. Oh, gintlemen, stay where ye are, or go farther off, but don't come next nor nigh them fiery villains, they'll swear yer lives away as shure as I'm here."

The wretched old creature hanging over the fire had listened in silence to all, but now turned towards Murty and uttered some sentences so rapidly in Irish that no one but himself could catch their meaning, but it evidently confirmed his fear of his young master's returning, and again he entreated him to keep out of sight. At last it was agreed that they should remain where they were until they heard from Darcy's father; so they dismissed poor Murty once more, and it was on his reappearance near the lodge that Biddy met him, almost famished from fatigue and want of food. He had been constrained to lie by hour after hour by the sight of groups of men who seemed posted about in every direction, and were evidently intent on mischief, from the little he could hear of their talk.

You have now the substance of Murty's explanation to

his master and the other gentlemen assembled, perhaps in rather a more lucid form than the original, and with some slight additions which were afterwards supplied. Possessed of this information, those considering the subject decided on sending at once to the house of young M——'s parents, requesting them to throw any light they could on this mysterious affair, which, of course, must be brought as fully as possible before the proper authorities for investigation.

The M—— family lived on the shore, a few miles from the lodge, and not far from the steep rugged rocks under which the terrible accident occurred. An answer was soon returned, but of the most unsatisfactory nature; in fact, it was but a violent reiteration of the charge first brought against young O'Brien and his friend by the savage men on the cliffs.

Mr M—— positively refused to unite with the other gentlemen in the examination of the affair, but was loud in his threats of vengeance, and in denunciations against every Protestant in the country, he himself being a bigoted Roman Catholic.

As soon as Mr O'Brien found he could with any propriety leave the magistrate's house, he hurried back to his own, knowing well how much his poor family stood in need of comfort.

Murty had been detained as a witness, but had mentioned to Biddy the arrangement made in the old woman's cabin, and the girl now offered to convey any letter or message her master chose to send. The way was long and solitary, and the parts through which she must pass pro-

bably watched by the declared enemy, yet she did not shrink from giving this proof of her affection and gratitude to those through whose means she had received such blessings. The hesitation was all on their part; they dreaded exposing the faithful creature to danger, yet knew not to whom besides to intrust so delicate a commission. Mr O'Brien deemed it imprudent to write lest his letter should increase Biddy's risk; so at length it was reluctantly decided to instruct her fully, and then leave her to explain all to the young men if she should be permitted to reach them. It was too dark now to think of setting out; but at dawn of morning Biddy was ready, and with a basket of provisions, which it was thought were much needed by the absent ones, and a clear message in her mind, she set out cheerfully; and although she saw several wild-looking men from time to time as she pursued her rugged way, succeeded, after some hours' toil, in reaching the isolated hovel. But there a bitter disappointment awaited her; the young gentlemen had left during the night, and the old woman, who still retained her watch over the embers, only rocked herself to and fro, and muttered in Irish something that was unintelligible to Biddy whenever she questioned her. All that could be gained from her for a considerable time was, that they had gone away in the night.

"Was nobody at all at all here since they came?" asked Biddy.

No answer; the rocking went on, with occasional groans as an accompaniment.

"Thin musha, Peggy, can't ye be afther raisonin' wid

me, an' not be like a dumb baste there, convarsin' wid thim few cinders. Shure an' I 'll make ye up a rousin' fire in no time, if ye'll only jist spake the few words I want to hear."

This seemed to affect the old creature somewhat; she stretched her skinny arms over the smouldering fire, and shivered, muttering in her native tongue—

"Oh, heat 's good."

"Thin heat ye 'll have, if that 's all ye want to loosen yer jaws."

So the girl left the cabin in pursuit of fuel, which was scarce in these wilds. At length, in despair, she ran down to the shore, to try if any pieces of plank or other remnants of wrecked vessels might be found there, and succeeded in picking up an armful, which she carried up to the hut. As she entered, she perceived a small scrap of paper fastened to the lintel with a pin, and her curiosity induced her to take it down, when she found that there were on it a few lines within in pencil, and signed Darcy. Of course, she considered this her master's property, and, without reading it, concealed it in a corner of her apron. The fire was made, and proved a bright one; and although the shrivelled hand was shaken deprecatingly each time a fresh stick was added, yet the glowing warmth soon revived the wretched creature, who so much needed it.

"Good! oh, 'tis good!" she muttered again and again.

Biddy thought she would seize the opportunity of this better mood to put a few more questions. Still grunts were the only reply; till at last, as a desperate means of arousing the old woman, she asked suddenly—

"Peggy, what 's come of Peter?"

An electric shock could not have produced more instantaneous effects. Peggy trembled violently, tossed up her arms, threw back her head, muttering cries, almost shrieks, the while. Then turning fiercely on Biddy, she poured forth a torrent of invective, her face betraying every appearance of rage and hatred. Biddy had withdrawn to a safe corner; she knew pretty well the effect her question would produce, and did not care to be within arm's length of the infuriated woman. After allowing the rage to spend itself, she approached, and taking the poor trembling hands of the creature, who was now exhausted and passive, she gently pressed her down into her seat; and kneeling before her, she said soothingly—

"Arrah, Peggy, what for won't ye thrust me, that 's yer own flesh and blood? Don't ye know me for your brother's child? An' do you think I 'd be afther bethrayin' the worst of my people? Oh no, Peggy; it 's not come to that wid me. It 's in me heart to help ye if I could; and shure that 's one raison why I brought up Peter. Isn't he my own first cousin? An' wouldn't it be rale plasin' to me any day to own him afore the whole world? An' I hope I 'll do it yet."

The poor old woman had gradually softened in appearance; her impatient grunts had turned to heavy sighs, and now she fairly broke into sobs, while tears, which were rare with her, coursed down her wrinkled face.

"Thin maybe ye would, maybe ye would; but it 's few that are willin' to look lovin' on my poor boy now; and where 's the wonder, when his own mother disowns him?

Ochone, ochone! but they put it on me. Shure, didn't they tell me if ever I spoke a civil word to him, unless he came back to the old thrue Church, that they'd let the divil fly away with me, body and sowl, and send the boy to keep me company? Ochone, ochone! and haven't I to shut me eyes when the shadow of him comes across the door, and cover up me head for fear of seeing him, when the poor heart brings me the bit of food he's starvin' for hisself, and niver a one word passes me lips to him when he kneels on thim stones, and prays to God, and coaxes meself? Oh, 'tis breakin' my heart intirely! I wish I was under the sod, out of this misery!"

Here the desolate being wailed so piteously, that Biddy's heart ached, and tears flowed fast. She hardly knew what to say; yet to listen in silence seemed to her heartless.

"Peggy agrah, I'm thinkin' that if you an' Peter was jist to make up yer minds firm and lave the counthry intirely, 'twould be the best plan. An' I'm certain shure the masther would help ye; he's good to all that'll let him."

Here Peggy gasped out, "Oh but, Biddy, wasn't it him that brought all the throuble on me an' the boy? Didn't himself and the misthress put the heresy into his head, an' wasn't that the beginnin' an' the ind of it all? An' now my pace is gone!"

Biddy rarely spoke of her own experience. Her truly humble mind, shrank from the idea of commending herself to others by dwelling on her progress in holiness; and as for her shortcomings and sins of every other class, she brought them with a bowed-down heart before God's

mercy-seat, and earnestly sought to have them washed away in the blood of the Lamb. But God's cause was very dear to her; and there were times when she felt as if it might be advanced by telling of the great things He had done for her soul; and then with an inward prayer to be kept in a lowly spirit, she ventured on the subject, guarding against the desire for praise, and not holding up herself, but God's dealings with her, for the edification of her fellows. Such was her frame of mind now as she told poor Peggy of the many blessings which God had granted her through the faithful teaching she had received in Mrs O'Brien's school, and in her family home. And by degrees she turned to the forbidden topic of Peter's conversion, and in her heart she thanked her heavenly Father that she might with perfect truth speak of the persecuted lad as one who had indeed been born again. She reminded his mother of his early waywardness, his reckless idleness, being contented to live on her hard earnings, and see her wear out her strength in order to procure food for him, whilst he indulged in every evil taste, and wholly neglected his duty to her. With all this she contrasted the subdued respectful manner he gradually acquired towards her and others; the patient industry and self-denial he exhibited; the carefulness for her comfort, and anxiety for her change of heart; the meekness and purity of his language, instead of his former profanity and jestings, which were not convenient. All this she dwelt on with the afflicted mother, till that mother's heart melted within her, and a hope that all was not lost sprung up to sustain her. Biddy then repeated from memory (for it had been well stored) several

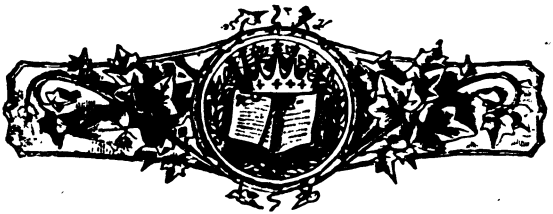
passages of Scripture which, far better than any human words, taught the bruised heart, and healed it as they taught.

Once more she talked of emigration to her, and offered to ask Mr O'Brien's advice; and the poor old timid woman at length consented to this; and laying her hand on Biddy's, she said—

"I did not think I'd ever tell mortal what I heard from poor Peter's lips, or ever as much as acknowledge I'd seen him; but now, my girl, I'll not hide it, an' I know you'll not betray me or him. The night the young gintlemen came to my poor hut—'twas bare enough, no sticks for the fire, no food for my cravings, and I was sick in my heart, and sick in my poor bones—I could scarce sit up on the stool, and hadn't the spirit to look out for anything, so I thought I must die; and a poor welcome I gave them,—as bad as you got. They spoke civil and soft; and although I wouldn't answer them, I couldn't help thinking how much better their behaviour was than what I met with from them that has me in hand to do for my soul, as themselves say; but I was stubborn, and wouldn't talk, so they laid themselves down on the floor and slept for a while, till some one up pulled the latch, and came in. I knew 'twas Peter, though my eyes didn't see him, and he didn't come empty. He laid down a little bundle close to me, and said in his lovin' way, 'God save all here,' but I had no 'Save ye kindly' for him; so he looked wonderin' at the gintlemen, and asked when they came, but I darn't speak. He looked as if he was thinkin' for a while, and then he woke up Mr Darcy, and told him the boys was up all over the

hills lookin' out for him, and he 'd never get off with his life if he didn't run at once. Mr Darcy told the other one, and they talked, and then asked Peter where they ought to go to. He said there was such a lot out huntin' for them, that it wouldn't be easy to get off at all; but maybe, if they went to R——, they might find a schooner there, and hide on board her. This seemed a good plan, and they agreed to it, and asked Peter to let the family know, but Mr Darcy tore a slip of paper out of a little book, and wrote a word or two on it, and gave it to Peter, and he said he 'd take it to the Lodge, but first he went to see them a piece of the way to R——, and as he was goin' out he stuck the paper in the door, and I 've never seen his face since, and I 'm fearin' the boys have caught him, and there 's an end of us both. I hope I 'll be forgiven for tellin' you all; but somehow you got over me when you talked lovin' of the lad."

Biddy must go. She left the contents of her basket with Peggy, kissed the poor worn face, and turned on her way homeward, wondering at the work she had found to do in the lonely hut.



CHAPTER VIII.

The New Home.

"But there are storms within
That heave the struggling heart with wilder din
And there are power and love,
The maniac's rushing frenzy to reprove;
And when he takes his seat,
Clothed and in calmness at his Saviour's feet,
Is not the power as strange, the love as blest,
As when He said, 'Be still,' and ocean sank to rest."

MANY months passed without the slightest tidings of the missing ones. It came to be a received conviction that young M—— had been really flung into the sea by intention, and Darcy O'Brien and his friend were regarded as murderers by the majority. Some ventured to urge in extenuation that the violent domineering temper of young M—— had probably provoked them; but this did not absolve them from the dread crime.

The M—— family bore their loss strangely. When amongst Protestants they spoke most revengefully, and bewailed their bereavement in the most extravagant manner, but it was said that in their daily habits there was no change, nor appear-

ance of sorrow. Not so in the O'Brien family. Their deep tribulation marked every hour, every act. The mother's health failed, and the father, with all his unselfish efforts to conceal it, lost strength and spirits. The children, too, shared in the melancholy change; and this it was which first aroused the parents. They saw that something must be done at once to break in on the gloom which was settling down on their home.

It is true that they had not forgotten God in the day of trouble, nor had their heavenly Father forsaken them, but they were in the furnace, and the fire was exceeding fierce—not for their destruction, but truly for their purification, for God loved them, and had received them as sons.

After thinking over many plans for the family benefit, without being able to decide on any, their thoughts were thrown into a particular channel by the arrival of a letter from Peter, who, under Mr O'Brien's kind patronage, had been sent to Canada with his mother shortly after Biddy's interview in the mountain cabin. The letter was to Murty (now freed from restraint). It told of a prosperous voyage, and early employment in the Lower Province, which enabled the young man to support his mother comfortably; but he said he had lately heard something (as it seemed, accidentally) which made him suppose that Mr Darcy O'Brien and his young friend were in the Upper Province, and that, with his mother's approval, he was preparing to go there, and make a new home. The old woman had rallied so much from the time she left Ireland that she was not afraid of the journey, and expressed the strongest

desire to see after the young gentleman for his *father's and mother's sake.*

This letter at once decided their plans, and soon preparations were commenced for emigration. It was at this point that our story opened; but in order to make the Canadian part of the little family history more distinct, we returned to the period at which the severest of their trials commenced. We may now pursue our travellers on their way from Quebec to Kingston, but must not linger to describe all the magnificent scenery, the rising towns, the extensive public works in their commencement, and very many other objects which interested them. The journey in those days was not easily accomplished. There were no luxurious floating palaces to carry one over the waters. The Durham boats and a few small steamers were the only available means of transportation by water, and these had not much to boast of in the way of comfort. However, our friends were thankful for everything, even of the humblest kind, which facilitated their movements. They longed for quiet, and rejoiced in the hope of enjoying it in its simplest form. The one great grief which had befallen them since they left their country was so blended with consolation, that they never spoke of it as a misfortune, and their hope of finding a lost son grew stronger as they approached the part of the colony in which they trusted he might be. It seemed very strange to them that they had never heard from Darcy, yet they would not nurse evil surmises, nor dim their hopes by dwelling on painful possibilities. Hope for time and hope for eternity they regarded as their privi-

lege, and they enjoyed them wisely. They were much comforted by the improved appearance of their dear children, and the children rejoiced to observe returning vigour and health in their beloved parents. So a quiet happiness pervaded the family; and thus they escaped in a great measure the sinking emptiness of heart and sour discontent which but too often render the first few months of emigrant life a misery. Biddy and Murty (who had derived their ideas of British America from those in their own rank whose friends had emigrated to the United States, and written home wild accounts of what they had heard rather than seen) were vastly surprised, and very often disappointed. They conceived the whole North American continent as possessed of but *one* climate, *similar* natural productions, and the inhabitants perfectly alike in habits and pursuits; so that they were not conscious of any absurdity in asking permission to go into orchards to gather a few oranges, for hadn't Pat Doolan, who went to Ameriky two years ago, written home to say he could get lots of lemons and oranges for the pickin' of them, and that there were whole fields of grapes? And Murty's expectation of employment in the cotton plantations was only marred by the fear of the niggers who came in droves to work for the white man. Various and extravagant were the blunders these simple people were continually making, but they were always kindly corrected, and the youngest of the family even knew better than to wound their feelings by rude ridicule. They remembered the injunction, "Be courteous," and were not so ill-taught as to suppose this courtesy was to be extended exclusively

to those equal to them in social position. Mr O'Brien had listened attentively to the many discussions carried on at the public tables connected with settlement in the colonies, and when he met with any person of particular intelligence or experience in such things, he ventured to request a little further information, and rarely was denied it. He greatly enjoyed the friendly, frank manners of those into whose society mere accident of travel threw him, and concluded in his own mind that many opportunities of showing kindness and speaking a word in season were lost through the needless frigidity of manner it was deemed proper to assume in the old countries towards all to whom you had no formal introduction; and Mrs O'Brien, although she carefully cultivated modest diffidence in her daughters, and guarded them against undue familiarity, yet never objected to the interchange of little polite attentions and obliging courteousness with those about them. She listened with interest to gay, animated conversation when the subject was useful, or at least perfectly unobjectionable; but levity, frivolity in any form, she never permitted in her own children, and if it were introduced by others, she instantly took steps to subdue it. Witticisms drawn from the Scriptures their parents abhorred, and the young people never indulged in them themselves, nor did they smile at them from others. They knew too well that a light use of sacred things was profane and offensive to God. But whilst we tell of sentiments and habits, we allow our travellers to make great strides towards their western goal. They had brought out a few introductory letters to some gentlemen supposed to be living about

London, and expected to be able to deliver them within a circuit of a few miles; but experience taught them that friends at home (Great Britain) had not the most accurate ideas of Canadian localities. Then there was one addressed to "Mr P——, Gore District, Shore of Lake Ontario;" and many others with equally indefinite directions. However, after sundry inquiries and much amusement, places were discovered and letters presented, and invariably did kind, hearty welcomes follow. On one occasion, when Mr O'Brien had been constrained by circumstances to partake of a gentleman's hospitality for several days, and knowing that there was but a light purse to supply the wants of a large family, he tried, in the most delicate manner, to induce his host to accept some little remuneration; but the laughing answer was, "Why, my dear sir, it is *I* rather who should offer a handsome compensation for the pleasure your society has afforded;" and invitations for weeks or months were given, in all sincerity, to his wife and children; but home, though in a rude Canadian shanty, was the grand object. In order to be the less hindered in his own movements, and to spare his family as much fatigue as possible, Mr O'Brien hired a small house in London, Canada West, and placed them there; then he set out with his son Edgar to reconnoitre, and, if possible, decide on "a location."

His first day's journey brought him to Delaware, a small village on the Thames. There he inquired for the pastor, to whom he had a few lines from a mutual friend. He was easily found; every one knew him, and all who knew, loved the simple-hearted, upright old gentleman. He was living

most happily, with his beloved wife and child, in a very humble log-cottage, a little distance from the village, and made his visitor cordially welcome; but although he took much pains to show and recommend the neighbourhood, Mr O'Brien thought it wise to see further before he decided. He then continued his journey to Adelaide, where he also met with a most courteous reception from the most estimable Christian gentleman who had charge of the mission amongst the members of the Episcopal Church; and long were these two visits remembered with pleasure, and gladly was Christian intercourse renewed with the kind-hearted entertainers whenever circumstances permitted. But the home was not yet attained, nor had any tidings of the two young wanderers reached their anxious friends, and the summer was passing away. A Canadian summer, with its intensity of heat, its luxuriance, its pressing claims for effort in the open field, even under the scorching sun, and its appeal for more labourers to share the toil of the coming harvest,—these were the forms in which the first summer presented itself to the *new comers*, and they confessed themselves in some degree intimidated; but no one of them would yield to selfish regrets, so all gained courage, and courage, the emigrants of early days, and perhaps of the present days also, decidedly need. There were difficulties to be encountered, habits (many of them laborious) to be acquired, privations to be borne, enjoyments to be relinquished, uncomfortable extremes in climate to be endured; still, in Canada, might be found a fair share of prosperity, with God's blessing, if sought aright. The indolent or thriftless, the self-indulgent or intemperate, the wilfully

ignorant man, can scarcely succeed in making a prosperous home in any land, least of all in Canada. After a long ramble to the north-west, Mr O'Brien returned to tell his family he had purchased a farm on the shore of Lake Huron, not far from the little promising village of Goderich. They all rejoiced, and they would have had brighter thoughts still, had they known that some clue to the wanderings of the fugitives had been obtained; but Mr O'Brien refrained from telling them of it; there was still so much uncertainty clouding his information. They had prudently taken the house by the week, and contented themselves with the simplest accommodation,—the furniture, of which they had purchased a small supply in Toronto, had been left in its packings ready for removal to the home; their bedding, sea-chests, and a few indispensables, satisfied them for the present. They were cheerfully helpful to each other, and not disposed to murmur at anything.

The first Sabbath was a delight to them, and found them all in the house of God, where they heard a faithful declaration of the truth as it is in Jesus. As yet there had not been a church erected, but service was held in the Court-house, and the room was crowded; but the congregation wore a singular appearance in the eyes of those newly arrived. The fashions of a century back mingled with more modern costume. Young girls wore their great-grandmother's "best cloak" or "new bonnet," of eighty or ninety years' standing. Those treasures had been brought from the *old country*, and were hoarded with the most scrupulous care, and handed down as heir-looms. "The cloth was first-class; it had cost a heap of money, and was

bought in the best shop in the town." With such traditions attached to each article, how could they be despised? Nevertheless, the entire effect was grotesque, and the young people were inclined to be amused, but the deep gravity of their parents' and eldest sister's manner rebuked them, and they remembered they were in the Lord's presence, and felt ashamed of the momentary levity.

At the close of service they had several friendly salutations, usually accompanied with an inoffensive question or two, such as—"You're lately from the old country, eh?" "Not long out, eh?" "You're pretty much strangers, ain't you?" winding up with a welcome, and an assurance that "It's a fine country for folks that's willing to work, and isn't weakly." These were the greetings of the "old settlers." The more recent arrivals pretended to more style; but it is doubtful if this compensated for the absence of the simple heartiness of manner which the naturalised inhabitants extended to strangers. In conversing with some persons, who seemed familiar with the country about the upper lakes, Mr O'Brien was much reconciled to his purchase on Huron, although it was so far from the position in which he had first thought of settling. The shores of Ontario had been recommended to him, but he had found it difficult to obtain the class of farm there that his friends suggested. On the upper lake, lands were cheaper, and he was assured equally good, and this, with some other motives, influenced his choice.

The 15th of July found our party lodged in "The New Home." It was a large double shanty—that is, there were two lengths of logs used for the length of the house. Within,

there was but one partition, which divided the whole into two nearly equal-sized rooms. There was chinking of moss and mud between the logs, which, dropping out here and there, did not very perfectly exclude either wind or rain. The mansion boasted of three windows and two doors, the latter precisely opposite each other, and opening on the street, as they called the yards in that neighbourhood. The dividing partition did not possess anything more than a doorway. There was a huge chimney, with a gaping mouth opening wide to the sky; a large rough flag for hearth; and a ladder in the corner by which to ascend to the unceiled loft—the roof was of moss-grown shingles; and a little lean-to at the gable, with a deep covering of sod—this was the dairy. At a short distance from the front door was the well, with its long pole for drawing up the bucket; a little narrow shed to protect the bee-hives; and a strange-looking little stone building, half oven, half smoke-house. This completes the description of the dwelling-house and its attachments.

They all stood on the bank of the lake—an almost perpendicular cliff, commanding a wide view of the noble fresh-water sea. The occupation of the first half-hour within the walls was praise and prayer. Glad young voices arose in sweet psalmody, led by the solemn tones of their grateful parents. The only tears of regret shed in that hour were by Murty and his sister; and they wept not for themselves, but for the family.

"Ochone, ochone! that born ladies an' gintlemen should be brought to this. Shure, thin, it 's not too good for their pigstye."

"O Murty avick! what'll become of thim? Will they ever get over it? And there's the puzzle of the world—the misthress an' the young ladies jist smilin' on everything as if it was nothing at all. I'm fair bate this time. Where do you think they'll put the drawin'-room, an' the parlour, an' the masther's study, an' the ladies' mornin' room, an the misthress's dressin'-room, an' all thim other rooms that ladies like thim can niver do widout. Tell me that, Murty avick! an' I'll say yer as wise as St Pathrick."

But Murty, notwithstanding this touching appeal, did not undertake to make such intricate architectural arrangements. He sighed profoundly, however, and proposed bilin' the pitaties.

"Bilin' thim! an' I'd like to know how we're to bile thim, now, widout any livin' thing in the shape of a grate or a crane, or a jack or a"——

"Och! stop now, Biddy; be aisy. Shure didn't ye bile thim all the time at mother's widout any of thim things, and didn't they ate as swate as a nut?"

"Murty, I'm ashamed of ye! Shure, thin, ye wouldn't be afther evenin' our bit of a cabin to the respect the misthress has a good right to? But come along, at all evints, an' bile the pitaties."

This was the beginning of Biddy's household cares in the new home. The potatoes, boiled in a pot which hung from a rope fastened some distance up the chimney to a cross pole, ate, after all, "as swate as a nut."

But although the family were very cheerfully content for the present, they by no means intended to leave things unimproved; and very soon there was an evident change

for the better. Rooms were subdivided, doors supplied, the loft made habitable, the walls sheeted inside with thin boards, shelves and racks put up, cupboards contrived in corners, and shutters put on the windows, which were enlarged so as to admit sufficient light for convenience and health. The flooring was also renewed, and a little cooking shed put outside one of the doors, so that Biddy had the satisfaction of feeling herself in "her own place," and not "pushin' up with the family." All these improvements were made "between times"—that is, on rainy days or in hours when it was not necessary to be abroad in the fields or woods.

The settlement around the new home was a thriving though new one. Several skilful farmers, from England and Scotland, had succeeded in making "large clearances," and were "getting things snug." They possessed means enough to be liberal in their purchases of things most useful on their farms. They all had oxen and horses, cows and pigs. Sheep had fared so badly amongst the wolves and an occasional visit from a bear, that few cared to try them again. There was a keen eye for the profit. Work, work, was the general motto; money, money, the leading motive. Young and old worked late and early: both knew, or thought they knew, the value of money, and were bent on getting it. They considered not that those who make haste to be rich fall into a snare; in fact, they considered nothing but how to get gain; and what they considered *gain*, was nothing but things which perish with *time*, and might at any moment make to themselves wings and fly away.

It was a matter of painful surprise to Mr O'Brien, to find so many empty seats in the house of God each service. For a time he could not understand it. He knew that there were families enough around professedly members of the Church, who, if they attended, would nearly fill their place of worship. They were strong, healthy people, with few exceptions. They worked indefatigably during the week in the fields or woods, and yet when Sunday came they were not to be seen, unless, indeed, passing along to spend the afternoon with a neighbour, who, of course, having to receive them hospitably, must give up public worship also—thus preferring the pleasure of sin for a season to the service of the living God. As intimacy with his neighbours increased, he understood more of this, and ventured, in a kind, respectful manner, to expostulate with them regarding it. He told them how those that robbed God of His Sabbaths robbed themselves of God's favour, and though they might seem to prosper for a time without seeking His blessing, destruction was ever at hand, though they saw it not. They were trusting in their own arm, and believing that by their own might of industry and skill they secured wealth. But who can boast of to-morrow? Who knoweth what a day may bring forth?

He was listened to civilly, but his hearers seemed to think they had good reasons to urge in excuse for their neglect of public worship.

They said, "Their horses, poor brutes, were pretty well used-up by the hurry of the week, and they did not feel like doing more themselves than the jobs that had to be done, whatever turned up, feeling tired with hard work."

Mr O'Brien listened attentively, and then commended industry, and applauded care and consideration for the "dumb brute;" but reminded the farmers that by overworking themselves and the animals during the week, and thus rendering both unfit for God's service on Sunday, they deliberately denied God's claim in that service, and preferred their own worldly profits; and he asked them solemnly how they could expect God's blessing on anything which they did, *knowing that it would hinder them from approaching Him in the way He had appointed and commanded.*

Some of them said that, after all, they thought people might be very good without going to public worship; and wasn't the Bible as good in their own houses as anywhere else? and couldn't people pray at home just as well as abroad?

Mr O'Brien asked if they remembered the example set by the Saviour, a man of toil indeed. "'His custom was to go into the synagogue (place of worship) on the Sabbath-day' (Luke iv. 16). St Paul, who was no idler in his Master's service, '*reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath-day*' (Acts xviii. 5). The Hebrews were exhorted 'not to forsake the *assembling* of themselves together.' Then there were blessings poured out on those who met together for prayer and praise. 'And when the disciples had prayed, the place was shaken where they were *assembled together;* and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost' (Acts iv. 31); 'And on the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were *assembled* for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto

them, Peace be unto you' (John xx. 19). And, my friends, just ask yourselves how the time is really spent when, without any sufficient cause, you remain away from public worship. It is easy to say, We *can* pray at home; but the thing is, *Do* you pray at home? Is it likely that, when you grudge God the time He requires from you in His holy house, that He will grant you His Spirit? and without it, prayer is but a mockery. There are works of positive necessity which He permits us to perform on the Sabbath, but everything beyond these dishonours God and His sacred day."

"And do you mean to say, Mr O'Brien, that it is a sin to hold a little friendly intercourse with our neighbours or friends on Sunday, either going to them, or having them to come to us?"

"God says, 'If thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it'" (Isa. lviii. 13, 14).

There was silence—the words of the Lord were unanswerable, and, however reluctant to be governed by them, none gainsaid them.

Each day brought forth something to excite Biddy's regret and surprise. It was impossible for her to accomplish all the duties which she conceived properly belonged to a

servant, and when she saw her mistress and the young ladies engaging in the performance of them, she was terribly distressed, and often ventured to expostulate.

"Shure thin, ma'am, it's not right at all at all for the likes of ye to be humblin' yerselves to such mean work. If ye'll jist lave it to meself, I'll do it, an' a thousand welcomes."

"But, Biddy, I wish you to do other things which you can manage better than we can, and, in the meantime, we will employ ourselves usefully; it is no disgrace to employ our hands in useful household matters. I should feel ashamed for myself or my children if we neglected them. All are commanded to be diligent in business—not slothful. Now our business, it seems to me at present, is to maintain cleanliness and order in our family; and no mistress is at liberty to oppress her servants with an undue amount of toil. Therefore it becomes us, as Christians and reasonable beings, to do well what our hands find to do,—to guide the house wisely; and, indeed, we find pleasure in learning many things which, at home, we were not called upon to do. See these nice loaves. I am greatly pleased to know that Miss Moira has succeeded so well with her baking. Some of our kind neighbours have been teaching her, and I thank them heartily. Then Miss Dora really does make up the bedrooms nicely, and she is training the younger ones to set the table and wash up the tea-things, and I am glad to do a little of everything when I see it needed; so that I hope you will not be troubled with too much work, and can secure a little time for improving yourself in every way. A mistress has a serious responsibility laid on her,

and should be very careful to govern her servants well, with justice and gentleness. Our work at first, I daresay, will not be very perfectly done, but we are all in earnest in trying to discover what God would have us do, and I trust He will enlighten us, and give us ability for the work which He appoints us—and let all of us do whatever we do *heartily* as to the Lord, and not unto men."

This, in a great measure, quieted Biddy; but she allowed herself to dwell largely on each little wonder accomplished by the family.

One day she came in from the stable where she had been seeking eggs, and, with great glee, boasted of "the most beautifullest bin that ever her two eyes set on; and as true as I 'm here, the masther and Misther Edgar made every bit of it with their own four hands; shure an' if they were bred carpenters, they couldn't do it better."

There was a general smile at Biddy's enthusiasm. But she was reminded that the gentlemen had supplied themselves with tools, and practised the use of them, before they came out; "and now I hope," said Mrs O'Brien, "their skill will be of great convenience to us. I believe it is very difficult to get mechanics in this young settlement. And do you know, Biddy, that I have asked Mr O'Brien to get me a spinning-wheel and cards? for it seems he has been offered some wool instead of some articles which we brought out, but which we have no present need of. Will you not be pleased to spend part of the winter evenings spinning yarn for socks and stockings for the family?"

"Thin, indeed, that I will, ma'am. I was counted a good spinner at home, but maybe 'tis a new-fashioned sort

of spinning they do here; they have such odd ways wid them in this counthry."

"Yes, Biddy, they have many ways which seem odd to us; but, in general, I think they are clever ways. At all events, they seem to suit the country, and we should be glad to learn them. The thing to be guarded against, I fancy, is getting too much engrossed in our new cares, and allowing them to interfere with things of far greater importance. Mr O'Brien has been looking round amongst the people, and he tells me he thinks we could collect quite a number of children for a Sunday-school, and should very much like to have a class of young women. Would you join it?"

The poor girl's face brightened with smiles as she said, "Oh, dear ma'am, nothin' I 'd like better. It 'ud be like old times thin;" and so the conversation closed, leaving poor Biddy's heart lightened, for, with all her will to work, she began to fear that she should never again have a leisure hour for her much loved reading.

The Sabbath-school was established, and so long as it was a novelty, it was crowded. Not only did the invited children come, but young men and women. As Mrs O'Brien did not think it judicious to mix the adults with the little ones, although in many cases there was little, if any, difference in their attainments, she formed a class of the more advanced in years amongst the girls, and took it under her own charge; and her husband promised to superintend the school, and instruct the young men. Moira, Dora, and Edgar had their classes also. They had brought out some books, but found that they should require a great

many more, as few of the young people possessed even a Testament. This for some time proved a serious hindrance to success; but, at last, in compliance with their urgent request, some of the societies in England sent them liberal supplies, which were received by the scholars with great delight.

One Sunday, on entering the schoolroom, which was an old barn made a little tidy, and furnished with seats made of slabs, and a very unpretending desk and cupboard, of Edgar's handiwork,—one Sunday (we had begun to say), as Mrs O'Brien entered the schoolroom, she found many of the young people engaged in a warm disputation on the relative merits of the different denominations to which they belonged. They were so engrossed by their subject that they did not observe their teacher's arrival, and continued their rather angry discussion. Mrs O'Brien was distressed. She thought of Biddy's remark—"They have many odd ways in this country;" and, in truth, the present way her pupils were pursuing did seem to her very odd—more than that, very objectionable. She quietly seated herself and waited for silence. In some little confusion the young disputants acknowledged her presence, and took their seats. Mr O'Brien presently came in, and opened the school with a hymn and prayer. The business went on as usual. A few verses were repeated, slowly and correctly, from the New Testament; then a simple explanation given, and questions asked; a hymn, or part of one, repeated and explained; and a short portion of Catechism lectured on. All was required to be thoroughly done: there was no encouragement to the imperfect repetition of long lessons.

Close, respectful attention to the teachers was expected, and seriousness and orderly conduct rigidly exacted.

The school closed, as it had opened, with prayer and praise, and all dispersed; but on their way home Mrs O'Brien told her husband what she had overheard of the contention regarding the different denominations. To him, also, this seemed strange. In the old home the struggle had been merely between Protestantism and Popery—truth and error. Here it seemed to run high between different shades of Protestantism, and to find its origin in jealousy and ambition, and perhaps bigotry—I am of Paul, and I of Apollos. Was Christ thus glorified?

The subject was thought over, and prayed over; and the following Sabbath there was a simple lecture on being one in Christ, casting out all bickerings and jealousies, and knowing nothing but Christ and Him crucified; labouring together in love to gather in the lambs of the Great Shepherd's fold, rather than indulging in idle disputations and angry controversy, which are sure to engender strife and crush out love. Some of the elder ones looked as if they understood this as a reproof, but nothing was said.

"The fall" had closed in gloriously, and winter approached. There had not been any large amount of labour on the farm as yet, Mr O'Brien's purchase not including the standing crops, which had been disposed of previous to his taking the land; but of employment there was always enough to be found, and all hands were kept fairly busy. Much was done to render the dwelling-house more comfortable, and to protect the cattle from the inclemency of the approaching season. Necessary provisions were laid

in, though perhaps not as judiciously selected, or as advantageously purchased, as they might have been. Experience was still wanting. Mrs O'Brien and her female staff effected much in their department. Rattling windows were wedged and papered wherever the wind could whistle through; sand-bags were made for the door-sills, and selvages tacked on to exclude draughts. Some of the purchased wool was made into comforters for the beds; and mittens were provided by Biddy's swift needles for each. In fact, the family had endeavoured to carry out the useful hints they had had from their neighbours, whose knowledge of the country and climate made them prudent guides in such matters.

But, amidst all their varied occupations, they felt a weary longing for tidings of the exiles. Mr O'Brien had told his wife of the slender clue he fancied he had discovered; but there it rested, although letter after letter was despatched to the supposed place of refuge. At length suspense became so painful, that Mrs O'Brien entreated her husband to go himself in pursuit of his son. He had hitherto been deterred from doing so by the expense which must necessarily be incurred, at a time when his family needed all possible economy to meet their most pressing wants; and, besides, he was reluctant to leave them in an unsettled state. But, in their great and increasing anxiety, all objections gave way; and it was resolved he should set out at once, hoping still to have a few weeks of moderate weather. The parting was a grief to all; but sweet hope, and confidence in God's protecting care, lightened heavy hearts.

Much of the ground he had already travelled had to be

passed over once more. Adelaide came again in his track; and there he paid a second visit to the pastor and his family, now enlarged by the arrival of his aged mother. Mr O'Brien's introduction to this old lady was full of interest. Her manner was charming—a blending of intellectual vivacity and grave dignity; her heart full of earnest love for her Saviour, and gentle benevolence towards her fellow-creatures. Her hands were literally never unemployed, through her waking hours, though her feeble frame demanded ease. In all family difficulties, her sound sense and promptitude came to the rescue; and far beyond the limits of her home were the influences of her kindness and wisdom felt. Much of all this was perceptible even in the short visit Mr O'Brien was induced to make by the pressing hospitality of his warm-hearted entertainers, and much more still did he hear and see of it in after years, for this mother in Israel was left for an unusually long term to comfort her children, whose tenderness and respect for her never waned. But the pleasant little visit closed, and the long erratic journey was resumed. Place after place, person after person, were visited, but no distinct information obtained, though occasionally there was some slight lifting of the cloud. At last, fearing that were he to remain longer from home he might be cut off from it for the whole winter (for the anticipation of a terribly severe season was becoming general), he thought his search for the present must end, and was preparing to return, when an incident occurred which brought the greatest relief in a most unlooked-for manner. His wanderings had brought him to Port Stanley, a small landing-place on Lake Erie, which was still open,

though, on some of the other lakes, ice had been formed to a considerable distance from shore. Some adventurous sailors were still making trips in their schooners, but at great risk. The last night which Mr O'Brien meant to spend there, before he turned his steps homeward, was one of fearful storm. Sleep was out of the question on that wild shore—the dashing of the angry waves, and fierce howling of the wind, sobered many a reckless spirit, and brought many a trusting heart closer to his Maker.

Mr O'Brien left his bedroom, which was in an exposed corner of the little inn, and sought a quieter spot below, but found the whole household crowded together, with anxious awe-stricken faces, in the room which he entered. One of them had just returned from the high rocky bank, which, within a few hundred yards of the inn, overlooked the lake. He carried back fearful tidings.

One of the schooners alluded to was drifting hopelessly towards some dangerous rocks at a little distance off. None could say what should be done; in fact, no one had a hope of the possibility of a rescue—destruction to the boat and all on board seemed inevitable. There was a dread silence for some moments, at last broken by some one proposing to go and watch the fated vessel. All went, and fixed their eyes on the terrible scene, with that strange fascination which sometimes seizes one almost irresistibly. There were attempts made to light fires along the coast, but they quite failed—the wind caught away the fuel ere there was time to ignite it. Boats were drawn out from their shelter, and hardy men stood by them, watching for an opportunity of rendering help, but all in vain—no boat could live in such

surf: the lake, as far as they could see, looked like a boiling cauldron. The catastrophe was not long delayed. A huge wave came down with headlong force and struck the struggling vessel. She made little resistance. One or two agonising shrieks, mingling with the howling tempest, formed the requiem of the lost barque.

The sky was covered with murky clouds; but as these were driven along by the sweeping wind, fitful gleams of gray light partially revealed the scene—as it were, rendering darkness visible—and so it continued for about an hour after the capsizing of the schooner. Then the storm lulled, the clouds dispersed, and a silvery moon shone out. In the meantime, several of the men who had witnessed the awful wreck, ran along the shore, with a lingering hope of finding some of the crew to whom assistance might yet be available. It was just possible that the waves might carry them in before life was extinct, as the spot in which the boat had gone down was but a little way from land. With much difficulty they scrambled down the steep rocky bank and reached a little beach, partly formed of rock, partly of gravel. Only the highest spots of it were uncovered by the frothy surf, and even these were washed over from time to time by the tremendous waves which filled every nook for a moment or two, although the beach lay in a sheltered cove. Again and again they saw planks and spars tossed on the wild waters like so many feathers dancing in the wind, and their hopes were fast dying out, when a large chest was driven in almost to their feet, and fastened to it was a human form. Ready hands were soon stretched out, and after a struggle or two with the receding wave, they

succeeded in drawing in the unhappy creature. There was not a moment lost in cutting the lashings and carrying the body to a safer spot. There was no appearance of life, yet the men lifted the corpse-like figure and carried it tenderly to a small farm-house on the bank, where all that kindness and limited skill could suggest was done by those around, and a messenger was quickly despatched for a doctor. By the time he arrived, there were faint signs of returning animation, and the further means he used in a short while produced still more hopeful symptoms.

At length the sufferer opened his eyes and gazed wildly around him, moaning sadly, and occasionally muttering some unintelligible words; but by the doctor's directions all was kept perfectly quiet. He alone remained close to the patient, administering what he deemed requisite; and when at length the poor exhausted man sunk into a deep sleep he withdrew, but cautioned the people in attendance not to allow noise or excitement of any kind, and promised to return in an hour or two. Some of the men had remained on the beach, but in vain did they wait and hope for further success—all but the one had been swallowed up by the merciless deep. This one was well cared for. There were crowds coming all through the day to offer assistance. Clothes were amply provided, and many little simple delicacies brought in. There was no lack of watchers through the night, and each came provided with lights, tea, coffee, &c.; and, in consideration of the inconvenience the family might be put to, beds and bedding were offered, and the little people were carried off by the neighbours. Such is Canadian aid in times of trouble all over both provinces.

Mr O'Brien, as may be supposed, did not remain selfishly inert during this time. He was quietly on the watch for opportunities of usefulness; and his firmness and composure had so recommended him to the medical man, that he was the one selected to watch by the patient, and administer medicine or nourishment, till the most critical time had passed. As he bathed the wounded face, and gently smoothed back the long dark hair from the forehead, he fancied he discovered something familiar in the countenance, but set it down to mere imagination; but again he caught it, and this time it set him thinking. Yet he could not arrive at any definite recollection. The doctor had placed in his safe keeping some papers and a note-book, found on the rescued man's person, asking him to dry and preserve them for the owner. This he was endeavouring to do, as he sat by the bedside, not far from the fire. As he opened out the adhering leaves, a name written on one of them struck him with amazement. It was his own. Could the poor helpless man lying before him be a friend? His features were so distorted by bruises and gashes that his nearest relative could scarcely recognise him; yet the familiar look which Mr O'Brien had at first caught, as he bent over the poor sufferer, was again discovered, and again caused agitating surprise. A sense of honour forbade his examining the papers in his possession, and it might be long ere the injured man could speak or recognise any one; so there was nothing for it but patience. The papers were laid on the hearth, and when dry, wrapped up and laid aside carefully, and the watch was resumed. Thoughts would wander to the singular circum-

stance of his own Christian and surnames being on the leaf of this stranger's pocket-book, then his eyes would return to the poor disfigured face, and many a surmise arise. But soon the sleep of his charge was broken by convulsive shudderings and deep groans. The doctor had hinted his fear of some internal injury, and now Mr O'Brien's apprehensions of the same gained strength. He watched anxiously for the return of the medical attendant, yet almost dreaded hearing his opinion, so rapidly did the alarming symptoms increase. The patient's moans were mingled with words eagerly spoken, but without connexion. "The priest! the priest!" frequently burst from his lips. Some of the people standing by were Roman Catholics, and at once concluded that the poor sick man thought himself dying, and called for the priest. They proposed going for him; but he lived many miles away, and could not reach Port Stanley for hours; and to all appearance the spirit of the apparently dying man would scarcely linger so long on earth. There was much distress expressed, and no doubt felt, by all; but it was decided not to make any move till the doctor returned and gave his opinion. This was a great relief to Mr O'Brien's mind. His heart sunk as he thought of witnessing a departing soul seeking peace and reconciliation with God through the interposition of man, or clinging to the superstitious faith in the Virgin and saints whilst the one only sufficient means of salvation—Christ crucified—was slighted or overlooked. He longed for an opportunity of declaring the truth, but at present there was no appearance of this.

At last the doctor came, and, after a careful examination,

gave it as his opinion that the poor sufferer's hours were fast hastening to an end; and he held out little hope of any relief from intense pain, or return of reason till towards the last, when mortification set in.

Many distressing hours were spent through the second night succeeding the storm, still no abatement of suffering, no hope of relief, except such as the last fatal stage might bring. The wild wanderings of mind continued. Sometimes exclamations of despair would startle the watchers. Often low wailings, mingled with the mention of father, mother, sister, would melt those present to tears. Then, again, something that sounded like self-reproach would break from the parched lips; but no word of hope—no reference to Jesus—ever met the ear through this sad night.

Towards morning the patient seemed easier, and gradually sunk into a state of quiet exhaustion. He frequently opened his eyes for a moment or two, but there was little expression in them. Mr O'Brien, stooping over him, asked if he wished for anything, and put a glass of some restorative to his lips. Suddenly the poor creature cried out—

"A priest!—oh! let me see a priest! I must confess before I die. Oh! 'tis cruel not to let me ease my soul. I am in torment!"

A man instantly set out, hoping to meet and hasten on the priest, for whom they had sent some time before. But, as the doctor entered again and observed his patient, he whispered to Mr O'Brien—

"Poor fellow! his end approaches swiftly. Would it not be well to pray with him, if that would comfort him? for I hardly think he will live to see his priest."

Mr O'Brien, thus appealed to, rebuked himself in his heart for remissness, and sought forgiveness and grace to do all that the Lord had appointed him to do. Again he bent over the dying man, and asked if he should pray to the God who had given His only-begotten Son to die for the salvation of sinners.

The man looked fixedly at him, and uttered faintly—"O'Brien!"

"Yes, that is my name. Have you known me?"

"O'Brien—oh! that name is my curse; it is sending me to hell!"

Inexpressibly shocked, Mr O'Brien said, earnestly, "No, no, my friend; I will pray with all my heart that you may be taken to heaven. May I not, now?"

"You do not know me, or you would curse me."

"God forbid I should so sin against my own soul."

"But I tell you, it is only because you do not know me."

"Why, when or where have we met? Tell me; it may relieve your mind."

The wretched man started. "Relieve my mind! to tell a heretic that I tempted men to swear away his son's life. Oh, this is strange relief! And yet, I must speak it; I cannot any longer endure the horrible secret; it is killing me. Now you know Harry M——. Ah! you cannot pray for me now—you cannot forgive, and I don't wonder; but, if you have any mercy, let me have my own priest. I must confess."

"Make your confession to God, who can alone pardon and sanctify you," said Mr O'Brien, gently. "I do forgive. I can pray for you with all my soul: do say I may."

And, without waiting for permission, he sunk on his knees, and implored from God, for Christ's sake, a spirit of true repentance and pardon for the unhappy one before him. His voice was full of deep feeling; his attitude, his face, his words, all bespoke intense earnestness; and it was evident to all that the dying sinner was convinced of his sincerity. After the words of prayer had died away, a solemn silence prevailed. It was broken by young M—— asking to be left alone with Mr O'Brien, which was immediately done; and then came a conflict between a desire to relieve his mind by a confession of crime, and a vindictive clinging to the means of revenge. He asked Mr O'Brien what he expected him to tell, and what right he had to expect any confession.

Mr O'Brien answered kindly that, believing that it would be of some use to himself to speak truthfully, and make all the reparation in his power to those he had injured, he would urge him to do so.

"And do you promise that you will forgive me, and that I shall find ease if I do acknowledge all I have done against you?"

"I promise freely to forgive you any injury you may have done me or mine; but your sin against God you must truly repent of, and sincerely and humbly ask His pardon for, through Christ Jesus, otherwise you can hope for no real peace in time or eternity."

"And who are you, heretic that you are, that dares to cut me off from peace?" said the wretched young man, in much excitement. "Were it the priest that said so, I *must* believe him; but you"——

Here exhaustion stopped him, and Mr O'Brien seized the moment to say that *he* condemned no man, but that he simply declared *the words of God*, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Unless ye repent, ye shall perish." "The sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite spirit." "A broken and contrite heart the Lord will not despise." "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should have eternal life; and He hath exalted Him to the right hand of God, to give repentance and remission of sins to all that come to God through him." "For Christ Jesus is the appointed way of access to the Father; and there is no other name whereby a sinner can be saved." These precious declarations he made in a slow, impressive manner; whilst the poor dying creature lay listening, but unable to speak.

Mr O'Brien then, believing that he had delivered the whole gospel message, was silent, waiting and praying for a happy result. He knew that the good seed sown in faith would surely bear fruit, and he asked the Lord to increase his faith. The first words that broke the solemn silence were—

"Does the doctor think I must die soon?"

It was a painful question to answer, but the simple truth was told.

"Then," said young M——, "I may as well make a clean breast of it:—I tried to provoke your son to quarrel, and had a number of my father's men, who would swear anything I chose, to stand in readiness on the bank, where I

meant to entice Darcy and young Forrester to; but I could not carry out my plan, as they did not want to fight with me, and were trying to get out into the current, when I fell overboard whilst flinging an oar at Darcy. I soon rose, nothing the worse, but more than ever determined on revenge; so I would not let them help me into the boat, as they evidently wanted to do, but I dived, and came up in one of the little caves which are all along the shore, and from that I easily got up the bank, and joined the men who had been looking on; and I stirred up their hatred to the Protestants so much by what I said, that they were ready for anything. I believe they would have murdered your son and his friend if I had not hindered them. I did not want that; but I wanted to mortify all of you, and I thought of a plan of doing it as I stood dripping on the shore. It was to hide myself, and get the two arrested on the charge of murder; and this would have been done, but that they got down the current and hid themselves away. I did not show myself, and most people thought me drowned, whilst I was concealed in my father's house; and by threats and entreaties I got my family to let the thing go on; for I thought, at least, it would banish them and trouble all of you, and I wanted revenge."

This terrible avowal was made faintly, with many interruptions; and Mr O'Brien heard it with horror, yet felt its great importance to his family, and resolved to try and induce young M—— to repeat it before witnesses. He first asked what had stirred up such hatred and revenge towards his family. The poor young man looked long at him before he answered—

"My heart had gone out to your daughter in spite of myself, and I saw that you all despised me."

The doctor had again stepped in (he lived close at hand), and found his patient sinking fast: he said so aloud. Then Mr O'Brien asked if M—— would repeat what he had just said so that it might be made useful to his family. A languid look was the only answer. Then the thought of writing down what he had heard, and obtaining the dying man's confirmation of it before witnesses, occurred to Mr O'Brien; and this idea he immediately acted on. Seizing a pen which lay on the table, he wrote on the back of a sheet of the doctor's directions, as nearly as he could recollect, the confession made by M——. He asked the doctor and the man of the house to come to the bedside, and read before them what he had written. Young M—— offered no opposition; and when asked if he would sign the paper, said—

"Yes, if I have strength."

They propped him up, and with his last remaining energy he affixed his name, saying feebly—

"This is about all I can do. I feel death seizing me, but I am glad I have done so much. Oh, my poor parents! —my sister! You will tell them of my death, but spare them all you can,"—his eyes rested on Mr O'Brien as he spoke,—"and do not blame them; they would have done better but for my threats and persuasions; and they often felt sorry for you. Don't tell them I died without a priest; it would grieve them to the last. I wish they could hear some things I have heard, and have some of my present feelings; but oh! not all. It is hard to find God in the

end, when you have despised Him all through life, as I did; but if what you say is true, perhaps"——

Here his voice failed. Again Mr O'Brien knelt and entreated for mercy through the merits of Christ Jesus. The poor dying man made an effort to stretch out his hand towards his friend (for friend indeed he had proved himself), and when Mr O'Brien clasped it tenderly in his own, said—

"If I find favour with God, it will be through your guidance to Jesus. I never sought Him, or knew I should seek Him, before: God bless you! Tell your son to forgive me. God bless you!"

The poor discoloured lips ceased to move, the hand lay cold and clammy in Mr O'Brien's, and, with a few deep-drawn sighs, the spirit departed. With deep sadness Mr O'Brien turned away. As he left the room, he said to the woman of the house—

"Be so good as to have all done with decency, and be assured you shall be fairly recompensed. I will meet all the necessary expenses."

The kind-hearted woman nodded her head; and Mr O'Brien made his way down to the shore, to meditate on the wonderful ways of God, and to praise Him for His goodness to the children of men.

The doctor recommended an early burial; so, as soon as arrangements could be made, the poor remains were laid in their last resting-place. No priest attended. He had been twice sent for, but had not returned home from a distant journey. Those present requested Mr O'Brien to say a few words at the grave. "Without them," they said, "it would seem so little like the burial of a Christian." He complied,

though his heart was indeed heavy. The verses he selected were John xi. 25, 26: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Psalm xc.: "Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, Thou art God from everlasting and world without end. Oh teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory. And the glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us. Prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us. Oh prosper Thou our handiwork. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen." Then a short, fervent prayer, beginning with humble confession to God of the utter unworthiness of man at his best,—a cry for mercy through the blood-shedding of the Lamb of God,—a petition for a spirit of true repentance,—a desire after holiness—for the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, and everlasting salvation; and for all these great gifts, a soul filled with praise and thanksgiving to Him who found out a way whereby He might be just and yet a justifier—"who gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should be saved."

The little company present was formed of members of various denominations, a few Roman Catholics included; but all, with uncovered heads and an appearance of solemn reverence, listened throughout, and frequently uttered a fervent Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

A Reunion.

"I found trouble and heaviness, and I called upon the name of the Lord: Oh, Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. I am well pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer; that He hath inclined His ear unto me: therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live."

IMMEDIATELY after the funeral, Mr O'Brien set out for home laden with tidings of great importance to his family, yet oppressed with sad regrets for the fate of poor M——. His journey proved one of much toil and difficulty. Sleighing had passed away, and the roads were in a particularly trying condition, either frozen in hard rough ridges or covered with sheets of smooth ice, from both of which the poor horse shrunk; and when he was induced to go on, the rider suffered not a little. But to use a vehicle was out of the question. However, Mr O'Brien recollected that he had set out at the call of duty, and whatever troubles met him by the way, however

serious, however trivial, should be borne patiently, as appointed for him by One without whose permission a sparrow cannot fall to the ground—by whom the very hairs of the head are numbered. Besides, had he not experienced a most remarkable answer to prayer? Had he not found peace and comfort from an unthought-of source? His mind dwelt on these things, and grew strong in the recollection of God's mercies; so that the end of the journey was attained without the irritation and wearing impatience which one forgetful of God's providence would have surely suffered under.

As Mr O'Brien approached home, his spirits rose, and he thought of the happiness his tidings would bring to the hearts of his wife and children; and as he mused on this, a dear, familiar voice met his ear—Moira and Maud stood before him. They were returning from the house of one of the settlers, who lived about a mile from their own home, and Moira had delightedly hailed him.

"My daughters! my darlings! Thank God I find you looking so well. How is mother?—how are all?"

"Oh, very well indeed, papa; and how rejoiced they will be to have you home again. We began to feel uneasy about you, not having had a letter for many days; but I hope you have not been ill?"

As they talked they neared "The New Home," and met on its threshold a loving welcome indeed.

Mr O'Brien had spent five weeks away from his family, but not in vain; and his first feeling on entering his house was one of deep thankfulness to God, who had kept him and his beloved ones in safety, and suffered them to meet

again in peace and joy. He took the first opportunity of being alone with his wife to relate all we have told our readers of poor young M——. Her astonishment was, of course, very great. She asked what his motive for coming to Canada had been; how long he had been out in the country; and a great many other questions which her husband was unable to answer. He reminded her of the short and troubled time which had passed from the night of the wreck till the death of poor M——, and of the large portion of that which he felt constrained to spend in efforts for the unhappy young man's safety of soul and body, but with her he regretted not knowing more particulars concerning him. It was arranged between them to write at once to M——'s parents, and then came the thought that it might be proper to examine his papers, so as not needlessly to pain them, but spare them in every way, as he had been entreated to do by their lost son. So the pocket-book and a few letters found in the pockets were looked at. In the little book were several bank bills of considerable value, some half-obliterated writing, and on a card the name of a vessel, said to have sailed from the west of Ireland on the very date of their son's and young Forrester's disappearance from the hut on the coast. Next a packet of letters, tied together, was looked at. To the painful surprise of the father and mother, they found that they were their own to their son, and his to them,—the latter dated from different places in Canada and the States, and in each a complaint of never having received a line from home since they had been obliged to fly, although they had written so often, and sent their address. In one

of the earliest, Darcy asked if Peter had been true to his promise of seeing them, and mentioning that, by some information he had given them, they had been induced to leave for Canada.

All this puzzled Mr and Mrs O'Brien for a time, until at length it seemed plain to them that young M—— had, by some unfair means, got possession of the letters sent from and to Ireland by the family: this would account for much that had hitherto so greatly distressed them. Again, they examined the papers, hoping to find some clue to their son's present place of refuge; nor were they disappointed. On a sort of little rough chart, drawn probably by young M—— himself, they found places marked, which corresponded with the addresses sent in Darcy's letters; and, by the dates, they easily ascertained that the last letter had been written about three months before from Buffalo, whither Darcy and his young friend had gone in pursuit of employment, hoping, as they said, "to do something respectable for their maintenance there, though it was but a small place as yet,"—its being near Canada seemed to recommend it to them.

Oh, how did the parents' hearts bound with joy as they thought of an early restoration of their first-born! The hope was too sweet to be long kept from their other children, so all were called and told the glad tidings. Then were demonstrations of delight characteristic of each. Biddy and Murty had not been excluded, nor had they been behind the others in expressions of pleasure.

Biddy could not refrain from saying, "I knowed it all along meself; shure, thin, didn't meself often tell Murty,

and Murty telled meself the same, that there was no use in spakin, but Misther Darcy was safe enough, and would be home wid us some fine mornin'; for shure, an' didn't the Lord make the masther, and every soul of thim, pray to Him night an' mornin', to keep him safe in soul and body, and give him back to us in His own time; and who ever knowed any one pray in vain? And now it's meself that'll begin right away to tidy up the room for him—and, misthress, mayn't we fatten up them chickens, and air the new blankets, and cut down a ham to steep, and scrub out the floor, an'" ——

"Yes, yes, Biddy, thank you—all in good time; just now, please help Miss Dora to get one of your *nicest teas*, and we'll think of the other matters presently. We shall, I fear, have to wait a little longer for our dear son; but you shall hear of our plans, and we are much obliged to you and Murty for your glad share in our happiness."

Biddy vanished. The girl was improving much in every respect. Cut off from the associates of her early days, and living amidst a carefully trained and educated family, she gradually laid aside the objectionable peculiarities of manner and diction, which naturally clung to her so long as her intimacy with the illiterate peasantry in the west of Ireland continued. It was only when particularly excited that the old weakness showed itself; and, at such times, both she and her brother would resort to their native language for a fuller expression of their feelings, and seem forgetful of the many lessons they received from the young ladies; but this was so harmless a return to early habits,

that it only excited a smile, and indeed seemed greatly to amuse the young ones.

Murty, naturally of a more reserved and quiet turn of mind, did little more than coincide with Biddy by sundry nods and winks, interspersed with a few words; but he felt as heartily as she did the joys and sorrows of their kind employers.

Nothing aroused the indignation of both more than any slight, real or imagined, put on "the family;" and on one occasion, when some attempt was made to induce them to leave their present home and accept higher wages in another, their wrath fairly boiled over, and it is to be feared their language in expressing their resentment was not the choicest, for Biddy, in mentioning the circumstance afterwards to Miss O'Brien, seemed a good deal self-condemned. But she said it was so out and out mean and unprincipled entirely, to try and coax them away with fair words and bribes, that she did think it was not altogether wrong to be angry; "but then you see, miss, I 'm so wild-like, that I always run away wid it." She got some good advice from her young mistress, and promised to keep it in mind.

Only just if they came over that again, she thought it would be no harm to tell them that she was brought up to better manners, and saw it written down in the Bible, that people should do to others as they wished others to do to them. "An' I 'm certain sure, miss, not one of them would be willin' for my misthress to try and coax away *their* servants an' leave *them* to do their own work the best way they could by thimselves."

To this argument, Miss O'Brien could see no objection;

but she warned Biddy to resort to it only in case of necessity, and then, with quiet voice and manner, reminded her that angry words only bred discord.

Letters had been despatched to Buffalo, and the replies were eagerly looked for; but nearly three weeks passed without any tidings,—then came a letter from George Forrester, written, as he said, at Darcy's bedside.

Whilst they were employed in Buffalo, cholera appeared, and swept off numbers of the regular inhabitants, but more still of the emigrants, who were, generally speaking, miserably poor, and destitute of comforts. Sheds had been erected outside the limits of the town, and thither all those who could not pay for attendance were sent, and amongst them poor Darcy; but he was not alone in this dark hour, —the God of his father had mercy on him, and by the light of the Spirit, showed him the vileness of his heart, and led him to Christ for cleansing and pardon.

He had long known religion by the hearing of the ear,—his mind had been stored with the letter of Scripture,—but heretofore it had not been to him a saving knowledge. There was a certain amount of propriety in his conduct, and moral excellence in his principles, which obtained for him a rather high reputation amongst his associates; but which left him as much as ever in need of a new heart,—of a death unto sin—a new birth unto righteousness; and of this, illness and indigence were made the blessed means of convincing him.

George Forrester, with all the generosity and sincerity of a warm unselfish heart, had accompanied his friend to the wretched corner allotted him in the sheds. There he

had nursed him tenderly; secured for him all the medical care that entreaty and expostulation could obtain; and by filling different minor offices of trust under the health-officers, he found means to provide little comforts, which greatly tended to the recovery of his friend. And what was his reward? The unspeakable gift was revealed to him whilst he indulged his companion in his wish to have the Scriptures read during his slow recovery; and as Darcy spoke to him of many things which hitherto he had only considered essential for the aged or dying, his soul was opened to receive the glorious news of the gospel; and the two young exiles soon learned to thank God for His corrections, and declare that it was good for them to have been afflicted,—better to have been in the house of mourning than in that of mirth and laughter.

They had just obtained permission to return to their posts in town when letters were handed them by their employer. They had left directions at the post-office to have any letters for them sent with his to his place of business whenever his messenger called; and in this way they had the great consolation of receiving at last the long-wished-for news.

It seemed, as George Forrester said in his letter, "to put new blood in Darcy's veins, and fresh muscles in his limbs, to read his father's letter. And although he was still very unlike his old self, and was obliged to take rest whenever he could find time for it, yet there was no doubt that the prospect of being once more with his family, and acquitted fully of the foul charge which had so long hung over him, would soon make a man of him; so that they might hope

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THE WELCOME TO THE NEW HOME.

"Within the ten days the poor fellows found themselves once more with true friends. The meeting was one . . . which few could imagine more full of happiness and gratitude than it really was."—*Page* 109.

to see him in a few days—eight or ten, perhaps. And," the young man went on to say, "Darcy insists on my accompanying him to 'The New Home.' What do you and Mrs O'Brien say, my dear sir? For myself, I confess it is my great wish to be with you. Say I may go, and I shall, with delight, be Darcy's companion by the way."

Of course, the invitation was gladly given, and within the ten days the poor fellows found themselves once more with true friends. The meeting was one of those things which no one should attempt to describe, but which few could imagine more full of happiness and gratitude than it really was.

Once more Darcy had to submit to be treated as an invalid, and during the time that he lay on his bed, with his parents as his nurses, much of what I have already told of himself and young Forrester was related.

CHAPTER X.

A Clearing of the Clouds.

"No longer hoary winter reigns,
No longer binds the streams in chains,
Or heaps with snow the meads;
Arrayed with robe of rainbow-dye,
At last the Spring appears on high,
And smiling over earth and sky,
Her new creation leads.—*Grahame.*

SPRING had really set in, though the trees were not green, nor the flowers blooming, as they would have been found at the same season in Ireland; but the sweet soft air, bright sunshine, longer days, and milder nights, soon wrought a change most welcome to all. Occupations in the fields were resumed; and, even with the fresh willing hands of the new comers, it was found that early rising and steady diligence were requisite to accomplish all the necessary labour. But they had learned to think, and fully believe, that God, in appointing the labours of the hands unto fallen man, had remembered mercy,—that useful employment, so far from being a disgrace,

ennobled a man,—whereas idleness and sloth only became a fool. Still, Mr O'Brien was careful not to encourage or allow excess, even in industry. He knew that it was in vain, and but lost labour, that men hasted to rise up early, extended their labour so far into the night, and ate the bread of carefulness, if their hearts were inordinately set on gain, and their chief desire was for the riches of this world.

To be diligent in business was with him a recognised duty; but he remembered that those who made haste to be rich, fell into many snares, and hurt their own souls. So, by precept and example, he enforced temperance in all things. And however necessary attention to household care and agricultural pursuits might be, he never allowed them to interfere with duties of a higher order. No haste to meet the demands of the farm without, or thrift within, would be accepted as sufficient excuse for the neglect of private, family, or public worship. "God first, and His creatures afterwards," was a household word with him and his family; and he often took an opportunity of speaking it amongst his neighbours also, though many of them did not relish it in the least, and indirectly argued against it, saying that "it is sinful to waste, and without working late and early, much will be lost,"—then, "when you pay away money for labour, it is only fair that you should get the worth of it." That "you had a right to do as you liked with your own time, and didn't hurt any one by doing so." To such sentiments Mr O'Brien would give very distinct replies, being careful not to wrangle or stir up angry passions, but not afraid to be faithful. He

proved that time is one of the most precious talents committed to our care, and that we do waste that when we expend it to an unlawful extent on ourselves,—that it is to be used for God's glory, as well as everything else we have.

"Oh, then, I guess you'd have us running from meeting to meeting, and using up our horses and our time waiting on the preachers here and there; and what would become of our families then?"

"Not so," Mr O'Brien would reply; "I find it written that 'a good man will guide his affairs with discretion.' 'Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks; and look well to thy herds.' 'By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.' And these words convince me that diligence in business is a duty; but there is a great difference between diligence and entire devotion to the affairs of time, to the neglect of the things of eternity. If the body needs care, and it is right to provide for its wants,—how much more precious is the soul, and how much pains should we take in doing all that we are commanded for its safety? As for running about from place to place, and preacher to preacher, I cannot see it at all justifiable. I conceive those who do so neglect the warning we find in 2 Timothy iv. 3, 'heaping to themselves teachers, having itching ears,'—in danger of becoming 'idle, wandering about from house to house: and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking those things which they ought not.' No, I believe we do far better by waiting on God in humility, gathering up the morsels He sends us by the

hands of His servants, hearkening diligently to the Word, which is above all price, all preaching, and only valuing the teachings from the pulpit as far as they bring forth precious things from the treasury of the Scriptures. I am afraid our ears itch too much for the gratification of our tastes, and are often deaf to words which might teach our hearts. One upholds Paul, another Apollos, whilst both forget Christ. One boasts of his favourite preacher's fine voice and grand delivery; another of the startling effects of the discourses he hears. Is it very sure that either or both look for Jesus through the medium of these mere means? Are they quite certain that they sit and listen that their souls may be fed with the bread of life, rather than that peculiar taste, or ambition, or enthusiasm may be gratified? I can remember myself, returning from hearing a strange preacher, and feeling quite enraptured with his eloquence, quite excited by his energetic appeal to my senses, and yet wholly unhumbled,—wholly unenlightened as to my own exceeding sinfulness and need of a Saviour. I do not mean to say the fault was all the preacher's—far from it; but does it not prove that mere excitement may be mistaken for real edification, and the pleasure the ear and taste have experienced be falsely set down to growth in grace? And surely this is a grave error—most misleading, and having a tendency to shut us up in false security by persuading us there is peace and safety, when we are really far off from God. Then some one would say—'Then it seems you despise eloquence, and would have one listen in an unmoved way to all that might be said.' No, no, my friend, I do not despise the least of God's gifts,

but I would not have darkness called light, nor mere excitement of imagination and nerves set down as vital godliness; for I believe that this often leads to false and fatal security, and under its influence many suppose they are safe, and have a name to live, whilst they are really dead. We are too apt to take the work of conversion out of God's hands, and attribute it to His creatures, forgetting that no man can see true light unless the Holy Spirit shine into his heart,—that though Paul may plant, and Apollos water, God alone can give the increase. I believe it our duty to pray earnestly to God to send forth labourers into His harvest, and to receive as His gift the minister His providence places over us; to hearken to his teachings as far as they are faithfully drawn from the Word of God, not cavilling at his fleshly imperfections of speech, or despising him because of his inferiority in point of appearance, manner, talent, &c., to others that God has seen fit to endow with more showy and attractive gifts. Do you not think, my friends, that if, instead of finding fault with our minister, we were to pray earnestly for him and for ourselves, both would be better off? Those we pray much for we are drawn towards in love and compassion. And this in itself is a blessing, for it is charity, the most excellent of gifts."

Many and many a conversation of this kind was held, and yet little in the way of good result appeared. Still Mr O'Brien worked on, and prayed on, and left the issue with God.

Moira had for some time been engaged teaching. The proposal to do so had been made to her by the wife of one

of the settlers living near them. This person had several children old enough to attend school, but unfortunately there was no school of any kind near enough to send them to. Moira consulted her mother, and expressed her own willingness to undertake the charge, if it were approved of by her parents. This was while Mr O'Brien was from home, but Mrs O'Brien seeing no objection to it, and their means much needing a little increase, it was arranged that Moira should teach a class of young people in their neighbour's house, and she had for some time been doing so. She found the children at first somewhat unmanageable. Young as they were, they asserted a right of doing as they pleased, and kicked against control. But fortunately for Moira, and for the children also, Mrs Dunning, the lady of the house, supported her authority, and insisted on order and obedience from all attending the class. Moira's plan was very similar to that pursued at the Sabbath-school. Religious instruction, of course, held the first place; then, according to the ability of the pupil, geography, grammar, &c., &c., were added. Writing was carefully taught, and the children made familiar with the early rules of arithmetic. Moira's voice was a particularly sweet one, and her singing of hymns delighted the children; so she proposed, as a reward of industry and obedience, to teach a little vocal music; and this proved the nursery in which many young voices were trained for the sweet choir which, in after years, led the congregation, and so greatly added to the enjoyment of public worship.

The young teacher's work prospered. It was undertaken with prayer, and in reliance on the guidance and blessing

of God. Mrs O'Brien sometimes took her daughter's place, so as to allow the young girl a little rest; and she felt most thankful to witness the happy results of her child's labours.

Dora had gradually glided into Moira's place in the household; and Maud was in useful training.

George Forrester had written to his mother repeatedly, but received no replies; and Mr O'Brien could give him no information either, as his letters to Mrs Forrester had not been answered. It was probable that they had been intercepted with those he sent to Canada.

George now thought of returning home, and Mr O'Brien encouraged him to do so, thinking it his duty. George would have gone before, but for the want of means to meet the expenses of the journey; and he had positively declined accepting a loan from purses that he knew to be already too light for the wants of the family. But as Mr O'Brien had insisted on his receiving the usual wages of the country for his services, and he had been very prudent in his outlay, he had now enough of money saved to carry him across the Atlantic at least. So it was settled that, as soon as the hay crop was in, the young man should set out. This resolution had cost George Forrester much pain, sincere as his anxiety was to see and comfort his mother. He was affectionately attached to his friend Darcy, and each of the family; but there was one feeling far stronger than the rest, and although he had never given distinct expression to it, there was not much difficulty in discovering it,—and certainly Moira seemed to understand it; and to her, poor girl, the departure for England

was no small trial; yet she urged it, believing it to be duty.

Mr O'Brien and Darcy went some part of the way with Forrester, and before they parted he made a simple, manly declaration of his love for Moira, and asked permission to regard himself as accepted by her parents, saying that he had had a promise from Moira depending on this.

Mr O'Brien and his son did not feign surprise, nor feel any reluctance to comply with his request, except on the grounds of the uncertainty of his return, and the possibility of his mother objecting, neither of which he would think of; but it was agreed that he and Darcy should exchange letters as often as they felt so disposed, and that he should state frankly what his mother's wishes were; and so they parted, commending each other to God's safe keeping.

Father and son were soon home again, and with Moira Mr O'Brien had some loving, earnest conversation. He told her of all Forrester had said, adding affectionately, "My child, I should be glad to intrust him with you, if such were God's will, as I believe him to have the love of the Lord Jesus in his heart. This, I conceive, is incomparably the best recommendation; and, besides, I think him a fine amiable young fellow, of frank generous nature and good temper—a grand requisite for happiness. He is industrious and reasonable too; so that I cannot see how we could object. All this your mother and I thought of long since; and had we not had so much reason to be pleased with him, you should have been spared the trial which constant association with him exposed you to, as we

conceive no parent is justified in exposing his children to close intimacies which are not likely to tend to their happiness. However, even with our approval, you must not expect to escape many anxious feelings. A wide distance will separate you, and hindrances may exist or arise which we know nothing of; but, my dear child, carry this important matter to your heavenly Father, and leave it in His keeping; He careth for you, and will order all things for your good. Your mother tells me that you have been perfectly candid with her, and I am very glad of it. Full confidence in a prudent mother is a wonderful safeguard to a child, and we all know how capable yours is of guiding her children, and what a true and tender friend she has ever been to them."

This communication of her father's, in manner as well as substance, greatly comforted Moira, and she continued her usual routine of daily duties without flagging; indeed, her new trial brought her closer to God, and consequently more conscientious in all she did.

Maud always accompanied her to the schoolroom, and took her lessons with the other pupils, so that Mrs O'Brien had the comfort of knowing that the little girl's education was carefully attended to. At home they had evening readings, which drew in the sons, and gave home an additional charm; but Edgar's taste for the water, and all maritime matters, was a source of anxiety to his parents. They did not see how it could be encouraged with prudence. On the magnificent lake, close to which their home lay, there were many schooners, but the trade was as yet very limited, and objectionable in many respects.

The class of sailors employed were, generally speaking, wild, reckless young fellows, uninfluenced by a serious thought, and very undesirable companions for Edgar. Still the lad evidently yearned for a seafaring life, and it did not seem to his parents right to push their own prejudices too far, and so provoke disobedience; but they reasoned much and affectionately with him, and he apparently yielded. However, after months of industry on the farm, he confessed to Darcy that he longed as much as ever to be a sailor. In this difficulty, Mr O'Brien thought of writing to a naval officer he had known well in Ireland, and whom he ascertained through the newspapers had now the command of a vessel lying in the port of Quebec. He asked his advice, telling him truly all that was necessary for him to know of the lad. In a very short time he had a most kind reply from this friend, advising him by no means to thwart the boy, when he had reason to think there was a strong and abiding preference developed.

"You know," he said, "that ours is a lawful service, and may be engaged in without any departure from Christian principle; and if your son's mind be strongly imbued with a love for it, we may hope that in such a calling he will be preserved from evil as effectually as in any other. If you think it well to follow this matter up, I can give him a berth on board—an humble one, 'tis true—but it will place him much under my own eye, and if his conduct merits promotion, the first step will prove no hindrance to others; but he must be prepared for the most implicit submission to rather strict discipline, and pretty hard work."

This letter required the deepest consideration. The offer

was a very kind one, but was it such as they should accept for their son? They took counsel together, and together sought counsel from the Source of all wisdom. The matter was talked over with Darcy and Moira, and finally it was deemed expedient to make Edgar acquainted with it. It excited in his mind the most enthusiastic delight and brightest anticipations, only tempered by his regret at separation from his family. So, after a few more letters had passed between Mr O'Brien and his naval friend, it was decided to send Edgar to Quebec, to be taken on board the British man-of-war lying there, under Captain C——'s command. All the arrangements must be speedily accomplished, and every female hand in the house was busy for a couple of weeks. Then came the parting, and sad days of loneliness on both sides.

The first letter from Edgar mentioned many things new and agreeable to him, and also told of a large amount of occupation to which the strictest attention was required from him. This was no unacceptable news to his parents; they had great faith in useful employment as a safeguard to youth, and prayed that he might be rendered upright in the conscientious discharge of his duties.

Letters also came from George Forrester, full of affection and gratitude, but mentioning what made them all sad for him. On his arrival in England he at once set out for his old home, but found it desolate. None of his friends lived near; but from the people in the neighbourhood he ascertained that Mrs Forrester—who, as he knew, had been for years in failing health—had quite sunk under the shock conveyed to her through the papers regarding the efforts

being made to arrest her son on the charge of murder. This seemed to account for the neglect of his letters; but he had hurried to London, to see some relatives of his father's, and ascertain, if possible, more minute particulars of her death, and of his own prospects of the means of support. He was received with the greatest astonishment, and certainly no show of affection. On inquiring as to property, he was coldly repulsed, and left the house, resolved to obtain information from some other quarter, rather than again intrude on such heartless relations. Accordingly, he called on the lawyer through whom he knew his mother had transacted her business, and from him he heard that his aunt—the lady on whom he had called—had been put in possession of his mother's little property, as the nearest of kin; but that doubtless it could, with some trouble, be recovered by the real heir. "At the same time," poor Forrester said, "the man looked at me very suspiciously. When we had last met I was but a boy of twelve or fourteen, and little like the weather-beaten, shabby-looking fellow I am now. Besides, he must have had his doubts as to my moral character, as the charge of murder still hung over me; and for this reason, my dear sir, I must ask you to intrust me with the document you hold signed by poor M——, and any other papers you think would help to re-establish my character. I am wretchedly forlorn here,—a perfect outcast,—and longing with all my heart to be back amongst my Canadian friends, by whom I trust I am remembered with affection."

The papers were sent immediately, and a recommendation with them to cross over and see the M—— family, and draw from them an acknowledgment of their son's

escape from the watery grave which it was supposed he had found.

There was then a long pause, and a very trying one to Moira; but at length came a joyous letter, saying that all had been set right, and a few days from that date he hoped to be crossing the Atlantic once more, on his way to "The New Home," and the dear one he so greatly desired to place in it.

This was great joy, and the cause of much gratitude. A few weeks more brought about a happy meeting; and then Forrester told his bride-elect that she must choose her home, as he had abundance of means to purchase, and only waited for her selection. There was, of course, a family consultation; and a lovely spot was chosen on the Maitland River, not very far from her father's. This farm had been advertised for sale for some time, and was easily obtained; a cottage built on it with as little delay as possible; and then a wedding, and a bride brought home, rich in the blessings of all she loved. Her little pupils grieved to lose her as their teacher, but found her an affectionate friend, ever glad to see them, and ready to aid them in any way she could.

CHAPTER XI.

A Shaking of the Dry Bones.

"Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is 'freely give:'
He only who forgets to hoard
Has learned to live."—*Keble.*

SUMMER was ended; harvest-time, with all its important labours, past; and once more the winter must be prepared for. Through God's blessing, the fields had yielded abundantly, and there was a goodly store packed safely away in the barns of each of the settlers. Mr O'Brien thought this would therefore be a good time for bringing forward a project which he and his family had long thought of, with much desire for its accomplishment. Hitherto the neighbourhood had been dependent for divine service on the occasional, and indeed rare, visits of a travelling missionary, who held his meetings in a miserable old school-room, no place of public worship having been as yet

erected. This seemed to the O'Briens a lamentable state of things, and they determined, if possible, to have it remedied. So they requested the missionary, on the occasion of his next visit, to announce a meeting for the following week, to take into consideration the necessity for building a house of worship, and securing more frequent, if not constant, attendance of a minister. This announcement seemed to startle the congregation. They had so long unresistingly yielded to the old scanty supply, that now they could hardly see any occasion for larger religious privileges, and especially when they thought that such could not be secured without some sacrifice of time and money. However, the meeting was held, and curiosity, if no better motive, drew many to the appointed place. Mr O'Brien wished some of the older settlers to open the proceedings, but all declined, and seemed to think the movement rested with him. So, with a few humble, earnest words of prayer for guidance and a right spirit, he stood before them to plead with them for that which they should have long since accomplished. He said, for his own part, he felt it a grief and shame to expend the bounties the Lord had bestowed on him on his own selfish wants, whilst the public acknowledgment of these bounties was so little thought of; and he greatly desired the honour of dedicating to God's service a portion of all he had, and he would ask his neighbours to do likewise. There were many whispered consultations, and evidently much dissatisfaction, expressed in an undertone, for some time; till Mr O'Brien once more requested them to state their views, and appealed particularly to one of the oldest and wealthiest

men in the township for aid. This old man, whose labours God had for many years crowned with success, causing his cattle to increase, and his barns to run over with plenty, stood up, and began by "regretting he had been selected to speak for the others, as he didn't feel much up to it; but there was a thing or two he would say, and them was —that folks around all knew he had worked hard for what he had, and his boys and girls had done their share; and now he thought it was about time he had a little ease and enjoyment of his earnings; and he didn't see why they mightn't be content to leave things as they were. He didn't like changes; but to be sure, he didn't mean to speak against improvements on their land. How would the country get on without that? But then, ye see, if we're not careful of our pennies, we'll have no pounds to spend on the helpful things which we would all be glad to see coming into the country. A new breed of cattle would be a grand consideration, but they were costly articles; and then some of the late improvements on their tools, and things for doing work up a little quicker,—all them was desirable, and no mistake; and, therefore, for his part, he thought the best thing they could do for the country was to spend money on their land, and try to get up a name for the country; and"—— Here he sat down.

Mr O'Brien was greatly shocked, and especially as he saw that this worldly, selfish speech had given much satisfaction to most of those present. "Oh!" thought he, "truly the Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, to bear with His rebellious children so long, and still to pour out benefits upon them."

Once more he rose, and asked to be permitted to speak. This was readily granted. All appeared to find more interest in the proceedings since their neighbour had so clearly expressed their own views, and no thought of his arguments being set aside entered their minds. But Mr O'Brien had weapons to use they knew not of; and, with prayer for skill, he determined to use them manfully. He thought it well to take the old farmer's speech as headings to his arguments, and so began:—

"I am sorry, sir, you regret being called upon to speak for God's cause. It is an honour we should be very thankful for. The apostles of old rejoiced at being thought worthy of suffering for their blessed Master. We are only called upon to do a happy and easy work for Him; that is, to bring forth the gold and silver which He has intrusted us with the care of, and to expend it on a building in which we may meet to praise and pray, and obtain great blessings. You say all your neighbours well know how industriously yourself and your family have laboured for what you now possess. May I ask what your possessions would be if God had not blessed your labours? It is true, you ploughed the ground that God's providence bestowed on you; you sowed it, planted and cared for it diligently; but who gave the increase? Who caused the grass to grow, the seed to spring up and bear fruit? Who gave the early and the latter rains; and sent the springs into the valleys to give drink to every beast of the field? Who appointed the sun to shed his fertilising light and heat? Who bindeth the floods from overflowing, and stayeth the biting frost from blighting, and the scorching heat from utterly con-

suming? Who giveth health and strength, sight and skill, to the husbandman? In fact, what is man without God's mercy? What are all his labours without God's blessing? And yet you say, you see no need of change, no call to arise from the deadness and darkness in which you have hitherto been content to lie. You acknowledge no claim on your money, your time, your heart, and strength, except that of yourself, your family, and your land. You heap up riches to secure ease in your latter days, and to establish your children in plenty. But what secures these riches to you? Remember, they are but lent by Him to whom the whole world belongs; and He may at any moment withdraw them; and He will leave you to find them a curse, instead of a blessing, if you forget the Giver, and refuse to honour Him with your substance. You are stewards. God is your Master; and He will surely call you to account for the use you have made of the things committed to your keeping; and eternal misery must be the lot of the unfaithful servant who sinks into his grave unrepentant and unforgiven. Oh! my friends, the end is at hand. Let us work while it is yet possible, lest the night of death overtake us in our unpardoned sins. There is, in God's providence, a work to be done amongst us. Let us do it heartily, without grudging; or fear that the order will go forth—'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness.'"

Mr O'Brien sat down, and, with bent head and humbled heart, prayed that whatever truth he had spoken might bear fruit, and his failure in wisdom might be forgiven. Near him sat a poor man, whose life had been one of ex-

treme toil; his family was large, but had enjoyed little health. Fever and ague had held them down in languishing suffering season after season. He had to bear the burden of their support almost alone, but was uncomplaining, and rarely looked for aid from his neighbours, who thought him "*unlucky*, and wondered how it was that he didn't do better," without considering or inquiring into his many difficulties. Another source of their wonder was, "how he could take his troubles so easy;" but this was a secret which they could not understand, even if it had been explained to them. "His ear had been opened to discipline." He had felt himself vile, and laid his hand on his mouth. Yet he cried unto the Lord, and was heard, though his burden was not at once removed. Poverty and sickness were still laid upon him; but his soul said, "I have received good at the hands of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil?" It said, too, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." So there was light in the midst of darkness, and joy in the depths of sorrow.

This poor man now timidly came forward, and laid on the table one dollar. There were incredulous looks, contemptuous looks, looks of condemnation. Some censured him for his presumption in giving whilst they withheld. Some accused him of hypocrisy, pretending to care for what could not really interest him, who had so much besides to worry him. All thought him forward and upsetting, for taking on himself to set them an example, and whispered loud enough for him to hear, that "it would be better to keep starvation out of door with that same dollar, and to leave his betters to manage matters that he had no

right to meddle with." But he felt his right. He thought of the widow's mite, and her Master's commendation; and he let the cruel remark pass unheeded.

Mr O'Brien looked brightly at his poor brother, and said, "I am thankful you have had the honour of first putting into the Lord's treasury, and I am glad to follow you." Here he laid down his offering, which was large enough to surprise and mortify others, who cared not to give, yet in the pride of their hearts did not choose to have it said that they did less than others. Gradually, from one motive and another, the little fund swelled; and as it grew late, it was proposed to hold another meeting, to decide on the site, plan, &c., of the new church. George Forrester had throughout stood firmly by his father-in-law, and gratified him by his liberality.

CHAPTER XII.

Light out of Darkness.

"Therefore in life I'll trust to Thee,
In death I will adore;
And after death will sing Thy praise,
When time shall be no more."

SO much had been gained, and Mr O'Brien and his family thanked God for it, and prayed Him still more to prosper the work. A few days after the meeting, Mrs O'Brien and Dora set out on a visit to *the first* subscribers towards the new church. They found them living in a small log-shanty on the edge of a low beaver meadow. The piece of clear land had induced them to select the spot; but it was a very injudicious choice, as for a great part of the year the flats were covered with stagnant water, and consequently there was much miasma to produce ague. Mr O'Brien had never been in the place. It lay on a back concession, and he had not heard anything of the cir-

cumstances of the poor settler; but the acquaintance, once begun by his wife and daughter, was cordially followed up, and produced many happy results to both families, for a godly friendship is rich in blessings. "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel;" and as "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

Mrs O'Brien found the house crowded with sickly, haggard faces. The mother was in bed, very ill. The debility produced by repeated attacks of fever and ague had deprived her of the use of her limbs; and she lay on a bed of languishing, witnessing the many wants of her family without being able to relieve them. Her eldest daughter, an overgrown slender girl, looked as if her constitution was quite undermined; walking across the room made her flush and gasp. All the others (six in number) seemed to have suffered more or less from the swamp fever, as they called it; but still they lingered on in the unhealthy spot, not having means to build a shanty elsewhere, and shrinking from any application to their neighbours, who should have come to their aid unasked.

On Mrs O'Brien's return home, she made her husband acquainted with the melancholy sight she had witnessed; and spoke of the gentle submission of the poor mother, and the trembling gratitude with which she had accepted a little help; but "more, much more, must be done for the poor people, else they will die in that swamp."

"Yes," said Mr O'Brien, "we must lose no time in

coming to their rescue. Do you think we could manage to take them all out of that terrible place at once? I suppose the Forresters can take some of them, and the others can come here; and I will see about getting up a log-house for them on a higher part of their little farm."

It was so arranged.

Moira and her husband gladly entered into the views of the O'Briens; and as their house was a better and much larger one than their father's, they insisted on taking the greater number in.

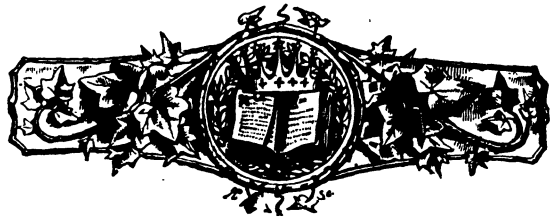
When all had found shelter, Mr O'Brien went to a few of the wealthier neighbours, stated the facts, and asked their help in putting up the shanty. This they promised freely; indeed, the Canadian settler is rarely backward in complying with any request of the kind. As it was late in the season, all wished to begin the work without delay.

Mr O'Brien and his son's skill as carpenters, proved very valuable. They all worked with good will, and in a fortnight there was a little clearance made on a dry, elevated part of the land, and a good-sized log-house put up. Many hands made light work; and it was a gay, pleasant time to all. When the house was thought habitable, the father (James Duff), and those of his children who seemed strongest, were allowed to take possession; but Mrs Duff, and two or three of the sickliest of her family, were still kept by their kind friends; and this considerate liberality quite stirred up a wholesome emulation in the neighbourhood, so that many useful articles were spared to the suffering family. A nice little store of provisions for the winter was sent in, and clothes were

supplied for all; and hence there was great comfort in seeing the scattered members gathered under their own roof once more. Nothing could exceed their gratitude.

The first time that divine service was held after their new dwelling had been taken possession of, the whole family attended,—many of them, it is true, still very feeble; but the parents were unwilling to leave any behind,—all must appear in God's presence publicly, to acknowledge His benefits. And the minister, who had been informed of the circumstances, made their happy rescue a subject of general thanksgiving. Nor were the benefits of these acts of kindness confined to the Duff family. Those whose hearts were moved with compassion towards them, felt softened by the kindly effort, and more disposed to open their stores, and exert themselves for the benefit of their fellow-creatures in future.

So much for holy example and precept. So much for prayer and patience. There was certainly a stirring amongst the dry bones; and though all gave, none felt the poorer,—on the contrary, as a bluff outspoken old man said, "I believe charity is a bush that bears thorns for such as don't cultivate it, but roses for those that do."



CHAPTER XIII.

New Arrivals.

"Work of all kinds is kingly, if men only know how to do it well.
The pride that despises it is beggarly."

CHOPPING, logging, hard work, and cold weather were outside the order of the day. Within, no lack of business either. Thrifty housekeepers time their work well, and each occupation falls into its proper place. Biddy was a good manager, and found hours for her clever knitting and spinning. Most comfortable and durable socks grew rapidly under her fingers; and she was highly pleased to find the ladies prizing the stockings she had made for them. But in a private corner lay her best performance with the wheel and needles. Several pairs of very superior mittens, socks, and a comforter or two, were laid by carefully for her favourite, Edgar; and great was her joy

when told that a visit was expected from him before long. His ship had been cruising along the coast, and round the Gulf, but was now under orders for Europe, and the Canadian youths were permitted to pay farewell visits to their friends. So Master Edgar came in good time to enjoy his cosy woollen treasures, and great was his admiration of Biddy's skill. He praised her dyeing,—the bright reds, blues, and yellows that she was so proud of,—and he told her many wonderful things of his little voyages.

"But, Biddy, can you guess whom I met on the St Lawrence? Somebody who was not very gallant to you once."

Biddy blushed, as she said, "Oh, Master Edgar, don't be reminding me of what I forgave and forgot long ago. It's the captain you mean, I'm sure. Then, did you see him? and what was he like? I hope our little darlin's teaching wasn't lost on him. Could you find out at all, sir, whether he remembered the blessed child?"

"Yes, Biddy, he was the first to speak of him; and, would you believe it, his eyes filled with tears as he talked over what the little fellow said to him. I never heard so much of it before. It was wonderful for such a youngster."

"Ah! young or old, he was nothing but an angel. At least, God was making him one fast, for the little while we had him; and now he is a perfect one in heaven. Tell me more of the poor captain, sir, if you please."

"Well, Biddy, I have not much more to tell. We met his vessel in the river, and the young doctor was with him again. He had moved about a good deal since we knew

him, but when the captain met him at Quebec, and asked him to make another trip with him, he took him at his word; so I met them together, and after they had asked a hundred questions about all of us, you amongst the rest, they said we need not be surprised to see them in Goderich some day before long; and I fancy their visit will be in the winter, while the ship is laid up. She is not to make another trip till summer. In her last she was late, and fell in with an iceberg, which knocked a hole in her side; so she is to be patched, and her master will have idle time on his hands. I hope, if they do come, father will make them welcome."

"Ah! thin now, Master Edgar, don't you know well enough that he will? Isn't he always one to do good to his enemies, and love them that despitefully use him?"

"O Biddy! I thought you had forgotten all about his spite."

"Yes, and so I have, though I just remember it when I'm not thinkin' of it. But what if I do bring it back? Sure you don't think I want revenge, unless it's just the sort the mistress showed when she nursed and cared for the woman that said such lies of the family? No, no, Master Edgar, I'd be a dunce if I didn't know better by this time, after all the examples I have before me. And you may tell the same captain, if ever you see him again, that I love my enemies; only I have none to love."

"Well done, Biddy, I'll be sure to tell the captain you *love him;*" and so saying, the merry lad closed the conversation with Biddy.

Edgar's parents saw nothing in their son to make them

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regret having permitted him the indulgence of his strong bias, and the letter he brought from their friend, Captain C——, was in every respect satisfactory; so that it was only the unavoidable separation which made them think with sorrow of his choice of occupation. He spent a few weeks with them; and before he left, to his great amusement, Captain Kurtz and young Dr Baynes walked in. They said they came to see the country and their friends, and they were so cordially welcomed, that their stay was prolonged from day to day. Indeed, Dr Baynes began to think he might do worse than try for practice in Goderich and its neighbourhood, and the captain asked many questions as to the trade on Lake Huron. A plain statement of facts was given them, and both seemed inclined to pay another visit at least.

Mr and Mrs O'Brien were greatly pleased to perceive a very marked change in Captain Kurtz; and Dr Baynes assured them that he was altogether a different man, "and he always says he owes the change to 'blessed little Willie;' and, my dear sir, I hope Captain Kurtz is not the only one that listened to Willie's holy words and remembers them. I thank God I ever met the child; he taught me more than ever I knew before, and I hope to meet him again. I think I must tell you how it was that I fell in with Captain Kurtz again at Quebec. I had been trying different places, but failed in getting practice to suit me, and went back to the city. One day I had walked out to see the little green grave you know of; and whom should I see there but the captain. He was kneeling on the sod planting some fresh tufts of primroses and violets on Willie's

grave. He had brought them from Ireland on purpose, because he had heard the child speak of them with delight. From that hour my heart warmed towards the rough man; and when he proposed my making another trip with him, I could not refuse. But, pray sir, do not let him suppose that I have mentioned anything of this to you. He is, with all his roughness, really shy. Just fancy his being quite afraid of your Biddy. He cannot believe that she forgives him for his misbehaviour towards her, but I heard Edgar telling him to 'try,' and saying a lot of nonsense besides on the subject."

The little incident the doctor had related concerning Willie's grave, touched the parents to the heart, and they longed to thank the captain; but the doctor's request for silence prevented it. However, they all the more wished and urged a continuance of the visit; but when pressing Captain Kurtz to stay, he said—

"I tell you what, my friend, if I had not been a fool I should have gone long ago."

So surprised was Mr O'Brien at this strange speech, that he asked some explanation of it, and to his far greater astonishment heard the reply.

"Well," said Captain Kurtz, "I was plain enough in showing my hatred to her once, and now, maybe, I shouldn't be ashamed of letting my love be known; but somehow I 'm daunted. Do you think, sir, she forgives me?"

"Who forgives? Of whom do you speak?"

"Oh, Mr O'Brien, I forgot I had not mentioned her name. You see, I 'm a little ashamed to talk of her. Well, I mean your girl, Biddy: I once treated her like a brute,

as I then was; but ever since, I can't tell why, she often comes into my mind, and I'd be glad to get her to think well of me; but whenever I begin to talk to her, I think of the rope's end, and get afraid to go on, and more like shutting myself up in the hold for the rest of my days. Your mad-cap son gave me a little courage by something he said, but I believe it's all gone now; so I think I'll be off, for I can't well stand seeing her, and knowing I've no chance."

"Then," said Mr O'Brien, "you have not asked the girl yet?"

"No; I wish I had, so as to get out of the scrape one way or other; but it's no use trying; do you think it is?"

Mr O'Brien smiled and said he felt inclined to second Edgar's advice, to "try;" but he would prefer consulting with his wife before he gave any opinion.

The consultation was held; and as soon as her husband left her, Mrs O'Brien called in Biddy. To her she told what the captain had said, and asked the girl plainly if the offer of marriage were to be made, what she would be inclined to say?

Poor Biddy's confusion prevented her speaking for some minutes, and she gradually withdrew quite behind her mistress's back before she could utter a word, and then even her tongue seemed to refuse its usual office.

"Ma'am, dear, isn't he a good man? Doesn't he love the child? An' shure, meself forgives him intirely; but he's too good for the likes of me—an' what would the family do? An' I'm only a poor servant girl—an' I don't know what to say at all at all, only just that I'll be sorry for him

when he goes. Shure, it's all Masther Edgar's fault for putting it into my head, and talking such a lot of the captain's goodness."

Mrs O'Brien had waited in patience and silence whilst sentence after sentence came forth at rather long intervals. She was most anxious to fathom Biddy's real feelings, and now she thought she understood them pretty well, and might venture to encourage the captain to "try."

This her husband undertook to do, and before very long it was evident that the old sailor was getting over his fears of Biddy; indeed, in a day or two, he broached the subject himself with Mrs O'Brien, by thanking her for giving him "the chance," and saying that, after all, though he knew he was only a weather-beaten old hulk, the girl didn't despise him, and all was right between them. He went on to say then, in a more methodical way, that as he hoped to have a snug little property when he settled up, he intended to come back and buy a farm near them, as Biddy could not bear to think of parting from all her friends, and he felt as if it was about time for him to settle down. And so it was arranged; Mrs O'Brien considerately setting Biddy's hands quite free for her preparations, in which the whole family aided her, and engaging two of the young Duffs to fill her place. Captain Kurtz made it a request that Dora would give him a list, and not a short one, he said, of all that she thought the lassie would fancy, only just to leave the choice of the wedding-gown to himself, and he would try to please her.

This kind offer was very gratifying to Mrs O'Brien, as a proof of considerate liberality; and she allowed her daughter

to supply a list of such articles as she thought would be useful and suitable to Biddy's new position. Under the circumstances, this did not appear indelicate; and it left Biddy's wages as a little pocket-money, to be disposed of as she pleased.

There was a great deal of merry but affectionate congratulation; and the idea of Mrs Kurtz living near them reconciled the young people in a great measure to the partial separation.

Murty had been for a time dubious and reluctant regarding the step proposed, but his master's high opinion of the captain, and a gradually received belief that Biddy really did like him, made him think better of it; so he consented, after sundry shy manœuvres, to be measured for "a bran-new suit of clothes from top to toe; an' a hat, an' long boots, and gloves, if ye plase, was all to come home along with the suit from Montreal. An' Murty was to be on the look-out for a first-rate farm, and lots of things, for cakes and things was to come home with the captain; and they were to be rale respectable, and to have a great feast; and, shure, I 'm going to do the biggest half of it all meself, and not lave the poor dear misthress and the ladies to work for me."

Such was Biddy's summary of the preparations; and it was with difficulty she was moderated in her efforts to carry out her intentions literally. But there was a secret she never told any one but Murty, for "what for should she be after talking of the things that she sent for, for every livin' soul of the family? Wasn't the silk gown for the misthress, an' the big books for the masther to leave down

in the new church, and the muslins and sashes for the young ladies, and the tool-chest for Masther Darcy? and I won't tell ye what for Miss Moira, that 's Mrs Forrester now. An' all them things is down in the captain's pocket-book; an' I know they 'll come, for he 's not one to break his word. I tell ye, Murty, she 's the lucky girl that gets him, for the roughness is all wore off, and it would be surprisin' to you if I 'd tell you how rale good he is."

"Thin, now, Biddy, I 'm all of a puzzle to see how you can think so well of the captain just of a sudden. Shure, it 's not more nor a month since he came here, an' afore that it 's not much any of us thought of him. I tell ye, I 'm afeard it 's his money and the grandeur ye're thinkin' of, an' desavin' yourself about the love; an', shure, we have good right to know that wouldn't be right. Didn't ye often tell me yourself, that what the masther and misthress thought most of in Mr George, when he was courtin' Miss Moira, wasn't his money at all, but the love of God that was in his heart? An' now, shure, Biddy, if you 're hankerin' after the gould, and forgettin' what 's betther, how in the wide world will ye ever be able to say them solemn words at the altar? When Miss Moira was sayin' them, my heart was full, for I thought how awful like it would be if she broke her word; for, shure, it 's all the same as an oath before God and the people. Oh, Biddy, Biddy agrah, don't do it if ye can't feel ye have the truth of it in you; and I 'm frightened for ye."

Poor Biddy had listened with downcast face and tearful eyes, as her brother, in his own homely way, had exhorted her faithfully to consider the vows and duties she was about

to undertake, and not to rush thoughtlessly into a position full of important duties and responsibilities. She felt the truthfulness of all he said, and looked within to see whether her feelings could stand the test his plain words presented; but, after a few minutes' silence, she said, in a timid voice, "Murty dear, don't be afther doubtin' me; indeed an' indeed, as well as ever I can find out, it isn't the money nor the grandeur I'm afther. An' shure, though it's only a month since he came to us, wasn't I thinkin' of him many a time afore? And when Masther Edgar used to be teasin' me, an' tellin' me a heap of things about the captain, I used to think afther all he was goin' to be the right sort; an', as thrue as I live, the anger that I had once against him was turnin' and turnin' into—love; an' I was glad in my heart when I heard he was comin', not for that I had the foolish notion that he'd even himself to the likes of me, but just that I had the wish to let him see I forgave him out an' out; an', thin, when he was so soft-like to me, from the minit he came an' showed me such respect, an' thin hearin' the family spakin' well of him; an' thin—och, but I won't be afther telling ye any more, Murty dear; but the beginnin' and the end of it is, that I have the feelin' to him; an' now if ye go for to send him off from me, it's little good ye'll leave in me; an' what for should the dacent man be desaved? An' oh, Murty, I do think of the promises and vows; but, shure, all I can do is to ask the great God to give me the heart to keep them, for they are solemn-like, and above me intirely." And Biddy laid her head on her brother's shoulder, and wept unrestrainedly.

I will leave my readers to welcome back the captain and doctor, and to fancy the happiness and affection exhibited at Biddy's wedding, and the shy delight with which the bride entered on her new duties in her own very comfortable home.

With Mr O'Brien's consent and approval, Murty soon went to superintend the captain's farm. The old sailor's natural propensities and life-long habits unsuited him for agricultural pursuits; and after sundry consultations, and awkward attempts at apology, he bought a vessel, and became its master, on the noble fresh-water sea beside his happy home.

The young doctor settled also at some short distance from "the family," and soon gained a wide practice. By and by, it was observed that his horses often took the road to "The New Home," even when there was no call for their master's professional attendance. But that matter we shall leave with Miss Dora, whom it seems most to concern; simply gratifying our readers, in taking leave of them, with the knowledge that the settlers exhibit an increasing confidence in the O'Brien family, and a greater willingness to be led by their example and precept into holier paths than the old.

THE END.