

There was a little convulsive sympathy then, but it was too late. There was, however, one beautiful ray of brightness that streamed out over his darkened life. Floy Austin had been true to her love for him, though her father had forbidden her to see him after his arrest. But when the story that he was dying, came to her ears, she threw aside all parental control, and came to him, and insisted upon being his wife immediately. He objected faintly, but the thought of having her with him to the end, and of calling her at last, by the sweet name of wife, was too pleasant to be long resisted, and so in the solemn shadow of death they were united in wedlock, and her hands ministered to his last earthly wants, and her loving faithfulness brightened the valley of shadows.

And so Robert Sherwood was dead—dead in the flush of his young manhood. If he erred and fell in that one terrible moment of bitter temptation, were they quite guiltless who barred the way of his return to honor, and virtue, and usefulness?

After Robert's death, Alfred Lindsey came up and took Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood and Corraline down to Windsor Locks. He knew how desolate and terrible the old place must seem to them now, and he promised Robert to make their grief as easy for them to bear as possible. Grantley people talked about it some, and wondered "why he didn't marry Corrie and be done with it—it would certainly look better."

But one, two, three years went by, and both Alfred and Corrie kept on in the even tenor of their way. There was nothing heard of marriage between them, but that a deep, and tender, and earnest affection existed between them, no one could doubt who knew them. Some people, not understanding pure and tender feeling, laughed, and made sneering remarks and innuendoes, but the poisonous arrows glanced off harmless from their strong armor of purity. But there came a change at last; a change that released Lindsey from the self-imposed life of labor and sacrifice in their behalf. Corrie Sherwood, quite unexpectedly to most people, though not to Alfred, married a wealthy gentleman in Hartford, who at once took her parents home to his house. The day after they left, Lindsey went up to Grantley. He had scarcely been there since Robert Sherwood died. There were reasons why he dared not trust himself to go there much.

Annie Morrison, a little paler and graver than on that autumn morning when she had ridden from Hartford to Grantley with Alfred Lindsey, sat lost in thought before a light fire that flickered through the twilight shadows of a gray October evening. A low rap sounded on the door. Of course it was her father, she was expecting him momentarily; so she said, with a little low laugh:

"Come in, if it is anybody that loves me."

The door opened and a gentleman came forward, pausing where the light fell across his face.

"Addie," he said, tenderly, "I could not stay outside when you said that."

Of course she gave a little feminine start and scream, and protested against his taking her so literally, because, of course, she was only in fun, besides, she was so sure it was her father. But when he told her in earnest, passionate words of his love for her all these years, and how he had not dared to come to her before, lest her sweet face should make him forget the path of duty he had marked out for himself; and that now the burden was off his hands, and he was free to seek his own happiness, etc., etc., why, she quite broke down, and admitted between little happy, hysterical sobs, that "she had loved him always;" and when a little later Mr. Morrison really came in, he found his little girl the betrothed wife of Alfred Lindsey, and like a model father, added the parental blessing.

In a Western Sabbath-school, a boy was asked to give an account of Moses. "Moses," said the boy, "was born on the banks of the Nile in a basket. As the infant lay in the basket, concealed in the bushes, a huge crocodile came swimming along, and approaching him, said: 'Moses, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.' Whereupon the infant stretched out its little arm toward the crocodile, and said: 'Verily thou art the man.'"

An orator, who had raised his audience to a great height by his lofty soarings exclaimed: "I will now close in the beautiful and expressive language of the poet—I forget his name—and—and—I forget what he said, too."

THE IRISHMAN'S WILL.

IT was a little after midnight that a knock came to the door of the cabin. I heard it at first, for I used to sleep in a little snug basket near the fire; but I didn't speak, for I was frightened. It was still repeated louder, and then came a cry: "Con Cregan; Con, I say; open the door! I want you." I knew the voice well; it was Peter McCabe's; but I pretended to be fast asleep, and snored loudly. At last my father unbolted the door, and I heard him say, "O, Mr. Peter, what's the matter; is the old man worse?"

"Faix that's what he is; for he is dead."

"Glory be his bed! when did it happen?"

"About an hour ago," said Peter, in a voice that even I from my corner, could perceive was greatly agitated. "He died like an old huthen, Con, and never made a will!"

"That's bad," said my father, "for he was a polite man, and said whatever was pleasing to the company."

"It is bad," said Peter, "but it would be worse if he couldn't help it. Listen to me now, Corney; I want ye to help me in this business; and here are five guineas in gold if ye do what I bid ye. You know that ye were always reckoned the image of my father, and before he took ill ye were mistaken for each other every day of the week."

"Anan!" said my father; for he was getting frightened at the notion, without well knowing why.

"Well, what I want is for ye to come over into the house and get into bed."

"Not beside the corpse?" said my father trembling.

"By no means, but by yourself; and ye're to pretend to be my father, and that ye want to make yor will before ye die; and then I'll send for the neighbors, and Billy Scanlan the school-master, and ye'll tell him what to write, leaving all the farm and everything to me—ye understand. And as the neighbors will see ye and hear yer voice, it will never be believed that it was himself that did it."

"The room must be very dark," says my father.

"To be sure it will; but have no fear. Nobody will dare to come nigh the bed, and ye'll only have to make a cross with yer pen under the name."

"And the priest?" said my father. My father quarreled with him last week about the Easter dues; and Father Tom said he'd not give him the rites; and that's lucky now. Come along, now, quick, for we've no time to lose; it must be all finished before daybreak."

My father did not lose much time at his toilet, for he just wrapped his big coat round him, and slipping on the brogues, left the house. I sat up in the basket and listened till they were gone some minutes; and then in a costume as light as my parent's, set out after them to watch the course of the adventure. I thought to take a short cut and be there before them; but by bad luck I fell into a bog-hole, and only escaped drowning by a chance. As it was, when I reached the house the performance had already begun.

I think I see the whole scene this instant before my eyes as I sat on a little window with one pane, and that a broken one, and surveyed the proceedings. It was a large room, at one end of which was a bed, and beside it was a table with physic bottles, and spoons and teaspoons; a little further off was a table, at which sat Billy Scanlan, with all manner of writing materials before him.

The country people sat two and sometimes three deep round the walls, all intently eager and anxious for the coming event; Peter himself went from place to place trying to smother his grief, and occasionally helping the company to whisky—which was supplied with more than accustomed liberality.

All my consciousness of the deceit and trickery would not deprive the scene of a certain solemnity. The misty distance of the half-lighted room; the highly-wrought expression of the country people's faces, never more intensely excited than at some moment of this kind; the low, deep drawn breathings, unbroken by a sigh or a sob; the tribute of affectionate sorrow to some lost friend, whose memory was thus forcibly brought back; these were all so real that, as I looked, a thrilling sense of awe stole over me, and I actually shook with fear.

A low faint cough from the dark corner where the bed stood seemed to cause even a deeper stillness; and then, in a silence where the buzzing of a fly would have been heard, my father said:

"Where's Billy Scanlan? I want to make my will."

"He's here, father," said Peter, taking Billy by the hand, and leading him to the bedside.

"Write what I bid ye, Billy, and be quick for I havn't a long time before me here. I die a good Catholic, although Father O'Rafferty won't give me the general rites."

A general chorus of muttered "O! masha, masha!" was now heard through the room; but whether in grief over the sad fate of the dying man, or the unflinching severity of the priest, is hard to say.

"I die in peace with all my neighbors and all mankind."

Another chorus of the company seemed to approve their characteristic expressions.

"I bequeath unto my son Peter—and never was there a better son, or a dacent-er!—have you that down? I bequeath to my son Peter the whole of my two farms of Killmundoonery and Knock-shaboora, with the fallow meadows behind Lynche's house, the ferge and right of turf on the Duran bog. I give him—and much good may it do him—Lanty Cassara's acre, and the Luaty fields, with the lime kiln; and that reminds me that my mouth is just as dry. Let me taste what ye have in the jug." Here the dying man took a very hearty pull, and seemed considerably refreshed by it.

"Where was I, Billy Scanlan?" says he; "O, I remember it was at the lime-kiln. I leave him—that's Peter, I mean—the two potato gardens at Noonan's Well; and it is the elegant crops that grow there."

"Ain't you getting weak, father darlin'?" says Peter, who began to be afraid of my father's loquaciousness; for, to say the truth, the punch got into his head, and he was greatly disposed to talk.

"I am Peter, my son," says he; "I am getting weaker; just touch my lips agin with the jug. Ah! Peter, Peter, you watered the drink!"

"No, indeed, father, but it's the taste is leavin' you," says Peter; and again a low chorus of compassionate pity murmured through the cabin.

"Well, I'm nearly done, now says my father; 'there's only one plot of ground remaining, and I put it on you Peter—as ye wish to live a good man, and die with the same easy heart as I do now—that ye mind my last words to ye here. Are ye listening? are the neighbors listening? is Billy Scanlan listening?"

"Yes, sir, yes, father, we're all mindin'," chorused the audience.

"Well, then, it's my last will and testament, and may—give me the jug!"—and here he took a long drink—and may that blessed liquor be poisoned to me if I'm not as eager about this as every part of the will; I say, then, I bequeath the little plot at the cross roads to poor Con Cregan, for he has a heavy charge, and is an honest and as hard-working a man as I ever knew. Be a friend to him, Peter dear; never let him want while ye have it yourself—think of me on my deathbed whenever he asks ye for any trifle. Is it down, Billy Scanlan?—the two acres at the cross roads to Con Cregan and his heirs in *secla seclorum*? Ah, blessed be the saints! but I feel my heart lighter after that," says he—"a good word makes an easy conscience. And now I'll drink all the company's good-health, and many happy returns—"

What he was going to add there's no saying; but Peter who was now terribly frightened at the lively tone the sick man was assuming, hurried all the people into another room to let his father die in peace.

When they were all gone Peter slipped back to my father, who was putting on his brogues in a corner, "Con," says he, "ye did it all well; but sure that was a joke about the two acres at the cross roads."

"Of course it was, Peter," says he,—"sure it was all a joke, for the matter of that. Won't I make the neighbors laugh hearty to-morrow when I tell them all about it?"

"You won't be mean enough to betray me?" says Peter, trembling with fright.

"Sure ye wouldn't be mean enough to go aginst yer father's dying words?" says my father; "the last sentence he ever spoke; and here he gave a low, wicked laugh, that made myself shake with fear."

"Very well, Con!" said Peter holding out his hand; "a bargain's a bargain; yer a deep fellow, that's all." And so it ended, and my father slipped over the bog, mighty well satisfied with the legacy he had left himself.

And thus we became the owners of the little spot known to this day as Con's Acre.

Time About.

TWO Yankees were strolling in the woods without any arms in their possession, and observing a bear ascending a tree, with its paws clasped around the trunk, one of them ran forward and caught the bear's paws, one in each hand. He instantly called out to his comrade:

"Jonathan, I say, go home and bring me something as fast as you can, till I kill the varmint. Mind don't stay, for I'm in a fix."

Jonathan ran off as fast as he could, but was an exceedingly long time returning. During the interval the bear made several desperate attempts to bite the hands of him who held it. At length Jonathan came back.

"Hallo, Jonathan, what the deuce has kept you?"

Jonathan replied: "Well, I'll tell you. When at home breakfast was about ready, and I guessed it would be as well to wait for it."

"Here, now, Jonathan," said his comrade, "you come and hold it, and I'll kill the critter in a jiffy."

Jonathan seized the bear's paws, and held the animal while the other could kill it.

"Well, Jonathan, have you got hold of him?"

"Yes," said Jonathan.

"Very well, hold him fast; I guess I'll go to dinner."

A Poor Place.

A MEMBER of the far-famed Quandang Club—the Historical and Piscatorial Society of Westchester County—tells of a curious funeral custom in one of the Long Island agricultural districts, a district remarkable for its fertility in clams and bluefish. He says that a few years ago he went down on the island with a view of purchasing a farm which he had seen advertised for sale. He spent several days in the village; his inquiries as to the value of the farm were satisfactorily and assuringly answered, and he finally had the honor to 'assist' at a funeral. He noticed in the funeral procession a heavy cart drawn by oxen, and the cart was filled with guano. He was surprised to see the contents of the vehicle deliberately emptied into the grave before the earth was thrown in. Upon inquiry of the minister he ascertained that this custom was in accordance with an old tradition of the farmers on that part of Long Island, who believed the soil was so poor and thin as to require a fertilizer to insure the resurrection of any thing buried in it *except clams!*

Our correspondent didn't buy that farm on Long Island, but eventually settled in one of the fever-and-ague districts of Westchester County, where they have a curious funeral observance of their own, and where most of the people die of fever and ague. At the funerals the mourners uniformly sprinkle quinine on the graves of the deceased to prevent their being prematurely shaken out!

What She Thought.

In the county parish in Scotland the minister and the ruling elder went over the muir to visit an old parishioner on a catechising visit, and the walk being a long one their appetites were pretty keen when they arrived. Before commencing the serious business they suggested that the inner man was clamorous. Janet accordingly went to the press and placed on the table country refreshment, bread, milk, etc, and seating herself at a little distance, requested the visitors to fall to. They soon cleared the board, and the minister remarked: "Mow, Janet, we'll begin the serious business. Do you remember the text last Sunday, Janet?"

"Deed I do," replied Janet, "I mind it well; it was the miracle of the loaves and fishes."

"And have ye pondered the subject during the week?"

"Deed I have, and I'm thinking the noo that gin you and the elder had been there they wad nae hae taken up sae many basketful."

A young lady went into a music store in Royal street, recently, and asked the shop man for "Thy hand, my charming Willie," (a popular ballad so called.)

"I beg your pardon, madam," said the confused seller of crochets, who is a green one by the way—"My name ain't Willie, but Robert, they calls me Bob for short; besides, I's engaged to Lucinda Jenkins, and can't give to no one else my hand."

The lady of course put down the seller of sharps for a perfect flat.

Men of means are often the meanest of men.

A Racy Incident.

SOON AFTER the opening of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad there chanced to be traveling over the line, in a car where there were but a few passengers, a gentleman who was seated opposite the stove, wrapped up in his shawl and meditations. Night came on. Presently in bounded a brakeman, loudly slamming the door behind him—one of those country geniuses who, with a laudable ambition, had a day or two ago abandoned the girls, the fiddle and the plowtail, to climb "in the world," and became a brakeman. He had been the king-bee at all the neighborhood frolics, at the house raising, at the corn shuckings, and at the cross-road's doggerly fighting ground, and now he felt sure that he was king-bee on railroads. Strutting up to the stove he slammed down his lantern, kicked the mud from his huge boots on the foot board of the seat, spit tobacco juice copiously and noisily on the hissing stove, crossed his muscular thighs, took a survey of the aforesaid boots with harness-leather straps, and then both thought himself of the "customer" sitting opposite, on whom he proceeded to bestow a lengthened and saucy look, as though he doubted the "customer's" right to be in the coach at all.

At length he sought knowledge.

"Whar ar you guine, mister?"

"To Dalton, sir," responded the gentleman quietly.

"Preacher ain't you?"

"No sir, I am not; but why do you ask?"

"Oh! nothing, only I thought I saw 'Hark from the Tombs' sticking out all over you, like the measles. You know me, I reckon?"

"I am sorry to say that I do not."

"Well, I'll jist be darned; why, whar the devil were you raised?"

"At Maryville, East Tennessee."

"Oh! that excuses you, for if ever I hearn tell ov that settlement afore, I wish I may be durned, and I knows every place, I dus."

"You seem to be well acquainted with the place you are now occupying," remarked the stranger, almost choking with efforts to suppress his laughter.

"What place do you mean, mister?—This ere red baunch, covered with dried skins of cows' toungs, or my office?"

"I alluded to your office, and by the way, what is your position on this road?"

"Brakeman, by the jumping ginminy. I thought everybody knowed that; brakemen over the Yeast Tennesseey and Georgia Railroad."

"Unfortunately, I did not know it."

"Well, you'd soon found the fact out if you'd cut up any shines roun', or trying to steal any bod's carpet-bag, or talking to the conductor, or sich. Why, I'd a chucked you a bottom foremos' through that winder, like dartin' clapboards thru the crack of a barn. I mean to run this train on high moral principles, I dus.—An' you didn't know I was the brakeman on this vere railroad?"

"Indeed, sir, I did not."

"Well, old Slideeasy, all I has got to say is that for a man of your looks you know less than any man I ever saw.—How do you manage to make a living?"

"I receive a salary; I am President of this road; Wallace is my name, but I have not the pleasure of knowing yours; will you be kind enough to inform me?"

"All symptoms of 'king bee' disappeared at this thunderbolt announcement, and in the stead were seen timid humanity, crushed pride of place a strong 'git-up-and-git' expression, and a most confounded hang-dog, "done up" and "dog-goned" appearance generally. The brakeman slid.

Thirty thousand enterprising young gentlemen in Ohio, last year promised to love, honor, and buy "things" for thirty thousand bright-eyed dames and dauzels; and the thirty thousand dames and dauzels blushed and whimpered, and said they "never could go through the ceremony in the world," and then very quietly accepted their destiny, and—on the whole, rather liked it.

Convisart, a French physician of some celebrity, during the latter portion of the last century, was once lamenting the premature death of Dr. Baker. "It was not, at all events, for want of medical aid that he died," said he, "for in the last days of illness, we, Halle, Porter and myself, did not quit him for an instant." "Alas!" interrupted the Abbe Steyez, "what could he do against three of you?"

A wife's sour face is good for the liquor trade.