KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

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KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN.

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AUTHOR OF "THE MISER OF KING'S COURT," "PERCY'S REVENGE," "THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE SNOWDROP, ETC., ETC.

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KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN.

CHAPTER I.

It is mid-winter. The air is sharp and bitterly cold; and as Kathleen climbs the hill she draws her cloak more closely round her and tightens the fur at her throat.

"Surely, they will not turn them out on such a day as this," she murmurs, "a day unusually severe, even here, in the wilds of Donegal. Where is Lionel, I wonder? Why does he not come to tell me what has been decided?" and she turns, and anxiously scans the horizon.

The prospect on every side is bleak and wild. Inland the rugged mountains lift up their fantastic peaks against the morning mists. Away towards the

ocean the bare headlands project far out, dark with bogs and marsh, from which, at intervals, rise huge masses of bleached rock. The calm waters of Lough Swilly are low, and along the sides of the winding bay the sands lie bare and yellow, in the dreary light of this dull winter's day. For miles not a creature is visible, and the thin lines of smoke rising here and there against the sky, alone, indicate the small cabins in which, in the midst of this desolate country, human beings contrive to live.

"He has forgotten his promise, or his news is bad," sighs the girl. "Poor Pat—poor Mary. God grant you courage and patience," and she hurries on up the hill.

Kathleen Burke is eighteen, lithe and graceful as a young fawn, and as she walks briskly over the rugged hill-side, the exercise and sharp wind bring a brilliant color to her usually pale cheeks, which enhances the beauty of her deep blue Irish eyes and delicately chiselled features. But as the girl steps along there is no one near to notice how she is looking, and her own mind is too busy with other and more serious thoughts to allow her time to reflect upon what her appearance may be. It is

not, indeed, a subject that ever interests her much, and to-day it is a matter about which she is absolutely indifferent.

At the top of the hill Kathleen pauses again, and as she looks around she starts, her color fades, and a sad, then an indignant expression flashes across her face, and her dark eyes are filled with an angry light.

"What are the police coming here for this morning?" she cries. "It will not require a mounted guard to drive poor Pat from his cabin; and yet, surely, they are riding this way. I hear the clatter of their horses' feet."

But presently the sound of merry voices and gay laughter was borne towards her on the breeze, and as the riders approached she saw that they were not policemen, as she had supposed, but a cavalcade of ladies and gentlemen, followed by several dogs.

"Only a riding party from the Wood House," she murmured with a sigh of relief; and she turned aside, anxious to escape notice, if she could.

But on the barren hill-side concealment was impossible, and as the eyes of one of the riders fell upon the slim figure in the long crimson cloak and

small round hat, he pulled up his horse and sprang quickly to the ground.

"Kathleen," he cried, grasping her warmly by the hand and looking inquiringly into the dark eyes that were raised in eager expectation to his face, "Why are you up here alone?"

"Why? Have you forgotten your promise?"

"Certainly not. But did you not receive my letter?"

"No, Lionel, and I came here to meet you, hoping that you would have good news for me. Tell me—has your father relented? May Pat and his little ones remain in their home?"

"My father will not relent. Pat O'Connor is lazy and idle, he says, and to-morrow afternoon go he must."

Kathleen's eyes filled with tears and her lips quivered.

"God help him and his children. Where," glancing over the dreary moor-land, "are they to go?"

"To the Union at Dunfanaghy. That is the best home for creatures like them."

Kathleen's color rose and she started away from his side.

"Lionel Dean, your words are cruel," she cried. "But perhaps you are not aware that for years, day and night, late and early, Pat O'Connor worked on his small holding, which in the beginning was merely a piece of bog? That he built the little cottage in which he has lived happily for the last four years? That then the rent was raised; and as Pat could not pay it he and his children were evicted?"

Lionel shrugged his shoulders.

"They all tell the same tale. I would not believe them if I were you."

"I believe what I know to be true," said Kathleen coldly, "and I assure you, Mr. Dean, this story is correct in every particular. Father Lavens offered to pay a year's rent, and personally guaranteed the future payment, but the offer was roughly refused. Poor Pat, in the dead of the night, took possession of his house, from which he declared he had been illegally evicted. It was pulled down over his ears and he was sent to jail. On his release he built a kind of wooden hut, and gathering together the few pieces of furniture that the neighbors had kept for him he settled down peacefully in his

new home. But again the agent and his men were upon him. They pulled down his cabin, threw the furniture into the lough, and sent him once more to prison. A fortnight ago he returned, built himself a kennel—I can call it by no other name, and has taken refuge there."

"It is a sad story. But why is the man so pertinacious? Why cannot he go elsewhere?"

"Why? Can any one explain the love—the infatuation that binds an Irish peasant to his home? You, I am sure, could never understand it, for you are a stranger. But I who have dwelt amongst these hills all my life—I who know what a sorrow it would be to me to leave this wild, lonely country, can sympathize with him from my heart. The love of home is strong, and to my mind the feeling is very beautiful. I cannot believe that you do not think so."

"I do. I consider it most touching," he said, looking admiringly at her glowing face. "But what can be done? When idle fellows like this—"

"He is not idle," interrupted Kathleen indignantly. "When he had work to do he did it well. Oh, what a mockery it is to hear you and your

fellows, rich landlords and their sons, talk of the idleness of these peasants. You, who pass your days hunting, or shooting, or gambling. Spending in luxurious living in your mansions, here or in London, the rents extracted from a starving people. Taking no interest in their lives, feeling no responsibility, never lending a helping hand to them in their misery; and then, when the money falls short, casting them forth to die upon the roadside, calling them lazy and idle, unworthy of any better fate. But believe me, such conduct must bring down upon you the vengeance of God. Sooner or later He will punish you for this cruel neglect of your duty."

Lionel had flushed hotly during this speech. He felt angry with the girl for her blunt speaking. And yet in his heart he could not but acknowledge that a great deal of what she said was true.

Twenty years before Mr. Norman Dean, Lionel's father, had purchased the large property, extending for many miles over one of the wildest parts of Donegal. At that time the tenants had each a small farm, with a patch of land attached, on which they grazed their few sheep and cows; and they had contrived by their patient industry to reclaim por-

tions of the barren mountain. Much of this the new landlord took away from them, and, instead of giving them compensation, doubled, and in many instances, trebled the rent. But of this Lionel knew little. As a lad, coming home from Eton, he had enjoyed a month or six weeks in his father's beautiful house near Lough Swilly; had delighted in the fishing and shooting, and liked the peasantry fairly well. They were always good-natured, treating the "young master" with much respect. His father had done a good thing, people said, in buying this Irish property, and was getting high interest for his money. That was pleasant hearing; and so long as Lionel's allowance was large, and his father in good humor, the young man troubled his head little about whence the money came, or how it was obtained. But suddenly there came a change. The people could not pay their rent—evictions followed. Cottages were razed to the ground; and, heedless of what became of his starving tenants, Mr. Dean drove them off his land, and let thousands of acres of mountain to a Scotch farmer, who paid him a higher percentage than the hard-working peasant had ever been able to do. So the landlord

did not suffer and evictions went on apace. Then Lionel returned from Oxford; but, absorbed in his own amusements, he took but small interest in his father's affairs and scarcely noticed the changes that had been made in the estate. But he was not allowed to remain long in this state of indifference. And to his surprise he soon found himself making inquiries about the condition of the people, and even remonstrating with his father for his harshness in turning Pat O'Connor from his farm. In this, however, he was not following the promptings of his own heart, but merely obeying the instructions of Mrs. Burke and her daughter, who were his best, and I may almost say, his only friends in Donegal.

As a child little Kathleen had been the big school-boy's favorite companion, and she had looked up to him with much affection and respect. His holidays had been the brightest and happiest time of her life. And when he came back from the university, announcing his intention of spending a large portion of his time in Donegal, she was truly glad, and in the simplicity of her heart took no trouble to conceal her pleasure.

The whole of Kathleen's young life had been spent in Donegal, and she knew nothing of the fair world beyond. She loved her home; the grim bare mountains, and the dark, deep waters of Lough Swilly. But above all she loved the people, and longed to see them happy. Mr. Dean was a cruel landlord, who, like a modern Shylock, would have his pound of flesh. But Lionel was kind-hearted, chivalrous and honorable. Through him, she hoped to see justice done. And full of sympathy for the sufferings she saw around her, she urged him to do something to improve the condition of the unhappy tenants. But he was hard to move. He liked to listen to the young girl's pleading, to watch the color deepen in her cheek, to see her dark eyes kindle with indignation, as she told the story of an eviction, or the poverty of some unfortunate family. But he considered such a show of feeling excessive, putting it down to a tenderness of heart, which though worthy of admiration in one so young, was nevertheless quixotic and not worthy of much attention. The land was his father's. He had invested his money in it, and had a right to get as high a rate of interest as he

could. If the tenants could not pay, the tenants must go. They were idle, lazy, and unprofitable, he was told, then why should they encumber the earth? Far better cover the hill-sides with Scotch sheep than with useless creatures like these. Lionel, however, was not hard-hearted, only careless and indifferent, and when Kathleen had pressed him to ask his father to allow Pat O'Connor to remain in his wretched hovel, he consented to do so at once. But Mr. Dean was determined. Pat must go. And he soon made his son believe that it was only right he should. But as Kathleen spoke, telling first the true story of the man's life, and then, full of indignation, had denounced him and his father for neglect of their duty, a feeling of shame took possession of him, and he turned away. But he could do nothing, he reflected bitterly. Mr. Dean and his agent managed the estate between them. He was not to blame. It was absurd to speak so to him. Then suddenly he felt a sharp twinge of remorse, as he remembered how utterly careless he had been, and how little attention he had given to the real condition of these poor tenants.

Kathleen, who knew his character well, guessed

what was passing in his mind, and regretting that she had spoken so harshly, approached him and laid her hand upon his arm.

"Lionel," she said, and her voice was very low and sweet, "I am sorry if I have annoyed you. But believe me, our people are not what they are represented. You are in a difficult position, I know. Your father would resent any interference at first, but could you not, quietly, gradually, find out the truth about these unhappy creatures and use your influence in softening him a little towards them? It would be a noble work and God would bless you for it."

"You speak foolishly—like a child," cried Lionel, hotly. "It is not my business. I will not interfere. You see the success I had to-day."

"Yes; but that was because you did not care; you did not feel; you believed what you were told; you did not know the truth. If you did you would have more power and—I am disappointed, Lionel—bitterly disappointed." And covering her face with her hands the girl turned away with a sob.

"Kathleen, do not speak so. There is nothing I would not do for you. But indeed in this I am

powerless. Go to my father yourself. You will see how determined he is."

Kathleen looked up quickly. A look of terror shot across her face. Then she pressed her lips tightly together, and the color deepened in her cheek.

"It is a good thought," she said firmly. "I will act upon it. Pat shall not go out of his home without an effort being made to save him. To-morrow morning I shall see your father myself. Good-bye." And she went quickly away from him, down the hill. Lionel watched her retreating figure, a softened light in his eyes.

"Kathleen Mavourneen, you have a tender little heart. But alas! I am afraid you go on a useless errand."

Then mounting his horse he galloped off after his friends.

CHAPTER II.

KATHLEEN awoke next morning with a heavy load at her heart. Her sleep had been broken, her dreams troubled. For the sake of Pat O'Connor, his wife and children, she had resolved to go up to the Wood House and implore Mr. Dean to be merciful. But the thought of doing so terrified her. And as she lay tossing from side to side in the lonely darkness of the night, and pictured the stern face and cold manner of Lionel's father, she felt that she could not go to him; that such an ordeal was more than she could bear, and that after all it would probably be useless, indeed, it might even do more harm than good; and she decided to spare herself, and not go. But then, she reflected, she might be successful—she might move the man, and soften his heart towards Pat and his unhappy family. There was always a chance of that. So at last, she dropped

off to sleep hoping and praying that she might have courage to do what was right.

Long before daylight Kathleen awoke, and dressing quickly, stole away down the mountain-side, along the wet shining sands to the lone barn-like structure that served as the chapel, in which the poor peasants worshipped God with all the fervor of their simple, loving hearts. Mass was just beginning as the girl entered, and falling upon her knees in a quiet corner, she implored our Lord to give her the strength and courage necessary for the performance of her disagreeable task.

At breakfast she looked calm, though pale. She felt very brave, and was able to tell her mother of her intended expedition without a quiver in her voice.

Mrs. Burke was a refined, gentle woman of some forty-five years. She was a distant cousin of the late Mrs. Dean, and had lived with her for many years as a companion. She was pretty and well educated and was happy enough in her cousin's home. But still she was only a dependent, with little hope of ever becoming anything else. So when handsome Tom Burke, with his rolling brogue,

and kind good-natured manner, came to the Wood House and asked her hand in marriage, the girl gladly consented, and after a short engagement became his wife. The Deans were shocked at the match. Not because Tom was a Catholic, for Lucy also belonged to the true faith—but for the simple reason that he was only a farmer, a tenant at will of the great landlord of the place, Mr. Dean himself. Still Tom was well-to-do. His father had been to America, had there amassed a considerable sum of money, and returning home to Donegal had taken a large farm, and built upon it a handsome, comfortable house, in which he had lived happily for some years, and on dying had left it to his son Tom. So, after the Deans had recovered from their first astonishment at the news, that even a lowly and distant connection of their great family was willing to stoop to marry an Irish farmer, they became gradually reconciled to the idea, and gentle Lucy Grey, became Tom Burke's wife without further opposition. During Mrs. Dean's life, Lucy, her husband and child were frequent guests at the Wood House; but after her death, which occurred nearly twelve years before this story begins, they

seldom went there, and there was but little intercourse between the two houses. The Deans had one son, Lionel; the Burkes, one daughter, Kathleen, and between the pretty, merry little maiden with the earnest eyes, and the big boy nearly six years her senior, there was a close friendship, with which so far, no one had ever tried to interfere. But the heads of the families rarely met, and when they did, were cold and reserved in their manner and bearing towards each other. And this was caused by no fault of poor Burke's, but by the landlord's greed. Anxious to make his home comfortable, his wife and child happy, Tom improved his farm, decorated his house, ornamented his pleasure grounds, and the result was, that his rent was raised to what he and everyone around considered an exorbitant one. Full of indignation, Tom remonstrated—but in vain. If he would not pay—why he could go. There were many eager to take the farm. And looking round at his home that he loved so well, Tom felt he could not leave it. So he paid the increased rent, and remained Mr. Dean's tenant. But after this, the two men rarely spoke, all friendship was at an end between them. For fifteen long years

Tom Burke continued to work his farm, paying punctually the money demanded by this grasping landlord; and then he died.

"Make what you can out of the land, Lucy, but do not improve," was his last advice to his wife. "Save what you can against a rainy day. For if ever you are in trouble Norman Dean will be a cruel master. He would squeeze out your last farthing, and then cast you forth to die. God help you, dearest, I can do nothing for you now."

After her husband's death, Mrs. Burke enjoyed several prosperous years. The farm was in excellent condition, and she was able to put money in the bank, and educate her daughter as a lady. Then came a succession of wet summers, failure of crops, and loss of cattle by disease. And at the time our story opens the little savings were much diminished, and though not owing a penny of rent, the brave woman and her child were feeling the pinch of poverty in more ways than one. Still they were better off than their neighbours, and their kind hearts were sore as, day after day, they saw whole families thrown out of their once happy homes, to die of starvation amongst the lonely mountains.

"My darling," said Mrs. Burke, as Kathleen unfolded her plans to her, "do you think there is much use in going to the Wood House? If Lionel failed with his father, how can you hope to succeed?"

"Lionel was not in earnest; I am," answered the girl. "He does not believe in poor Pat. I do. Therefore, mother dear, my words may perhaps have more effect than his."

"Perhaps. But, Kathleen, be careful. Do not anger Mr. Dean, pet. He is *our* landlord, too, remember. We are only tenants at will."

Kathleen flushed. She looked anxiously at her mother.

"But we are not in his power? You do not owe any rent?"

Mrs. Burke raised her eyes reverently to Heaven.

"Glory be to God, no. I am thankful, deeply thankful, I have paid every penny. But these are hard times, dearest. I could not pay more than I do, and it would kill me, Kathleen, to leave my home."

Kathleen put her arms round her mother's neck, and drawing her head upon her bosom, kissed her tenderly.

"You shall never be asked to do that, dearest. Even if the very worst were to happen, and Mr. Dean threaten to turn us out, Lionel would not allow him to do so. I am not uneasy, mother."

Mrs. Burke sighed and looked curiously at her daughter.

"Why do you pin your faith on Lionel? He has failed you in this affair of Pat O'Connor. He seems quite indifferent as to what occurs upon the estate."

"Yes; at present I fear he is. But," the color deepened slightly in the girl's cheek, "there is good, much good, in Lionel, mother. And were he once roused—"

"Well, if the things that are going on around him now, do not do that, Mavourneen, I don't know what will. The poverty and sufferings are terrible. Truly, the patience of the people is wonderful. God alone can give them the strength and resignation that they show in the midst of such trouble. Their faith in His goodness is beautiful, and very touching."

"Yes, so it is. But, oh! mother, it makes me

angry. My blood boils with indignation when I see those sufferings, and think how easily they could be prevented. Would that I were a landlord, with a large estate, and money to spend. What a happy place it would become. *My* tenants should have comfortable homes, nice little farms and patches of grazing land for their cows. The children should be well and warmly clad. Their school-rooms should be large and airy, and oh! the treats I'd give them. Why there would not be a sick or sorry person upon the property."

Mrs. Burke smiled, and caressed her daughter's hand, which still lay upon her shoulder.

"My darling, your picture is, I fear, utopian, and even had you the means, impossible to realize. However, between the present state of affairs, and your happy dreams, there is a wide—a terrible difference. But what are you going to ask Mr. Dean to do for Pat O'Connor?"

"Not much. Merely to allow him to stay in this wretched shed that he has built for himself until the spring, when Father Lavens hopes to have gathered together enough money to send him and his little family to America."

"He can hardly refuse that," said Mrs. Burke, musingly, "and yet—if Norman Dean has made up his mind, it will be hard to move him. But go, dearest, on your errand of mercy. God bless and prosper you. I must go out now, and look after my men."

CHAPTER III.

As Kathleen passes through the village, she is greeted with smiles and bows, and "God save you kindly, Miss," from everyone she meets. The children, in scanty rags, stop their games, in front of the squalid cabins, to pull their fore-locks, or make their little curtseys as they see her coming towards them. For dearly do they all love this beautiful girl, who, they know well, has a strong affection and sympathy for them and theirs. She is not rich, has not much in her power; but a kind word, a smile of recognition, a sign that you think him worthy of consideration and respect, will do more to win the heart of the poor Celt, than any quantity of the good things of this world, doled out to him in charity. And in every look and word, Kathleen shows the deep love she feels for these suffering people. Along the way she

stops continually, to ask news of a sick child, a bed-ridden mother, or a dying father. She knows all their troubles, and takes an interest in everything.

At last, she leaves the village behind, and having walked for some distance along the wide sands, she rests a while on the top of a slope over Downing's Bay, which is a dark, calm pool, deep blue in the shadow of the mountains; a charming spot, picturesque and beautiful amid that bleak scenery. For here, the hills are soft and green, the trees large and well-grown. And nestling comfortably in a wide plantation suggestive of lordly wealth and ease, lies the Wood House, the home of Norman Dean, one of the wealthiest men in Ireland.

"How strange it is to see that splendid mansion here," thought Kathleen. "It is hard to believe that so much wealth, such unbounded riches, could dwell side by side with such dire poverty, misery and want. Surely, the master of all this need not be so eager to gather up the hard-earned pounds of the people, or so anxious to turn out those who cannot pay their rent. Mr. Dean, like Lionel, does not understand, or he would not—he could not be so hard."

So thinks Kathleen, as she gazes upon that beautiful house, whose walls of solid granite shine and sparkle in the rays of the wintry sun. And so she still thinks when she is shown into the library of the Wood House, and Mr. Dean shakes her by the hand, kindly smiles upon her, and bids her take a chair.

He is a tall, well-made man, with handsome clean-cut features, and hair that is almost grey. He reminds one strongly of Lionel. But whilst his son's eyes are large, blue and clear, looking straight out with an honest fearless look, Mr. Dean's are small and dark, with a fidgety, shifting expression that is not pleasant to behold. His mouth, too, is hard, and the massive jaw tells of a determination that will be difficult to move.

But he is smiling now. And as Kathleen notes the cheerful ring in his voice as he greets her, she takes courage, thinking it augurs well for the success of her mission.

"Well, my little Kathleen, to what do I owe the honor of this visit?" he asks bowing. "But I beg your pardon. I must not call you little. Why, you are quite a stately young lady now. And what

can I do for you? nothing wrong with your mother I hope? the farm is doing well. She makes an excellent tenant."

"My mother is well, thank you. And so—but oh!" blushing and trembling, "it is not for myself I am here, Mr. Dean, but for poor Pat O'Connor. Will you—say you will allow him to stay in the hut he has built on his old farm, until the spring. His children are delicate, his wife is weak and ill. Pray let them stay, and God will bless you."

As Kathleen spoke, Mr. Dean's face underwent a curious change. The smile quickly faded; the lines about his mouth became hardened; his lips were firmly set, and his eyes shone with a cold hard light.

"To that request, I reply emphatically, no;" he answered sharply. "Pat O'Connor must leave his farm at once, and forever. I told Lionel so, yesterday."

"But Lionel did not explain—did not tell you all," she insisted earnestly. "He did not say, that he wanted to stay only until the spring, when Father Lavens will be able to send him and his

children to America. If you turn them out now, they may die of starvation."

"That is not my affair. Pat O'Connor has no right to be where he is. He was legally evicted from his holding. The land is mine, Miss Burke. Surely, I can do what I like with my own property. So long as that man remains in that hut, no one will take the farm, and that would be a loss, a distinct loss to me."

Kathleen's eyes wandered round the handsome library with its wealth of pictures, its richly carved cabinets, its marble busts, its valuable books, its warm velvet hangings, and soft thick carpet; and then before her she seemed to see the interior of Pat O'Connor's cabin, with its solitary stool, its broken table, and cracked iron pot.

"And yet he was happy there--happier than this man in the midst of all his luxury," she thought. "Poor Pat you ask for little—and that little is denied you."

Then as she looked at Mr. Dean, and noting how well-fed and well-clad he was, compared him with the thin emaciated peasant, and his starving children, a great lump rose in her throat, and she burst into tears.

"Come, come, you must not be so sensitive," remarked Mr. Dean, looking annoyed. "It is absurd to feel so much for these people. Their own lazy habits cause all their sufferings. Let Pat go and work. It will do him good. It is quite ridiculous the way these Irish cling to the land. Idle, good-for-nothing—"

Kathleen started to her feet, her hands trembling, her dark eyes flashing angrily.

"Mr. Dean," she cried—her young vibrating voice full of scorn—"You cannot believe what you say, it is impossible. This is a lie that has been repeated so often by you landlords, that the world has come to believe you. Our people are not idle, except when they are forced to be so. And you know that well. What are they to do when the land is taken from them? Where can they find work? Will you give it to them?"

"My dear young lady, your language is violent. However, I forgive you on account of your extreme youth. But allow me to say that you talk a great deal of nonsense. How can I provide work for the whole country-side? These men must look for it themselves. Where there's a will there's a way,

remember. And now pray let us change the subject. Have you been riding lately?"

"No. I have sold my horse," she answered shortly. "But tell me—must Pat really go?"

"Certainly, and the sooner the better. If he does not leave the cabin quietly, he shall be forced out."

"Then I have no more to say. May God forgive you, Mr. Dean," she said in a choking voice. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye. And pray do not take this matter to heart. That fellow is not worth a sigh. Remember me to your mother." And he held out his hand.

But the girl did not appear to notice it, and merely bowing her head, walked slowly from the room. As the one door closed upon Kathleen, Lionel opened another, at the opposite side of the room, and walked in.

"What Niobe have you had with you this morning, father?" he asked carelessly. "I fancied I heard the sound of weeping as I passed down the corridor. Why"—going to the window and catching sight of the retreating figure—"it's Kathleen Burke—Kathleen Mavourneen. And I declare, she is still in tears."

And paying no attention to his father's repeated calls, he left the house and hurried along the avenue after the young girl.

As his son disappeared Mr. Dean sank back in his chair, and drummed impatiently with his fingers upon the table. There was an angry frown upon his brow, a cruel smile upon his lips.

"A liar! She dared to insinuate that she thought me a liar. A most dangerous, impertinent girl. And Lionel—well, she is pretty, beautiful, I may say. The boy is young and perhaps susceptible. I must watch, and if I find any signs of—I must sweep her from his path. The mother is but a tenant at will, and if I find the smallest trace of what I fear, they shall go—mother and daughter. Dunmore shall have a new tenant."

CHAPTER IV.

HEARING the sound of footsteps behind her, Kathleen hurried on, wishing if possible, to escape unnoticed from the grounds of the Wood House. But Lionel was quicker than she, and very soon he came up, panting and breathless, to her side.

"You are swifter than Atalanta, and would easily have beaten that damsel and secured the prize," he said, laughing. "But surely, Kathleen, you do not wish to run away from me, your old friend and companion?"

Kathleen raised her beautiful eyes, heavy with tears, to his. Then meeting his glance full of anxious inquiry, she blushed deeply, her eye-lids drooped, and she answered sadly:

"No. And yet after to-day, I fear our friendship must be at an end."

"You are not in earnest?" he questioned gravely.

"Our friendship is not a thing of yesterday, Kathleen. It would take much—in fact, there is nothing that I can imagine that could ever put an end to it."

"I have angered your father," she said, in a low voice. "He told me he forgave me, but I feel he has not—not really—he spoke harshly, cruelly, of Pat O'Connor, and all our people about—I—I lost my temper—and so—"

"You told him what you thought of him and his class? And I must say," smiling, "you are very hard upon us all. But cheer up, my little friend; you are young and enthusiastic. Time and experience will doubtless change you. My father will only laugh at your plain speaking. He will not bear you a grudge. And as for me, I am quite accustomed to your hard knocks and long lectures about my duty, etc."

Kathleen smiled. "Yes, I do preach sometimes. But," sighing, "I am afraid I do no good. My temper is so hot, that when I feel much, I get excited, and then I invariably say the wrong thing. If I could only keep cool, my words would have more weight, and then even you, sir, might occasionally listen to me."

"Listen!" he cried. "Am I not always listening? You have great influence over me, Kathleen. But you must not ask me to do the impossible."

"I? Oh, no! That is not likely."

"Well, you have done so already, in this case of Pat O'Connor. Where his tenants are concerned, my father is as impossible to move as that mountain. But after all, I cannot see that he is so very hard upon them. It is not pleasant, even you must allow, not to be able to get the money that one has a right to. If a man cannot pay his rent, he ought to go. However, we are getting on dangerous ground again."

"Yes," she said sadly, "very, since we do not agree upon the subject. But oh! Lionel," clasping her hands and looking up earnestly into his face, "if only something would happen to touch your heart. If only you could be persuaded to look into the real state of things on your father's estate, you would soon see as I see, and grieve for our people."

"My heart is not as hard as you think, my little enthusiast. I am sorry for this poor Pat O'Connor, and here is a five-pound note. It is my contribution

towards sending him and his family to America. But we must say no more about him for the present, and perhaps my father may leave him where he is until we can manage to send him away. I'll speak to the agent about it to-night. He might put in a good word for the poor beggar."

Kathleen's eyes shone with joy, and a brilliant smile lit up her sweet face.

"Thank you, Lionel," she cried rapturously. "God will bless you for this. I will consult Father Lavens, and see how much money he has."

"Do. And who knows, perhaps, we may be able to ship the poor things off at once. However, I am happy to have brought a smile to your lips. I wish you were not so sensitive, Kathleen, for in this rough world of ours, such tenderness of heart will cause you much pain and suffering."

"I am not afraid," she answered gaily, as she folded the note, and put it carefully away in her purse. "I am strong and healthy—and have little to fear. My dear mother takes such care of me. And were it not—"

She broke off abruptly; her face grew white as death, a look of anguish came into her eyes, and

clinging to Lionel's arm, she pointed towards the sand, along the side of the winding bay.

"What is it? what is wrong?" cried Lionel. Then, as he looked towards the spot she indicated, a cry of horror broke from his lips, and he gazed spell-bound at the strange spectacle before him.

Suddenly, below them, a dense smoke arose, then high into the air sprang flame after flame, fanned and increased by the wind which was blowing in strongly from the sea. Wild shrieks soon rent the air; and a number of men, women and children ran screaming towards the fire. For a few moments there was a confused murmur of tongues, a sound of wailing and lamentation, then all was over. The flames died down, and nothing remained but a few smouldering ashes.

"It is Pat O'Connor's hut," whispered Kathleen. "The poor souls are now without a home. Oh, Lionel, how can it have happened?"

"By accident, I suppose," he answered. "But stay here, I will go and inquire." And he ran quickly down the rough uneven road that led to the sea.

Kathleen's heart was sore within her. This burning of the wretched hovel was an unexpected blow.

And as she watched Lionel disappear down the mountain, she began to wonder what was to be done for this unhappy family, and where they would be able to find a home for them, this bitterly cold weather.

"It is a most unfortunate accident," she murmured, "and brings matters to a crisis at once. It will save Mr. Dean the trouble of evicting Pat and the children, poor things. I wonder if anyone is hurt? I trust not. But I cannot wait until Lionel returns, I must know the worst as soon as possible." And she started off towards the scene of the disaster.

As she neared the foot of the hill, she saw that a considerable crowd had gathered. The women had run out from their cabins, and the men had left their work in the fields, wildly excited by the sight of the conflagration.

As Kathleen approached the edge of the crowd, she saw Father Lavens, the much-beloved parish priest standing amongst the people, and above the noise, she could hear his voice raised in tones of expostulation and entreaty.

"Go back now, to your work, in the name of God," he said. "There is nothing more to be done. Pat and his family must come to my house

for the present. Try not to murmur or complain. We must take this fresh affliction as from the hand of God. Let us bear it meekly and patiently, lest greater evils befall us. Disperse now, and may the Almighty bless you."

The people bowed their heads, and slowly did his bidding. Father Lavens watched them anxiously for a few moments; then seeing Kathleen on the road, he turned away, and went to meet her with outstretched hands.

"My child," he said, "this is no place for you; come back to Dunmore. There is no one hurt, thank God, they all escaped quite easily. But this act of cruelty has roused the angry passions of those poor fellows. Do not speak to any of them to-day; they are excited and sore at what has happened, and it is hard to blame them."

"But, surely, it was an accident? it was nobody's fault."

"Alas, no, dear child, it was no accident. Would to God that it had been. It is only a cruel way of getting rid of an obnoxious tenant. The little hut was burned down by the express orders of our landlord, Mr. Norman Dean."

CHAPTER V.

It is May. And away amongst the wilds of Donegal, the weather is mild and genial. The hardships of winter are at an end; and as the people feel the soft Spring rain, and warm sunshine, they raise their heads, and give fervent thanks to God.

During the dreary days of January and March, when fierce storms of wind and rain swept down the mountain passes, and the air was damp and bitterly cold, families were evicted right and left, cast adrift by their cruel landlord to seek food and shelter where they could. What became of them mattered little to him. He had a right to drive them off his land, and turn it into pasture if he chose. The land upheld him and helped him to get rid of these worthless creatures. He had no public opinion to fear, that is, none that he valued. The world at large knew nothing of what was

passing in this far-off country, and Mr. Dean never stayed his hand from any feeling of sympathy with the poor suffering tenants. So evictions went on apace. All signs of human habitation were fast disappearing; and in every cabin there was sorrow; every family mourned some departed friends.

But now, as the spring came round, giving promise of a fine summer and a good harvest, past troubles were partly forgotten, and hope sprang up in the hearts of those, who had been fortunate enough to escape the evictor's hand, and remain upon their farms. And of all the people upon the estate, the inmates of Dunmore were the most happy and hopeful. Mrs. Burke had been weak and ailing during the winter months; but she was much better since the wind had changed, and the sun warmer. The work of the farm was going on well. The crops already sown, seemed flourishing; and the little that remained to be done, would be finished in good time. Everything about the farm was in order. The industrious widow, as Mr. Dean had said, was an excellent tenant.

And as Kathleen went about her household duties, or looked after her dairy and poultry, her

heart was light, and she sang snatches of bright songs, or laughed merrily at old Biddy's wise sayings and curiously quaint remarks. For the girl was happy indeed; happier than she had been for years. Why she felt so, she could not have told you. She had always loved her home. The wild, bleak beauty of the country had never been anything but charming in her eyes. But now everything was more beautiful, more beloved than before. Never had the mountains looked so grand; never had the shifting mist-wreaths that draped their tops seemed so graceful or fantastic; never had the rugged peaks made such a picturesque framework against the arching sky.

On the day that poor Pat O'Connor's wretched hut had been burned over his head, and he and his wife and children cast out upon the road-side, Kathleen had suffered intensely. But thanks to Lionel's generosity, and Father Lavens' exertions, the little family had been sent off immediately to America, where they were met and looked after by a good Irish priest, who had the welfare of his emigrating countrymen much at heart. Pat was hard-working; and news soon came that he was

doing well. Lionel's kindness on this occasion gave Kathleen great pleasure. He was indignant at the cruel manner in which the eviction had been carried out, and although he said little upon the subject the girl saw that he was touched. So she wisely left him alone. This episode had made him think. He was no longer so hard in his way of speaking of the peasants. He began to acknowledge the hardships of their lives, the uncertainty of their position, and as Kathleen noted this growing change in him, her heart was full of hope and happiness.

"Lionel will be landlord here in the future, mother," she said one day to Mrs. Burke. "And please God, he will be very different from his father. From this hour my first prayer, the intention for which I will offer many prayers to our Lord—to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, will be that Lionel may really see things as they are and that he may have grace to become a true and faithful steward over the unhappy people on this estate."

"God grant your prayers may be answered, dearest. For when I am gone, you will not find it easy to battle against a rent-raising landlord."

"I was not thinking of myself, mother. Your

life, please God, will be a long one. And we are of Lionel's kin. Neither he nor his father is likely to be hard on us."

"I would not trust Mr. Norman Dean, Kathleen. And I rejoice that I am not in a position to fear him much. So long as I pay my rent, I think he will surely leave me in peace."

"I am certain he will. And since he forgot and forgave the way in which I spoke to him, that day, about Pat O'Connor, he cannot be so easily turned against us, mother. Lionel says he never alluded to the subject."

"Well, dear, I would not like to speak to him in such a way again. He forgave you, I suppose, on account of your youth."

"Yes," said Kathleen sighing. "So he told me. And now, mother I must go and make one of my lightest and best sponge cakes for tea. Lionel is coming to finish "The Lady of the Lake." I think we shall finish it this evening." And she tripped off gaily to the kitchen.

Mrs. Burke looked after her, with a half smiling, half anxious expression upon her pale delicate countenance.

"Lionel's conversion is to be the object of your prayers, darling—the ambition of your life. Well, it is a noble thought. To bring him round to know and love his people is a work worthy of your loving, unselfish nature. But I do not much like your undertaking it for your own sake. There is much danger for your peace of mind in these constant meetings, and pleasant readings. Danger for your happiness, and perhaps for his. I wonder if Norman Dean knows how often his son is here. If he is aware of the fact, and does not prevent his coming, he is a less worldly man than I take him for. I might stop his visits by a word. But I will not. I cannot. For, Kathleen Mavourneen, I could not bear to see a cloud on your face."

So when evening closed in, the pretty parlor was ready, and all preparations were made for Kathleen's tea-party. On the table was the dainty pink and white china, and sparkling silver that had been gifts from some rich English relatives to Mrs. Burke upon her wedding day. Golden daffodils nestled amongst rich brown leaves in a large old-fashioned bowl. Rolls of butter; bread as white as snow; and a sponge cake, the lightest and most

delicious ever seen, were laid out for the delectation of the expected guest. All these dainties were prepared by the girl's own fair hands. And nowhere, Lionel was wont to declare, did he eat such delightful bread and butter as in the parlor at Dunmore.

At the window sat Kathleen and her mother. Mrs. Burke was knitting, and as the needles flew swiftly through her fingers, her eyes rested lovingly upon her daughter.

The girl had put on her best dress, a soft clinging robe of grey cashmere, with creamy lace frills at the neck and wrists, and a bunch of pink ribbons at her throat that seemed to have lent a slight tinge of their coloring to her generally pale skin.

In her hands she held a piece of work; and there was a pleasant smile on her lips, an amused look in her dark eyes, as she turned down the hem, and made ready to begin.

"Biddy is the queerest of mortals, mother," she said, laughing. "She wanted right or wrong to tell my fortune to-day, but I refused."

"Quite right, dearest, I do not like such nonsense."

"If it were only a joke, it would not matter. But really, Biddy is too solemn over it."

"Foolish old woman, as if she knew anything about such things. Fortune-telling is a superstitious practice, and not to be encouraged."

"I quite agree with you, Mrs. Burke," said Lionel, who entered the room at this moment. "Of course you are talking of Biddy's little propensity? But fortunes, I must say, are not terrible to listen to."

"What? Have *you* listened to her?" cried Kathleen, as she took her place at the table. "I am surprised."

"I did not listen. But I was obliged to hear," he answered, laughing. "One day, I gave her half a crown, and she turned upon me and poured out a torrent of nonsense about money being left to me, a long journey, and a sweet lady. I was—but such rubbish is not worth repeating. How are the new calves getting on, Mrs. Burke?"

Here, the conversation became strictly agricultural, and it is needless to follow into all the particulars of the farm.

But at last the tea came to an end. The pink and white china was carried away, and as the ladies

returned to their needle-work, Lionel drew forth his book and began to read.

The young man was an excellent reader. His voice was strong, yet sweet and sympathetic, and as Kathleen listened the work slipped from her fingers, and she leaned slightly forward, her eyes fixed dreamily upon Lionel's face, unconscious of everything, but the beauty of the poem he was reading.

Suddenly, a shadow fell across the floor. Mrs. Burke started, and Lionel looked up quickly from his book.

"Some one was standing at the window just now," he said. "It was a man, I think. I suppose he was envying our look of peaceful happiness."

"It was a man, Lionel," said Mrs. Burke. "And do you know I thought for a moment that it was your father."

"No fear. He is too busy with his agent. He was so absorbed that he never even asked me where I was going, although, I had to go into the library, where he was, to get this book."

"Of course I must have been mistaken. I hope I was."

"I don't think you need care, mother dear. We are most respectably employed," said Kathleen smiling. "Go on, Lionel. That part is lovely."

So Lionel cleared his voice, and resumed his reading.

The evening darkened into night. And still the three friends sat on together, discussing the book they had been reading, enjoying the present happy time, without any forebodings of the troubles that were to come.

As the clock struck ten, Lionel jumped up.

"How quickly the evening has passed," he cried. "I had no idea it was so late. My dear Mrs. Burke you should have turned me out long ago. But it has been delightful. We must have another meeting soon, Kathleen. I have another story of George Eliot's to read to you. I am sure you will be charmed with it."

"I am sure I shall. 'Silas Marner' was perfect," replied Kathleen brightly. Mother and I— What is it, Biddy?"

"If you please, Mr. Lionel," said the old servant, "there's a man from the Wood House brought this." And she held out a letter. "He told me it

was most perticlar. But sure, I kept it an' him waitin' a bit, for I would'nt disturb yer readin' for him nor the likes of him. An', ma'am dear," and her voice trembled as she turned to her mistress, "he wants to spake to you. I've put him into your own little parlor, as he told me it was business."

"Quite right, Biddy. But I don't think he should trouble me about business at this hour of the night. However, I suppose I must see him. Good-night, Lionel. Many thanks for your beautiful reading. I have enjoyed it immensely."

"Good-night, Mrs. Burke," he answered. "This note is from my father. And he says," glancing over the page, "though sorry to disturb you, or interrupt the charming party that I saw gathered together in Mrs. Burke's parlor."

"Then it was your father, who looked in at the window?" cried Mrs. Burke, her color fading. "Is he angry, Lionel?"

"Angry?" answered the young man laughing. "My dear Mrs. Burke, why should he be? But listen. He wishes me to go home at once, as I am to start for England, to-morrow morning early, on important business. I am very sorry. It will

interrupt our readings. However, it can't be helped, and we'll enjoy them all the more when we come back to them. Good-bye, Kathleen Mavourneen. Good-bye, Mrs. Burke." And shaking his friends warmly by the hand, Lionel left Dunmore, and mounting the horse that was waiting for him, rode home to the Wood House.

"There is trouble coming. My God give me strength to bear it," murmured Mrs. Burke, and she left the parlor with a strange pain at her heart.

As the door closed upon her mother, Kathleen raised the window, and gazed out into the night. It was bright and clear, although the moon was not visible, and hardly a cloud marred the beauty of the starry firmament.

"Thank God, there is no sign of a storm," she thought. "And when Lionel crosses to England to-morrow, he will have a pleasant passage. I wonder what this sudden journey means? Well, it is not my affair. But oh, I wish he had not gone just now."

"Miss Kathleen," cried Biddy running in, in great agitation. "Asthore machree, come quickly to the little parlor. Sure yer poor mother must

have had bad news. God help her. For she's ill—an' dyin'—an'—"

Kathleen waited to hear no more. But turning from the window, sped quickly down the passage to her mother's room.

In an arm-chair, her face white as marble, a look of unutterable woe in her poor frightened eyes, lay Mrs. Burke. At the sight of her daughter she tried to speak, and raised her hands with a gesture of horror. But the words refused to come, and she sank back with a groan.

Terrified, Kathleen flung herself on her knees, beside the chair, weeping bitterly.

"Mother, mother—what is it? What has made you ill?

"My darling," gasped the unhappy woman, at last. "The blow has fallen—you—I—shall soon be without home or shelter. Mr. Norman Dean—has —served me—with a notice—to quit."

CHAPTER VI.

Yes; the blow had fallen. The blow that of late the poor widow had dreaded, and yet felt she had no right to expect. She had been a good tenant. Her husband, and his father before him, had expended much time and money upon the land, and had built the pretty house, Dunmore, in which they had lived and died. But now for a mere caprice, because their landlord considered that she and her daughter were in his way, because he was alarmed at Lionel's friendship for Kathleen, they must go. This hard-hearted tyrant was resolved to exercise his right and sweep them from his path.

This determination of Mr. Dean's was not, as we know, arrived at hastily, but was the result of much careful thought and consideration. Lionel, he had come to the conclusion, was in danger. The cause of that danger must be removed. And as he

knew his son would fight hard for his friends, he made up his mind to get him out of the way, before the notice of ejectment was served upon Mrs. Burke. So the young man was ordered off to England, and business was manufactured to keep him absent, till the eviction should have taken place.

Thus, innocent of what was going on, Lionel left Donegal and traveled to London. He was reluctant to go, but before long he found life in the metropolis extremely pleasant. He had many friends; was asked out, and made much of on every side, and, as was natural to a man of his age and disposition, enjoyed himself thoroughly. His father's business occupied but a small portion of his time; but it progressed slowly. The lawyers would not be hurried, and until the matter was settled, he could not think of going home. So the weeks passed over, and in spite of himself he was obliged to remain in England.

Meanwhile, the little family at Dunmore was in a state of mind almost bordering on distraction. Where they were to go, and what they were to do, were questions that the poor mother and daughter asked themselves a hundred times a day, but could

never answer in a satisfactory manner. Leave Dunmore they must; that was the decree of their landlord, and there was nothing for them to do, but to obey.

Father Lavens went to the Wood House and did all he could to move Mr. Dean and make him change his mind. But he was as hard as adamant. Go they must. Then anxious, at least, to get what he could for the widow and her child, the priest asked for compensation for all that had been done on the farm by the Burkes, father and son, he was laughed at, and ordered from the house.

"It is only what I expected," replied Mrs. Burke, when Father Lavens told her what had happened. "Norman Dean has neither heart nor feeling."

"Alas! I fear not. God forgive him for his cruelty. And now, my friend, we must look matters boldly in the face. What are you going to do?"

"Father Lavens," she answered solemnly. "God is very merciful to me. He is going to take me to Himself. My hours are numbered, and ere the time to quit this roof, where I have lived so long and happily, has arrived, my soul will have taken flight. I shall only leave Dunmore in my coffin."

"How can you tell? You are weak and ill. But you have no disease."

"You are mistaken there," she said calmly. "My heart has been affected for years. Had I been allowed to go on peacefully in my home, I might have lived to, perhaps, a ripe old age. But this shock, this cruel blow, has been my death warrant —any day—any hour God may call me to Himself."

"My poor friend," said the priest, in a voice full of emotion. "And does your daughter—does Kathleen know?"

"Yes. And," sighing, "what a brave unselfish child she is. Her heart is breaking at the thoughts of losing me—and leaving the home she loves—and yet she is always cheerful and talks hopefully of the future."

"So she may. Believe me, she will be happy yet. God will take care of her. She has been a good daughter, and has worked hard amongst the poor. She will have much to fight against, many troubles to endure, but she'll have a noble reward—if not in this world, then certainly in the next. God bless her, she is a good, unselfish child."

The priest spoke feelingly, for he loved Kathleen with a father's love. He knew her well; had given

her her First Communion, and seen her confirmed. And in all the country, he knew there was not a finer nature, or a more faithful, devoted heart, than that of the beautiful girl, who loved the poor peasants, and longed so ardently for their happiness. Her presence in the parish, he had always regarded as a blessing to himself and his people. Her example had done an incalculable amount of good; and her ready kindness and sweetness of disposition had endeared her to all. A word from Kathleen was more powerful in the village, than a threat of punishment, or an offer of reward. Young and old, looked up to, and reverenced her, and in this they had all been encouraged by their parish priest. Her virtue had always been a source of happiness to him, and he was overcome with grief at the thoughts of the bitter tribulations through which she might have to pass.

"I fear my darling may have a thorny path to tread, Father," said Mrs. Burke, after a slight pause. "When I die, she must leave Donegal and go to London."

Father Lavens started, and looked at her in alarm.

"To London? My friend, you surely, would not send the girl to such a wilderness as London, alone—without means—"

"No, no. She shall go to friends. You remember Tom's sister, Lenora, who married George Selwood?"

"Yes. A rich merchant, whom Tom, poor fellow, could never endure. He was a Protestant, too?"

"Yes. But he never interferes with his family, I believe. Well, Nora writes that Kathleen may go to her."

"Humph! And what does Kathleen say?"

"What can she say? Beggars can't be choosers. Poor child, she will probably have much to endure amongst these fine English cousins."

"Much. But don't fret," he said, anxious to reassure the unhappy mother. "She is a brave creature and will surely win their affection. God will take care of her. You may safely leave her in His hands."

Then bidding her good morning, he left the house.

In the garden he met Kathleen. She had grown very thin of late. Her cheeks were pale, and there were dark rings under her eyes.

"Father Lavens," she cried eagerly. "You have been to the Wood House. Is there any news of Lionel?"

"None. He was not mentioned. But do not dream of any help from him, my child. He is a chip of the old block, and cares little for any one in distress."

Kathleen crimsoned over cheek and brow. Tears rushed to her eyes, and her lips trembled.

"Oh, no," she murmured, "do not say so. You —do—not know him—as I do."

Then turning away, she fled into the house.

"God save us!" cried the priest in a tone of horror, as he watched her disappear. "Was there danger for your happiness in that quarter, Mavourneen? Sure, then if so, sorry as I am to lose you, I thank the Almighty that He is taking you away —removing you to a new country, where you'll soon forget both Norman Dean, and his good-for-nothing son."

CHAPTER VII.

TIME flew on apace, and as the day approached on which she and her daughter were to leave their home, Mrs. Burke grew weaker, her hold on life more uncertain. But Kathleen could not believe that her mother was going to die, and spent many an hour thinking over their future plans, wondering how they would contrive to live on the small sum of money they had in hand, until she could find work to do.

"Is not the postman late, Mavourneen?" asked Mrs. Burke, one bright summer's morning. "He must be late."

"A little, dearest," replied Kathleen, rising from her chair and leaning out of the window, in order that she might see, as far as possible, down the road to Dunfanaghy. "But I think I see him coming along."

"I am glad. There may be a letter to-day. I want to be certain, before I go, that your aunt Nora will receive you at once."

The girl looked anxiously at her mother. She was reclining in a long, deep easy chair, and as Kathleen's eyes rested upon her, she noticed, with a thrill of pain, how white and worn she was looking, in the clear bright light of the morning. How hollow were her cheeks; how sharpened her features. What a sad, pathetic look there was in her sunken eyes. Was it her fancy? Or had the dear face wasted rapidly during the past week? Alas! alas! it was no fancy. And for the first time she realized that her mother's strength was fast declining; that her end was perhaps very near. It was now the 16th of June, and in ten days from this, they must leave Dunmore. Would God take this fragile creature to Himself ere then, or would she live to be carried forth from the shelter of her home in a dying condition? And the girl's heart sank within her as she asked these questions, reflecting how bitter it would be for her in either event. To lose her mother would be terrible. But to see her suffer, as she knew she would, on being forced to

say good-bye forever, to the one spot that she loved best on earth, seemed more painful still; and she almost prayed that the poor invalid might escape from this world before the fatal day came round. Yet, loving her mother as she did, she longed to keep her, and clung to the hope, that if the removal were once accomplished, she would gather fresh strength, and live for many years to come.

"Mother," she whispered softly, as she bent over to draw her wraps more closely round her, for though it was summer Mrs. Burke was always chilly, "do you not think it would be better, less painful for you, dearest, if we were to leave Dunmore quietly to-day, or to-morrow? Mrs. Donnelly will take us in for the present. It is useless waiting here till the end. Our things must be sold, and that will distress you."

Mrs. Burke laid a transparent hand upon her daughter's head, and smoothed back the beautiful brown hair from the pure white brow.

"My darling," her voice was low, but firm, "when God sends for me, I shall go. Not before."

"But, mother, if—if—" Kathleen's tears fell fast; sobs choked her; she could scarcely speak; "the day comes—first. Think how terrible that will be."

"It will be God's will, dearest, and I shall bear the suffering as part of my Purgatory. But it will not be. I shall die in Dunmore, and you shall have to face the world alone."

"Oh, mother, what shall I do without you?" Kathleen flung her arms round her mother's neck, and hid her face upon her bosom.

For some moments Mrs. Burke made no reply. She pressed her child against her heart, in a close, loving embrace. Her lips moved as though in prayer, and her streaming eyes were raised to heaven.

"My darling," she said presently, "at first the thought of leaving you seemed more than I could bear. But now, I feel that it is best that I should go. Best for you, love, and far, far better for me. On earth I could only be a burden to you, weak and helpless as I am. In heaven"—her eyes shone—"I can pray for you, and help you. It is God's will that I should go. He will take care of you, Kathleen. In His hands I leave you."

"Yes, mother." And as the girl raised her head, and looked at the sweet face and fragile form of the dying woman, she felt a sudden gratitude to God,

that He should be willing to take her to heaven, and save her from the hardship and misery which would surely await her in the wide, unknown world, which she would be obliged to face, if she lived to leave Dunmore.

Mrs. Burke met the look of love and unselfish resignation in her child's eyes, and a smile lit up her wasted features.

"My little girl will let me go?" she whispered. "She will submit patiently to God's will?"

"Yes, mother, I see it all now. Pray for me that I may have strength to bear the parting."

"I will, love, I will."

Kathleen rose, pressed her lips long and lovingly to her mother's brow, then quickly left the room.

An hour later she came down-stairs, dressed to go out. She looked pale and sad. Her eyes were red with much weeping.

On the hall-table were a couple of letters, and a small box. This she opened hastily, for the address was in Lionel's writing. Within, nestling upon damp moss and maiden-hair fern, was a bunch of crimson roses. They were fresh and fragrant, and as Kathleen lifted them to her lips, they were wet

with her falling tears. A slip of paper lay beneath them, and on it was written:

"In a fortnight I return. What pleasant evenings we shall have then.

"Your friend,

"LIONEL."

"In a fortnight!" A cry escaped the girl. "Too late, too late. But now, I know the truth. Lionel is ignorant of what is happening. I was sure of it. But alas! he will return to find us gone."

Unhappy and restless, heart-broken at the certainty, that suddenly came upon her, that she should now never see Lionel again. Lionel, her one friend, of whom she had hoped and expected so much. Kathleen hurried out of the house, and leaving the pretty garden, with its bright flowers and shady trees, she wandered up the road that led to the mountains.

The view as she goes high up is varied and picturesque, but she has no thoughts for such things to-day. Her heart is filled with a great sorrow, and on no side can she find comfort or hope. Wild, angry and rebellious are her feelings as she climbs

the hill-side, and at last sinks down exhausted amongst the heather. Her mother is dying. In her presence, under the influence of her holy words and sweet anxiety to be with God, Kathleen had been able to look and feel resigned. But here, alone, with the full knowledge of her utter desolation upon her, she feels despair and misery take possession of her. It is hard—too hard, she tells herself, that she should be robbed of all that is most dear to her in life. Her mother, her home, Lionel. All would be taken from her. Soon there would be no place for her in the world. No one would want her. There would be no one left to love her.

The sun was shining brilliantly; and far out towards the horizon rose the dark gloomy outline of Horne Head. Far away lay the deep waters of the Atlantic, and crests of foam, like living things, flashed whitely, from time to time against the sky. A little lark sang high up in the heavens, and the beauty of his song moved the girl, and for a moment she forgot herself.

"How immense is the power of God. How strange and wonderful are His ways. What care He takes of His creatures. How grateful they

should be for such love and tenderness," she thought, "and yet I rebel against His holy will, refuse to bear the cross He lays upon me." A shower of blinding tears hid the daylight from her eyes, and then suddenly she felt conscious of a swift change of feeling. Her pride and hardness of heart gave way, and were soon replaced by a sense of shame and contrition.

"Oh, my God," she cried earnestly, "give me patience and resignation. Have mercy upon me. Help me to bear my sorrows. Lift me out of myself, and grant me grace to think only of others. Make me obedient and submissive to Thy will."

For some hours Kathleen sat alone upon the hillside, praying fervently, struggling hard to bring her will and feelings into subjection. And at last, for such prayers are never in vain, a great calm took possession of her, and she was able to say from her heart:

"My God, Thy will be done. Do with me what Thou wilt."

The next evening she and Father Lavens were together in her mother's room. The invalid had grown rapidly worse, and that morning had received

all the last rites of the Church. She was fading fast away, happy in the thought that she would soon be with God.

"Kathleen," she whispered, "I am glad I received that letter from your aunt. You will go to her at once. Your influence and example will do much. Never be afraid of what anyone may say. Do what is right—no matter what it may cost you."

"Always, mother, with the help of God," replied Kathleen, tenderly kissing the pallid cheek.

As morning dawned the dying woman turned upon her pillow.

"Pray, darling, pray. The light is fading."

The girl fell upon her knees, and Father Lavens drew forth his book, and in a voice full of emotion read the prayers for the dying.

As he concluded Mrs. Burke opened her eyes; a sweet smile lit up the white face, and she murmured softly.

"Now dost Thou dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, in peace. My God! mercy. Mary—help. Jesus—"

The Holy Name was faintly whispered. Her head sank a little on one side—her lips still moved,

but the words were no longer audible. Then followed a few moments of awful stillness, broken only by short, labored breathing.

"God be merciful to her. May she rest in peace," said Father Lavens, reverently. Then taking Kathleen gently by the hand, he led her away, telling her that she was motherless.

CHAPTER VIII.

Long and dreary was Kathleen's journey from Donegal to London. The death of her beloved mother, and her departure from her home, had well-nigh broken her heart. She was crushed with grief; and as she passed along the road from Dunmore to Derry, she shed bitter, blinding tears.

The news of her going had been noised abroad, and as she went the people crowded after her to wish her "God speed." Out of the cabins they rushed, with cries of affectionate farewell. Heads were uncovered; hands outstretched; and to each and everyone the girl spoke words of love and sorrow. In this simple child these poor people had found a faithful friend, and were grieved to see her go. She had so often soothed them in times of affliction, had been their champion when all hands were raised against them, that they had grown to

love her, and to look to her for comfort in their misfortunes. The thought that she was leaving the country, not of her own free will, but through the inexorable tyranny of her landlord, who was their oppressor also, increased their anguish a hundred-fold; and so they pressed around her. The women and children weeping; the men wringing her hands, and wishing her good luck and prosperity. The scene was a touching one; but painful in the extreme. And much as she loved the poor peasants, the girl was relieved when it was over, and she was well started on her way to Derry.

It was a trying, fatiguing day. And when at last, the train rushed into the big station at Euston, Kathleen gave a sigh of pleasure. She was in London. Very soon she would be at her journey's end.

Unaccustomed as she was to travelling, the poor girl felt utterly bewildered as she stepped out upon the busy platform. She was hustled about, pushed ruthlessly from side to side, and almost despaired of ever finding her trunk amidst the mass of luggage that was being tumbled pell-mell out of the van. But after much struggling and patient wait-

ing, she succeeded in securing a porter, who shouldered her box and put it up on the top of a cab.

"Where to, miss?"

Kathleen stared at him. She was so excited by the whirl of noise and bustle, that she scarcely realized what he was saying. But at last she produced a paper from her pocket and read her aunt's address in Kensington, in a low, frightened voice.

"All right." The door banged. The porter shouted to the cabman, and the girl was soon rattling along the Euston road.

"How ugly and black everything is," she thought, as she was driven through street after street of dingy-looking houses. "And oh! this crowd always moving—it makes me giddy. And how heavy is the atmosphere. How different from the pure, fresh air of Donegal."

After what seemed an interminable drive, the cab entered a square, where the houses rose some four or five stories high, shutting out every prospect, except their own gloomy walls, and the little patch of black, dusty evergreens, which they surrounded. One or two of the trees were, however, freshly green; and on almost every window-sill there were boxes filled

with growing plants of mignonette and large field daisies.

"Poor flowers, some of them look sadly parched," thought Kathleen. "Like me, they pine for fresh air. But, I suppose, I have reached the end of my journey. This must be Aunt Nora's."

The cab stopped, and trembling with terror at the thoughts of facing her strange relatives, Kathleen got out.

"My God," she murmured, as she rang the bell, "help me to be brave. Help me to get on with these people. Oh, mother, would that you were with your child at this moment."

After a somewhat long delay, the door slowly opened, and an old woman put out her head.

"You're from Ireland?" she asked, eyeing Kathleen from under a pair of bushy eyebrows.

"Yes. I am from Ireland. I am Mrs. Selwood's niece. She knows I am coming."

"Aye, aye. It's all right; come in, come in." And she called to the man to carry up the girl's luggage.

"Can I see Mrs. Selwood?" asked Kathleen, nervously. "I'd like to see her at once."

"Mrs. Selwood's not in London. She an' the young ladies is in Brighton."

"In Brighton? But—"

"Oh, it won't be for long. They often goes from a Saturday to Monday. Master Jacky's maid 'll look after you. I'll tell her you are here." And going into the inner hall, she shouted up the back stairs.

"Rose."

"What?"

"The niece has come. She's waitin' in the 'all."

"Let her wait. I'm busy."

"She'll be here directly, miss," said the woman, coming back to Kathleen. "Won't you sit down," pointing to a hard, straight-backed seat of carved oak. "The shutters is shut in the dining-room, and there's no light in the library, or I'd ask you in there. We don't open up any rooms we can help when the missis is away."

Kathleen sank upon the seat, and in the dim, gloomy hall, wept silently and unobserved. What an ending was this to her journey. What heartless treatment from her aunt, in whom she had hoped to find a second mother.

"But perhaps she could not help it," she thought, ever ready to make excuses for others. "She may have been obliged to go. I must be patient and brave."

"Will you follow me, please? And I will show you to your room," said a voice, and a tall, angular woman, dressed in black silk, with lace collar and cuffs, her hair done up elaborately in puffs and plaits, stood before the weary traveller, examining her with a critical eye.

"Thank you," replied Kathleen; and she rose with alacrity.

"This way, please." And the maid led her up the thickly-carpeted stairs, past the drawing-rooms; Mrs. Selwood's elegantly furnished bedroom and boudoir; her daughters' dainty chambers, and down a narrow passage; then up a winding, ladder-like flight, covered with a shabby drugget, which led to the top of the house.

"This is your room," said the woman, ushering the girl into a small, scantily furnished apartment. "Would you like a little warm water?"

The tone was not unkind, but it was familiar; and Kathleen felt that this stately person was not

inclined to treat her with much respect, evidently regarding her as a visitor of little consequence.

"Thank you. If it is not too much trouble," she answered. "It would be pleasant after my journey."

"So I thought. You look dusty and tired," and the woman rustled leisurely away. She soon returned, however, with a can of hot water, and followed by a boy with Kathleen's trunk upon his shoulder.

"Put it there," said the maid, in commanding tones. And when he had bumped it into a corner, and unfastened the straps, they both withdrew, and the girl was left alone.

"Oh! what a welcome. What a change from my own dear home," she cried, gazing round the room, and noting the sloping roof and narrow window, the untidy curtains and the faded carpet. "How shall I breathe in such a place?" And flinging open the window, as high as it would go, she leaned forward, her arms upon the sill. But the air was heavy with the odors of the mews; the view of the slated roofs, and tall, black chimney-pots, was not a pretty one, and she drew back with a sigh. Her

eyes filled with tears, and she sank down upon the end of the bed.. Then she blushed deeply, and a pang of remorse shot through her heart.

"Is this being brave? Is this bearing my cross? How much better off am I, than many of our poor people, cast out of their homes without any place of refuge. My God, grant me patience and courage."

Then she rose, brushed out her hair, bathed her face and hands; and taking off the dusty dress, in which she had travelled, took another from her trunk, and put it on. As she fastened the brooch at her collar, and stood wondering where she should go, and when she should get anything to eat, for she was beginning to feel very hungry, she was startled by hearing a voice in the next room, saying in querulous accents:

"Well, has the wild Irish girl arrived?"

"Hush, master Jacky, the walls are thin. Miss Burke has come. She is in her room."

"Tell her to hurry. I want my tea. Does she look like a savage?"

Kathleen could not hear the answer to this question; but whatever it was, it was said with a laugh and a sneer, and the girl's cheeks burned with indig-

nation. Presently someone knocked at her door, and the stately person in black silk looked in.

"If you are ready, will you come this way?"

Kathleen was quite ready, so she followed the woman down the passage into another room, very like her own, though somewhat larger, and with a wide window looking out upon the square, instead of into the mews. Close to the table, in a capacious arm-chair, sat a boy of about nine or ten, with a thin, white face, and a mass of curly brown hair.

As the girl entered the room, and stood beside him, her heavy black draperies falling softly round her tall, slender figure, her sweet eyes fixed upon him with a look of inquiry, an expression of sorrow and fatigue about the corners of her sensitive mouth, the child smiled kindly, and held out his hand.

"Are you really Kathleen Burke?"

"Yes. And," archly, "I am the wild Irish girl you spoke about just now. Do I look like a savage?"

The boy crimsoned to the roots of his hair, and turned away his head.

"I am so sorry," he stammered. "It was a shame. I—"

Kathleen laughed merrily.

"I am not offended. And now that you know my name, what is yours? Are you one of my cousins?"

"Yes. I am Jacky Selwood. And it's awfully good of you to—to forgive me."

"Not at all. It was only a joke. I am a wild Irish girl, fond of my mountain home, and hating dusty streets and high houses. And now, Jacky, we must be friends. May I kiss you?"

Jacky made no reply; but turning suddenly, he flung his arms round her neck. Then frightened at what he had done, he drew back, murmuring: "What a fool you must think me."

"Not at all. You are very kind. I don't feel half so unhappy as I did. A little show of affection is delightful when one is lonely."

"I suppose it is," gruffly. "I don't get much of it, I can tell you, and I am often—oh! so often, lonely."

Kathleen looked at him compassionately; and as she noticed the crutches by his chair, the pale weariness of his face, and the utter dejection of his manner, she felt full of pity for him. Her own

troubles seemed very small, compared to those of this unhappy child.

"You shall not be lonely any more," she said, touching his curly hair lightly with her hand. "My room is next door. We must keep each other company."

"Oh! you'll be like the rest. Mother and Lina and Gwen. They don't mean to be unkind. But—" sighing, "they are so busy. Dinners, balls, visits and teas—they haven't a minute to spend with me. You'll soon get drawn in. It seems so enticing, this whirl of gaiety and amusement."

"It will not be so for me, Jacky," answered Kathleen, then glancing sadly at her black dress. "My mother died a fortnight ago. It is not likely I should care to go to any kind of entertainment for a long, long time."

"Did you love your mother much?"

"Very much." Her eyes filled with tears. "She was all I had to love, Jacky."

"Then it was cruel that she should be taken," he cried, vehemently. "Very cruel."

"No, dear. She was glad to go. It was God's will to take her; and I am thankful she went."

"How odd. Are you a Catholic?"

"Yes, thank God. And you, Jacky. Are not you a Catholic?"

"Oh! a sort of one. I was baptized, and all that. But nobody troubles much about religion in this house—they are too fond of fun."

"Poor little boy," murmured Kathleen, in a low voice. "No wonder you find it hard to be patient. But, please God, I shall help you to better things.' Then looking at him with a smile, she said aloud: "You and I must try to set a good example, Jacky, and show them how happy people can be when they are real strong Catholics."

"*You* may do that. I don't know how."

"Will you let me teach you?"

"Certainly. But you'll find it a hopeless task. I'm so ill-tempered. No one will ever stay with me as governess. Rose is the only creature that can manage me. She knows my ways and doesn't mind."

"I shan't mind either, I think. Shall we promise to be friends?"

"With pleasure," he cried, eagerly. "And I'll try my best to be nice to you."

"Master Jacky," said Rose, as she placed a dish upon the table, "tea is ready."

"I hope there is something good?" he questioned. "Something really good?"

"Cook is out. But Jane has done a chop for Miss Burke."

"Chops are horrible dry things," he said, impatiently. "What business has the cook to be out?"

"I don't know," answered Rose.

"Well, you ought to know. It's a shame—a horrid shame—when there's a visitor, and—"

"Hush, Jacky," said Kathleen, cheerfully. "Why, my dear, this is a delightful tea. Come now, don't spoil my appetite by grumbling. Shall I sit at the head of the table, and dispense the good things?"

"Yes, do, please. And if you don't mind chops—"

"I shall be very glad to get one, I assure you. I am extremely hungry. A good chop is not to be despised after a long journey."

And as Rose left the room, Kathleen seated herself at the table, and having said grace in a low,

reverend voice, she helped the boy to some toasted muffin, and began to pour out the tea.

"This is charming," cried Jacky, presently. "I never knew my room looked so nice. I hope mother and the girls will stay away for a good while. When they come back everything will be changed."

A shadow flitted across Kathleen's sweet face. She felt a growing dread of these gay, worldly people. Her aunt and cousins, she gathered from Jacky's remarks, were mere butterflies of fashion. Between her and them, there could be little sympathy, and she trembled at the thoughts of meeting them. But wishing to conceal her feelings, as much as possible, from the boy, she said encouragingly:

"I don't think so, dear. Aunt Nora will leave me up here for a long time, I hope—and I am sure we shall be very happy together."

CHAPTER IX.

Some three weeks later, Lionel Dean drove up to the Wood House, on an out-side car, and sprang lightly to the ground.

"Well, Pat," he said gaily to the servant, who came forward to meet him. "How's everybody?"

"In the best of health, sir."

"That's right. Any news?"

"Sorra word. Beyant an eviction or two, sure there's nothin' at all happens in these parts."

Lionel frowned. The bright look vanished from his face.

"True. But you have had fine weather. The harvest will be good?"

"Wid the blessin' of God it will, sir. An' sure that same is wanted, badly."

"Very badly. Where is my father?"

"In the library, sir. An' sure it's himself 'll be glad to get ye back. For it's raal lonesome he is in this big house, all by himself."

"I am sure it is, Pat. Be careful of that small box. It's very fragile."

And leaving the servant to look after his luggage, Lionel passed on to the library.

Mr. Dean looked up with a glad smile of welcome, as his son entered the room, and grasped him by the hand.

"Well, my boy, it's a pleasure to see you. I've missed you every day, and often wished you back."

"I am surprised to hear that, father. I could easily have come home much sooner," said Lionel. "Slow as those pottering lawyers are, they had finished everything nearly a month ago. But you urged me strongly to stay for that ball at the Carltons."

"Of course—of course—I should have felt much annoyed if you had not done so. They are people worth cultivating. And besides, it is good for a young man to go into society—to see a little of life. However, now that it's over, I am glad to get you back. Had you a pleasant journey?"

"Very. But I declare, father," he said, laughing, "I was seriously annoyed once or twice with those old friends of yours, Messrs. Dingle and Carter. It was most preposterous the way they dawdled over that business of ours. It seems absurd to say it, perhaps, but it struck me several times that they were slow on purpose, just to keep me hanging about London."

Mr. Dean looked curiously at his son.

"It is not likely they would care whether you stayed in London or not," he said, sharply. "And from my experience lawyers are always slow."

"I dare say. Probably it was their usual method of managing business. But it looked odd, once or twice."

"Nonsense. They did not hurry, I suppose. And I can't see that it mattered much. Your time is not precious."

"No. I wish it were. Every man and woman should have an object in life—something to work for—" said Lionel, with a sigh, as he took a cigarette from his case. "It is poor fun trying to kill time. And to tell you the truth, father, I'd rather do it in Donegal than in London."

"Indeed! You surprise me. Now, in my young days—"

"If ye plaise, sir," said Pat, opening the door, "there's a man wants to see ye."

"Who is he?"

"A stranger, sir. He wouldn't tell me who he was. It was on business he wanted ye, he said, an' his name didn't matter."

"Some poor tenant, wanting help, I suppose," said Lionel. "Don't be hard on him, father. The harvest promises well. Lend him some money, if he wants it, till he saves his crops."

"Pray, allow me to manage my own affairs, Lionel. You have nothing to do with these matters, at present. Leave me now. I will call you when this man has gone."

"All right. But I think I'll take a stroll. There's someone I want to see," and he smiled as he thought of the welcome that awaited him at Dunmore. How glad Kathleen would be to see him. How pleased she would be with the autumn roses he had brought her from Covent Garden.

"I would rather you did not go far away," said Mr. Dean. "I have something of importance to communicate to you."

"Have you?" answered Lionel, surprised at his father's stern manner. "But won't it keep till to-night? I am anxious to see my friends."

"You must put off your visits, pray. I shall want you here again in half an hour."

"I shall do as you desire, of course. But—"

Lionel paused, a look of vexation on his handsome face. And as he stood, divided between an anxiety to respect his father's wishes, and a longing to visit Kathleen at once, the door opened and the stranger was ushered in. Lionel started and stared at him in surprise. The visitor was not a poor farmer, but a big, burly man, wearing the uniform of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. Dean signed to his son to go; but Lionel lingered, wondering what was wrong. Had some crime been committed in his absence? Was his father anxious to discover the criminals? He watched the man breathlessly. But his first words reassured him.

"I hear you are looking for some new tenants, Mr. Dean," the man said, bowing respectfully.

"Yes. I have several farms to let at present."

Lionel breathed more freely. As his father frequently told him, he had nothing to do with the management of the estate, and he turned to leave the library, when suddenly, a name that was even now in his mind and in his heart, fell upon his ear, and arrested his footsteps upon the threshold.

"But the place I came to inquire about," said the policeman, "is Dunmore. We are willing to pay a good rent for it, as it will suit our purposes exactly."

"Dunmore is not to be let. It belongs to Mrs. Burke," cried Lionel, turning quickly round. "Surely, you mean some other house?"

"Pardon me, sir, I mean Dunmore. It did belong to Mrs. Burke, but since her death—"

"Her death!" Lionel grew white to the lips. "She is not dead. You are dreaming, man."

"No, sir. The poor lady's dead. She was buried this day, six weeks ago. I thought you knew, sir. She's much mourned in the country, for she was always good to the poor. God rest her soul."

Lionel sank into a chair by the table, and burying his face in his hands, uttered a low moan of anguish.

"Leave us for a moment," said Mr. Dean to the policeman. "He is shocked to hear of this death."

"An' sure he's not the only one was that," replied the man, sadly. "An' many say it was the notice to quit did it. Like every other poor Irish woman, be she gentle or simple, she loved her home."

"Leave us," said Mr. Dean, sternly. "And now, Lionel," as the man disappeared, "pray, do not make a fool of yourself. Mrs. Burke was only a distant relative. It is not necessary to mourn her so deeply."

Lionel raised his head slowly. His face was white; there was a look of horror in his eyes.

"Is it true, what he said? Did you threaten to evict her from her home?"

"What nonsense. Dunmore is my property. I wished to get a higher rent for it, so I told her she must go. But before the time came, she died. Her heart, says the doctor, was weak and diseased for years."

"Poor soul! How happy she must have been to go to heaven. But—" starting to his feet, and grasp-

ing his father by the arm, "if Dunmore is empty—if you are looking for a new tenant—in the name of God—where is Kathleen?"

"How violent you are," cried Mr. Dean, shaking himself free. "How do I know. I am not Miss Burke's keeper. She is with friends, I suppose."

"I trust so. Father Lavens would be sure to take care of her, poor little lonely girl."

"I dare say. You need not be uneasy."

"Kathleen Mavourneen," murmured Lionel, in a low, broken voice, "the fate from which you longed so ardently to save the poor peasants, has fallen upon you. But *you*, thank God, have friends and money. For," he said aloud, "of course you gave compensation? The Burkes have made Dunmore what it is. You never laid out a penny upon it. So the sum given would have been large."

"Pardon me," said Mr. Dean, coldly. "I gave no compensation. There is no law to oblige me to do so. The property is mine. I have a right to take it back when I choose."

Lionel looked his father straight in the face.

"Property has its duties, as well as its rights. So far, our family has upheld its rights, nobly.

From this day I will labor to enforce its duties. And with the help of God I shall succeed."

"Until my death you have no power upon this estate."

"No. But it is not only here, which is after all but a small corner of the world, but all over the country, that changes must be made. Everywhere throughout Ireland the rights of the tenant, the duties of the landlord have been neglected."

"And how, may I ask," said Mr. Dean with a sneer, "do you propose to remedy the evil? How are you going to change a state of things that has existed for centuries?"

"Of myself, I could do little. But I have resolved to join a band of earnest men anxious to promote the welfare of their unhappy countrymen. Whilst in London they asked me to stand for Parliament at the next election. I refused. But I am now determined to offer myself as a candidate, and if I am returned, I shall do all I can to improve the laws. From this day, father, I espouse the cause of the most down-trodden creature on earth, the Irish tenant."

CHAPTER X.

The next morning Lionel ate his breakfast alone. His father and he had had angry words the night before. The old man was annoyed at his son's new-fangled notions, and indignant that he should dare to find fault with him, as to the manner in which he managed his estate. He was master, and he would allow no one to interfere with anything he might choose to do. Up to this Lionel had given him little trouble. He had always seemed indifferent upon the subject, and so long as he was permitted to ride, fish and shoot, he rarely inquired into the tenants' affairs. But Kathleen's earnestness, her tender pleadings and entreaties had been doing their work, though he knew it not. Something of the young girl's fire had entered his heart. A feeling that the people on the estate were badly treated had grown up slowly in his mind. The

burning of Pat O'Connor's hut had roused his indignation, and made him think deeply. And now, this sudden, capricious eviction of his friends from their home, removed all lingering doubt, and he saw clearly how evil was the system by which the people of Ireland were oppressed. In London he had met men anxious to alter the law, to give rights to the tenants, as well as to the landlords. Kathleen's oft-repeated prayer, that he should do good; that he should not spend his life entirely in search of amusement, came into his mind, and he almost consented to help them in their noble work. But something held him back. It was not seemly or becoming that he, the son of a landlord, should join in this cry against his class, that was making itself heard throughout the length and breadth of the land. His father would not like it, and he felt bound to study his wishes in this, as in everything else. So he begged them not to press him further, and returned to Donegal resolved, that if he could not take active steps in their favor, he would at least urge his father to be less harsh and tyrannical in his future dealings with the people. But this unexpected blow—Mrs. Burke's threatened eviction, her

death, and Kathleen's departure from the country—brought matters to a crisis, and Lionel was filled with anger, remorse and pity. How blind he had been. How selfish and unreasoning. From that hour his life should be changed. He would work night and day to improve the condition of the poor tenants. The harm that had been done could not, alas, be undone. Those who had been cast out of their homes, and had died of starvation, or gone to America, could not be recalled. But for those who remained new laws should be made—laws that would enable them to stay in their cabins, or if obliged to leave, secure them compensation for the improvements they might have effected. His father's conduct had shocked him; and he felt that it had absolved him from any tenderness or consideration for his feelings. His harsh cruelty left him free to join the national movement if he chose.

As Lionel explained things in this way, Mr. Dean grew more and more furious; and at last, angered beyond words, he left the library, declaring that his son must be mad, and that until he changed his mind, and returned to ideas more worthy of a man of his birth and education, he

would hold no further communication with him. He might stay at the Wood House if he pleased; but all friendly intercourse between them must be at an end, unless Lionel would unsay his cruel words and apologize for the wild speeches he had made. He then shut the door with a bang that shook the house, and Lionel was left alone.

When the dinner hour came round, Mr. Dean did not appear, and the young man, having eaten but little of the good things that were placed before him, retired to his room with a dull, aching pain at his heart. Here he sat, far into the night, pondering deeply over the strange position in which he now found himself. At war with his father—ready to rush into a struggle, which would cost him much trouble, worry and annoyance; alienate his friends and make his home uncomfortable.

"And why? What shall I gain by such a combat?" he cried. "Why should I torment myself? Why not leave this disagreeable task to others? Oh, Kathleen, my heart fails me. If you were only here to encourage me. If I had but your faith—your strong belief that to do something, because we know it to be right and good, no matter

what it costs us, will please God and bring His blessing upon our work—then I might go on with a clear conscience and a firm will. But alas, you are away. I have no one to help me. My whole nature cries out against the step I am about to take. But your wrongs—your mother's death—your eviction from your home, pushes me forward—shows me the iniquity of our laws, our cruelty towards our unhappy tenants. So for your sake, I go on. And with the help of God I shall accomplish something good."

Then at last, tired and weary, he went to bed, and fell asleep. But his rest was broken and troubled. The thought of Kathleen, motherless and homeless, haunted him, and in his dreams he saw her poor and forsaken, her face worn and pinched, her beautiful eyes dim with much weeping. He tried to speak to her, to console her, but she fled from him, and he awoke with a cry. After that he could sleep no more, and lay tossing feverishly from side to side, longing for the dawn of day.

As the sun rose, Lionel got up unrefreshed, uncertain as to his future life, and very sad at heart. He dressed quickly, and ate a hasty breakfast. Then

leaving a message that he would not be back until the evening, started off for a long walk across the hills.

High up the mountain road he went, encountering on the way several sturdy farmers, who looked at him in astonishment, wondering as they saluted him respectfully, why the young master was out so early, and why he looked so sad.

"There is going to be a fair to-day at Glent," thought Lionel, as, standing in the midst of the rude, fantastic hills, he gazed down upon the level sands, and the little chapel that lay below, in the valley. In a general way the country had a lonely, deserted look, but now the sands were populous. Men and women were trooping over the glistening shore; horses without riders; mares with rough coats and lively foals; small mountain kine; sheep with soft eyes and stupid faces; obstinate, independent pigs, cautiously urged on in the right path by their owners; young men and maidens in their cleanest attire are crowding along, all hoping for good luck and high prices for the various animals they have to dispose of.

"Poor souls," sighed Lionel. "I trust you may have a successful day. You will require all the

money you can get. For I fear my father's hand will be heavy upon you. My conduct has angered him. He may revenge himself upon you."

This thought increased his sorrow, and turning away with a groan, he toiled on up the face of the dark, frowning mountain.

At a high point, from which he can see the waters of Mulroy, Sheephaven and Downing's Bay, gleaming brightly in the morning sun, he comes upon two tiny cabins. Before them three or four little brown, bare-legged children, besport themselves in scanty clothing.

As he stands and looks at them for a moment, amused by their merry laughter and lively chatter, the door of one of the cottages opens, and Father Lavens comes out. Even thus early, he has been obliged to climb the steep hill on an errand of mercy. Within that humble dwelling an old woman lies dying, and to her he has come to administer the last sacraments and comfort her in her agony.

He smiles as he meets the children; pats one upon the head, says a kindly word of greeting to the others, and hurries on. At the end of the nar-

row path his eyes fall upon Lionel, and his kindly face instantly assumes an expression of stern displeasure. He bows coldly, and buttoning his coat with an impatient movement, passes quickly by.

"Father Lavens," cries Lionel, starting forward. "Pray, stay for a moment."

The priest stopped, and looked at him inquiringly.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Dean?"

"You can tell me. I am sure you know. Where is Kathleen?"

"Miss Burke is with friends."

"Of course. But where? What is her address?"

"That I am not at liberty to tell. And after the manner in which you and your father have treated the poor child and her mother, 'tis better you should never meet again."

"But I was away. I knew nothing of what was going on," exclaimed Lionel, quickly. "Kathleen could have told you that."

"She did," replied the priest, softening a little, "but I thought she had been deceived. She had known you as a friend, and *that*, to a warm, loving nature like hers, was enough. She would never doubt or suspect you of doing wrong."

"Nor had she any cause to do so. I was sent from home on business, and I went, without the faintest idea that Mrs. Burke and her daughter were to receive notice to leave their home. They were my best, I may say my only friends, for my affection for others is as nothing compared with what I feel for them. My father's cruelty—the unjust way in which he has treated them—has opened my eyes to many things. From this hour, Father Lavens, I intend to devote my life, my energies, to doing good to our people."

The priest's eyes shone with happiness, and tears sprang to his eyes.

"God bless you," he cried, grasping the young man's hand, and pressing it warmly. "Sure, you'll landlord here some day, and even before that you'll have much in your power. It's splendid to hear you say those words. You'll bring happiness to many a poor cottage."

"I am afraid I shall not be able to do so in the way you mean. My father will brook no interference. But I intend to work hard in another way. I have determined to enter Parliament, and fight for the rights of the poor Irish tenants."

"What!" cried Father Lavens, lifting up his hands in astonishment. "You, the son of a landlord. I cannot believe that you will dare to do such a thing. That you will work night and day to pass a land act that will impoverish your friends. Oh, it is impossible. You will never have courage to do it. It is against all the traditions of your race."

"Nevertheless, it shall be done. It is a great work, and surely one you must approve of."

"I? My dear sir, the thought brings joy to my heart, and I can hardly believe my senses. God alone could have wrought this sudden change in you. And I marvel at it, wondering how it has been brought about. Ah, now, I know. It has been won for you by prayer."

"By prayer?"

"Yes. By the fervent prayers of an innocent child, who, trusting in your goodness, has all her life looked upon you as the possible saviour of our unhappy people. I speak of Kathleen Burke."

"You are right. Kathleen's influence has been at work. She is an angel, Father Lavens, and any good that is in me, is due to her and her sweet, unselfish example."

"Do not exaggerate, my son," said the priest, smiling. "Kathleen, with her quick, sensitive nature, is no angel. But she is a true woman, full of noble aspirations, and gifted with a deep, unbounded faith in God's power and mercy."

"True. I have often wondered at her simple faith."

Father Lavens did not answer for a moment. He raised his head and allowed his eyes to wander far over the country. Then looking earnestly at Lionel, he said:

"This land is barren. The people who live on it work hard, and have little to comfort them. They know nothing of the luxury, or of the joys of life. What then sustains them? What helps them to bear cheerfully, as they do, the heavy afflictions that press upon them? It is their faith. That beautiful, simple faith in God, which is the great gift the Almighty has bestowed upon our people here in Ireland. They are poor. But what of that? The riches of this world pass away, but this precious treasure of faith and trust will endure forever. Kathleen Burke is Irish to her heart's core. Her faith will carry her triumphantly through all her troubles."

"Her troubles are, I trust, practically at an end. I love her, and hope to win her as my wife."

"You are a Protestant."

"Yes. But I love and reverence the Catholic religion. Who could fail to do so, knowing Kathleen as I do."

"That is not enough. To make the child thoroughly happy, you should be a Catholic. I know what you would say, mixed marriages are frequent, especially in England. But to my mind they are much to be deplored. Religion, religious feeling should be the key-note of every happy household. How can that be, or how can perfect unity exist, where husband and wife are divided upon this most important, this most vital subject?"

"I agree with you, up to a certain point, but not entirely. However, will you not leave it to Kathleen to decide?"

"Yes. I think I may safely. Yet—"

"You spoke just now of the power of prayer," urged Lionel. "Prayer has done much for me. Then why should it not do more?"

"With God all things are possible," said the priest, reverently. "You have a noble nature. In

time, perhaps, He may grant you this great gift of faith; meanwhile, '*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*'—''Tis sweet, glorious and honorable to die for one's country,' says Horace. You shall not be asked to die, but if by your labors you help to lighten the load borne by these poor peasants, God will bless you; and you will feel how sweet and honorable it is to do His work. Come to my house this afternoon, and I will give you Kathleen's address."

CHAPTER XI.

The days passed over pleasantly enough in the attic rooms in Camlet Square; and when Kathleen suddenly discovered that she had been a week in London, she was amazed. Her heart was still sad, and at times she felt terribly lonely and deserted. Then the sound of Jacky's voice, raised in querulous altercation with one of the servants, would startle her, and in her anxiety to soothe and pacify him, she would try to assume a cheerfulness she did not possess. These unselfish efforts invariably brought their reward, for in rousing herself to amuse her cousin, she distracted her mind, and for the time being escaped from the world of her own sad thoughts.

For some reason unknown to Jacky and the servants, Mr. and Mrs. Selwood and their daughters still lingered in Brighton.

"Do they often leave you like this?" asked Kathleen one morning, as Jacky was wondering why they did not return.

"Often. But I don't mind. My sisters and I are always quarrelling, and mother doesn't care to be seen with a cripple son."

"I think you are mistaken there, dear," she answered gently, "remember, you thought I would not like to go about with you, and you know now that you were quite wrong."

"Yes," he replied thoughtfully, "but that was before I knew you. Since then I have found out that you are different from mother and Gwen and Lina. You are not always wondering what people will say and think about you."

"No, dear, I hope not. I do what I believe to be right, and it matters little to me what the world says or thinks."

"Yes, I know, but mother is not like that. She is anxious to please the worldly people she meets, to look nice, and have everything nice about her. So as I"—flushing—"am not a pretty object, I am left at home."

"Jacky," said Kathleen gravely, "you must try

to put these thoughts out of your head. It is wrong to brood over them. They make you discontented and unhappy."

Jacky sighed.

"I dare say. But how can I be anything else? It is sad to be a cripple and have no one to love you."

"Yes, dear, very sad, if it were true. But in your case, Jacky, I cannot believe that it is. You are a cripple, but you have a mother, father and sisters—"

"But I tell you they do not love me. They—"

"Then it must be your own fault."

Jacky opened his eyes very wide and stared at her.

"My fault?"

"Yes, yours. Listen, Jacky, since I arrived you have always been telling me about your sisters' shortcomings, and never about your own; and yet I feel that with them—you must forgive me if I speak plainly—you are cross and rude, ever on the lookout for slights, and ready to suspect them of being unkind to you."

"So they are unkind and ill-natured. You don't know them—all frills and airs and affectation."

"I don't know them. But I know you, Jacky, and from what I have seen—but perhaps I had better say no more?"

"Go on. I know what you'll say. You'll tell me I am an ill-tempered and disagreeable boy."

"Not quite, dear, but I will say that you do not take pains enough to be amiable with your mother and sister."

"Why should I? They're a jolly sight too unkind to me. Rose always says so."

"Then Rose is very wrong. And even were she right, that is no excuse for you. We must return good for evil, remember."

"I'm not a saint," grumbled Jacky. "If people don't love me, I can't love them."

"Yet our Lord tells us to love our enemies."

"Yes. But it's a terribly hard thing to do. Perhaps if I hadn't so much to bear—if—if I wasn't a wretched cripple I might not mind."

"Poor little boy," said Kathleen, laying her hand affectionately upon his curly head, "you exaggerate your lameness, which is after all very slight. You can walk very well with your crutches."

"Yes. Now I can, but for years I lay on my back. I think people were kinder then. Mother was, for she used to be more with me, and the girls were not so stuck up and silly."

"I dare say you were more easily managed in those days. And now, Jacky, you must try to be more patient. God has given you this cross to bear, and bear it you must. If you do so humbly, with patience and resignation, it will prove a blessing to you. Remember the words of the 'Imitation' that we read last night: 'If thou carry the cross willingly, it will carry thee, and bring thee to thy desired end. If thou carry it unwillingly, thou makest it a burden to thyself, and loadest thyself the more, and nevertheless thou must bear it.'"

"It is dreadfully hard that—dreadfully."

"No, dear, I don't think you will find it so, if you are patient."

"But how am I to get patience? I can't say long prayers and—"

"You need not say long prayers. Every morning offer yourself to God, and for the sake of our dear Lord, Who suffered so much for us, promise to bear your cross and any troubles that it may cause you."

"I will," said Jacky, in a low voice. "I will indeed."

"That is right. And you will soon see how kind and gentle your sisters will become when they find that you are working hard to be good and contented."

"I hope so, but I am afraid it will be a long time before I am different to what I am now."

"Not so very long, dear, if you have courage. But, Jacky, you promised to take me out this morning. I want to go to the Jesuit Church in Farm street. I have not been there yet. We shall just be in time for the ten o'clock mass, if we start now. And we can pray together, offering it up for your intention. Shall we go?"

"Yes, if you like, but it's a good, long distance."

"Never mind. We'll get the 'bus part of the way."

"It's wonderful how often master Jacky goes out now," said Rose to the cook, as she watched the lame boy go down the hall-door steps with Kathleen. "And it seems to me he walks much better than he did."

"Very likely," answered the cook. "That young lady is kind and gentle. And to anyone afflicted as

poor master Jacky is, kindness is of more value than gold."

Meanwhile Kathleen and her guide threaded their way carefully through the streets. Jacky could not walk very fast; but as the 'bus took them over the most crowded part, and set them down at the entrance to Hyde Park, which is a short distance from the church, they had taken their places in front of the altar before the priest came out to say mass.

"Kathleen," said Jacky, as they walked back through the mews, in which stands the beautiful Church of the Immaculate Conception. "How fervently you pray. You seemed absorbed the whole time of mass."

The girl turned her earnest eyes, shining with a strong, loving faith, full upon his face.

"I have so much to pray for, Jacky. So many graces to ask of our blessed Lord."

"And you really think people get things they pray for?"

"I have great belief in the power of prayer, dear, though God does not always give us *just* what we ask for. There is one grace, one all important

grace that I have prayed for, Jacky, for a person I love, and have loved since I was a child. It has not been granted yet; but I feel sure it will be, sooner or later. Some day God will listen to my prayers. I know—I feel—"

"And—and supposing," Jacky hesitated, and a deep flush dyed his pale cheek.

"Well, dear, what is it?"

"Supposing I were to ask God to—to make me able to walk without crutches, would He hear my prayers?"

Kathleen slipped her hand within his arm, and looked down upon him with tender compassion.

"For everything we want, but especially such things as that, Jacky, we must pray, subject to the will of God," she said gently. "Your lameness is a severe trial; but it may be for your good. And it is better—more perfect to bear it patiently than to ask to have it removed. God is all powerful, and could make you strong and able to walk like others. But after all, dear, that is a small matter compared with graces for our souls. If we are meek and humble of heart, it matters little how we

walk or look. Pray, then, for patience; accepting willingly your cross, and you will soon receive an answer to your prayers."

Jacky was disappointed. As he had told Kathleen he was only a "sort of a Catholic," and it was quite new to him that goodness and purity of heart were of more importance than physical strength and beauty. The son of a worldly mother, accustomed to hearing his acquaintances praised or despised, according to the amount of good looks they possessed, he had become embittered, regarding his lameness, as the cause of all his woes. His greatest wish was to be straight and strong, like other boys that he saw around him; and the thought that he never could be so filled him with rage, and made him ill-tempered and quarrelsome. Kathleen's gentleness and sweet resignation, the uncomplaining manner in which she had taken his mother's unkind neglect surprised him, and he began to wonder why she was so different from him and his sisters. Every day since her arrival in London, as he knelt beside her at mass, he had watched her closely, and seeing how fervently she prayed, how peaceful the expression of her beautiful face, as she became absorbed in

her devotions, a great longing to be more like her took possession of him.

"But," he would think sadly, "how can I? I am such a wretched, unhappy boy. If only I were not a cripple, I would soon grow kind and good." And then came the thought, "God might cure me, and make me strong. Kathleen prays so hard. Perhaps she will help me. I will ask her."

But Kathleen's answer was not what he expected. He was vexed and dissatisfied, and walked along by her side in sullen silence.

The young girl guessed what was passing through his mind, but thought it best to say no more. She felt full of pity for him, and would gladly have comforted him if she could. But it was a difficult task, one far beyond her she knew. God alone had power to touch the child's heart, and give him the grace he required. So, looking up into the blue heavens, Kathleen murmured a short prayer, imploring our Lord to help poor Jacky; asking our holy Mother to be a mother to him, and teach him to bear patiently the heavy cross that had been laid upon him.

As they went through the park, the boy's steps began to flag, he walked slowly, and with more difficulty than usual.

"Sit down, Jacky, you are tired," said Kathleen, stopping near a seat under a wide, shady tree. "This is a quiet place. We can rest here for a while."

Jacky sat down without a word, and laying his crutches aside, he bent forward, and covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears.

Kathleen laid her hand caressingly upon his bowed head.

"My poor boy," she whispered, "you must not weep."

"Must not! Oh, Kathleen, how can I help it? Think how unhappy I am."

"I know that you make yourself unhappy, and I am grieved that you should do so. I do not like to be always preaching, Jacky, but you must not fight so persistently against your troubles. Accept cheerfully the cross that has fallen to your lot. Pray hard for grace to bear it well, and the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, will come upon you."

The girl spoke earnestly. Her sweet voice shook with emotion, and her eyes were full of love and tenderness.

Jacky raised his head, and looked at her for a moment. Then seizing her hand, he clasped it tightly within his own.

"For the second time this morning, I say that I will try to be patient," his lips trembled, "and try to bear my cross. But, Kathleen, you must pray for me and help me, and you must not be disappointed if I break down many times."

"Certainly not—nor must you be discouraged, dear; that you should do so is only natural, and I will pray for you night and day, and, please God, you will soon be a happy little boy." Then bending, she kissed him on the forehead.

CHAPTER XII.

The next day, Mr. and Mrs. Selwood and their two handsome, fashionable daughters, returned from Brighton. Soon after their arrival, Kathleen was sent for; and feeling somewhat nervous and agitated, the girl descended from her little room in the attic, and entered her aunt's elegantly furnished boudoir.

Mrs. Selwood's manner was not absolutely unkind, but there was neither warmth nor affection in her greeting.

Gwen and Lina said: "How do you do?" in a cold, indifferent tone of voice, as they presented the side of their cheeks to be kissed. Then sinking back in their arm-chairs, they locked her up and down with a cool, supercilious stare, which was anything but reassuring to poor, shy little Kathleen.

"Come here," said Mrs. Selwood, making room for the girl on the sofa beside her. "I want to have a talk with you."

Kathleen sat down as desired. Her heart was beating fast. This cold reception pained her, and she felt afraid to speak, lest she should burst into tears.

"You are not like poor Lucy," remarked Mrs. Selwood, examining her niece with a critical look. "You are quite Irish in appearance, I suppose, for you do not resemble any of our family."

"Yes, she is certainly very Irish," murmured Gwen.

"Dark eyes, dark hair, and a high color," said Lina, fanning herself languidly, as she glanced admiringly at her own mop of fair curls in the long looking-glass, near which she sat. "Irish girls all answer to that description."

Kathleen smiled, and looked inquiringly at her cousins.

"And are all English girls fair like you?"

"Generally fair; but, of course, not like me."

"That would be too much to expect," remarked Gwen, with a sneer. "Lina considers hers a very uncommon type of beauty, I assure you. There are

few girls like the second Miss Selwood—that is, in her own estimation. But," looking hard at Kathleen, "it is absurd to say that you have a high color. You are as white as a lily."

"You must be color-blind, Gwen; but, of course, you always contradict me. She is scarlet."

"No wonder. Any one would blush with you staring at them as you are doing—that is, anyone who could blush—to you that has long been a lost art." And having administered this parting shot, Gwen rose from her chair and sailed gracefully out of the room.

"Such impertinence!" cried Lina. "As if any one but a country bumpkin ever attempted to blush. Mother, I'll be in my room when you want me." And without taking any further notice of Kathleen, she too swept across the floor and disappeared.

Kathleen felt much relieved at their departure. It was unpleasant to be discussed and criticized so openly; and the wrangling tone in which the sisters spoke to each other, was extremely painful.

"Poor Jacky. No wonder he finds it hard to get on with them," she thought. "His account of them is, I fear, only too true."

"And now," said Mrs. Selwood, breaking in upon the girl's reverie, "you must try to get accustomed to our town ways. I do not know what sort of a life you led in Ireland, for I had but little communication with my sister since her marriage. I am afraid we shall have to leave you a great deal to yourself. The girls and I go out so much that we shall see you very seldom. I am looking for a governess for Jacky, however, and she will be a companion for you. That is, if I can get one, who will stay. But really, that boy is so troublesome that no one can manage him. He is the torment of my life."

"Aunt," said Kathleen eagerly, "let me be Jacky's governess. I am anxious to do something. I could not live here in idleness; and I think I could manage him."

"You? My dear, you do not know what you are talking about. He is most tiresome."

"No, he is not. That is, I think he likes me. Let me try; and if I do not succeed, you can get someone else."

"Well, I see no harm in that; but I do not care much for the idea of my niece acting as governess.

It might look bad. People would be sure to talk."

Kathleen smiled brightly.

"No one knows me, aunt. And if they did, what would it matter? There is no disgrace in a girl teaching her little cousin. Quite the contrary. And if I am not allowed to teach Jacky, I shall have to look out for another pupil."

"Well, I think you may try Jacky," said Mrs. Selwood, thoughtfully. "It might not be a bad thing. And, as you say, no one knows you. We need not mention the relationship outside the house. I must caution Rose and the other servants."

"Just as you please," answered Kathleen, coldly; "I shall never mention it."

"No, of course not. I will pay you thirty pounds a year, and you and Jacky can live up-stairs. His sitting-room has always been used as a school-room. Will that satisfy you?"

"Quite. Good morning, Mrs. Selwood." And with a dignified bend of her pretty head, Kathleen rose and left the boudoir.

So, much to Jacky's delight, Kathleen was installed as his governess; and they settled down to

work without delay. Like many children, both boys and girls, Jacky would not be driven. And with those who tried to drive him, he was rude and unmanageable. But when one, whom he loved and respected, took him gently in hand, leading him on, by word and example, to the knowledge and practice of all that was good and useful, he became obedient and submissive. Occasionally his hot temper would get the better of him, and an angry outburst would interrupt the peaceful life of the school-room, and disturb the happiness of its inmates. But, thanks to Kathleen's tender firmness, such an occurrence grew rare, and in a short time Jacky became bright and cheerful, with a buoyancy that no one had ever seen in him before. His mother and sisters wondered at this, and set it down to the improvement in his health, which was also very marked at this time. But Kathleen, who knew the boy, and had watched his struggles, understood the change, and was well aware that it came from the trust in God's goodness that was growing stronger within him every day. He was not, as yet, always ready to admit that the unpleasant things in his life were entirely beneficial; but he

was learning gradually to feel that, in some mysterious way, they were for his good. And so, from following Kathleen's example, and practising the virtues she inculcated, he now accepted, with resignation, as coming from the hand of God, the many disagreeable incidents to which he was exposed. This gave him a happiness that he had never known before, and very soon it showed itself in his whole person, in the touch of his hand, in the sound of his voice.

This change in her son gave great pleasure to Mrs. Selwood; for, in spite of her evident worldliness, she really loved the boy. In the old days he had worried and tormented her, and she had kept him out of sight as much as possible. But now she delighted in his society, and from dreading his appearance in her boudoir, she began to look forward to the hour before dinner spent there, with him and Kathleen, as the pleasantest part of the day.

"That little Irish niece of mine is a treasure," she would say. "I think she must possess some magic skill. She has worked upon Jacky like a charm."

And she spoke truly. Kathleen's was a magic skill. But it was a skill that we may all possess, if we will. For it consisted in doing everything in God, and for God, with a deep and trusting faith in His love and mercy.

CHAPTER XIII.

During this time, in which Kathleen was working so successfully with her little cousin, the girl's heart was full of a sorrow that was all her own. She never murmured or complained. But in the midst of these cold-mannered strangers, in the whirl and bustle of the great city, she pined for the sight of a friend, for the peaceful stillness of the wild, yet picturesque country, in which she had passed so many happy years.

One morning, about six weeks after her arrival in London, she received a letter from Father Lavens, and the sight of his writing and the Donegal postmark, brought tears to her eyes and joy to her heart. But he told her little she wanted to know. Merely mentioned that Lionel had come home, and nothing more. This was but scant information, and as she

finished reading the letter, she folded it and put it back into the envelope with a sigh.

"No bad news, I hope?" asked Jacky, watching her expressive face with much anxiety.

"No, dear. This does not tell me enough; that is all."

"About friends?"

"Yes, Jacky; but about one friend in particular."

"The one you pray for so much?"

Kathleen bowed her head.

"Yes," she said softly, "the one I pray for—we pray for, Jacky."

"Don't fret about him, Kathleen. He is sure to be all right."

"Thank you, dear. I feel that also—"

That afternoon, when lessons were over, and the young governess and her pupil had had their early dinner, Jacky suggested that they should go and see some pictures.

"They are all so far away," said Kathleen. "It would be too fatiguing for you, I fear."

"We'll have a hansom. Mother gave me some pocket-money, yesterday. So we'll have a swift hansom, and go off to the National Gallery."

Accordingly, a hansom was called, and away they went to Trafalgar Square. It was a beautiful day in September. The streets were full of gayly dressed people, some walking, some driving; and as Kathleen looked out on the busy throng, she felt interested and amused, and for the time forgot her disappointment of the morning.

"Look at these Romneys and Gainsboroughs, Kathleen," cried Jacky, enthusiastically, as they strolled through the gallery; "and these angels heads, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Are they not lovely?"

"Very, dear. But how well you seem to know them all," remarked his cousin, looking in surprise at the boy's animated countenance. "I had no idea you were so fond of pictures."

"I love them. They always make me feel happy. And shall I tell you a secret, Kathleen?"

"Yes, dear. What is it?"

"The greatest wish of my life is to be an artist."

"I am glad. It must be a delightful profession."

"I should just think so. And then, when I am grown up and have studied a lot, you and I will go to Donegal, and I'll paint all Mick Doolan's chil-

dren, and those funny old women you have told me about."

Kathleen laughed merrily.

"That will be great fun. I fancy I see their faces. But," sighing, "you are only ten, Jacky, it will be fifteen years, perhaps, before you are an artist. That length of time will make a terrible change. My friends will be all gone, perhaps, by then. The children grown up, the old people dead or evicted. Even two years would make a great difference in Donegal."

"True. I forgot how uncertain life is for the poor people there. But, do you know, Kathleen, I sometimes feel that I positively love that hard-hearted landlord, Mr. Dean."

"Jacky?"

"Yes; I do truly. For remember, had it not been for him, I should never have known you."

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," said Kathleen, laughing; "and I am glad poor Mr. Dean has secured one friend, at least."

"It's more than he deserves. However, I don't suppose he would be unduly elated if he were told of my affection. But, look here, Kathleen, here's a

picture by an Irishman, Maclise. Isn't it fine? It's the play scene in Hamlet."

"Yes. It is beautifully grouped, and the coloring is very good. Hamlet's face is wonderful. How anxious and excited he looks. And the king and queen! What a guilty look is in their eyes."

"Yes. It is splendidly done. But there's a jolly little picture, 'Happy as a King,' I want to show you. I can't think where they have hung it. Its position has been changed. Come, and let us look about for it."

They wandered on, hand in hand, through the various rooms, stopping every moment to admire some masterpiece of art. To Kathleen they were all new. But to Jacky, they were well-known and much loved treasures.

"Oh, Jacky, how lovely this is," she cried, sinking down upon a chair, in front of Francia's touching picture of the "Dead Christ."

"Yes," he answered, "but I wish I could find the little painting I want. You stay here, and I'll have a look for it." And without waiting for a reply, he went away, his crutches making a loud noise, as he hurried along over the polished floor.

Kathleen scarcely notices his departure, and sits absorbed in the beauty of the picture before her. The exquisite face of our Saviour, still and white in death; the heart-broken expression of the Virgin Mother, as she bends over the dead body of her beloved Son, touches the girl to the soul, and fills her with love and adoration.

"How can we murmur, or complain at our small sorrows, if we think of Mary's anguish, of the agony she endured at the time of the Passion?" she reflects. "How lonely and desolate must she have been, when she gazed on her only and most adorable Child, Who had died such a cruel death. Oh, Mother, give me patience. I am lonely—without friend or home. Teach me, by thine example, to bear my troubles with courage and resignation. I am very desolate—without hope;" and tears start into the girl's eyes, and roll slowly down her cheeks.

But presently a feeling of peace steals over her; a hopefulness takes possession of her heart, and she is able to think of her future life without fear; full of a certainty that all will be well with her; that God will not try her beyond her strength.

CHAPTER XIV.

As Kathleen sat in the big gallery alone, her hands clasped, her eyes fixed upon the beautiful painting that had moved her so deeply, a young man sauntered leisurely round, looking first at the pictures and then at a catalogue, which he carried in his hand. But it was evident, from his whole demeanor, that he was little interested in what he saw. His mind was preoccupied. He looked tired and weary, and there was an expression of disappointment in his handsome face.

"What a wilderness this London is," he sighed. "To hope to meet anyone in the streets is absurd. And yet, what can I do? Ten times have I been to that door, and have never been lucky enough to find her at home. But patience, Lionel Dean, perseverance must and shall win the day. I'll sit for hours on those steps, if necessary, for see Kathleen

I will. I cannot take any interest in these things, so I'll return to Camlet Square, at once."

And he was about to stride away, when a boy on crutches appeared, in one of the doorways, and raising his voice, said: "Come along, Kathleen, I've found what I want."

Lionel started, and turned eagerly round.

At the sound of her name, the girl rose, stepped forward towards Jacky, then stopped short. A look of joyful recognition, a radiant smile of welcome flashed across her sweet face, and holding out her hands, she cried, in a voice full of emotion: "Lionel! Am I dreaming? Or is this really, really you?"

"Really me. You are not dreaming, but wide awake, I assure you, Kathleen," replied Lionel, joyfully, and grasping her hands, he led her to a chair. "And, oh, if you only knew how glad I am to see you. How—"

"But why did you not come?"

"I came as soon as I could. When I got back to Donegal, Kathleen, you had been gone three weeks. I was nearly mad with indignation when I learned how you and your mother had been treated. I then got your address from Father

Lavens, but could not leave home until last week. Since my arrival in London, I have called many times at your aunt's house, but you were always out, or they said you were. And as I have not the honor of Mrs. Selwood's acquaintance, I could not do more than inquire for you at the door. I wrote to you last night, asking you to stay in, and was bitterly disappointed when I called this afternoon."

"I never received your note, but I am glad our first meeting was here, amongst the pictures. It would have been awkward in Aunt Nora's drawing-room—so stiff and formal."

As Jacky saw Kathleen go forward with joyful steps and outstretched hands, to meet this stranger, he felt a sudden pain at his heart.

"He will take her away from me," he cried, despairingly, "and I shall be friendless once more." Then turning, he fled away through the galleries alone.

"Did Father Lavens tell you how I had changed?" asked Lionel. "How I have resolved, henceforth, to work for our poor people, and try to make them more comfortable, more secure in their homes?"

"No. But I felt you would soon change, Lionel," and her eyes, as she raised them to his, were full of emotion. "I am so glad."

"I thought you would be. During my father's life, I can do little on our own estate. So I have made up my mind to work for Ireland in Parliament. What do you say to that, Kathleen?"

"It is splendid. Oh, Lionel, I never hoped for so much as that. God grant you may do much good there."

"I trust so. And you," very earnestly, "must pray that I may."

Something in his tone surprised the girl. In the old days he had been kind and considerate to all. But the question of religion had never been mentioned by him, and few knew what the young man believed or disbelieved. Instinctively, Kathleen had felt that his faith was weak, and that he thought little about God, and his duty towards Him. But now, as he asked her to pray, there was a ring of sincerity in his voice, and earnestness that told of an increase of faith in his Creator.

"Yes. I will pray night and day," she replied, gently. "And you, Lionel, you too must ask God

for His grace. It will be a noble work to fight—to labor that good laws may be made for our people. But oh, how doubly noble, if done for God, to please Him."

"I am willing—anxious to work thus—Kathleen, if you will help me. Will you?"

"Oh, yes, assuredly," smiling. "I will do what I can. My prayers shall be redoubled. But there is little else in my power. You see I am a governess now, and my time—"

"You a governess? I thought you lived with your aunt and cousins?"

Kathleen looked at him sadly. A slight flush tinged her cheek, and she said quietly:

"Yes. I live with them, but I prefer to be independent. I have a very small sum of money—and that I wish to keep—as a provision for a rainy day."

Lionel bowed his head, and covering his face with his hands, groaned aloud.

"And to think," he cried, "that my father has brought you to this. When I think of your happy home—your mother's tender care—and then hear that you are a governess—the sport of unruly children—worried and annoyed—"

"Pardon me. My life is not so gloomy as that. I have only one pupil—my little lame cousin. He is fond of me. And I hope—I trust that I have a good deal of influence with him."

"I am sure you have. But you are not, you cannot be happy."

Kathleen turned aside her head. A vision of the small, badly furnished attic, in which she was lodged; the cold, repellant manner, in which her cousins treated her; the loneliness, from which she so frequently suffered, rose before her, and she knew not what to reply.

"You are not happy. I can see that in your face," he cried. "You cannot hide it from me. These people do not want you. But I do—every moment, every hour of my life. Kathleen, can you trust your happiness to me? Will you be my wife?"

A great wave of crimson swept over the girl's fair face, then died quickly away, leaving her paler than before.

"I would, gladly, if— But oh, Lionel, there are many barriers to our marriage."

"I know of none. My father will not interfere. He has driven me from him, because of my political

opinions. But I have a small private property, and though we shall not be rich, we shall have comfort. Then, dearest, what Father Lavens said you would consider the greatest barrier to our union, will soon disappear, for I have determined to become a Catholic."

He waited for a moment, expecting the girl to speak, but not a sound escaped her. The delicate profile, and softly rounded cheek, upon which the brilliant sunray fell, was all he could see of the expressive face, and that told him little of what was passing in her mind.

"Kathleen, I have spoken too soon? Do you doubt my sincerity, my love?"

She turned quickly. Her eyes shining, her lips trembling.

"Oh, no," she cried. "But, Lionel, my heart is too full for words. God has, indeed, been good to us both. I am frightened at the thoughts of so much happiness."

"Then," he answered, a great flash of joy lighting up his face; "you can love me—you can be my angel, and help me to persevere in the work I have undertaken, encouraging me by word and

example, leading me along the path to heaven. Tell me, dearest, is it so? Will you do this for me?"

His earnestness touched the girl deeply. All her life she had loved him, looking upon him as her dearest friend. Now, he was to be something more. But she knew him well, and felt no fear. His heart had always been to her as an open book; and in it, to her thinking, there was but one thing wanting, the gift of faith, the sanctifying touch of a divine religion. That would now be his. So, with the simple trust of a little child, Kathleen accepted his love, and promised to be his wife.

Absorbed in their own happiness, they sat on, talking over their future, making plans for their life together. Hours passed. The afternoon closed in, and the gallery was deserted, except by the policemen and servants, who strolled leisurely round, glancing now and again at the girl and her companion, wondering when they would get up and depart. But suddenly the stillness was broken, and the clop, clop, of Jacky's crutches, sounded through the rooms, as he limped towards them in great haste.

Kathleen started to her feet in dismay, as she saw him approach.

"Poor Jacky! How badly I have treated you. Lionel, this is my little cousin and pupil. You and he must be good friends."

Lionel looked at the boy with eyes full of compassion. Then, pressing his hand warmly, he said:

"You have been kind to Kathleen, she tells me. I am very grateful to you."

Jacky examined him closely, then turned away with a sigh.

"It is time to go home, Kathleen," he said, shortly, and taking no notice of Lionel's remark. "We have stayed here too long."

"I am sorry, dear," she answered, flushing. "You must forgive me for keeping you. But, Jacky," smiling radiantly, "I am so happy. God has heard my prayers, dear. Heard them in a way that I should never have dared hope for; and," clasping his hand, "I am filled with gratitude and love."

"I can well imagine it," said Jacky, "and I am glad."

Then, withdrawing his hand, he turned abruptly, and led the way out of the gallery.

Some twenty years later, two figures stood together upon the hill-side, gazing upon one of the most varied and picturesque scenes in Donegal. Strange, dark mountains, wreathed in ever-shifting mists, on the left. Below them, Sheephaven and that little "Downing's Bay," glisten upon the coast. Far out towards the horizon, rises the gloomy outline of Horne Head. The wide Atlantic is beyond, and crests of foam rise up and flash whitely against the sky, and then disappear. Right before them, frowning darkly, is the mountain of Muckish. Along a rough, uneven road, some sure-footed horses pick their way; the riders doff their hats, whilst a couple of pretty, bright-eyed maidens, duck a curtsey and murmur, "good day," with a smile and a blush, as they go past.

"So here, at last, we stand together, as master and mistress in this country, that we love so well," said Lionel Dean, turning to his companion; "and the responsibility of the welfare and happiness of these poor peasants rests upon our shoulders. It is

a terrible burden, my Kathleen, and I tremble when I reflect upon my own weakness and incapacity."

"Yes," replied Kathleen, looking at him with sweet, grave eyes, "and so you might, dear, if you were not sure that God would assist you now, as He has done so mercifully in the past. Think, Lionel, of all the graces that have been ours. Think of your conversion; of Jacky's recovery, and wonderful success as an artist; of our years of happy marriage; of the health and strength of our children; of your father's illness, and beautiful, holy death, and your courage will be renewed a hundred-fold. Great, my husband, is God's power and mercy. He, Who has been so good to us during these past years, will not desert us now. With His help we shall be able to effect many changes for the benefit of the poor around us."

"I trust so, dearest," cried Lionel, with emotion, "and forgive me for doubting it for a moment. With you, by my side, to guide and help me, I cannot falter or turn back. The question of the poor tenants' happiness is a difficult one. Much has been done, during the last twenty years, but not enough. Not nearly enough."

"Well, dear, we must still work, and hope and pray. Much has been done, much more shall and must be done. So, do not lose courage, my husband. Continue your noble efforts in Parliament, fight on bravely for the good cause, and when things look dark, do not forget to pray fervently, with faith. Every event of my life—of yours—is a proof of the power of prayer. With such a weapon in our hands, why should we fear?"

"Why, indeed, Mavourneen! And," drawing her hand within his arm, "we shall not. 'For God and our Lady' was the old war-cry of the French. It shall be our motto in the battle we are fighting. But come, dearest, I have business to attend to, and the evening is closing in."

Then, with one long, lingering look at the wild and picturesque scenery, they passed slowly down the hill-side, to their beautiful home amongst the mountains.

THE END.

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