

Moat's Conquer.

IRELAND'S VOW.

BY D. F. MCARTHY.

COME! Liberty, come! we are ripe for thy coming—
Come, freshen the hearts where thy rival has trod—
Come, richest and rarest!—come, purest and fairest!
Come, daughter of Science!—come, gift of the God!

Long, long have we sighed for thee, coyest of maidens—
Long, long have we worshipped thee, Queen of the brave
Steadily sought for thee, readily fought for thee!
Purpled the scaffold and glutted the grave!

On went the fight through the cycle of ages,
Never our battle-cry ceasing the while—
Forward, ye valiant ones! onward, battalions ones!
Strike for Green Erin, your own darling Isle!

Still in the ranks are we, struggling with eagerness—
Still in the battle for Freedom are we!
Words may avail in it—swords, if they fail in it—
What matters the weapon, if only we're free?

Oh! we are pledged in the face of the universe,
Never to falter, and never to swerve;
Toil for it!—bleed for it!—if there be need for it—
Stretch every sinew and strain every nerve!

Traitors and cowards our names shall be ever,
If for a moment we turn from the chase—
For ages exhibited, scoffed at, and gibbeted,
As emblems of all that was servile and base!

Irishmen! Irishmen! think what is liberty—
Fountain of all that is valued and dear—
Peace and security—knowledge and purity—
Hope for hereafter and happiness here.

Nourish it—treasure it deep in your inner heart—
Think of it ever by night and by day—
Pray for it!—sigh for it!—work for it!—die for it!—
What is this life and dear Freedom away?

List! scarce a sound can be heard in our thoroughfares—
Look! scarce a ship can be seen on our streams—
Heart-crushed and desolate—spell-bound—irresolute—
Ireland but lives in the bygone of dreams!

Irishmen! if we be true to our promises,
Nerving our souls for more fortunate hours,
Life's choicest blessings—love's fond carressings—
Peace, home, and happiness—all shall be ours!

THE DISINHERITED SON.

A LEGEND OF FURNESS ABBEY.

"Oh, wretch—oh, villain!" cried the infuriated Randolph; "if I live I will have thine heart's blood! thine and my traitor brother's!"

"Fear not but thou shalt live, Lord Randolph, for I fear not at all either for thy brother or myself!" replied Joslyn, with an air of contempt that was even more exasperating to Randolph than his previous fury.

Then he mockingly told the youth that he could spare time for no further speech with him, and must consign him at once to the comforts of the Wolf's Hollow, as his presence was due at the bridal of the Lord Oswald.

CHAPTER VI.

A BLACK YULE-TIDE.

It wanted but three days of the sweet and gracious festival of Christmas; of that holy season which commends peace and goodwill to the hearts of men. Alas! domestic tyranny and treachery, a revenge more wicked even than the injustice that provoked it, was to make a black yule-tide in the lordly halls of Thurston.

There was dismay throughout the district—for three days the brothers de Coniston and the damsel of Egremont had been missing.

The stern, the impassable Earl was moved from his hard indifference. He moaned for his missing sons as a peasant or a burgher would have done, forgetful of his dignity.

His retainers scoured the district—the abbot and whole community at Furness offered up prayers; the vassals of the monastery also engaged in the search for the missing damsel and the two brothers, but without avail.

It was his knowledge of the fierce uncompromising temper of both his sons that alarmed the proud Earl; he feared that some awful tragedy would come to light; that the rival brothers had murdered the damsel or slain each other.

It was this terror that had bent the stubborn knees of the godless Earl—that bowed him down a fasting penitent at St. Mary's on that eve of Yule. It was a night wild and stormy as that on which the outbreak of brotherly hate and envy had led to the sacrifice of Walter de Coniston's innocent life.

But it was a winter, not an autumnal storm—sometimes roaring like the waves of the near ocean, the wild winds swept with resistless force from the bleak fells and matted woods of High

Furness athwart the valley of the deadly Nightshade, snapping like hazel twigs the strong tough branches of the beech and elm—shouting among the oaks of centuries, and bowing their stately heads and rending the offshoots from the parent tree.

Amid the mad gale would subside into a melancholy murmur, amid which would be heard the patter of the ceaseless rain and sleet upon the massive frondage of the place or the glittering metallic leaves of the huge hollies.

It was a night so wet and raw, so black and bitter, that in castle or grange, hut or homestead, the dwellers made fast their doors, and shut out the darkness and the howling storm, and piled high the blazing logs upon the hearth, and prayed Our Lady and St. Julian to solicit grace for the wayfarer.

A night on which each wild creature, beast or bird, sought its shelter; a night on which no living thing could face the storm and live. But the lights in the Beacon tower near the abbey gleamed out against the inky sky like a star of hope, and from the bell tower the long musical note pealed out upon the gale to guide or warn any persons whose disaster it was to be abroad on that dark dismal night.

Vespers were over, and still Earl Thurston knelt near the lady chapel. Seldom had real piety drawn him to those sacred precincts; as a matter of course he had attended the church on great festivals, but his heart had been hard and obdurate to religious influence till now.

But calamity is a softener of the hardest hearts, and the uncertainty respecting his two sons and the damsel of Egremont added to the grief and horror of the Earl; for his fancy suggested, in a thousand varied forms, some catastrophe which would cover the very name of Coniston with infamy and reproach.

Lord Thurston had fasted through the day; he was in general a free liver, and physical exhaustion added not a little to the dismal depression of his spirits.

The lights were for the most part extinguished, the chaunt of the monks had died away, and the hollow gale that swept through the lofty aisles, and shook the feeble flame of the few lamps and tapers that were left burning, was the only sound heard in the vast edifice.

A hand, gentle but firm, was laid upon Lord Thurston's shoulder.

He lifted his haggard face and saw the abbot standing beside him.

"Rise, my son!" said the churchman in a voice of kindly but grave authority. "Rise, I have had some slight refectation prepared for you; it is meet that we sustain our bodily strength if only that we may be able to bear our afflictions."

The Earl rose;—he had little care for refreshment, but he was absorbed by his fears about his sons. He followed the abbot out of the church, and crossed the cloister towards that portion of the monastery in which was situated the abbot's apartments.

Almost on the threshold they encountered the lay brother, an assistant of the sacristan, whose duty it was to attend to the bell tower, and have the chimes properly rung for the devotional services.

This lay brother was a mere youth, who had not long been a member of the community.

He was trembling from head to foot, either with fear or cold. His teeth chattered as from an ague fit, and he was ghastly pale.

"Good, my son!" inquired the abbot, startled at his looks. "What hath thus dismayed thee? Thou lookest like one risen from the dead!"

"Oh, my lord and reverend father!" cried brother Edmund. "Of a verity I think that I have seen one risen from the dead. A wailing spirit is around our sacred walls. I heard it first issuing from the deep woods—a cry full of despair and sorrow, pealing above the night wind, marring the solemn notes of the church bell. It filled my heart with dismay to hear those wild and desperate shrieks, and looking through a casement of the bell tower I saw a white figure rush from the covert of the woods—female in garb, with long hair that streamed wild upon the blast. It fitted past, and was gone—brief as the lightning's flash! But, as trembling I bent my steps thither, again that horrid cry I heard—the cry that pealeth from no human lips."

"Edmond, my son," said the abbot, who had listened in grave silence to the relation of the affrighted lay brother, "the superstitious terror to which thou hast yielded is a fault. The spirit that uttered that despairing cry had a mortal habitation—was doubtless some poor distraught wanderer benighted in this dreadful storm. So call together the lay brothers, get torches, and search the woods."

Even as the abbot spoke a long shrill shriek rang out upon the wind, and a white-robed figure such as Edmond had described flitted athwart the gloom.

"See, see, my lord, yonder where it glides!" exclaimed the lay brother. "Bring lights! bring lights!" said the abbot. "This wretched wanderer, whoever she be, is in some sore strait."

"Aye, so I ween," cried Lord Thurston, who had hitherto looked on the scene in moody silence. "Oh, my reverend lord, turn your eyes yonder—there see where the white spectral figure glides. It makes for the cloister. Oh, Mother of mercy! my heart sinks like lead in my bosom. Oh, the poor damsel of Egremont! Oh, my wayward sons!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE WHITE WANDERER.

There was an awful agony in the tone of Lord Thurston, which told the abbot that the apprehension which had suggested itself to him, as to who that fugitive might be, was shared by the unhappy father.

It arose from the direction of the cloister. The wretched wanderer had evidently sought shelter there.

The earl and the abbot joined in the search, but the miserable