

Poets' Quarry.

THE PENAL DAYS.

BY THOMAS DAVIS.

Oh! weep those days, the penal days,
When Ireland hopelessly complained,
Oh! weep those days, the penal days,
When godless persecution reigned;
When, year by year,
For serf and peer,
Fresh cruelties were made by law,
And, filled with hate,
Our senate sate
To weld anew each fetter's flaw:
Oh! weep those days, those penal days—
Their memory still on Ireland weighs.
They bribed the flock, they bribed the son,
To sell the priest and rob the sire:
Their dogs were taught alike to run
Upon the scent of wolf and friar.
Among the poor,
Or on the moor,
Were hid the pious and the true—
While traitor knave,
And recreant slave,
Had riches, rank, and retinue;
And, exiled in those penal days,
Our banners over Europe blaze.
A stranger held the land and tower
Of many a noble fugitive;
No Popish lord had lordly power,
The peasant scarce had leave to live.
Above his head
A ruined shed,
No tenure but a tyrant's will—
Forbid to plead,
Forbid to read,
Disarmed, disfranchised, imbecile—
What wonder if our step betrays
The freedman, born in penal days?
They're gone, they're gone, those penal days!
All creeds are equal in our isle;
Then grant, O Lord, thy plenteous grace,
Our ancient feuds to reconcile.
Let all atone
For blood and groan,
For dark revenge and open wrong.
Let all unite
For Ireland's right,
And drown our griefs in freedom's song;
Till time shall veil in twilight haze,
The memory of those penal days.

HAWTHORNDEN.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW OUR FAIR FRIENDS FARED AT THE FAIR.

DURING breakfast the penny-post brought the mail. "Ah," said Dr. Hartland, running over the letters, "two from Aleck; the Pochontas is in the harbor. One for you," he added, passing a letter to his mother, "and one for Rosine—another for Rosine from the West, I will take them to her."

He found his patient with flushed cheeks, her eyes unnaturally bright and set in a dark circle, indicating loss of sleep.

"I am stronger this morning," she answered as he greeted her kindly, "though I did not sleep many hours. Have you any letters for me?" she inquired eagerly.

The Doctor waited a little as he counted her pulse, looked doubtfully at her crimson cheek, but at length produced the two letters. "I don't think you ought to read this voluminous epistle this morning," he said as he held the thick package from his brother in his hand, "as it is from Aleck, perhaps you may let me read it for you?"

"No! Ned, give it to me!" she cried, trying to take it from him.

"Be quiet, Rosa," he said soothingly, attributing her haste to nervousness, "you know I would not read it without your permission."

She still held out her hand impatiently for it, and with a quick eager movement put that letter under her pillow, and broke the seal of the letter from the prairie home. Nothing escaped Dr. Hartland's eye; for a moment it flashed across his hand that Aleck and Rosine might be especially interested in each other; but all their conduct denied this suspicion; he must look elsewhere for an explanation of this strange movement. He leaned his head thoughtfully on his hand, while Rosine, her hands still trembling with excitement, slowly read her letter from Marion. He was started from his reflections by the words, "You will let Laura come to me, dear Ned, just once? I must see her a moment, and I am so much better."

"Better!" exclaimed the Doctor, raising his eyebrows. "I don't find you as well as I left you; there is more fever, and Rosa," he added, sadly, "I do dread Laura Marten's coming." She had never seen so much depth of feeling in his expression, and she imagined he thought her very ill.

"Indeed, Ned," she urged, "I am stronger, and I will not ask her to stay; I would rather she would not, but I must say a few words to her to-day."

"Secrets with Laura Marten will only bring you into trouble," he replied, looking fixedly at her face, as the conscious red was succeeded by a deadly paleness.

He questioned her no further, but giving permission to his mother for a short interview with Miss Marten, he turned away from the grateful expression and the pressure of his hand as she heard his consent, and the first shadow of doubt of his newly found sister crossed his mind.

After his departure Rosine endeavored to compose herself to sleep, but the letter under her pillow seemed to burn into her brain. Mrs. Hartland bustled about the room, and it appeared an hour before the good lady took her departure, shutting out every ray of light. Fortunately a window was near, and Rosine soon found light enough to assure herself there was an enclosure in hers from Aleck. She ran over the few lines addressed to herself, and then placing Laura's in a safe place, tried to quiet her throbbing pulse, but the dreadful secret would not suffer her to rest.

The next call of Dr. Hartland, in the evening, found his patient more quiet, but far weaker than in the morning; Laura's visit had been accomplished and the letter delivered. Rosine gave Dr. Hartland his brother's letter at once, in answer to inquiries for news from Aleck. He made no remarks as he returned the note to the half-filled envelope, but there was a shade of severity on his brow as he divined immediately that there must have been an enclosure, and for Laura, and that it was intended to be secret, and worst of all, Rosine in the secret. He did not offer to read to her, as he had done; he spoke no pleasant word, but went away with only the directions of a physician. Rosine saw that he suspected her of something underhanded, and it made her most miserable, filling her pillow with thorns, as she tossed about wearily.

Edward Hartland's suspicions once aroused, were not easily quelled. He was sure Laura had inveigled Rosine into some plot of her own; he was vexed with Rosine for allowing herself any share in a mystery; he was sensibly annoyed by the remembrance that he was the one who had promoted the first intimacy between the girls; and puzzled as to what this evident secret could be, he determined, with the resolute will of a man seldom turned from his purpose, to ferret it out in some way.

Rosine's illness was not of long duration; youth and a naturally good constitution were in her favor, and she was about again in a few weeks, not in full health, for she was still languid and pale. The Colonel watched and tended upon her with the devotion of a lover, but Ned withdrew himself from all but necessary intercourse, omitted his kind brotherly ways, and she felt that the dreadful secret which had brought her only misery was at the bottom of this change.

Laura's visits to the house grew less frequent; she dreaded the sharp eyes of the Doctor as well as his blunt questions, and Rosine's eager request, whenever they met, that she would release her from the bond of secrecy. But her rides and walks with Le Compte were not lessened; she was seen with him everywhere, and it was rumored, by those who did not know the man thoroughly, that he did at last mean to marry, and that Laura Marten was his choice. But she knew better; with her it was simply inordinate love of admiration and adulation which led her on, and his powerful influence which carried her forward even after she felt her danger; with him the plot was deep, the design dark, as we shall see.

CHAPTER XII.

CAPTAIN MARTEN COMES HOME, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

"Thank heaven! Captain Marten's ship is in the harbor," exclaimed Edward Hartland, as he came into dinner, addressing his father, who had just returned from his first drive with Rosine since her illness; "the honest old sailor will put an end to the goings on of Laura with Le Compte; she is positively the town's talk."

"Silly moth," replied the Colonel, "she will burn her wings this time; wont she?"

"I hope so!" said the Doctor impatiently, looking at Rosine. "She has given so many heartaches, it is a pity she should not know how good it feels, if indeed she has any heart to ache."

"It appears to me, Ned, you excite yourself very unnecessarily about Laura Marten," remarked Mrs. Hartland. "What do you care about her flirtations?"

"Because I have a mother," he replied gravely, "and a sister," he added, bowing coldly to Rosine. "I cannot bear that any of their sex, especially one who has, as we may say, been one of our circle, should be found guilty of such disgraceful conduct."

"But would she marry this Le Compte," inquired the Colonel, "even supposing marriage to be his object?"

"Marry the devil!" exclaimed his son, testily; "a pleasing prospect of repose must a woman have as the wife of such a man, with his amours and liaisons all over the country. No he'll never marry willingly. Captain Marten is a downright honest man, and hates philandering. I should not wonder if Miss Laura were put under bonds to keep the peace."

"I haven't seen Laura for more than a week," said Rosine, as they rose from the table, making an effort toward a conversation with Dr. Hartland, which she had never been able to bring about since her illness.

"It would have been better if you had never seen her," replied he, in a sharp angry tone, turning away to the window.

"Ned," said the Colonel, in a voice of authority, "why do you speak so to Rosa? See, you have brought the tears to her eyes. I have noticed your ill-natured way of speaking to her of late. I'll not have it."

"Rosine knows the reason very well," replied the Doctor, taking notice of his father's anger by word, but leaving the room immediately.