

in full from Bolton and company, the storekeepers; and, notwithstanding the dreary prospect; did not the head of the firm tell her she might have everything she wanted on credit for six months, to enable her husband to have a chance to raise some kind or other of a crop? As the mare jogged down the hill, Mrs. Clancy reflected that they did not owe a shilling to anyone. She had very few shillings left, she thought with a sigh, but no one had any claim on them, few as they were. And it might rain any day, and if it did, there was butter and eggs and fowls and pigs, as well as the promise of a crop. Mrs. Clancy's thoughts were running off in another direction when Clancy broke in upon them with, 'It's Aggie I'm thinkin' about. What's to become of the girl, if she isn't provided for?'

'You never seem to try. It's going on for fifteen years since the gate fell on her, and you've been talking ever since, and yet haven't done anything towards it.'

Clancy gave the mare a clip with the whip.

'Well, I don't see that you're doin' much towards it, either. After payin' the accounts to-day you're a pound short, that you don't seem to know what you did with. Buyin' some silly things that you don't really want. Last year you gave thirty shillings for a dress that no one ever saw you wear. You're in that old black thing as long as I can remember.'

'Oh, hardly now. It's a good dress yet. I got Aggie to alter the sleeves to make it look more up-to-date, an' the other'll come handy some day.'

'But what way is that to be buying things, an' us wantin' money? Who could have anything with your way of handling money?'

The last remark fired Mrs. Clancy.

'Faith, you needn't talk. Five years ago, you gave fifty pounds for that fool of a lorry, that you haven't used twice. You must have had too much money about your hands; you—'

The rest of the speech was lost in the rattle of the cart and the clatter of Daisy's hoofs. Clancy had angrily whipped the mare up. In a momentary argument, that lorry was Mrs. Clancy's strongest weapon. It was something of a white elephant, he knew. He had bought it in a prosperous season for a heavy crop of wheat; but since that year the two-horse dray was capable of drawing his crop into town, and the lorry stood there in the shed—a badly invested fifty pounds.

As they approached their home, a figure, just discernable in the twilight, came rapidly down towards the gate by the road. Its strange manner of progression did not look like anything human, but as it got close to the gate, it proved to be a young girl—a crippled girl—swinging along on crutches. She balanced herself upon them while she unfasted the gate and threw it back. Then she swung along beside the cart, easily keeping pace with Daisy's steady walk, and informed her parents that she had milked Strawberry and Rosey and Peggy; but the milk was on the bench at the cow-yard yet, for she couldn't carry it, and the boys were not up from the paddock. She had fed the chickens and housed the ducks, and found the grey hen's nest with thirteen eggs in it. She had fed the dogs, and chained Spot up for the night, and had the fire lit and the kettle boiling.

'Sure, she could earn a livin' for herself anywhere,' thought Mrs. Clancy, 'but it'd be awful to see the like of her workin' for a livin', and she sighed with the patient resignation of the poor.'

That season proved to be a bad one. There was no wheat, and as Mrs. Clancy had remarked, very little of anything else. The six months given by the storekeeper were slipping by, and there was nothing off the account beyond a little realized by the eggs and butter.

'Y' ought to sell that lorry, Pat,' said Mrs. Clancy. 'It might fetch something that'd help us for the present.'

'Oh, I suppose so. By the looks of things I'll never have any use for it.'

Clancy was very absent-minded for a day or two. He hung round that lorry, and if he looked it over once, he did ten times. He appeared as if he would like to say something to Mrs. Clancy about it, but eventually took it off to town without telling her what he thought.

'Put up a bit of lunch for me, Norry,' he said; 'I'm takin' a bit of horse-feed, an' me an' the horse will have our dinner by the crossin'. It'll save expenses.'

When he returned he told Mrs. Clancy he'd got thirty pounds for the lorry, and he'd paid Bolton and company the full amount owing to them, and had settled a few other little accounts in town; but when she examined the papers, there was five pounds not accounted for. Clancy could not give a reason for its ab-

sence; nor did he make any violent effort to try. 'Something's become of it,' seemed to be all he was able to say.

'And why don't y' know what's become of it?' said Mrs. Clancy, getting warm as her mystification increased. 'Y' didn't lose it, an' no one robbed you, so what have you done with it?'

'Oh, I suppose I've got through it somehow—buyin' a few little things for meself.'

'A few little things!' replied Mrs. Clancy scornfully. 'What little things? Were y' buyin' soaps, an' scents, an' shavin' tackle like a lad of eighteen goin' courtin'? Five pounds for a few little things! It's drinkin' wid those Morrisons I believe y' were, an' they've got your money from you.'

'I never saw the Morrisons, an' never had a glass of spirits all day.'

'Then what have y' done wid it?'—when Mrs. Clancy was angry she always dropped into a brogue—the angrier she became the more powerful the brogue. 'It's payin' off some owld grog score you've been doin';' Mrs. Clancy's brogue was rising rapidly, and Clancy wisely got out before it became any higher.

Poor Mrs. Clancy! She could not get over it at all. Five whole pounds! Why, it would have bought a cow; and that useful animal would be very welcome just then.

The rain, like the doctor, came just in time to save the situation—or the patient. It rained at last, and it rained well and long. Although it did not bring any immediate money to the Clancys, it gave promise of plenty; but it brought a deeper and more lasting sorrow than any drought could bring.

Aggie, swinging along through the paddock after the cows, was caught in a drenching shower of rain. She made light of the wetting and the cold that followed, but she developed a severe illness. The doctor said it was pneumonia; and in less than a week Aggie's troubles, and the anxieties of her parents concerning her, were at an end.

After the first agony of shock and grief, which poor Mrs. Clancy felt would never be consoled, she and Clancy sat together by the kitchen fire; sat together in a spirit of quiet, almost cheerful, resignation.

'We may be able to bury her decently, Pat,' suggested Mrs. Clancy.

'Yes, Nora, we'll manage to bury her decently.'

Mrs. Clancy fidgeted uneasily for a while with the folds of her black dress. Then she stood up and went into her own room. She was a considerable time away. She removed a chest of drawers from its place, and prised up from the floor a short piece of board. From the cavity displayed she took out a little bundle. She carefully replaced the board and put back the drawers, then unpinned the bundle—first a piece of the old skirt, next a half-yard of window holland, then some wrappings of newspapers; and exposed to view lay a strong little cardboard box.

Returning to the kitchen, she laid the little box on the table, just half-way between herself and Clancy, and leaning on both hands upon the table, she looked directly at him and said, 'Pat, there are fifty of them there—fifty gold sovereigns. I've been savin' from the day the gate fell on her, fifteen years ago. I've put by, sometimes only sixpence at a time. The price of the dress I didn't get, and the silly things I didn't buy, is here. It was all for her. She don't want it now—but it will pay the doctor an' bury her decent, Pat.'

Clancy started, and pulled his beard, and stared first at the box, then at Mrs. Clancy, and back to the box again. He opened his mouth as if to speak—opened it three times and closed it again without saying a word, then he stood up and went outside. He returned in about fifteen minutes with a dirty little leather bag, which he placed upon the table between himself and Mrs. Clancy.

'There are one hundred of them there, Nora; one hundred gold sovereigns. I, too, started savin' fifteen years ago. She won't want it now, but as you say, it'll bury her decently, an' enable us to help her in the next world, too, for the peaceful repose of her soul, poor girl. The five pounds from the lorry is in the bag, Nora,' he added with a grim little smile. 'Och, tush, tush—there, there, woman, never mind. We'll say no more about the lorry.'—Exchange.

Of all the silly proverbs one  
Whose vogue should be diminished,  
Is: 'Woman's word is never done.'  
It should be: 'Never finished.'  
She's always workin', understand,  
To keep the home together,  
And has Woods' Peppermint Cure on hand  
For colds in wintry weather.