

for that sympathy which called forth your devotion to a stranger; I had a sister like you; her name was Kate, also."

"And she is dead?" said Kate.

"Yes, Kate, yes! that fatal disease of our family did its work: she was older than I by a few years; she was the playmate of my young days, and the guide of my boyhood. We loved one another dearly. At length, her laugh became less merry—her step less buoyant. She was declining; yes, she was, for that short dry cough, that hectic flush, and the tiny blue veins and wasting frame told us so. Doctors were called in: they watched her heavy breathing, felt her pulse, wisely shook their heads, took their fees, and left. They ordered her whatever she desired: ah, we knew what this meant. At length she became too weak to remain up. I constantly watched and attended her sick bed, and often watered it with my tears. I can never forget the day our poor infirm father came to take his parting leave. He had to be helped up stairs: he tottered to the bed; though weak, she raised herself up, clasped her tiny hands around his neck; his tears bedewed her face. His long grey hair floated around, mingling with her soft ringlets. There he lay in her embrace, breathing blessings on that good dutiful daughter, that never vexed him: that cheered and consoled him in his declining health. It was a mute scene of heartfelt grief. Memory recalled the love and kindness of past years. All the tenderness of the fond father and dutiful daughter was aroused in that awful moment, when they were about to separate for ever. With swollen eyes and throbbing heart I witnessed this scene. My poor sobbing mother buried her face in the bedcovering. The domestics wept, and at length bore him away from that child he dearly loved, but was never more to see on earth."

"And your father, too?" said Kate, as she rested her head on her hand, and the tears trickled between her fingers.

"Is dead! Oh! I can never forget my feelings, as I knelt beside his death-bed. With a heart bursting with grief I knelt to receive his final blessing."

"Ah! in that moment what feelings agitate a sensitive mind. Our past lives rise up in judgment against us: our faults and transgressions appear so heinous that we feel almost ashamed to crave a blessing. Alas! if we could recall that good father to life, how changed we would become. What a lesson is there in that separation. As I paid nature her tribute beside that death-bed, some one whispered—'You have one comfort, you were a dutiful son.' I might reply 'Alas, I thought so while he was alive; but now that he is dead, I think otherwise.' These tears, Kate, were not weakness: no, for they sprung from that fount, the holiest in my nature, that stirred up this mutiny of sobs and tears for that dear father whose wise counsels and protecting hand steered me through life."

"And so you are alone in the world?" sobbed Kate.

"Alone, Kate, without a domestic tie, one to love me, to fill up the yearnings of my loving heart, for my kind, gentle, loving mother soon followed them. Father, mother, and sister sleep in one grave. Oh, God! how soon shall I join them?"

"Hush, hush," sobbed Kate: "don't say that, brother, it is sorrowful. God is good; sure we will love you and comfort you."

"You love me Kate! Oh, did you say that?" and he leant up in the bed. "Oh, Kate, if one so good and pure as you would love me, I could almost forget the misery of the past in the happiness of the present."

Kate blushed and smiled, and said: "You forget that we are brother and sister already. Now try and sleep, for you are fatigued."

And did he sleep? No; he dozed away and visions of the past rose up before him. He was a child again, and played with his sister at his mother's knee; and now tired and wearied with play, they knelt beside her and nestled in her lap, and she kissed

them and hushed them to sleep; and his dear papa had come home, and walked in on tip-toes lest he would disturb his little darlings' rest. When they awoke, he had brought with him a horse for Willy and a doll for Kate; and how he laughed and raced with his horse, and Kate fondled her doll, and then when they retired to rest, how his mother pressed her good-night kiss upon their little lips. And then came up his schoolboy days, with crowds of happy children at play; their laughing faces full of smiles, and they lustily shouting in the exuberance of their mirth; and then came up the mournful faces of strange men crowding around their house: and some, he thought, were eating and drinking and laughing, whilst others were bearing away his dear sister in a coffin, and then came his father and next his mother. He wept and cried, but the heartless men put him aside, and bore away the coffins: and as he wept, an angel came to console him, and she wept with him, and then dried his tears with her wings; and he looked up, and the angel smiled and left her wings aside, and said: "I am Kate O'Donnell." The poor invalid awoke, his heart was full of a sweet sensation, and the brightness returned to his eyes, and the glow to his cheek, for the unerring penetration of the heart told him that Kate O'Donnell loved him. What wonder that these young hearts folded in their bosoms, like a morning flower dripping with dew, that sweetest and holiest of sentiments—first love—that sentiment that so gladdens and beautifies human life as to make a paradise of earth. Willy Shea grew strong day by day: Kate was his constant companion: they feared not the world's censure, for they had pledged their young love to one another, and their hearts were full of joy. The *Spectator* says that "solitude with the person beloved, even to a woman's mind, has a pleasure beyond all the pomp and splendor in the world." How the hearts of Willy and Kate responded to this sentiment as they built their fairy castles of hope in some retired place, with no other eye but those of God and the angels upon them.

When he took his leave, to follow his studies, for he was a medical student, he promised to return each vacation, and faithfully did he keep that promise, for there were fond smiles from all, and one loving heart to hail his welcome to Glen Cottage.

(To be continued.)

PROFESSOR NOTLEY'S CLOUDED BROW

(By FATHER FITZGERALD, O.F.M., in the *Catholic Bulletin*.)

There is a look of repose on those who gather in an auction-room where a library is to be sold, which is not noticeable in any other assemblage. Literary habits or bookish tastes leave their impress on the countenance, and the apparel often proclaims sedentary habits. Contempt of mere externals, tonsorial and sartorial, connotes high pursuits in the realms of thought. These were some of the natural features of the gathering when McCleod's famous library was up for sale in O'Halloran's auction-rooms that day in spring. Such a gathering, strange to say, is usually not gregarious, as each of the units suspects his neighbor and moves furtively about examining rare works, surreptitiously marking crosses before books in the catalogue he or she is after. To do this in a non-chalant way and at the same time to keep a sharp eye on what other people are examining, is quite an art. Of course, the knowing ones, when they have dropped on something in their line, keep away as far as possible from that shelf lest they should furnish a clue.

In that sedate, leisured-looking, semi-frowsy, non-descript assemblage that gathered in O'Halloran's auction-rooms on this particular occasion there was one who was ill at ease, and wore a perturbed countenance. That countenance belonged to ex-Professor Notley. Indeed, he was quite a contrast to his charming daughter, who, radiant and comely, sat beside him on one of the long forms provided for bidders and purchasers. Not