

into the covered car and send you home at any hour you like."

"Well, when I have taken a rest on the rustic seat in the orchard, I'll think about it," returned Mr. Armstrong. "I hope the seat is still there?" he continued turning to Tom.

"It is just as it was the day you got your photograph taken there," was the reply. "The little thatched roof keeps off the rain, so that the timber is as sound as ever."

"I often hear that same photograph discussed," said Mr. Cormack. "My daughter Alice says it's the handsomest face and head she ever saw. I forget the name of the saint she says it is like."

Mr. Armstrong smiled, and perhaps a little bashfully, while Tom Dwyer laughed aloud, and turning round upon his heel seemed to have discovered something on the top of Kileafrehan that wholly absorbed him for several minutes.

"And she has some of your poetry set to music," Mr. Cormack added. "Good-bye till evening. Come, Eddy, my man, shake hands again with Mr. Armstrong."

Mr. Armstrong and Tom Dwyer seeming to have forgotten the stile and the path through the meadow—walked on in silence, until they came to where the road from the bridge met that which skirted the mountain, when Mr. Armstrong said:

"I suppose Alice has grown to be a fine girl since I last saw her?"

"So she is, sir," Tom answered assentingly, rather than as if replying to a question. "Though people don't take much notice of her, the sister is looked upon as such a beauty."

"Does she sing well?" Mr. Armstrong asked, his thoughts going back to the wood-notes wild that flung their magic spell around him long ago.

"Wonderfully!" Tom Dwyer answered. "'Twould thrill through you till you wouldn't know what was coming over you."

Mr. Armstrong smiled, but said nothing.

"Mrs. Cormack," Tom added, "was saying she wouldn't let her go back to school this summer as she was not very strong. It was Mrs. Mary Bernard that noticed it, and advised her to bring Alice home at Easter."

Again their conversation was interrupted by old Martin Dwyer, who was hurrying towards them from the house, with the same elated look as when they first saw him standing on the bridge. In fact from that moment to the present Martin Dwyer seemed to be on the brink of a side-splitting burst of laughter. Every object his eyes chanced to rest upon seemed provocative of mirth. Miss Cormack's ringlets floating on the breeze as she paced slowly up and down by the river, the lark that sprang from under his feet as he leaped with almost youthful lightness over a drain in the meadow—even a lonely heron on the top of a dead pine in a marshy corner near Poul-na-copple—though the very incarnation of desolation and despair—seemed to intensify Martin Dwyer's tendency to risibility as he hastened to tell his wife the "good news" he had heard at the forge.

A heavy deadening load was lifted from many another heart besides Martin Dwyer's

that day. Men who for weeks before had moped idly about, or gone through their daily tasks listlessly and with relaxed muscles, drew a long breath of relief, and resumed their wonted energy and cheerfulness. And women, wiping away the tears that sprang into their eyes at the glad tidings, went into their rooms, closing the door softly behind them, dropped upon their knees, and with clasped hands offered up prayers to Heaven for an unhoped-for mercy—The Honorable Horatio O'Mulligan had retired. There was to be no contest!

Fifty or sixty gentlemen connected with the law were disgusted. And Sammy Sloane, the process-server, ate his rashers and eggs that morning without an appetite. But some thousands of poor tenants-at-will rejoiced; and for their sakes—even without thinking of Martin Dwyer and his pretty little daughters—we are not sorry that the length (or the shortness) of the Hon. Horatio O'Mulligan's purse prevented him from "contesting the county" against the other Liberal candidate, the wealthy but ungrammatical Mr. Brummagem. In fact we are glad the legal gentleman, and Sammy Sloane, the process-server, and a great many others—including an embryo sub-inspector of police or two—to the contrary notwithstanding.

"No contest!" said Martin Dwyer, as a turn in the road brought them in view of the old ivied farm-house.

"Is that so?" Mr. Armstrong asked, turning to his old friend, whose silence, taken in connection with his evident high good-humor, was beginning to cause him some surprise. "I am very glad to hear that piece of news Martin."

"Yes," returned Martin Dwyer, moving to the side of the road, and raising his head high, so as to be able to see over the larch grove, the loads of lime that dotted a square patch of pale brown, like little

white tents a good way up the mountain. "I'll go on with the lime-burning."

Tom looked at Mr. Armstrong with a shake of the head, which said as plainly as words— "What a simple poor man my father is! He thinks the danger is over." And now Mr. Armstrong bent his eyes upon the ground as he reflected that a general election must come within three years, and might come before the end of one.

The light that sparkled in Nellie's eyes, and the more liquid lustre that beamed in Nannie's as they ran down to the road to welcome their old friend, brought a sympathetic gleam into their brother's face—which had been unusually clouded ever since he saw Miss Cormack walking along on the river bank.

The little girls hurried Mr. Armstrong away to see their flower-beds, before he could shake hands with their mother, who smiled approvingly as if the substitution of the flower beds for the rank docks and nettles was all her own doing, and looked like a woman who had never quarrelled in her life.

"Don't ye know," she said at length, "that poor Mr. Armstrong must be starved and tired? Come in, Mr. Armstrong, and don't mind their flowers till you're after having something to eat."

"Now," said Mr. Armstrong, turning to Nannie and Nellie, having done ample justice to the repast which Mrs. Dwyer, with many suggestions of regret that she had not been earlier apprised of his coming, had placed before him—"Now, let us go out to the orchard, and I'll have a rest on the old seat."

Tom walked up the hill, ostensibly to see how Mick Connell and Paddy Brien were getting on with the lime-spreading; but in reality to sit under the Brown Rock and commune with his own thoughts.

(To be continued.)

IRISH READINGS

(Edited by A. M. SULLIVAN, M.P., and T. D. SULLIVAN, M.P.)

THE DEATH OF OWEN ROE O'NEILL.

(From *The Chances of War*, a Historical Romance, by the REV. THOMAS A. FINLAY, S.J.)

"We thought you would not die—we were sure you would not go,
And leave us in our utmost need to Cromwell's cruel blow—
Sheep without a shepherd, when the snow shuts out the sky—
Oh! why did you leave us, Owen? Why did you die?"

"Soft as woman's was your voice, O'Neill! bright was your eye—
Oh! why did you leave us, Owen? Why did you die?
Your troubles are all over, you're at rest with God on high;
But we're slaves, and we're orphans, Owen!—why did you die?"
—Thomas Osborne Davis.

We linger yet a little longer amid the beautiful scenery that adorns the course of the Annalee. A few miles below the spot at which Owen O'Neill took leave of his

troops the river receives the superfluous waters of a chain of lakes of considerable extent and of great natural beauty. They are of most irregular shape, their sides are indented with innumerable fantastic bays, and they throw out their winding arms in every direction round the conical hills, which, like the colossal tents of some subterranean army, occupy the centre of county Cavan. Of these lakes the largest and most picturesque is Lough Oughter. Its waters fill the central basin of a rich and thickly wooded country. The fertile lands upon its shores have formed the prize for which many a fierce combat has been fought, and the spoil which many successive conquerors have divided. In the middle of the lake stands a small island almost entirely covered by the ruins of a castle. The water in some places washes the old walls; at other points a scanty border of green turf separates the ripples of the lake from the crumbling ruin. Ledges of slaty rock project at regular in-

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