

create amongst their numerous kings and princes. The social amelioration of the Irish nation was never thought of by the English adventurers; the country was looked upon merely as so many estates, and the people as so many enemies. The legislation of the conqueror, the most remarkably cruel, ignorant, and selfish of any of which there is a remaining record, was carefully framed to obstruct the improvement of the nation. Statutes were passed to prevent intermarriages, and all those other social connections which the humanity of Irish customs taught, and which would have gradually led to a perfect union of the two nations. Laws were made preventing the exercise of any of the arts and pursuits of peace. It was impossible for the Irish either to improve their own institutions, or, assuming them to be superior, to adopt those of the Anglo-Nor-

mans. Their expulsion and extermination continued to be for centuries the objects of Government, which it sought to effect by remorseless cruelty, and by a policy even more cruel and relentless. The wars of the Pale—the Statute of Kilkenny—the Plantations of Munster and Ulster, were the varying indications of that settled policy. The resistance of the Irish was noble and continuous, but it was without plan, without unity, without any principle of concert, and it finally yielded to the warlike and politic genius of Lord Mountjoy. The submission of Hugh and Roderick removed the last obstacle to English dominion; and if the English did not succeed in the total annihilation of the natives, it was not that they had changed their policy, but that it had become impossible.

boy—just his bills paid, his wants supplied; no tuck boxes, no one to be pleased when he did well in his examinations; no holidays except those spent in the charge of masters.

Sometimes he would come back and wander about the churchyard; the broken grave was covered in ivy now; over his mother's grave was a shining white angel. He hated it; he knew that his mother would not have liked it; but there was a little place where he could plant lilies of the valley, her favorite fragrant flower. Sometimes to walk beneath the limes was a comfort, for he seemed, for an instant, to be a little boy again, carrying sheaves of white stock and scarlet gladioli; but he could never climb the tree.

Many years passed, morbid, tragic years, haunted by that spectre of death always stalking humanity; he lived in a grave of his own making; his mother's sweet faith never spoke to him; she had seen only the empty tomb, and those in shining raiment sitting within when lovers brought the useless sweet spices to lay in the grave. He thought of death and corruption; and why labor for death to overtake one's speeding hands and feet?

At last his father died, and he, shivering with apprehension, came to the village one evening for the funeral next day. Just the same, that village; the same shouts from the green as the lads played the same croon of doves in the rectory garden, the same fairy flight of little airships as the seed pods of the limes fell in the church avenue. His father's body was being brought from miles away and would not arrive till to-morrow. Drawn irresistibly, he went to his mother's grave.

The white angel had gone and was leaning against the church wall forlornly. The old, old sexton had been at work under the beech tree, and was sitting now eating bread and cheese and drinking beer from a bottle, with his back against the wall, looking out over the green where the lads played. He did not see the lonely man who crept silently towards the beech tree, walking carefully so as not to tread on graves. He did not see him reach the side of an open grave, where the rich dark loam was piled and boards laid to tread upon. For minutes that seemed hours the man hung back, afraid; at last, drawn by some morbid fascination, he reached the side of the great dark hole and looked down, shivering. If only he could feel the touch of his mother's hand, guiding, so safe, so secure! If only he could hear that guiding voice of hers, so gentle, so wise. And all that was left was this dark hole. Kneeling down, while the soft soil sunk a little beneath his weight, he gazed in and stared and stared.

In the dark was a glimmer of light as something bright focussed the sunshine—the name-plate on his mother's coffin! Bright and shining; the old sexton had swept it clean. He was able to read it: "R—B—M— May 3rd, 1867—June 10th, 1900." Twenty-five years! A lifetime! Then, as his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he saw strange shapes in the grave—great twining roots and tendrils wrapped right round the coffin. He became aware of the old sexton behind him.

A Complete Story

TREE OF RESURRECTION

THE STORY OF A MOTHER AND SON.

(By LEONORA EXLES, in *T.P.'s and Cassell's Weekly*.)

All his life he had been frightened of death; in the churchyard, when he went clinging tightly to his mother's hand on Saturday afternoons with great armfuls of white flowers for the altar, he used to see the old, old graves. Like great stone boxes, they were covered with moss. One of them was actually broken across the top by the strength of the ivy that had burst out of the ground underneath it, after travelling in the darkness for yards, away from its parent stem. That broken grave terrified him.

"I'm frightened that you'll die and be put in a big box, mummy," he used to say; and then his mother would talk to him of the mystery of the resurrection. "Very early in the morning they came to the grave to bring flowers and spices, and they found the grave empty. Their Lord had risen, darling, and because He rose from the grave, everyone else will some day."

"But these poor people can't see the sunshine!" the little boy would protest, and read on the stones "In affectionate remembrance of Mary Barnes, who entered into rest January 3, 1854," and think of Mary Barnes there, hidden under the heavy stone boxes. Then his mother would take him into the fields and make cowslip balls, and they would listen to the village lads playing on the green, shouting and bawling just as though death never crept up to the edge of life at all. And sometimes, when he talked of the poor dead people, his mother would hold his hand very tightly, and they would walk together underneath the great lime trees thatavenued the church path; and the sweetness of the limes, and the fairy-like spin of their little winged seed pods would make him laugh sometimes.

The best thing of all was when they went into the church field, and he climbed the great beech tree. He loved that beech tree—an old, old great-grandfather of a tree, so old and so sturdy that it had pushed down the churchyard wall with its great trunk,

and formed part of the wall itself. There, on the smooth bark was his mother's initial cut—"R. B." "But it isn't B now, mummy. 'It's M,'" he would say, looking with something like awe at the work her mischievous childish fingers had done. And one day, after the B she cut M, and then his initials—R. M.

"I used to climb this tree when I was a little girl," she would say, with a dreamy look in her soft eyes. "Sometimes I used to hide in it, like King Charles hid in the oak tree. I made myself a little house up there. I was always a shy, lonely little thing, Robbie. You take after me. . . . When visitors came I used to climb the tree and hide. I took some boards up and made a little platform. I wonder if it's there now!"

She couldn't climb up herself, in her long, Victorian skirts, so Robbie reached up with her help to the lower branches, and presently he was hidden in the sheen of the fluttering leaves.

"Yes, yes! Mummy, it's there! Your little house!"

From that day he made his mother's cubby house his own. "I can hear you talking to me when I'm up there, mummy! I can hear you saying poetry." That was because one day, she had told him she had learnt "A dear little girl sat under a tree" while she was sitting in her little house one day.

A sad life they had, mother and son; they made each other's horizon, each other's refuge, and each other's life. So that, when she died it seemed as though his life had ceased, his horizon become clouded. She was buried under the churchyard wall in a new grave, and the little boy, not more than half alive, was sent away to school while his father, after a very little while, married again a woman much more suited to him than the fragrant poem of a woman who had been Robbie's mother. No letters for the little

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