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Two Cents



"PEACE ON EARTH GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN"

John Quigley's Reformation.

High up on the side of Knocknameela Hill the home of the Quigleys lay half-hidden in an embowering canopy of trees. The larches and tall pine trees were green and feather-like as ever, but already, ere the beginning of October, the oaks and sycamores had taken on autumnal tints of orange and russet-red, the "quickenberry" or mountain ash, the "rowan-tree" of Scottish song and story, shone resplendent in its graceful fernlike foliage and thick clusters of brilliant scarlet berries.

The house itself was a modern Jew-hatched dwelling, the ordinary typical abode of the Irish farmer; but within and without there were many evidences of comfort, of old-time affluence and good standing in the neighborhood. The farmyard and haggard, now almost empty, though the harvest-time had come and gone, gave nevertheless in their ancient aid of solidity, in their time-worn stone trestles and rickstands, no half-hearted hints of the prosperity of its former owners while in the interior of the house the sideboards and chairs and tables of good old Domingo mogony, and the steel engravings that hung on the walls, all told the same tale.

But pictures, however, as well as furnishings, had lately suffered a considerable thinning out, owing to the unsolicited but still in a sense, not altogether unwelcome visits of a swarthy-looking Jewman who had traveled all the way from Dublin in the hope of picking up some such treasures as these. To be sure it had gone to tax Mrs. Quigley's heart to part with the half-dozen fidie-back chairs which had been a kind of heirloom in her family, and, as she declared, it had almost been like losing one of the children to forgo forever her possession of a certain old colored engraving, "The Dairy," which she had brought there with her on her marriage, and which had been in the possession of her father and his father and grandfather before him.

But still—what was one to do when there was a half a dozen children to be fed and clothed, and a hundred and one pressing needs at hand, while the landlord clamored for arrears of rent and the chief mainstay of the house, or the one who should have been her husband, John Quigley had lately by his idle and drunken habits brought them all to the verge of absolute beggary.

Things had not always, indeed, been so gloomy and unhappy; and it seemed but a few years ago since the little house resting with its back to the hillside had seemed such a paradise of comfort and peace that often as Mrs. Quigley climbed her way up with an utter lack of enthusiasm from mass in the morning through the rows of ferns and tall fox-gloves that lined the narrow border leading to her home, her heart had lifted up in joy and gratitude for the goodness of God, who had set her lines in such pleasant places. But that was before, John had taken to spending his evenings, and later the best part of his evenings, as well, in Farrell's public-house in the village, while his fields lay untilled and unown. It was also, long before—the sorrowful day that Rody, her first born and perhaps best beloved of her children, grown disheartened by the fatality of his own unaided efforts and the furious opposition which his drink-sodden father gave to them, had hid himself by to his mother's

and sisters and set out for the State of America in the hope of being able to do better there.

Mrs. Quigley did not blame the boy for going, as things were indeed, there seemed nothing else for him to do. Still it made things all the harder for the innocent sufferers at home. The land, now neglected and uncultivated, was fast growing into a wilderness of weeds and thistles, and work as they might at the dairy and the poultry yard and garden the best efforts of the poor woman and the only two of her little girls old enough to be of help were all too little to repair the growing ravishes in their exchequer. The visit of that German Jew had as a consequence come almost as a godsend and Mrs. Quigley was looking forward with poignant apprehension to a day when little by little nearly all of their household goods would have gone the same way—if in the eyes of the neighborhood they were not altogether ready shown them over-much patience. And all the time John Quigley himself must be supplied with money not only sufficient for the assuaging of his own continual thirst, but for that of his boon companions as well.

The climax of all her sorrow seemed to have come when Rody's letters, and the small sums which he sent with them, had suddenly ceased, and a silence as of death fell like a blank wall between him and the mother who loved him. And then, just as her suspense and anxiety seemed growing too great to be longer borne, a neighbor had come in one day, and with a troubled face had shown her account in the Baltimore News-telegram, of a railway accident in which the name of "Rody Quigley" figured as one of those fatally injured. For a while, some few weeks of hopeless despair and inertia, the news had seemed the end of all things, of peace or any contentment, the end of life itself for the unhappy mother; still at last through prayer and patience, and for the sake of her children, she had pulled her scattered forces about her, and bravely taken up the threads of life once again.

As for her husband, instead of Rody's loss having sobered him, it seemed to have only made him worse; and Mrs. Quigley, with a wifely disposition to cloak over and excuse every failing of her spouse, often declared, as she truly believed, that it was "fret" and remorse for his treatment of the boy that made him now as bad as he was. The thought, however, was of little practical consolation or help, especially when at last the agent sent them the long dreaded "notice to quit," in default of their paying a half-year's rent in full within the next three months.

That at least served to steady John Quigley for a bit, and he sought (helplessly, it is true, and with an utter lack of enthusiasm from mass in the morning through the rows of ferns and tall fox-gloves that lined the narrow border leading to her home, her heart had lifted up in joy and gratitude for the goodness of God, who had set her lines in such pleasant places. But that was before, John had taken to spending his evenings, and later the best part of his evenings, as well, in Farrell's public-house in the village, while his fields lay untilled and unown. It was also, long before—the sorrowful day that Rody, her first born and perhaps best beloved of her children, grown disheartened by the fatality of his own unaided efforts and the furious opposition which his drink-sodden father gave to them, had hid himself by to his mother's

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"God help us, I see nothing before us but beggary and disgrace," said Mrs. Quigley one day, breaking down utterly last, and weeping as even the news of Rody's death had not made her weep. "God help us again, for if He doesn't, by some miracle or other, I don't see how we can ever hope to get out of our terrible difficulties. And yet I think children that are born in such a time, are born in a time when the Blessed Mother of God will herself, now a chastened and



From a painting by P. Dougherty

He Is Risen

hardly forget us, after our prayers to her," for Mrs. Quigley, who was devoutly pious woman, had brought up her children to have a great and special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

"Now, children," she went on a little more cheerfully, as she wiped the tears from her eyes with the corner of her apron, "we must all join together every night of the coming month of October, and offer up the Rosary for our Lady may help us, and especially that your poor father may get sense, for, no matter how things go, we need never expect any peace or happiness unless he changes his ways."

The girls agreed, and true to their promise, everyone of the family, Kathleen and Lily, and the two little boys who along with the youngest girl, Nona, were still going to the Convent School, all joined together earnestly and devoutly in the recitation of the Rosary each night. And it seemed as though, ever at the end of the first week, their prayers were already answered, for to their astonishment, John Quigley all at once gave up spending his evenings at Farrell's public-house, it may have been that he no longer found himself with any money to spend, and discovered simultaneously, no doubt, that without money, neither Mr. Farrell nor his former associates found any great need of his society; and as though to lend truth to this theory he had grown strangely taciturn and resentful; his wife preferred to call it. Still it was a beginning, and great as were her present troubles and anxieties it seemed as though more than half of them were lifted from her shoulders when one Saturday evening her husband came home and told her with a softened and shamefaced air, that he had gone and taken the pledge.

"Thanks be to the good God!" Mrs. Quigley ejaculated fervently. "Sure, if that be so, John, avic, 'tis half the battle and everything else will come right in the end." Everything, however, seemed still very far from being right, in a temporal sense at least. October had gone and November was getting nearly over and though they still said the Rosary regularly and unceasingly—John Quigley and his wife, and Mrs. Quigley would say, there is no

most devout recitants—there seemed so far-fetched a chance of their ever being able to pay the landlord in time, and Mrs. Quigley was afraid to think of what might happen ere the year ran out.

On a dark November day, however, Michael Kelly, the postman came once again his unaccustomed journey up the hillside and stopped before Mrs. Quigley's door front.

"Another letter from the agent," suppose," Mrs. Quigley said despondently; and as if to give color to her surmise, the moment she took the letter in her hand, her face grew a dead white, and she leaned heavily on Kathleen for support.

"Glorv be to God," she murmured brokenly. "It is Rody's writing! What can it mean at all?"

But the mystery was soon explained, and to the intense delight and happiness of Rody's mother and her household. For Rody had not been killed but badly injured in a railway accident so badly injured that he lay long weeks unconscious, his life hanging in the balance. But medical skill left him, after three or four months in hospital, almost as well and strong as ever; and what was better, the railway company had indemnified him for his injuries to the extent of nearly a thousand dollars, as an earnest of which the loving and kind-hearted lad now sent his mother a draft for fifty pounds, in itself more than sufficient to pay the debt that troubled them most, with the promise of bringing the rest in person by Christmas.

"God and His Blessed Mother be praised!" Mrs. Quigley cried amidst mingled smiles and tears; "see what the Holy Rosary has done for us! As if it were not enough to have Rody alive and coming home to us—oh, what a Christmas it will be—but to supply all our most pressing wants as well!"

In all Ireland there is not a home wherein the Rosary is said more prayerfully and gratefully than in the Quigley household every night of the year. And in all Ireland, "thanks be to God and His Blessed Mother," as Mrs. Quigley would say, there is no

more industrious and cheerful a kindlier or better father and husband than John Quigley is today.—Mrs. Tysan O'Malley, in the Irish Messenger.



"Oh! No Martyr!"
If you're waiting and see every cell in early, mother dear,
For tomorrow will be Easter-day, we hope it may be clear.
And you never hear how I wish to be when I want to lead my best, I wish my sweetheart and you, you're always clear.
There are many hearts that wish to be clear when I'm home, I wish to be clear when I'm home, I wish to be clear when I'm home.

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