

just rising. When she came to the gate of the sloping pasture, she stopped and looked over it; not a beast was to be seen. This was exactly what she had expected. Had she not slipped out late overnight, and unlocked all the padlocks, so that Tom Clancy might drive off her cattle through the dark to sell at the big Easter fair of Rushemnoe? The herd were there, she supposed by now, and Tom would lose no time in making his bargains. He was to meet her at Garville, the railway station nearest to Rushemnoe, whence they would travel south to Queenstown, get married there, and go on board a transatlantic liner. With the price of that herd they would be able to make a grand start in the States. "And after a bit, you know, you can come down on your brother for the rest of what's owing to you," Tom said. "Not that it's apt to be much to us here or there," he added magnificently. As Theresa turned away from the gate, a long and rosy ray came slanted down the lane, and set all the hanging dewdrops ablaze, as if some unearthly jewel-casket had been emptied over the hedges. She felt quite confident that she was faring to the highest fortune.

But a change crept over her frame of mind as she waited and waited on the platform at the dreary little Garville station. It began when the ten o'clock train, in which Tom had promised to come, arrived without any such passenger; and from thence forward her spirits were continually to sink. They dropped to a lower level with each train that went by, some rushing through in a dusty whirlwind, some stopping to give her a few minutes of agonised suspense, ending always in dismayed disappointment, for not one brought sight or sign of Tom Clancy. At last, when the afternoon was fast wearing away, she resolved in desperation, to return home, whereupon she quitted her dismal waiting-place, sure that she would evermore hate the sight of it, and especially of the stolid stationmaster and inquisitive porter. The best chance that she could conjecture to encourage herself on her discomfited retreat, was that some trivial accident had for the time being vexatiously hindered Tom from carrying out his intentions; but her imagination would not forbear to conjure up occurrences far more alarming than these. It struck her that his possession of her cattle might have got him into some terrible trouble with the police authorities, from whose clutches her own testimony perhaps alone would extricate him, and the thought made her fret at the slow pace of her long, tedious drive and walk.

Hurry as she would the dusk had almost ebbed away when she turned into the cow-lane, dragging herself wearily along between the hedges, weighed down by her heavy bag, which she had ten minds to fling into a ditch, and distracted with a thousand fears, which she could by no possibility discard. The fact that she had eaten nothing all day unawares added to her dependency. She hardly knew what she wished or dreaded to behold, when the gate of the sloping field should be in sight. But undoubtedly a wild hope did flare up when she came into view of a tall figure standing by the wooden bars, and for a moment believed that it was Tom Clancy. And undoubtedly, too, terror seized her as, drawing nearer, she recognised Fergus Moore. He stood beside the fawn-coloured Alderney, which was eating out of

a pail, while a white cow thrust her head over the gate to survey the repast with an expression of concentrated bitterness. Several other beasts were dimly visible, moving about in the grey dusk beyond the gate.

The munching of the cow close at hand for a while screened from Fergus the sound of Theresa's footsteps, but at length he heard them, and looked up to see her slowly approaching. He went forward quickly to meet her, with an expression of relieved concern on his broad good-natured face, russet-bearded and blue-eyed than which nothing could less resemble Tom Clancy's. Theresa felt vaguely as if, after her endless, miserable day, she had reached some sort of refuge.

"Well, Theresa, and is it yourself?" Fergus said. "Glad I am to see you back again anyhow. But it's the quare work altogether there's been agoin' on here; and wonderin' I was did you know anythin' about the matter. It's more than Martin does, that's sure."

"About what matter?" Theresa said, with as much show of indifference as she could achieve, which was little enough.

"Your bastes," said Fergus. "Sure now ne'er a notion you had to be sellin' them?"

Theresa said neither yea nor nay, and he did not repeat his question, seeing that her silence had indeed answered it very effectually. But he made no comment.

"It so happened," he continued, after a brief pause, "that I had to be in Rushemnoe this mornin' early to meet a man on business, I wasn't at that fair these half dozen years; 'tis mostly no great good. Howane'er, there I went today, and I wasn't in it above ten minutes when who should I see but Terry Molloy, of Garville, that's a notorious onid villin', and he just startin' to drive a herd of bastes off the other end of the green. So says I to meself: 'It's quare now if I don't know the look of them.' And when I stepped over to him, sure enough, devil aught else were they except these crathurs of yours—every single one of them. After buyin' them ould Molloy said he was off a young chap, he couldn't tell who he might be; a mildin' big man wid black hair. But wid that Jimmy Carr, from French Market, was standin' by, and he up and says he himself passed them on the road drivin' in, and Tom Clancy it was, ould Widdy Finny's nephew. And he said that more betoken only a little while back he seen young Clancy below at the station, gettin' into the Queenstown express along wid Fanny Fitzgibbon, the school-teacher's daughter at Clonowen—"

"Fanny Fitzgibbon," Theresa said, half under her breath, "it couldn't ever be." Yet as she spoke the world seemed swaying into ruin around her, and here and there amid the wreck emerged remembered incidents, which now wore a treacherous aspect.

Fergus Moore was observing her intently. The scared and bewildered anger in her face, her fagged air, and heavy load of bulging bag and cumbersome bundle of wraps, the mortified despair betrayed by her would-be incredulous exclamation, all confirmed a suspicion originally very strong.

"The two of them it was," he said. "Mrs. Dockrell was tellin' me the same thing afterwards. But we can aisy stop the young thief yet, Theresa, wid a wire to the Queenstown police, for I see

on the paper there's no American boat sailin' till Wednesday, and that's what they'll be makin' for, you may depeind—himself and the price of your bastes. I'll go straight to the office."

"Och, for mercy's sake, don't be doin' any such a thing," Theresa said aghast. The mere suggestion appalled her, so intolerable was the possibility of Tom's return to make her the laughing stock of the gossiping country-side. Even now she raged at the thought of her humiliating wait on the Garville platform. Well did she remember the sight of the Queenstown express running through the station, and she reflected with sore chagrin that two of its passengers had probably caught a glimpse of her sitting there by herself on the bench. Somebody had flattered a handkerchief out of a carriage window; very likely Fanny Fitzgibbon had done it in derision, with Tom Clancy chuckling at her side. Theresa felt that rather than ever set eyes on the pair, or hear talk of them again, she would lose her fortune ten times over. If the money went to the bottom of the sea with them it would be all the better; but at this moment her own intense desire was that nothing should interfere with their departure, so she vehemently and imperiously repeated: "Don't be doin' any such a thing on me, Fergus. Let them quit out of it, let them go wherever they like, and don't be delayin' them."

Fergus looked at her gravely. "Then it's the way I was supposin'," he said, "and thinkin' you were to go off along wid Tom Clancy, he that's took up instead wid Fanny Fitzgibbon, the little ugly-tempered weasel—many's the time I've heard her scoldin' and bargainin' at the other childer. Well, now, it was the quare notion for the likes of yourself to take into your head. But sure, Theresa, me child, it's the quare notions we do all of us be bound to git a hold of now and agin, and the odd way we do be mistook about different things, till we have a thrille of expariance. I mind the time meself when I couldn't scarce tell a three-year-old from a four-year-old, and 'ud be givin' double the worth of him for a bullock as soon as look at him. But as for that young miscreant, sure what matter, so long as you hadn't the bad luck to thravel off wid him after all? He knew anyway better than you what was the right sort for him. Fanny Fitzgibbon, bedad! And if it was to be annoyin' you, sooner than bring him back I'd let him run the farthest he pleased wid the money he's robbed off you in his pocket. By the same token I know right well from what ould Molloy gave me the bastes for that he suspicioned there was somethin' quare goin' on, and that he got them very reasonable off the young rogue. Faith, if the poor crathurs had the wit, they might be none too contented wid the bad price was paid for them twice over this day. For you see, Theresa ashore, they're bought back again for the very same us they were, and no more bother about them; and if anybody thinks to be passin' remarks, why there the whole of them are grazin' before our eyes, and who'd mind what he'd say? And apt you are to be takin' better care that your fortune isn't made away wid a second time. But whatever you do, machree, don't be throublin' yourself wid e'er a thought of them two, that's not worth this tussock of ragweed. Sure you shouldn't look the same side of the road as Tom Clancy, not if his sleeve's coat was double-lined

BABY'S Favourite



Skin Soap

Cuticura Soap and Ointment preserve, purify and beautify the skin, scalp, hair and hands and afford the most speedy and grateful treatment for torturing, disfiguring, eczemas, rashes, irritations, inflammations and every form of itching, scaly humours of the skin and scalp of infants, children, and adults. Guaranteed absolutely pure and may be used from the hour of birth.

Sold throughout the world. Depots: London, 75 Charterhouse St., Paris, 3, Rue de la Paix, Auilly, 11a, 11, Town & Co., Sydney, India, B. K. Paul, Calcutta, China, Hong Kong Drug Co., Japan, Maruzumi, Ltd. (Tokyo, Russia, Ferron (Apteka), Moscow), South Africa, Lennan, Ltd. (Cape Town, etc.), U.S.A., Foster Drug & Chem. Co., Sole Trust, Boston. Post-free, Cuticura Booklet on the Skin.

The Hon. A. Hicks, J.P., M.L.C., the ex-Mayor of Eaglehawk, Vic., says that Dr. Sheldon's New Discovery for Coughs, Colds, and Consumption cured him of a severe cough and cold in a remarkably short time.

New Zealand Insurance Company, Limited.

FIRE, MARINE and ACCIDENT.

ESTABLISHED 1859.

CAPITAL—£1,500,000.

NET REVENUE FOR 1907—£642,759.

PAID-UP CAPITAL AND RESERVE—£690,000

HEAD OFFICE

AUCKLAND.

DIRECTORS.

HON. S. THORNE GEORGE, M.L.C. (Chairman)
L. J. BAGNALL, Esq.
THOMAS BUDDLE, Esq.
R. C. CARR, Esq.

M. A. CLARK, Esq. (Deputy Chairman)
H. HORTON, Esq.
C. V. HOUGHTON, Esq.
ARTHUR M. MYERS, Esq.

C. RHODES, Esq.

Represented throughout the World, and well supported on account of its financial strength and liberal settlements.

CHAS. F. MINNITT, Inspector.

JAMES BUTTLE, General Manager.