

Poets' Company.

A DREAM OF THE FUTURE.

BY D. F. MC CARTHY.

I dreamt a dream, a dazzling dream, of a green isle far away,
Where the glowing west to the ocean's breast calleth the dying day;
And that island green was as fair a scene as ever man's eye did see,
With its chieftains bold, and its temples old, and its homes and its
altars free!

Nor foreign foe did that green isle know—no stranger band it bore,
Save the merchant train from sunny Spain, and from Afric's golden
shore!

And the young man's heart would fondly start, and the old man's eye
would smile,
As their thoughts would roam o'er the ocean foam to that lone and
"holy isle!"

Years passed by, and the orient sky blazed with a new-born light,
And Bethlehem's star shone bright afar o'er the lost world's darksome
night;

And the diamond shrines from plundered mines, and the golden fanes
of Jove,

Melted away in the blaze of day at the simple spell-word Love!
The light serene o'er that island green played with its saving beams,
And the fires of Baal waxed dim and pale like the stars of the morn-
ing streams!

And 'twas joy to hear, in the bright air clear, from out each sunny
glade,

The tinkling bell, from the quiet cell, or the cloister's tranquil shade!

A cloud of night—o'er that dream so bright soon with its dark wing
came,

And the happy scene of that island green was lost in blood and shame;
For its kings unjust betrayed their trust, and its queens, through fair
were frail—

And a robber band, from a distant land, with their war-hoops filled
the gale;

A fatal spell on that green isle fell—a shadow of death and gloom
Passed withering o'er, from shore to shore, like the breath of the foul
simoom;

And each green hill's side was crimson dyed, and each stream rolled
red and wild,

With the mingled blood of the brave and good—of mother and maid
and child!

Dark was my dream, though many a gleam of hope through that
black night broke,

Like a star's bright form through a whistling storm, or the moon
through a midnight oak!

And many a time, with its wings sublime, and with its saffron light,
Would the morning rise on the eastern skies, but to vanish again in
night!

For, in abject prayer, the people there still raised their fettered hands,
When the sense of right and the power to smite are the spirit that
commands;

For those who would sneer at the mourner's tear, and heed not the
suppliant's sigh,

Would bow in awe to that first great law—a banded nation's cry!

At length arose o'er that isle of woes a dawn with a steadier smile,
And in happy hour a voice of power awoke the slumbering Isle!

And the people all obeyed the call of their chief's unscathed hand,
Vowing to raise, as in ancient days, the name of their own dear land!

My dream grew bright as the sunbeam's light, as I watched that Isle's
career

Through the varied scene and the joys serene of many a future year—
And, oh! what thrill did my bosom fill, as I gazed on a pillared pile,
Where a senate once more in power watched o'er the rights of that
lone green Isle!

FLORENCE O'NEILL;

OR, THE SIEGE OF LIMERICK.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE KING'S PLEDGE REDEEMED—ST. GERMAINS.

UTTERLY prostrated, and quite overpowered by her grief, the queen
was led to a carriage, which was to convey her to the Convent of
Chaillot, in the retirement of which place she designed to pass the
first days of her widowhood, and one hour after her husband's death,
attended by four ladies only, she left St. Germain's.

The church of the convent was hung with black, and as soon as
she neared the edifice the bells tolled, and the abbess and the com-
munity received her at the convent gate. In silence, Mary Beatrice
entered the courtyard, her hood drawn over her face, followed by her
ladies, and overwhelmed with grief. The nuns gathered round her,
the abbess kissed the hem of her robe, and some of the sisters kissed
her hand, but no one uttered a single word; their tears expressed
their affliction.

Without a sigh, or a tear, the queen walked into the choir, and
continued in this stupefaction of grief until one of the sisters
approached, and kissing her hand said, in a tone of admonition, in
the words of the royal psalmist,

"My soul, will you not be subject to God?"

"Fiat voluntas tua," replied the queen, in a voice broken by
sighs. Then advancing towards the choir she said:

"Help me, my sisters, to thank my God for His mercies to that
blessed spirit who is, I believe, rejoicing in His beatitude. Yes, I
feel certain of it, in the depth of my grief." She then knelt before
the altar, and remained a long while in prayer.

The poor queen had taken no food since the previous night, and
the abbess, apprehending she would faint, begged her to be carried in
a chair, but she chose to walk, saying:

"My blessed Saviour was not carried up the painful ascent to
Mount Calvary, but walked to the consummation of His adorable
sacrifice, bearing the burden of His cross for our sins, and shall I not
imitate His holy example?"

The abbess and two or three of the nuns followed her to her
chamber, and begged her to suffer herself to be undressed and go to
bed; but she insisted on listening to more prayers. She could weep
no more; the fountain of her tears was dried up, and its solace
denied her.

She sighed often, writes the nun of Chaillot who preserved the
record of this visit of Mary Beatrice, and was seized with fits of dying
faintness, but listened with great devotion to the abbess, who knelt
at her feet, and read to her appropriate passages from the Holy
Scriptures for her consolation. Then she begged the community to
pray for the soul of her husband, saying:

"A soul ought to be very pure that has to appear in the presence
of God, and we, alas, sometimes fancy that persons are in heaven,
when they are suffering the pains of purgatory." At this thought
the sealed up fountain of her grief was opened, and she shed floods of
tears. Much she wept, and much she prayed, but was at last pre-
vailed on to take a little nourishment and go to bed, while the nuns
returned to the choir and sung the Vespers for the Dead. Then the
Prayers for the Dead were repeated in her chamber, in which she
joined, repeating the verses of every psalm, for she knew them all by
heart; and begged that a prayer for the conversion of England might
be added, observing that for the last twelve years she had been at St.
Germain's she had never omitted that petition in her devotions.

The nun's record goes on to say that, without pomp or noise, for
fear of agitating the royal widow, the king's heart was brought to the
convent. When the king's will was opened it was found that he had
directed his body to be buried in Westminster Abbey. It was to
await the Restoration of his son in the Church of the Benedictines,
at Paris, whither it was conveyed the Saturday after his death in a
hearse, followed by two coaches, in which were the officers of the
king's household, his chaplains, and the prior of St. Germain's; and
the king's obsequies being duly performed, the body was left under
the hearse, covered with a pall, in one of the chapels. One after
another the hopes of his race faded away, and still the bones of
James II. awaited burial.

On the third day the queen put on the habit of a widow, and
while they were thus arraying her, her Majesty observed that for the
rest of her life she should never wear anything but black; she had
long since renounced all vanities, and worn nothing but what was
absolutely necessary; "and God knows," she added, "I never put on
decorations except when obliged to do so, or in early youth."

When her melancholy toilet was ended the nuns were permitted
to enter to offer their homage, but not a word was spoken; she sat
still and motionless her eyes fixed on vacancy. After a quarter of an
hour she was told her carriage had come. She rose, and said, "I have
a visit to make before I go;" and bursting into a passion of tears, she
said, "I will go and pay my duty to it. I feel it is here, and nothing
shall keep me from going to it. It is a relic I have given you, and I
must be allowed to venerate it." Covered with her veil, and preceded
by the nuns, singing the De Profundis, she approached the tribune
where the heart of her beloved was enshrined in a gold and vermeil
vase. She clasped her hands, knelt and kissed the urn across the
black crape that covered it. After a silent prayer she rose, sprinkled
it with holy water, and turned as if about to retire, but before she
had made four steps she fell into a fainting fit, which caused us some
fears of her life. She returned to St. Germain's that evening.

We have seen this with our own eyes, adds the nun. Our Mother
and all the community judged it proper that an exact and faithful
narrative of the whole should be made, to the end that it might be
kept as a perpetual memorial in our archives, and for those who may
come after us.

* * * * *

A little distance from the palace of St. Germain's stood a chateau;
it was embosomed in a flowery dell; the grounds which extended
around it were cultivated with great care and taste, and the elegance
of its interior was such as to betoken the possession of vast wealth in
its owners.

A lady in the prime of woman's beauty, and dressed in the deepest
mourning, is wending her way through the valley to the chateau.
Two lovely children—a boy six years old, and a little golden-haired
girl of three—hasten to meet her, accompanied by a person of middle
age, who from love of those children, has made herself their nurse.
She is plain, very; not a soft line is there in her rugged features; and
yet in the eyes of those little ones, she is endowed with every
perfection.

Now the beautiful lady has reached the chateau, and she wends
her way, followed by her little ones, to a pleasant room, the windows
of which overlook the palace of St. Germain's, gilded by the beams of
the setting sun.

A gentleman is standing at the window, buried in thought, and,
touching him on the arm, she says:

"We have just brought her home; oh, she is very wretched,"
and her own tears fall fast as she speaks of the Queen's visit to
Chaillot.

Reader, the owner of the chateau is Sir Reginald, Marshal St.
John; the lady is Florence his wife.

The children listen, and their eyes are full of tears. Ah, the
good old king loved little children. They leave our old friend Grace,
and run to their parents.

"When I am a man I will fight for our young king," said the
boy, "as you did, papa, for good King James."

"Yes, my boy," replied the marshal, proudly patting the boy on
the head, "and may God grant the son may be more fortunate than
his father."