

was one of the chief means in the last few years of convincing not only England, but all other nations, that there is still an Irish question that has to be settled. It shows that the struggle in which England is engaged is not with a small, poor, and helpless country, close to her own shores, and within reach of her rifles and ironclads; it shows that the struggle is with a great and ubiquitous race—numbering millions of men, free from English control—wealthy, generous, passionately devoted to the cradle-land of their race. Finally, as political men are but human, it is an advantage to a cause that the material interests of those concerned should not be in antagonism to the honest and fearless discharge of their duties. English Ministries are able to agree with each other and to keep their party together, partly by the fact that they have wealth and honour to give away; and an Opposition is maintained through years of depression and defeat by the hope of some day gaining the same privileges. In Ireland, too English rule has been maintained by the fact that England was able to buy most of the talent of the country: It is something to see the day when the Irish race can say to men of ability in Ireland that their kinsmen are wealthy and generous enough to offer a career of honour to those who serve Ireland faithfully and well." To this there is nothing for us to add.

PHIL REDMOND OF BALLYMACREEDY.

BY NUGENT ROBINSON.

(From a collection of stories published by the Catholic Publication Society Co.)

"True; but there are exceptional circumstances connected with this case which hedge it round with an impenetrable *chevaux de frise*."

"Of what nature?"

"Family pride, which will never cease to confiscate the old acres."

"But the lands of Kilnagadd and Derralossory belonged to our family."

"That may be, Mr. Redmond, but they were part and parcel of other territory before the Redmonds came north of Vinegar Hill. I know all about them, as I rented a fishing lodge from one of the tenants, and being anxious to purchase it, inquired into the title."

"I made my dying father a solemn promise that I would get the old place. Money is no object, Mr. O'Hara. My Father operated both in real estate and in gold, and died wealthy, so that a few thousands will not baulk me."

"You can try it," was the rejoinder, accompanied by a shake of the head.

It was late when they separated, Minchin warbling, "The Young May Moon," and insisting upon shaking hands with the "young boss," as he designated him over and over again.

CHAPTER II.

The summer's morning was bright and balmy, and Redmond, after a yeoman's breakfast—consisting of trout fried with bacon, fresh eggs, tea in which cream was pre-eminent—started out in the glorious sunlight which was irradiating hill and dale, mountain and valley. The forget-me-nots told their tale to the crystal pools, the graceful ferns languidly embraced the lichen-covered stones, an occasional cur, basking in the heat and glow, opened a lazy eye as Phil passed along the road, and compromised a bark with a prolonged yawn. The hawthorns threw their shadows across the path, and the "blossoming furze, unprofitably gay" sent forth that fresh, quaint and delicious perfume that tells us with speechless eloquence, that we are out in the bright green country, and away from the heat and turmoil and loathsomeness of the over-crowded human hive.

Having promised to join his newly found friends at Lough Dan, Phil took the steep and romantic road that leads to the lake direct from the village of Roundwood. Far away to the left in the summer, haze lay the picturesque village of Annamoe, and farther still the sweet sad valley of Glendalough, guarded by the giant Lug na Culligh, while the deep-tinted groves of Castle Kevin lent a delicious contrast to the purple heights of the heather-covered Derryhawn; on his right the grim, gray crags of Luggelaw, and, as he gained the crest of the hill, the blue waters of Lough Dan lay mirrored beneath him, reflecting the giant shadows of Carrig-na-Leena. The exquisite loveliness of the scene fell upon the young American like a dream or a perfume. It was refreshing yet almost intoxicating. He thought of the colour glories of the Hudson in the fall of the blood-reds and orange yellows and the wine hues of the autumn foliage, and they seared his mental vision when he came to contemplate the soft, cloudy green, the odor-laden atmosphere, pure yet filmy as a bridal veil, and the delicious completeness of the *corp d'œil*, so satisfying, soothing, and so enravishing.

Somehow or other he associated all this perfection with the fair young girl whose pale face and mantling blush still haunted his imagination like a sweet strain of music. These scenes were a suitable setting for her beauty. She would comprehend them, she would commune with nature in this wild secluded spot, so lonely and yet so lovely. As his ideas glided into this rosy channel, his reverie was suddenly disturbed by the sound of wheels, and close upon him came a basket phaeton attached to a diminutive pony. His heart gave one violent bound—the object of his immediate and gushing thoughts was the occupant of the vehicle. Would she pass without noticing him? There had been no introduction. He could expect no recognition, and yet—

Chance fills up many a gap in life, solves many riddles, and hastens many denouements.

The pony, evidently a wilful, over-petted, hand-fed little brute, took it into its stubborn head that a rest at this particular spot in the road would admirably suit his inclinations; and as he feared no whip, and, save a gentle chuck upon the reins and a solemn admonishment from his fair mistress, his whim could be indulged in with comparative impunity, he proceeded forthwith to carry his idea into execution, and stopped with a jerk right opposite where Phil Redmond stood.

"Do go on, Doaty!" exclaimed Miss O'Byrne, shaking the reins. "Do go on, there's a pet. You shall have a lump of sugar when we get to the stable."

Doaty shook his head and stolidly gazed at the lake beneath him.

"Permit me to try and persuade him," said Phil, stepping forward and lifting his hat, which, by the way, doubled up in his hand, clumsily concealing his face and utterly destroying the bow.

"Oh! thanks; I seemed destined to give you trouble sir."

This was a delicate recognition.

"I have to thank you for making me the most popular man at Roundwood," retorted Mr. Redmond. "I feel like a lord-lieutenant. I had quite a *levee* this morning."

"And your courtiers, instead of looking for place, were seeking for pence."

"A distinction without much difference."

"Except in the viceroy," she laughed.

Doaty was as good as gold—at least so thought one of the party—and manifested no intention of budging an inch.

"What a tiresome pony!" exclaimed Miss O'Byrne. "I shall have to beat him."

"Let me try and get him along." And Phil, taking hold of his shaggy main, lugged the unwilling Doaty along in the direction of the lake.

"This is really too bad, sir," remonstrated Miss O'Byrne. "I cannot tax you in this way."

"It is no tax I assure you. I have nothing on earth to do but to revel in the especial sunshine of this moment."

This was said with ever so slight an emphasis; nevertheless it bore a scarlet blossom in the rich blush which came whispering all over the young girl's charming pallor.

"You—you are a stranger here?"

"I am, and yet I ought not to be."

"This savors of a riddle."

"Very easily solved. My forefathers hunted these hills and fished that lake. My father was reckless, extravagant, and new men came into possession of the old acres. My father emigrated, and made a great deal of money in New York, and—"

"I have been in New York," interposed the young lady.

Here was a bridge for travel-thought. Here was a market for mutual mental wares.

"Did you like it?" he asked.

"Like!" she exclaimed, enthusiastically "who could dislike it? It is the most charming city, perhaps excepting Paris, that I have ever lived in. And how are Fifth Avenue and Broadway, and the ash-boxes?" she added with a ringing laugh.

Doaty made another stop, and no earthly inducement would stir him until he so willed it himself. His fair mistress relinquished the idea and the reins, and, stepping from the vehicle, clambered, with the assistance of Redmond, to a moss-grown bank, from which she pointed out some objects of special interest in the scenery.

"That is Billy Doyle's cottage at Sbhonnagh, down far in the valley by the edge of the lake. See the amber thatch glowing in the sunlight, and the red flag. That flag shows that poor Mr. Fenler is on the lake fishing."

"Who is poor Mr. Fenler?" asked Phil.

"He is the man who was a great merchant in Dublin, but who lost all his property, and his wife, and all his children. He saved as much from the wreck as enabled him to purchase one-half of that cottage—the slatted half—and to support himself. He came here seven years ago having made a vow never to leave the valley again."

"And has he kept it?"

"Religiously. He goes nowhere, and spends his whole time in fishing. Do you see that golden strand at the head of the lake?"

"Yes."

"Well, there is a legend about that which you should hear. Any old crone in the valley will do it ample justice."

"I should prefer to hear it from a fairy on the hill," said Redmond, gallantly.

"*Pas de compliments*, although yours was clearly French."

"You beat me at my own weapons," laughed Redmond. "But whose palatial residence is that right over in the cleft between these two hills?"

The fire lighted up the young girl's eye, the delicate nostril expanded, the rich, ripe lips quivered, as she proudly replied: "That is my home."

Her home—the nest in which she had been nurtured. What a precious flower in that gloomy valley! What a world of love and joy and beauty in that lone and sequestered spot!

"I envy you," murmured Phil. "The tranquil loveliness of your home is—" he was going to send the words from his heart to his lips, but luckily they encountered Prudence upon the road, and altered themselves to suit that cold, passionless, interfering busybody—"is—just as it ought to be. You have made no vows to leave this valley?" he added.

"No, but I have often thought it."

"Such a determination would be a calamity, Miss O'Byrne."

"How do you know my name?" she quickly demanded.

"I asked the waiter after you had left."

"Now for an exchange," she laughed. "Let us trade. What is your name?"

"Philip Redmond, son of Redmond of Ballymacreedy."

"Why, that is Ballymacreedy, exclaimed the young girl, pointing to a fir-covered mountain, upon the side of which, as though perched on a shelf, stood a gaunt, uncompromising-looking, square-built