

Pancretius awoke as from a trance, and waving his arms, ran towards his enemy; but the savage brute, as if a lion had been rushing on him, turned round and ran away towards the entrance, where, meeting his keeper, he tossed him high into the air. All were disconcerted except the brave youth, who had resumed his attitude of prayer; when one of the crowd shouted out, "He has a charm round his neck; he is a sorcerer!" The whole multitude re-echoed the cry, till the emperor, having commanded silence, called out to him, "Take that amulet from thy neck and cast it from thee, or it shall be done more roughly for thee."

"Sire," replied the youth, with a musical voice that rang sweetly through the hushed amphitheatre, "it is no charm that I wear, but a memorial of my father, who in this very place, made gloriously the same confession which I now humbly make: I am a Christian; and for love of Jesus Christ, God and man, I gladly give my life. Do not take from me this only legacy, which I have bequeathed, richer than I received it, to another. Try once more: it was a panther which gave him his crown; perhaps it will bestow the same on me."

For an instant there was dead silence: the multitude seemed softened, won. The graceful form of the gallant youth, his now inspired countenance, the thrilling music of his voice, the intrepidity of his speech, and his generous self-devotion to his cause, had wrought upon that cowardly herd. Pancretius felt it, and his heart quailed before their mercy more than before their rage: he had promised himself heaven that day: was he to be disappointed? Tears started into his eyes as, stretching forth his arms once more in the form of a cross, he called aloud, in a tone that again vibrated through every heart—

"To-day: oh yes, to-day, most blessed Lord, 's the appointed day of Thy coming. Tarry not longer: enough has Thy power been shown in me to them that believe not in Thee: show now Thy mercy to me who in Thee believe!"

"The panther!" shouted out a voice. "The panther!" responded twenty. "The panther!" thundered forth a hundred thousand in a chorus like the roaring of an avalanche. A cage started up as if by magic from the midst of the sand, and as it rose its sides fell down, and freed the captive of the desert. With one graceful bound the elegant savage gained its liberty: and though enraged by darkness, confinement, and hunger, it seemed almost playful as it leaped and turned about, frisked and gambolled noiselessly on the sand. At last it caught sight of its prey. All its feline cunning and cruelty seemed to return and to conspire together in animating the cautious and treacherous movements of its velvet-clothed frame. The whole amphitheatre was as silent as if it had been a hermit's cell, while every eye was intent, watching the stealthy approaches of the sleek brute to its victim. Pancretius was still standing in the same place, facing the emperor, apparently so absorbed in higher thoughts as not to heed the movements of his enemy. The panther had stolen round him, as if disclaiming to attack him except in front. Crouching upon its breast, slowly advancing one paw before another, it had gained its measured distance, and there it lay for some moments of breathless suspense. A deep snarling growl, an elastic spring through the air, and it was seen gathered up like a leech with its hind feet on the chest and its fangs and fore claws on the throat of the martyr.

He stood erect for a moment, brought his right hand to his mouth, and looking up at Sebastian with a smile, directed to him by a graceful wave of his arm the last salutation of his lips—and fell. The arteries of the neck had been severed, and the slumber of martyrdom at once settled on his eyelids. His blood softened, brightened, enriched, and blended inseparably with that of his father, which Lucina had hung about his neck. The mother's sacrifice had been accepted.

(To be continued.)

For Chronic Chest Complaints,
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure. 1/6, 2/6.

THE STORY OF IRELAND

(By A. M. SULLIVAN.)

(Continued.)

III.—HOW THE UNFREE CLANS TRIED A REVOLUTION; AND WHAT CAME OF IT. HOW THE ROMANS THOUGHT IT VAIN TO ATTEMPT A CONQUEST OF IRELAND.

During those fifteen hundred years preceding the Christian era the other great nations of Europe, the Romans and the Greeks, were passing by violent changes and bloody convulsions through nearly every conceivable form of government—republics, confederations, empires, kingdoms, limited monarchies, despotisms, consulates, etc. During the like period (fifteen centuries) the *one* form of government, a limited monarchy, and the *one* dynasty, the Milesian, ruled in Ireland. The monarchy was *elective*, but elective out of the eligible members of the established or legitimate dynasty.

Indeed, the principle of "legitimacy," as it is sometimes called in our times—the hereditary right of a ruling family, or dynasty—seems from the earliest ages to have been devotedly—I might almost say superstitiously—held by the Irish. Wars for the crown, and violent changes of rulers, were always frequent enough; but the wars and the changes were always between members of the ruling family, or "blood royal"; and the two or three instances to the contrary that occur are so singularly strong in their illustration of the fact to which I have adverted that I will cite one of them here.

The Milesians and the earlier settlers never completely fused. Fifteen hundred years after the Milesian landing the Firbolgs, the Tuatha da Danaans, and the Milesians were still substantially distinct races or classes, the first being agriculturists or tillers of the soil, the second manufacturers and merchants, the third soldiers and rulers. The exactions and oppressions of the ruling classes at one time became so grievous that in the reign succeeding that of Creivan the Second, who was the ninety-ninth Milesian monarch of Ireland, a wide-spread conspiracy was organised for the overthrow and extirpation of the Milesian princes and aristocracy. After three years of secret preparation, everything being ready, the royal and noble Milesian families, one and all, were invited to a "monster meeting" for games, exhibitions, feasting, etc., on the plain of Knock Ma, in the county of Galway. The great spectacle had lasted nine days, when suddenly the Milesians were set upon by the *Attacotti* (as the Latin chroniclers called the conspirators), and were massacred to a man. Of the royal line there escaped, however, three princes, *children yet unborn*. Their mothers, wives of Irish princes, were the daughters respectively of the kings of Scotland, Saxony, and Brittany. They succeeded in escaping into Albion, where the three young princes were born and educated. The successful conspirators raised to the throne Carbry the First, who reigned five years, during which time, say the chronicles, the country was a prey to every misfortune: the earth refused to yield, the cattle gave no milk, the trees bore no fruit, the waters had no fish, and "the oak had but one acorn." Carbry was succeeded by his son, Moran, whose name deservedly lives in Irish history as "Moran the Just." He refused to wear the crown, which belonged, he said, to the royal line that had been so miraculously preserved: and he urged that the rightful princes, who by this time had grown to man's estate, should be recalled. Moran's powerful pleading commended itself readily to the popular conscience, already disquieted by the misfortunes and evil omens which, as the people read them, had fallen upon the land since the legitimate line had been so dreadfully cut down. The young princes were recalled from exile, and one of them, Faradah the Righteous, was amidst great rejoicing elected king of Ireland. Moran was appointed chief judge of Erin, and under his administration of justice the land long