

diverted the charge and inflicted the most exquisite punishments on a set of people whom the populace called Christians, and who were detested for the abominations which they practised. The originator of the name, a person called Christus, had been executed by Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius, and the dangerous superstition, though put down for the moment, again broke out, not only in Judaea, the original home of the pest, but even in Rome, where everything horrible or shameful collects and is practised. Those, therefore, who confessed [that is, admitted they belonged to this "sect"] were first brought to trial; then on information elicited from these, an immense multitude was involved in their fate [or convicted], not so much of firing the city, as of hatred to the human race.' The historian then describes their sufferings: 'The deaths were contrived so as to afford merriment to the spectators. Some were covered with the skins of wild bears and torn to pieces by dogs; others were fastened to crosses, to be set on fire after dark, that their burning might illumine the night. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle. There were chariot races, and the Emperor, dressed as a charioteer, mixed freely with the crowd, sometimes on foot, sometimes in his car. Hence, even for criminals who deserved the most exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of pity, for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man's cruelty that they were being destroyed.'

It is a relief to turn from this gruesome, though faithful, description to the picture of the same events that St. Clement of Rome drew with the hand of faith for the faithful at Corinth: 'Let us set before us the noble examples which belong to our own generation. By reason of jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church were persecuted and contended even unto death. Let us set before our eyes the examples of the good Apostles. There was Peter, who, by means of unrighteous jealousy, endured, not one or two, but many labors, and thus having borne his testimony, went to his appointed place of glory. By reason of strife and jealousy Paul, by his example, pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After that he had been several times in bonds, had been driven into exile, had preached in the East and West, he won the noble renown, which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and having reached the furthest bounds of the West, and when he had borne his testimony before the rulers, so he departed from the world. . . . Unto these men of holy lives were gathered a vast multitude of the elect, who, through many indignities and tortures, being the victims of jealousy, set a brave example amongst ourselves. By reason of jealousy women being persecuted, after they had suffered cruel and unholy insults as Danaids and Dircae [that is, they were made to play some outrageous part in a mythological comedy], safely reached the goal in the race of faith, and received a noble reward.'

## The Storyteller

### THE LAST OF TEN

Michael O'Halloran, from Ottawa, left the liner at Queenstown and had his portmanteau put on a car to take him up into the country whither he would go.

Not much of a portmanteau had been needed for his belongings when he had left the Irish port twenty years before as a restless youth bound to seek his fortune in an alien country.

As the fast trotting horse carried him along the green roads, with their hills and hollows, their over-arching trees, and background of grey and purple mountains, he was thinking that the old country was not a bit changed, and that he was going to give all the people at home a great and, he hoped, a happy surprise by unexpectedly appearing amongst them.

Of course they wouldn't know him, and no doubt he would find a change in everybody, for twenty years

do not pass over anyone's head without leaving their marks. The mother would show it the most; and a lump got into his throat as he thought of how much she would have to forgive him for his failure in the matter of letter-writing these many years back.

Well, he had been remiss, and he would own to it, but all's well that ends well, and he had brought plenty of money back with him to make amends, and to give her many an extra comfort in her old age, such as perhaps she had never dreamed of.

'This is Kilshirkin now, sir,' said the driver as they reached the top of a long sloping hill, and saw a wide plain of pasture and bog land, studded here and there with white walls, extending before them, even over the hills of ethereal blue that basked in the noonday sunlight.

Michael stood up on the car and gazed eagerly, with all his heart in his eyes, over the well-remembered landscape.

'I see!' he said. 'That's Dempsey's house with the trees behind it to the left, and yonder's Rorke's with the hay stacks, and there's Connolly's in the middle of the green hedges—and that would be O'Halloran's, wouldn't it, with the elder trees in a bunch at the gable?'

'O'Halloran's, sir?' said the driver. 'I don't know thim people at all. Not in this neighborhood.'

'You must be a stranger,' said Michael.

'No, sir, I'm not a stranger, but I'm young. And now I do remember that when I was a boy there was O'Hallorans about. But they're gone, sir, out of it, bag and baggage, long ago. I'm sorry, sir, if they were friends of yours.'

'They were friends of mine,' said Michael. His face had turned pale under its weather tan. 'But I hope you are mistaken. Drive me on to that house with the elder trees. They have just the same white flowers on them that they used to have. And there's smoke from the chimney. It can't be that the people themselves are gone.'

They drove on to the place. Michael left the car at the head of the well-remembered breen, and walked up to it, and stood before the house door. A woman, with a baby in her arms, met him there—neither mother nor sister of his, as he saw at a glance, even allowing for changes of time and the deceitful tricks of memory.

'The O'Hallorans!' said the woman. 'Oh, dear, sir, that's an old story. Sure all of them went to America, one after another, and the old woman herself's gone out of it years ago. She wasn't able to keep the place together and it failed on her. Daughters and sons either forgot her, or else they all died out yonder on her.'

'Where is she now?' asked Michael, after a short struggle with the sorrow that rushed on his heart.

'Well, I don't rightly know,' said the woman, eyeing him narrowly; 'but,' she added, lowering her voice, 'I have heard that she went down and down by degrees, sir, and that she ended in the poorhouse, God help her!'

Michael stared at the woman, and the spasm that crossed his face made her pity him.

'Will you walk in and rest?' she said. 'Maybe you knew them in times gone by; and indeed they were decent people, sir.'

'No, thank you,' said Michael, 'my car is waiting for me,' and he went back down the breen, with a grief lying like a lump of lead on his heart, and mounted his car again.

'You were right,' he said; 'the people are gone. Will you tell me where the poorhouse is, in this neighborhood?'

'I will, sir,' said the driver; 'but sure, what would the like of you be doin' in the poorhouse?'

'It's what any one may come to in Ireland,' said Michael, 'and I want to see for myself what the inside of it is like. I might find a few friends in it after twenty years that I've been out of Ireland.'

'Twenty years!' said the driver, with a laugh. 'That's as long as myself has lived entirely, barrin' a few odd years at the back of it, to begin with.'

'What's a lifetime to you was like a day's work