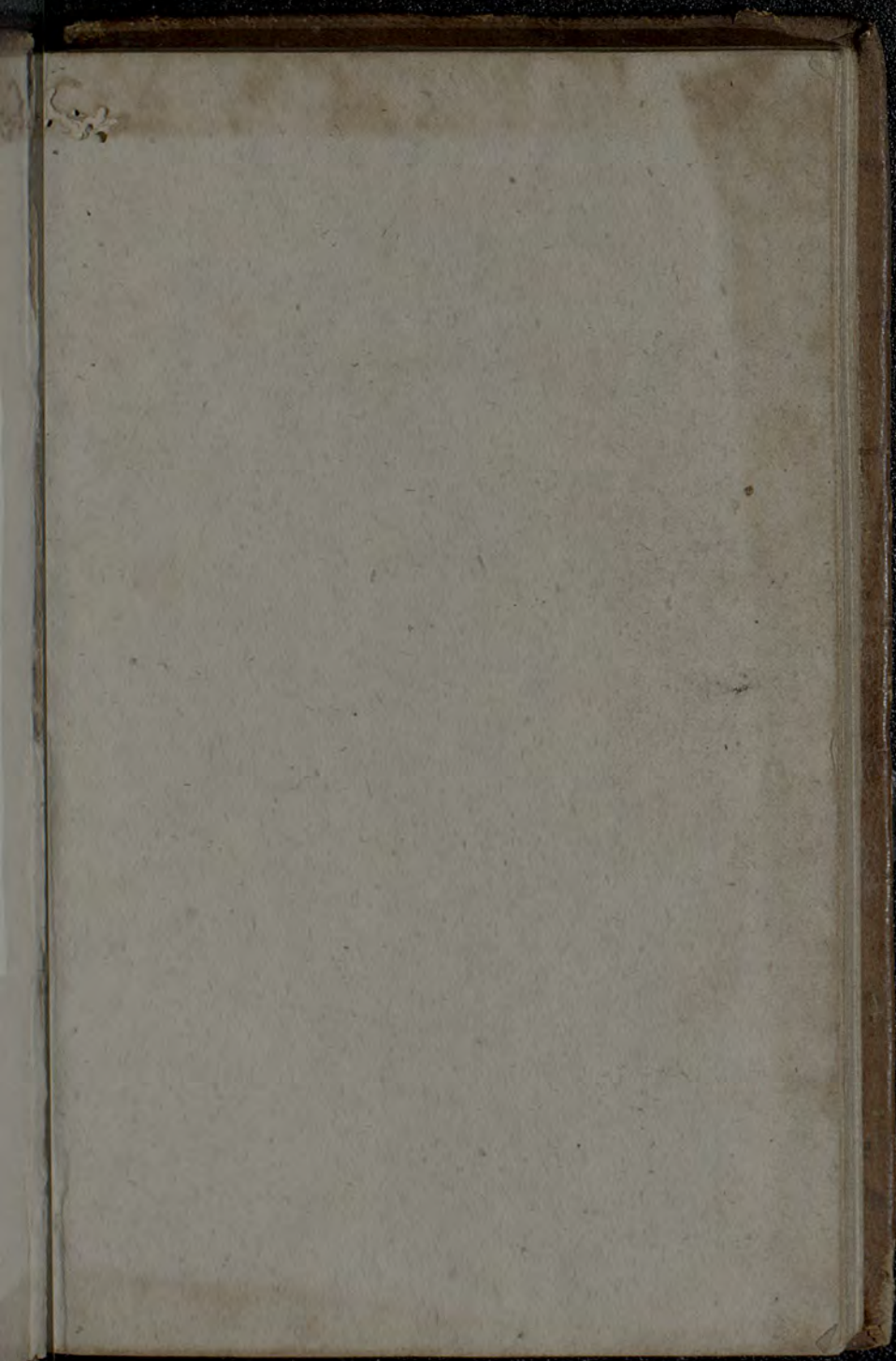
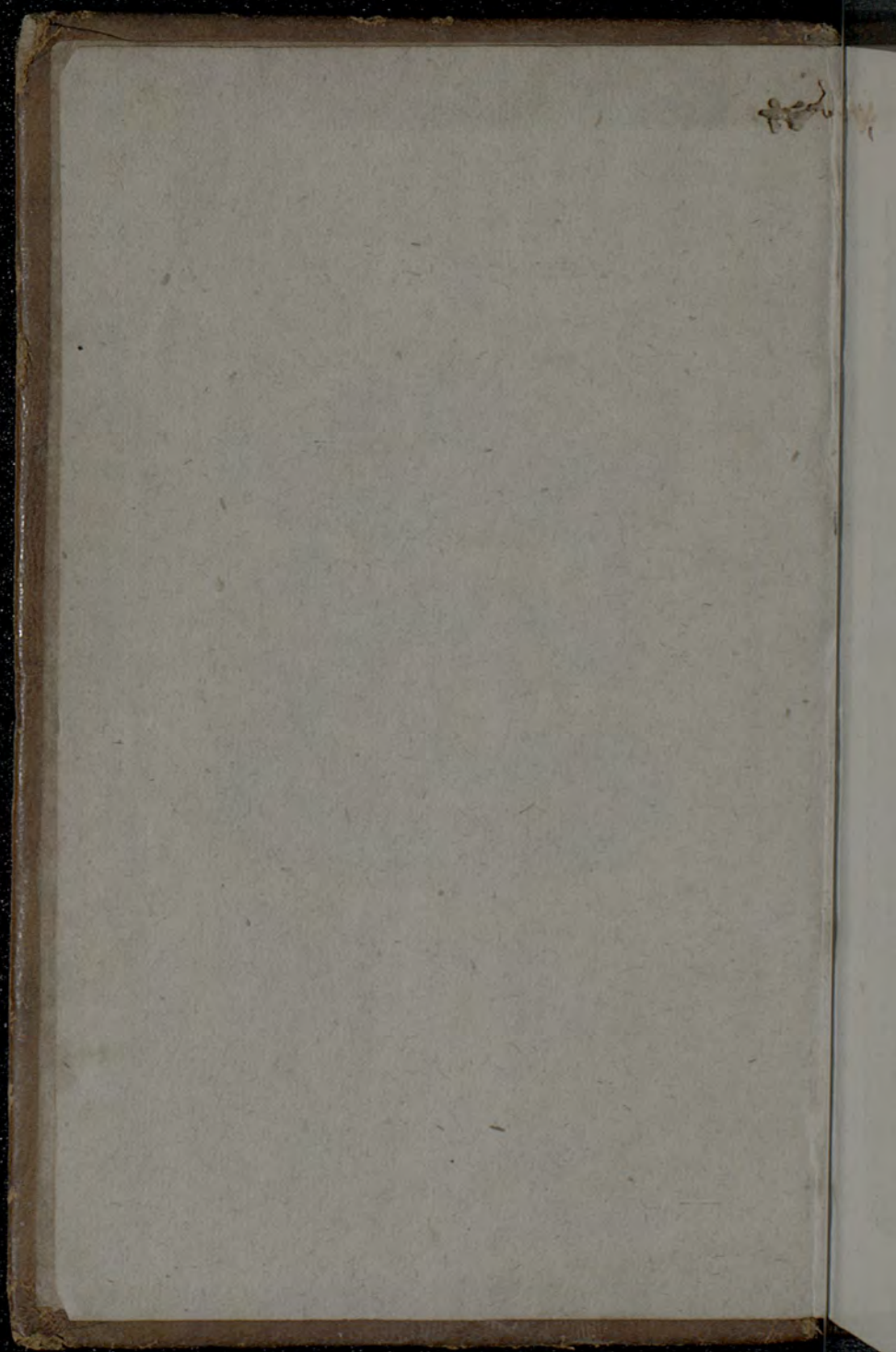


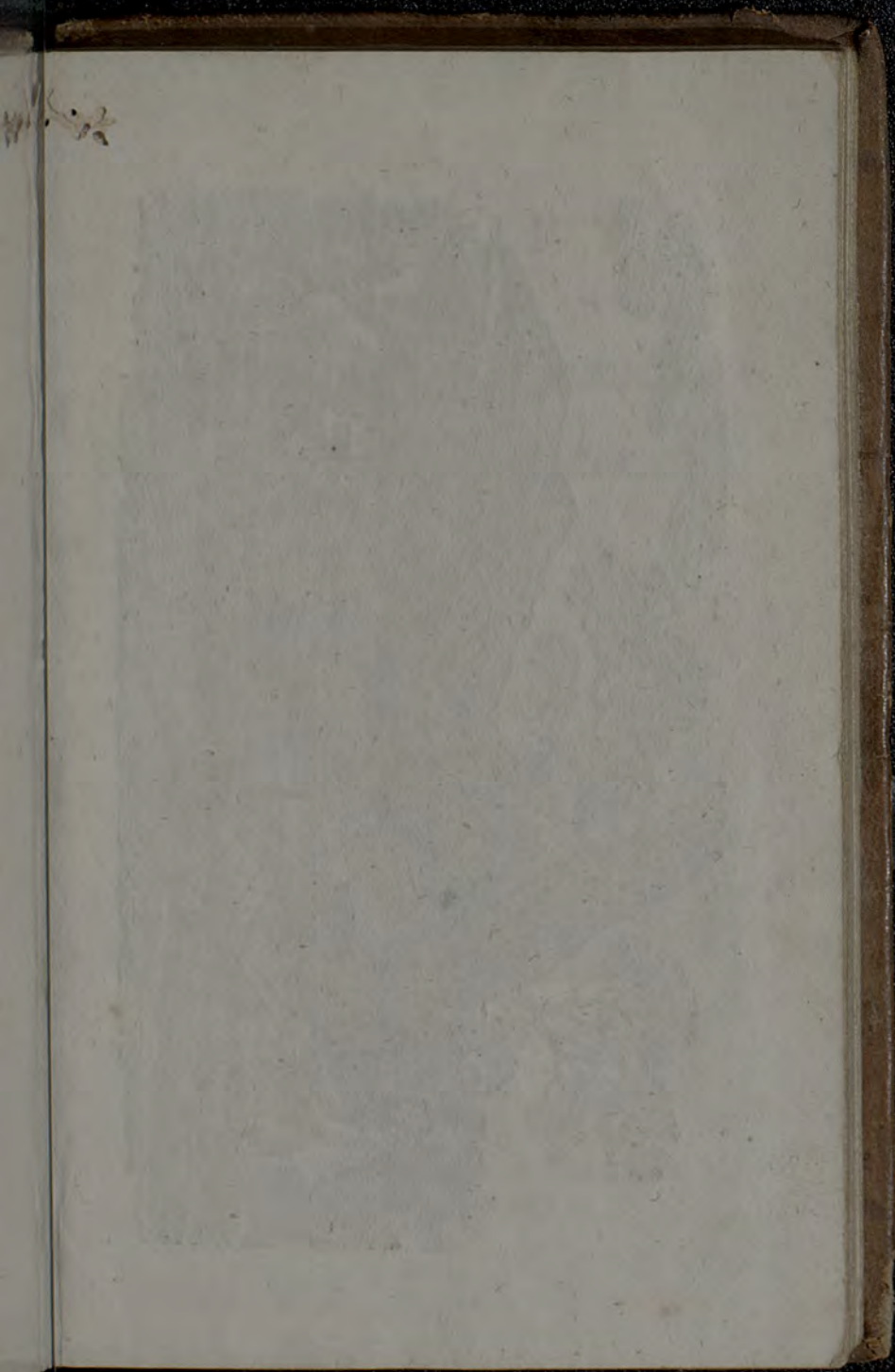
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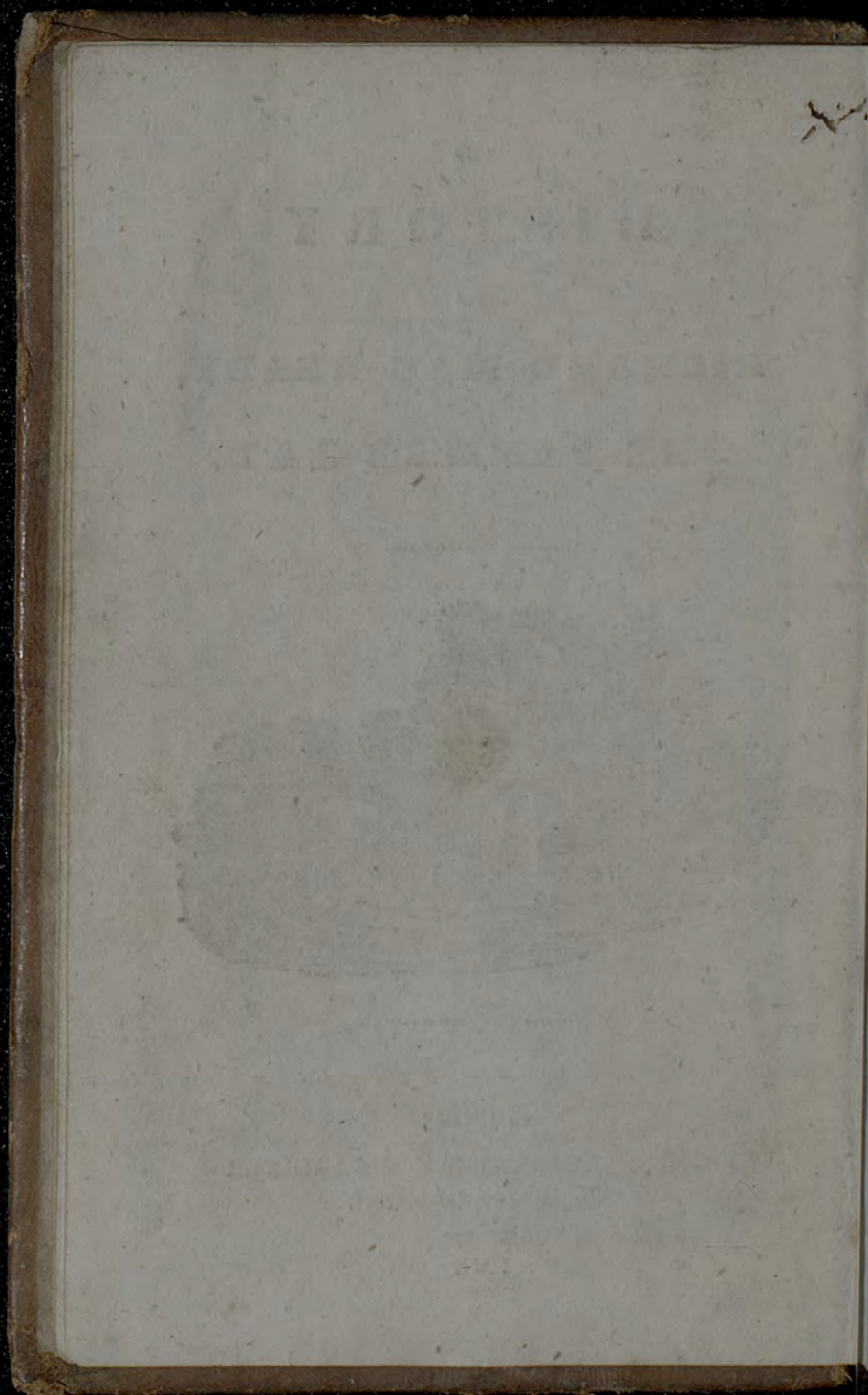


THE
HISTORY
OF
RICHARD MAC READY,
THE FARMER LAD.



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1824.



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RICHARD MAC READY,

THE

FARMER LAD,

RICHARD MAC READY was a very poor boy, who resided with his parents in one of the inland counties of the southern province of Munster, in Ireland. These parents unfortunately were of the number of those who would rather live on five-pence a day with half work, than earn plenty by active industry. They were contented,—but it was that kind of contentment which arises from indolence, and is therefore the bane of industry. The evils of poverty they bore without murmuring, and they deserved no praise for it; since almost every one of those evils might have been removed, had they been willing to labour every day like others. “Every thing was well enough for them,” they used to say—“Did’n’t it do for their father before them—and though matters were no better, it was a great advantage they *were no worse.*” They were ill qualified therefore to

teach their son by good example, and, in fact, would have brought him up to the same life of lazy poverty which they preferred themselves, if their unnatural purpose had not been frustrated by kind Providence, and by Richard's own good disposition. Let not the reader be surprized that their conduct is termed unnatural. Every father and mother should consider a child as a precious gift from God—and as surely as they are to die, will they be called to account for the manner in which they improve or abuse that gift. It is their duty to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to teach them to do to others as they would wish others to do to them; and is it too harsh to call them cruel, when the consequence must be to expose their own flesh and blood, to the danger of evil example acting upon a neglected mind, and then to the awful punishment which is denounced against all who fear not God nor keep his commandments?

James and Susan Mac Ready rented five acres of land, and to do them all justice, used to pay their rent with tolerable punctuality; but it was easy to see that the lease was made in times when land was cheap, and farming but little understood;—a patch here was laid out for oats; and a patch there for potatoes—"for what use?" as they said, "to slave themselves in growing more than they wanted;" but all the rest was so neglected, so overgrown with

rag-weed, that it barely afforded sufficient pasture for their single cow. Nor was it to any purpose that their landlord, a kind and humane man, offered premiums every year, to those who would free their ground from this pernicious weed. James and Susan were willing enough to obtain the reward, and not without some desire also to oblige him, but it was always put off from day to day, under one excuse or other, until at last the flowering time came on, the rag-weed shed its seeds, and every breeze of wind spread not only over their own but their neighbours' fields, those little feathery seeds, which were to produce more abundant mischief in the following year.

But let us turn from this "field of the slothful," to see how the Mac Readys' were lodged.—It was there a stranger might get a notion of what is called by way of reproach

"AN IRISH CABIN."

It was built at a little distance from the road side. It was of mud, and had neither window nor chimney; a hole in the roof let out the smoke, and, the door when open, gave admission to the light. When the cabin was building, about two feet square had been left for a window-sash,—but the glass was soon broken, and a wisp of straw, or some of James's old rags of clothes had been used to stop up the holes; the pig, which Susan now and then

contrived to feed for the market, was as often in the cabin as in his sty; and so damp and soft was the floor, especially near the door, that you might see the animal's marks wherever it set its feet: a large pool of stagnant water, just at the door, completes this picture of filth and slovenliness. Susan had a wheel, but it was seldom she could get flax to spin, for it may be truly said, they lived from hand to mouth—and James, provided he could find employment a couple of days in each week, usually passed the remainder lounging about, or sleeping with his hat over his face on the bank side. Sunday they thought a day of rest, and indeed they made it so; they slept long in the morning: were never in time for prayers, and passed the remainder restless and unoccupied.—What could Richard learn from such a father and mother, but to be lazy and poor as they were. And the reader has no doubt already asked himself, is it with such an example before him that we are to expect industry and virtue.

Now, if such a reflection has come across the reader, it gives us sincere pleasure to shew him that no case is so hopeless as he would suppose it. The Almighty's goodness is over all his works, and his mercies towards man are more numerous than the very hairs of our heads; to every one of us, whether rich or poor, whether old or young, he shews the path

of virtue and tells us to walk in it. Nor is there one, however surrounded by wickedness, who may not recollect many occasions when the voice of conscience, the advice of friends, or the instructions of his clergy have endeavoured to guide him to virtue and religion. It was the case with Richard—it is the case with every boy and girl who reads this little book, and if they will listen to it as he did, they may reasonably expect the same blessings through life which he enjoyed.

The way in which Richard first recommended himself to notice deserves to be mentioned: for it shews the advantage of having an obliging disposition, and may, perhaps, persuade some of an opposite temper, that if they wish to be loved they must strive to be amiable. At the time we now speak of, he was a fine sturdy boy about nine years old, as ragged as you may suppose one who had such indolent parents, but so active and so cheerful, that of all the neighbours' children he was the best messenger, and the most willing to run on an errand. It happened one morning, that he was up as usual with the lark, Mr. Alford, his father's landlord, had left home on horseback, having some business to transact, at about ten miles distance from home; he had proceeded about three miles from his house, when he recollected that he had left behind him a parcel, containing papers which were so necessary to him, that he must

either give up his plan for the day, or else return to fetch them. At this moment, whilst he was deliberating upon what was to be done, Richard appeared in sight, with his arm full of grass, or as it is called soil, for his father's cow.—“If you wish it, Sir, (said the servant) I can go back for the papers, whilst you continue your road; or if you think well of it, that little boy, whom you see yonder, is generally employed as a messenger by all the neighbours, and I'll be bail to you, that he attends to your directions as well at least as I could, and will carry your parcel no less safely.” “If he does, William, (said Mr. Alford, in reply,) I shall be much surprized: but as I cannot spare you, I must needs try him: so here, my little fellow, away like a shot, and tell any servant you see, to send me the paper parcel which I left on the breakfast table; and for fear they should dislike to give it to you, tell them, as a token, that it is tied with a red tape string—and hearken, my boy, (said he in conclusion,) when you have got it, fetch it safely to me, at the inn, in yonder distant village, where you see that tall spire—it is kept by Thomas Duffy, and the less time you keep me waiting for it, the better I shall think of you.” Scarcely had he done speaking, when Richard throwing down the grass he had been cutting, was already upon his way. “A smart boy, truly, (said Mr. Alford to his servant, when he saw

him depart,)—but are you sure he will execute my commission satisfactorily?” “I warrant you he will, Sir, for he never loiters upon an errand: and what is more, folks all speak of him as a boy who was never detected in a falsehood, even though it might have saved himself from some deserved punishment.” “I like the boy’s appearance and his manner, (said Mr. Alford,) but let us not praise him too soon; when he has executed my message it will be time enough.”—So saying, he proceeded leisurely on his way, stopping about an hour with his steward, who lived close to the road, to give him some directions.

It was past six o’clock when he had given Richard his directions, and at twelve o’clock the little messenger had placed the paper parcel in his hand, with a look which seemed to say, I made the best haste I could—I hope you did not think me long—at least so Mr. Alford understood him, for as if answering him he said—“You have not been long, my boy—here is ten-pence for yourself, and if you call to my house to-morrow, I will do something more for you.—If you are a good boy you shall not want a friend.”

The following morning, Richard was at Mr. Alford’s before any of the servants were stirring, and much it pleased their master to hear that he had been at the door from six o’clock. He asked him a great many questions, which

Richard answered as well as he was able; but the greatest pain was felt by this good man, when he found that this poor child, who had a wish to learn, was almost entirely ignorant of religion. He was not accustomed to say his prayers, either when going to or rising from bed; in this respect differing nothing from the beasts of the field. "You shall come and live with me, Dick; (said Mr. Alford,) and you shall go to school and learn to read and write and know your Bible, and when you are old enough, you shall learn to be a good farmer, and what is still better, an honest man.—Should not you like to see something better in your father's field than that great ugly flower which prevents the grass from coming up?" "That I should: (said Richard) and I should like to plant a great big apple tree, that we might have plenty of ripe apples." "Well, (said Mr. Alford,) that you can do also; but I should like to see you first planting potatoes, and getting in your harvest; so go home to your mother, and be ready when I send for you, tomorrow: tell her I shall call on her in the course of the day, and wish to see her."

A few hours after this, Mr. Alford had settled every thing with Richard's mother. She would have preferred keeping her son at home, (for want of parental affection is not amongst the faults of the Irish,) and to do Susan justice, she loved her Dickey very dearly, but her

landlord knew too well how likely he was to be spoiled with so bad an example before him, and therefore, as it offered such numerous advantages to Richard, she gave her consent with joy. He was to live with Mr. Alford's gardener, and to be employed about the garden, except for three hours in the day, when he was to attend the village school, which his master had set up for the children of his tenants. "If I live, (said Mr. Alford,) and the boy proves himself deserving, he shall afterwards be placed under my land-steward to learn practical farming;"—(a kind of knowledge of which the small farmers in Ireland are so entirely ignorant). Nor should it be omitted that Mr. Alford made this plan conducive to the improvement of Richard's father and mother. It was the condition on which their son was to be thus rendered capable of earning his bread in comfort as well as honesty, that James should clear his ground of the rag-weed, break openings for two small windows, one in the back, the other in the front of his cabin, that fresh air as well as light might enter; and also, that a narrow trench should be dug from the stagnant pool before the door, to carry off the water, and the hollow filled up. Mr. Alford kindly promised the two small sashes and window frames; and also, that he would repair the thatch and build a small chimney to carry off the smoke. What a blessing is an intelligent

and humane landlord to a country. He checks the vicious, encourages industry, rewards the deserving, and even where he can be of no other service, he benefits all by his good example; like the Apostles, says the Holy Scriptures, he is as a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid.

The next four years of Richard's life passed swiftly over; he had full occupation for his time, and therefore it never hung heavily on his hands. When employed in the garden, he worked with so much good will, that Joe Farrel took a pleasure in teaching him. If the flower beds were to be watered, or the young plants to be earthed, or a spot to be cleared of weeds, it was done not only quickly but well; and "that's a good boy," was always a sufficient encouragement to Richard. At first, as may be supposed, he was of little use, but three years had not elapsed before he understood perfectly the management of a kitchen-garden, and could graft and prune, with as much judgment and neatness as Mr. Farrel himself: at school, also, he shewed the same desire of improvement. Being totally ignorant, he was at first placed next a little boy three years younger than himself, who was also remarkably little for his age, and he soon shewed that assiduity which afterwards marked his character through life. What a shame, thought he to himself, it would be for me to let a boy so much younger

know his lessons before me—I must work hard, or strangers coming in will take me for a dunce if they see so many above me. In a very short time he knew his letters and could spell with great correctness; and it was not long ere he had the character of being the steadiest monitor in the whole school. Mr. Alford had caused to be written out a great many usefule rules and proverbs, and posted them up on the walls of his school. These the children were required to commit to memory, and a small premium was always given to each when he could say them by heart. They were called “Friendly Counsels,” and well they deserved the name; but no one in the school knew them in a short time better than Richard: and what is still more to the purpose, he could not only say them by rote, but they regulated his conduct, and indeed, under Providence, to them he owed much of the success with which he passed through life. The following are some of the most useful of these maxims:—“A place for every thing, and every thing in its place.”—“Out of debt, out of danger.”—“Honesty is the best policy.”—“Take time by the fore-lock.”—“Don’t postpone till to-morrow what should be done to-day.”—“Make hay while the sun shines.”—“Call upon the Lord and he will hear.”—And many more of the same kind. Ask Richard where he had laid a certain tool which he had

in his care—he had no difficulty in answering, for he always put every thing in its own place; tell him to explain what was meant by out of debt, out of danger: he could explain it by his own father, who, having spent at a fair his half-year's rent, not only displeased Mr. Alford, his kind landlord, but also got intoxicated; and was sent to gaol for being engaged in a riot, which had well nigh ended in murder.—“Surely,” (said he to the master, who often asked the boys to explain what was meant by these proverbs,) “I am making hay while the sun shines, when I strive to know my lessons. If I don't learn them now, it is not likely I shall do so when I leave school.” “And as for the last, Richard, (said the Master,) how shall I expect God to bless me unless I pray to him; if I want something from a friend, I will think it no trouble to ask for it; and can I expect that God will give me all I want, if I will not even take the trouble of looking for it in the way he has taught me.” All this may seem to a few thoughtless readers too wise for such a boy as Dickey Mac Ready, but they may rest assured there are many, very many boys, who, under good teachers, have shewed even greater proofs that God had blessed the instructions they were receiving.

— But amongst the many excellent maxims and precepts which were continually in view of the scholars, there were two collections, so

extremely useful, that they deserve the attentive perusal of every reader. What use, Mr. Alford was accustomed to say, is all our worldly knowledge, unless religion be at the foundation; a time must come, to rich and poor alike, when it is not the remembrance of good harvests or successful farming, which will bring us satisfaction, but the obedience we have shewed to his commands who is *the God of the harvest*. The first, was a collection of general precepts, inculcating Religion, Honesty, and Industry; the second, a number of useful rules, for those who were quitting the school for service. Richard was now about to leave it also for this purpose, and therefore, along with a good deal of excellent advice which the master gave him, and as he said, was imprinted on his heart as well as upon his memory, he received from him the following:—

“ FRIENDLY ADVICE TO COTTAGERS, &c.

“ Profane not the Sabbath—remembering that it is set apart not only as a day of rest for man, but for the worship of God.

“ Be sure to attend your place of worship regularly, and let your behaviour going and returning be suited to such a solemn place.

“ Never utter the name of the Almighty, except when reading, or thinking seriously of him, or praying to him.

“ Never let an oath or any bad word come out of your mouth.

“ Do not read bad books, nor play at cards or any game of chance.

“ Never go to cock fights, nor into public-houses unnecessarily. In such places you may meet with evil disposed persons who will lead you into wrong.

“ Bad company is the ruin of young and old—there can be no friendship with the wicked.

“ Parents! Set a good example to your children.—You are answerable before God, not only for the instruction you give them, but for the example you set them.

“ Children! Honor your Parents: shew them obedience as well as love: you owe them more than you can ever repay them.

“ Beware of drunkenness. It is a true saying, that every crime may be found at the bottom of the drunkard's glass.

“ It is much easier not to begin than to leave off: you know not to what sin and misery it may lead you.

“ Look at a drunken man and consider: Would you wish to be like him? If not, avoid the ale-house and whiskey-shop.

“ Do not go to fairs unless you have business: hold no parley with temptation by saying it is no harm. It may be no harm, but certainly it is no good.

“ Do not damage your own, and still less,

your neighbours' fences, or pull up any part of them for your fire. For the sake of a penny worth of firing, you might let their cow into the corn or potatoes to the damage of some pounds in amount.

“ Do not let your own cow or pigs trespass on your neighbour's land. It is a golden rule to do to others as you would wish others to do to you.

“ Be honest and upright in all your dealings. Would you trick or cheat if a man were looking at you? The *eye of God* is always upon you.

“ Never tell a lie in any way great or small. *It is always a sin.* The word of God expressly says, that ‘ all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.’

“ Falsehood is also punished in this world: it ruins the character, and makes a man suspected and disbelieved, even when he is speaking the truth.

“ In the season of plenty lay up something for a time of need, and never go into debt.

“ Parents, who teach their children habits of industry and frugality, give them a better fortune than money.

“ Send your children to school young, and encourage their regular attendance as long as you can.

“ Keep your garden well cropped, your pig in a sty, and your dunghill far from your house.

“ Do you wish to be comfortable?—Be industrious and frugal, sober and temperate.

“ Do you wish to be healthy?—Keep your person neat and clean, your house airy and often white-washed.

“ Do you wish to be happy?—Let religion regulate your conduct always remembering to pray to God to bless your humble endeavours.”

The following was contained in the other paper given to the children on leaving school :

“ TO YOUNG PERSONS GOING TO SERVICE.

“ The character of a faithful servant is truly honorable, and has always been respected by the good and wise.

“ Learn to speak the truth : it is the first of a servant's moral duties.

“ Be strictly honest : acting by your employer's property as if it was your own.

“ Be not eye servants : take no advantage of your master's absence to disobey his orders.

“ Be conscientious even in what may seem trifles.

“ Be careful with regard to fire : never set a lighted candle near a bed, nor take one into a stable or hay-loft except in a lantern. Do not carry a candle with a long snuff. Never leave a child alone in the room with fire and candle.

“ When any one's clothes take fire, lay them flat on the ground, and roll a blanket or

carpet round them to put it out; which is better than throwing on water or any thing of the sort.

“ Be kind to any dumb animals entrusted to your care, and when employed to kill any of them, study to do it in the quickest and least cruel manner.

“ If employed about the stables, do not leave the bridles trailing in the stalls, but put every thing in its proper place.

“ If your fellow servants waste, advise them privately that it is sinful. If they are only careless they will mind. If they are dishonest, tell your master.

“ Do what you believe to be the wish of your employer willingly, and without requiring to be desired: when once told a thing, do not require to be reminded again.

“ Beware of wishing to dress above your condition: let your clothes be neat and clean, and without the smallest hole in any part of them.

“ When the business of each day is done, quietly retire to reflect on that state where the weary are at rest.

“ Be courteous: be patient: be clothed with humility: be slow to wrath: do your own business: be content with what you have: trust in the Lord and do good. These are great Christian duties, suited alike for rich and poor. Their observance will render a man respectable, however low his station, and promote his lasting happiness.”

We shall now mention an anecdote of this good boy, which will shew the reader how much he deserves all the praise we have given him. When he came first to live under Mr. Alford, he of course having before him no better example than his parents, knew not how defective they were in industry, cleanliness, and good management, but a short time sufficed to shew him their faults, and from that time it became his desire to correct them. By this it is not meant that he thought himself wiser than his seniors—as is the case sometimes with naughty children—but as he could easily perceive how different was their conduct from that of Joe Farrel, the gardener, who was always Richard's great example, so the way that he strove to improve their habits was particularly deserving of commendation. When work was over in the garden, it was his great pleasure to run over to shew his father how Mr. Farrel dressed a garden, or how Mr. Farrel dibbled his potatoes; and soon the little spot had such a different appearance, and throve so under his care, that James himself began to take pleasure in dressing it: a proof that there is no one however young, that may not improve others by the simple but all powerful force of a good example. The success of his first efforts with his father, encouraged this good boy so much, that he began to consider how he might further benefit his parents; and perceiving that Mr.

Farrel always had certain times for planting, dressing, &c. his kitchen garden, he thought it would be an exceedingly good plan to get his father to lay out about half an acre of his ground as a kitchen garden, and to dress it exactly as Mr. Farrel should direct him. "I think it odd if father don't see the good of a little care; perhaps if he is only able to sell a few shillings worth of the vegetables at the market, it will encourage him to go on." For the first year, this succeeded but indifferently; James Mac Ready's indolence was too deeply rooted to yield all at once to good advice, and the consequence therefore, was, that the instructions which Richard left with him at different times, were frequently neglected from day to day; and sometimes the favourable moment had past, and could not be recalled. It is however frequently a small thing which produces amendment, and therefore we should never despair, but steadily pursuing what we think right, humbly look to God for his blessing on our efforts. Richard was disappointed but he was not discouraged. He asked leave from Joe Farrel, and having obtained it, he resolved to take the management of some early potatoes into his own hands.—Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might—was his motto; and therefore, with the Lord's assistance, he left nothing untried which could ensure success.—Good seed, plenty of manure,

plenty of labour, and a favorable season, all conspired for him, and the consequence was, not only an abundant crop, but a remarkably early one, of new potatoes, which sold so well to the neighbouring quality, who had not been as fortunate in their management, that even James, as he saw the money coming in, began to perceive the advantages of industry, and to take a liking to his garden, which he had hitherto so much neglected. "I will follow your advice, now, Dickey, (said he,) for I see it is good; there's your mother has bought herself a new cloak, and a pair of shoes;—and look at my own trusty—why I have not felt so comfortable and warm for many a day."

James's indolent habits once in part corrected—Richard found it easy to accomplish his wishes. The garden was now managed according to rule. Every thing was planted at the proper time, and under the friendly and judicious advice of Joe Farrel, as fast as a spot of ground became cleared, it was occupied by some other seeds; so that every thing was turned to the best account, and the fruits were soon seen—Mr. Alford's rent was paid to the day; the cabin was whitewashed; shelves were put up, on which Susan could lay her few plates and delft articles, instead of leaving them on the window-stool or on a chair, as before, where they were so likely to be broken; nails

and pegs, were also placed along the walls, on which she could hang a cloak or great coat, instead of throwing them down, "just for a minute," as she used to do. The reader, however, is not to suppose that they were both reformed from their bad habits; Susan was still slovenly: and sometimes she would let the basket or the turf-kish lie on the floor, to be stumbled over by James, notwithstanding all that Dickey used to say, about a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; and James would now and then relapse into old habits, and suffer the weeds to get ahead, although Richard often good humouredly hinted, that of all kinds of rags, Mr. Farrel disliked rag-weed most,—but on the whole there was an improvement; and thus it was that the endeavours of filial affection were rewarded.

We have said, that Richard had a quality, which is unfortunately too much wanting in the poorer classes in Ireland—forethought, or a due regard for the future. It was this which made him set down all the advice which Joe Farrel gave him from time to time, in order that he might be able to recal it in after years, for his father's use, and also for his own. His little plan of thus forming a Gardener's Calendar, he kept a profound secret from all but one, and that was Mr. Farrel; and evening after evening did he shut himself up in his little room, to write down, in a blank paper book,

all that he was able to collect on the subject during the day. It is true the writing was not very good, for he was only in his twelfth year, but the rules he gave were the result of experience in older and wiser heads than his own, and, as they were in a fair round hand, they were easily legible by James Mac Ready, who was quite proud of his son's penmanship, and so gratified at this mark of his affection, that he faithfully promised to attend to them; indeed he was still more disposed to do this, when he found that Mr. Alford, having heard of Richard's little plan, had afterwards taken the whole of his directions, in order to improve the style and language a little, and throw in occasionally a remark or two; for he was pleased at this indication of the boy's filial attachment to his parents, and could not help thinking how many with more opportunities for improvement than Richard, were far behind him in genuine worth of heart.

The reader is, perhaps, curious to know what was Richard's advice, and perhaps also willing to follow it, as far as in his power, we therefore subjoin it for his gratification:—

“THE COTTAGER'S GARDEN CALENDAR.

“*January*.—It would be well if every man in Ireland were convinced of this, that nothing in the world can succeed without industry.—A spade is a useful implement, even in the hands

of a child ; but when made use of by an active, intelligent gardener, it is like digging for a treasure hid in the ground, with the certainty of not being disappointed. The year is now beginning ; do you begin your labour, and if it fails of a reward, you may throw away your spade and never touch it again ; but if you will give a friend's advice a fair trial, take your spade in hand, and if the frost be not severe, dig over every vacant spot of ground, and throw up the earth into ridges, for this prepares it to be benefited by the frost and snow. Gather up manure in a place set apart for the purpose and at a distance from the house, and mix it with the mud gathered from before your cabin ; thin away the wood from the middle of the gooseberry bushes, for the leaves will otherwise get thick, and shut out the sun and air and make the fruit scanty, and of small size and bad flavour.

“ Clear out a little spot of four or five feet square, and plant it thick with the straight and healthy shoots of gooseberries and currants ; they will strike root with great ease, and though you should have more than you want, you may, perhaps, have the means of accommodating a neighbour. Take care, however, to rub off all the eyes, for three inches from the bottom, else they will constantly throw up suckers and not make handsome bushes. A man, who feels as he ought, will bear good will to his neighbour,

and it is pleasant to think he may have it in his power to shew his kindly disposition, even by the gift of such a trifling article as a gooseberry or a currant shoot.

“ If open weather, during this month, cauliflower plants, which have been covered, should have air. Radishes also may be sown for the first crop. Earth up beans, pease, and celery. Transplant cabbages, carrots, parsnips, and leeks for seed. Prune apple trees, and repair decayed hedges.

“ A rose or honeysuckle growing up the side of the cottage, gives it a very neat appearance.* Shorten the young shoots above the buds, and you will find the advantage of it in the fullness, plenty, and beauty of the flower. A China rose, flowers often in the year, and is all the better for being frequently cut. If you see a well trained honeysuckle or rose tree on the outside of a cottage, it is a sure sign that the inside also is neat and clean. Cleanliness greatly contributes both to health and comfort, nor is there in the whole kingdom a more respectable character than a cleanly, sober, pious, honest, industrious, and contented Irishman.

“ *February.*—Continue to work the ground during this month, and if the weather is mild and open towards the end of it, sow early York

* Richard had planted several in front of his father's cabin, and it may be supposed that he added this with reference to his own cuttings.

or sugar-loaf cabbages. Plant also chives, shallots, and early potatoes. Also pease where there is room; the hotspur comes in the earliest, but the Blue, Prussia, and other dwarf kinds are more productive. Transplant fruit trees. Sow celery and cauliflower seed on a hot-bed or warm border. Sow spinage, savoy, and lettuce seed. Slip artichokes. Plant cuttings of honeysuckles. Cut grafts and lay them under a dry wall; they will succeed better than when fresh cut.

“ There is no kind of food, on which the cottager relies so much as on the potato, and, therefore, a due economy is the more strongly recommended. The poor man has a quantity of potatoes for seed, and he cuts them up into as many pieces as the potato has eyes. This, to say, the best of it, is useless, and to say the worst, it is extravagance. Begin rather in this month, to cut off and lay by for seed the budding end of every potato that is to be boiled; it will hardly be missed from the root, and will be a material saving in seasons of scarcity, such as the poor had in the year, 1822. In this way, and without expense, a numerous family may, from the mere pairings of the potatoes, so generally thrown away, provide enough of seed potato to plant out a tolerably large garden. Nor let the smallness of each day's saving be despised; recollect the verse—

“ A penny saved, is two-pence clear,

“ A pin a day, is a groat a year.

March.—This is a busy month; nor is there one which shews more strongly the garden-er's trust in Him who hath promised, that “seed time and harvest shall not cease.” In March, dig between raspberries, and dress strawberries. Sow brocoli. Plant slips of sweet herbs. Graft apples, pears, &c. Plant quicks and oziers. Sow cucumbers, turnips, and celery. Head down stocks that are budded. Radishes, tongue-grass, mustard, parsley, carrots, parsnips, onions, and leeks should be sown; and towards its close, early green turnips, long pod and other beans, and some early potatoes in a dry sheltered spot. It is also a good time for sowing a crop of pease, transplanting cabbages both early and late, and also autumn sown brocoli plants.

“In this month manure should be turned over again and mixed well, and above all things, at this season, every thing in a garden should be neat and clean, for if weeds are now suffered to get a head, it will be difficult afterwards to root them out.

“Nor let the cottager think a little patch of a flower garden is beneath his care: it takes up but little room; and whether we consider the neatness it gives to a kitchen garden, or to the cottage, it is altogether a pleasing acquisition.—This then is the time to sow almost all kinds of flower seeds, and also to divide and transplant flower roots; they should get a little water

after they are transplanted, and the soil should be raked and made to look neat, for neatness is the great beauty of a garden; it matters little how rare are the plants, or how well they are flourishing, if the beds are not kept nice, the edgings regular, and the walks clean, the garden will otherwise never look ornamental or well. A man is always amply repaid for this trouble even though he made no other use of the flowers than to give his spot of ground a neat appearance; he has it in his power, however, thus to shew his good will to his landlord or to his friend, for there is no one, rich or poor, to whom a present of fresh flowers is not acceptable. Box makes a neat edging, and bears transplanting very well—but even a little paling or a row of even sorted stones or shells round a bed, looks better than nothing.

“*April.*—In the first week of this month, the gardener takes care to sow whatever was omitted in March, particularly onions, leeks, carrots, parsnips, radishes, and lettuces; these are vegetables which should never be neglected, for they are useful to both rich and poor. It is now time to plant potatoes for a main crop, and if the ground is small, you may plant a garden bean between every other potatoe set, and obtain two crops on the same ground, for the beans will not much interfere with the potatoes. The dryest spot in the whole garden is the best for a plantation of

asparagus, for making which this is the proper month.—This vegetable never thrives when in a wet situation or covered too deep; while young two inches and a half is sufficient,—and beds should be so made as to afford a supply of earth as the plants grow stronger.

“This is the time also for planting out young cauliflowers, and for sowing borecole, (or what is usually called curled greens,) savoy and brocoli plants. Prick out young celery. Wall-fruit trees should be pruned, and where the fruit is too crowded should be thinned.

“A good gardener is always very attentive to the bloom of his wall-fruit trees at this season, and the best way of preserving it is by covering over the trees with nets made of white worsted; these nets are likewise useful for defending the fruit afterwards from the birds; for it deters them from alighting on it, or even if they are tempted to do so, their feet become entangled in the woollen net, so that they are glad to get away. During the second and third week of April, there is always occupation enough in finishing the pruning, and in sowing vegetable crops for autumn, such as early York, &c. sugar-loaf cabbage, Cape brocoli, and also a late crop of pease and beans. Towards the latter end of April it will be time to plant kidney beans; for these, the gardener chooses a warm sunny border, and having drawn the drills two feet asunder, and made each about

an inch deep, he drops in the beans singly, three inches distant from one another. The whole of this month is favorable for transplanting both garden plants and evergreens.

“ *May*.—As it is a great object in every gardener to have successive crops of vegetables, and of different kinds, a gardener should never let the proper seasons pass for sowing his seeds, remembering always that—There is a time for every thing under the sun, and that time once gone-by can never be recalled. Spinach may be sown early in May; and as this is a plant which runs to seed very fast in warm weather, it is right to sow successive crops of it, and likewise the same of turnips. Slip artichokes during the first week of this month. A garden requires a great deal of weeding in the month of May, and to this, particular attention should be paid, as well as to earth up or land the pease, beans, potatoes, and cabbages. Remove useless shoots from peaches, apricots, and nectarines. Sow coss, cabbage and Silesia lettuce every fortnight, and radishes. In dry weather water them. Take up bulbous roots past blowing. Sow annual flowerseeds. Sow cauliflowers for October and November, and brocoli for spring.

“ The planting of potatoes should be all finished by the second week in May; but the greatest trouble a gardener has in this month, when the season is dry, is to keep his plants well watered. A border of strawberries takes

up no room, and a few leaves in the season always bring a price from the quality. They are now in blossom, and it is quite necessary their roots should be kept moist; this may be very much assisted by covering the ground round the roots of the plants with moss or wheaten straw. Cucumbers should be sown in May—they will do best in hot-beds; but if that is not convenient, they may thrive with great care in warm sunny situations; and early crops of pease should be stacked during this month. Potato ground should be always kept clean; and it is right to hoe down the weeds whilst they are young, that the rows of potatoes may be seen distinctly: the weeds should be either carried away or let to lie until quite dead before the potatoes are landed, otherwise you will be as it were planting the weeds again. Nor is this the only mischief you cause, for the weeds are bad neighbours, or rather robbers—they take the nourishment away from your crops, and if they ever flower, their seeds will fill your garden with weeds for a year to come. A good gardener declares war against weeds, and never rests so long as one of them survives, for he remembers the old saying, that six weeks weeds is six weeks seeds.

“*June.*—As soon as June sets in, it will be time to thin out the onions, carrots, leeks, and parsnips. The gardener always thins the first to three, four, or five inches asunder; parsnips

may be left seven or eight, for they require a good deal of room to grow to perfection. The cauliflowers will now be forming heads, and it is right at this time to look them over, and to break down the outside leaves of such as are very forward, covering and thereby preserving the flower. Celery, savoys, borecole, brocoli, and drum-headed cabbages should be transplanted in the middle of this month, and wall-fruit trees should be pruned. Transplant celery, plant cuttings, gather herbs for drying, lay them in the shade and not in the sun. Sow a full crop of turnips for winter. Prick out brocoli sown in May, and sow fresh seed. Plant kidney beans, scarlet and white runners. Lay carnations and evergreens. Gather seeds. Best time to inoculate stone fruit. Sow Scotch kale. Sow Pinton cabbage, and transplant in October—it will precede the early York in spring. Sow cauliflowers between the 16th and 24th. The last week in June and the first in July, are the only times for sowing endives, if earlier it will run to seed—if later it will not come to its full growth. The flower-beds, where the annuals are sown, must be kept free from weeds, and the best tool for this is a Dutch hoe: it cuts up the weeds without obliging the labourer to tread on the beds, and leaves the ground in such a state, that very little raking is required; this is a nice handy

tool and is very cheap for it costs only one shilling and six-pence.*

"It has been well said, 'that industry makes the world look beautiful around us; it turns the barren wilderness into a fertile pleasant land, and for thorns and thistles it plants the rose-tree and the vine. Industry preserves us from the inclemency of the weather, and finds some means to supply every want; it procures us wherewith to give alms to the poor, and therefore enables us to "lay up a treasure in Heaven."

"*July.*—In the first week of July it will be time to land celery; be careful not to bury the hearts of the plants by raking up too much earth at once, for this will either rot the plants,

* Samuel Wilder often complained of not having a Dutch hoe, to keep his garden clean, and that he could not afford to buy one—yet to Dickey's knowledge he used to spend the value of one every week in the public-house. He was a tippler, and you would have thought so had you seen his garden, for it was rough and slovenly like himself.—Whereas, go into Pat Kearns's and you will see a different sight—not a weed in view. Pat was a day labourer, but his garden was his delight when his day's work was over. It gave him health and spirits and plenty of potatoes, cabbages, &c.—He often said to Joe Farrel, "that it was a crying sin for a man to waste an hour at the ale-house, when it was well known he never could fetch t a k a minute. I have no occasion to carry my money there, for I don't find I have a half-penny more than I want; and if I ever should, in case I don't know what to do with it, I can put it in the Savings' Bank, hard by, where it will be safe from accident, and always ready for a time of want or sickness."

or make it gritty and disagreeable to eat. The autumn crop of cabbages should be now sown, also some dwarf French beans, and if the season is mild and moist, it will be well to sow peas and beans for a late crop. Box edgings, and thorn or other hedges may be clipped in the course of this month, and it is a good way to dig all the clippings into the ground; for they will be useful as manure, and if the hedge be yew, the clippings left lying about may do much harm, for yew is as poisonous to both horses and cows, as box is to pigs.

“The latter end of this month and the whole of the next, is also a good time for budding peach trees, nectarines, plumbs, and cherries; and though it is true the poor man’s garden does not always contain these rare fruits, it is useful to mention how they are treated, in case he should wish to make a penny by cultivating them for the market. At this season, the leaves of onions fall and wither, it is then time to take them up; let them dry in the sun for a week or ten days, frequently turning them; then cut off the leaves to about three inches in length, clear them from the bottom fibres and tie them up in ropes for use; nothing more is required than to keep them in a dry place, as the frost does not injure them, Shalots and garlic should likewise be taken up when the leaves droop and wither. In the third and fourth week of July, sow lettuce, radishes,

prickly-seeded spinach, and Welch onions;—likewise early Russian cabbages for the ensuing spring. These are not apt to run to seed, but if carefully managed, and brought on as fast as possible before Christmas, will afford fine young cabbages in March and April.

“With respect to onions generally, it may be mentioned that the Strasburgh is most generally adopted for principal crops, the silver skinned and two-bladed for pickling. Sown in February they bear transplanting in April.—Care should be taken to keep the bulb at first above ground.—The onion, to attain a good size, requires rich mellow ground or a dry soil.—Grow pickles in a poor light ground to keep them small.

“Many cottagers, no doubt, are now getting their little gardens into nice order: but the weeds are still like forward intruders, forcing their way into good company; look well to them before July is past, for they will be soon in seed—and, mark a friend’s advice, you will have a *terrible* crop of them next year, if you don’t mind them in this.

“*August.*—Stir up the earth as much as possible between the growing crops of celery, peas, beans, &c. and land such as are in a sufficient state of forwardness. Dig up and manure every vacant spot of ground, and be most careful to keep the garden free from weeds during this month. As leaves are the natural

and proper protection for fruit of every kind, and as it never ripens so well as when *sufficiently* shaded, gardeners should be cautious not to prune their wall-fruit trees so bare as to leave the fruit too much exposed.

“ By the third week in August, pickling cucumbers will be fit to gather; and from the 10th to the 20th of this month is a good time for sowing both brown coss lettuce and spinach—the prickly-seeded stand the winter best; as soon as the latter comes up, and that the leaves have got to about an inch in breadth, the plants must be thinned to four or five inches distance from each other, in order that they may grow strong and hardy. Stir the earth well between the rows of growing crops, and draw some up to the roots; this will keep them cool and nourish them greatly. It will also kill the weeds and give the garden a fresh and tidy appearance. Besides that the ground which is moved and turned a good deal in hot weather, is enriched, and works better all the year after. It is a good way to mix round seeded spinach with the prickly, and this crop will produce leaves for gathering in October, November, and throughout the winter in open weather, but the best of it will come in early in the ensuing spring; cauliflowers and radishes may likewise be sown at this time for the same purpose.

“ It is now time to examine trees that have been budded early this season, and to unbind

those that have taken well. Some gardeners, however, think it better to cut the bandage that is below the bud, to give room for the sap to rise and nourish it, and to let that above remain on for a few weeks longer.

“ Young strawberry plants may be put out during the latter end of this month.

“ *September.*—If any of the vegetable crops sown in the preceding month have failed, they must now be renewed, and carrots and parsnips may likewise be sown for an early spring crop ; this is always worth while attending to, for there is no greater treat at dinner than a nice dish of early vegetables. A poor man, indeed, never eats them himself, but he knows more by the price they bring at market, how much the richer classes prize them.

“ It is time now to dress asparagus beds, to divide and transplant flower roots, and to make layers of almost all kinds of shrubs, and likewise to put down cuttings of evergreens. In making cuttings of laurels, take off four or five inches of the old wood at the bottom of the last year's shoot, and having stripped off all the leaves from the cuttings, except a few at top, plant them in a trench about two inches from each other, instead of putting them into the ground very deep and perpendicularly. A skilful gardener always cuts the trench in a slope towards the south, and having laid them in, covers in the earth on them just sufficient to leave

a few joints above ground; they always strike stronger roots when put down in this way, than in the ordinary manner.

“ *October.*—The flower garden requires more care in October than the vegetable.—The carnation layers must first be taken up, and the common sorts, if they have good roots, will do very well in the open ground all the winter; the very choice kinds, however, require more care and shelter. Honey-suckles, rose-trees, and other flowering shrubs must be pruned, and their young shoots, if planted immediately after they have been clipped off, will grow very well. By doing this a gardener can greatly increase his stock; in short, nothing should be wasted in a garden; since, if we were careful we should find, that almost every thing, however trivial, might be turned to account.

“ Tulips and other bulbous roots should now be put down: and geraniums, and all greenhouse plants, should be new potted, and taken in from the open air.

“ If the weather is dry, apples and pears may now be gathered and laid by for winter use, and the best way of preserving them is by spreading them thinly on wooden shelves, in a dry airy chamber, or a little dry fern, if it can be got, may be strewn under and over them.

“ Towards the latter end of October, comes the troublesome task of pruning the raspberry bushes.—“ It is a long time, before a man

learns to dress a raspberry bush well; it is an ugly wild looking plant, if not properly attended to, but with proper care, it may be made both ornamental to the garden, and extremely productive. It is remarkable, that a raspberry bush never bears fruit two years on the same stem; the old stems die, and these must be cut away close to the ground: and of the seven or eight new shoots, which the shrub generally bears, choose three or four of the strongest and cut away all the others; shorten those which are left, to about two-thirds of their length, and tie them together; all the straggling suckers must be cleared away from about the roots, and the ground dug and neatly dressed between the bushes.

“ October is the time for taking potatoes out of the ground, and storing them either in pits or in the house. Such as have been housed, should occasionally, throughout the winter, be looked over, well turned, and the rotten ones picked out.

“ *November.*—As soon as November sets in, the annuals begin to perish, and should be pulled up; and the dead stems of the perennials should likewise be cut down.

“ Take up carrots and parsnips, and lay them in sand defended from frost and wet. Cover pease and beans in frosty weather, with straw, reeds, or tan. Mend fruit border with fresh earth and very rotten dung, well mixed.

Cut away all dead branches, and such as cross each other, and make the wound sloping and smooth.

“ The leaves of the trees now begin to fall, and therefore, this is a good time for a gardener to dig up his vacant ground, that he may bury in the old leaves and rubbish, which serve as manure to the soil. Before the frost begins, the roots of newly planted trees, or tender flowers, should be covered with straw, or even saw-dust will answer very well for the purpose; indeed the gardener always prefers it, for it looks neater, and does not disfigure or dirty his garden so much as straw. Cuttings of poplars and willows, and also of fruit, will do very well during this month: and in taking a cutting it is necessary to choose a straight healthy shoot, and to cut it off neatly under a bud.

“ It is not generally known that early cauliflowers may be preserved for use during the greater part of the winter. The mode of doing so is as follows:—Having a large quantity of this vegetable in full head, in the beginning of November, you dig a pit along the bottom of a wall, about eighteen inches in depth and about the same breadth; on a dry day pull up the cauliflower stocks, keeping the leaves as entire as possible, and lapping them round the flower. Begin at one end of the pit, laying in the cauliflowers with the roots uppermost and the tops inclining downwards; the next row

should be laid with the roots of the former one covering the flowers of the second, and so on with the whole of the stock. The pit is then covered closely up with earth and beaten smooth with the top of the spade in order that the rain may run off. The plants keep fresh and good, and one is thus able to have occasionally a dish of fine cauliflowers until the middle of January.

“*December.*—When the weather is open, it is right to till well whatever ground is lying unoccupied in the garden, by which means you have it ready for use when you want to put in early crops. The same occupations which employ a gardener in November, generally engage him throughout December; indeed he has enough to do to finish putting out all his cuttings and his layers, and to get his garden in readiness for the ensuing spring; and at this season, when the garden is cleaning out, he should carefully gather up every thing that will turn to account for manure; this being the great source of good crops in every garden, he ought to endeavour to make his heap as large as he can against spring and summer. The heap should be kept in a dry spot at some distance from the dwelling house, and frequently turned; pounded oyster-shells and soot make useful additions, also the leaves which have fallen off from the trees. These leaves make a most excellent compost for flowers with a little sand; but when they are covered with as much mould

as is sufficient to keep the wind from blowing them away, they decay and rot much better than in a pit.

“A plot of ground however small, is a source both of pleasure and of profit to those who know how to manage it rightly. If the soil is tolerably good it may readily produce two crops in the year—as, for instance, rape, or vetches, may be made to succeed a crop of early potatoes or cabbages. Plenty of manure will greatly assist this system, and when the common kinds fail or become scarce, a pound or two of saltpetre mixed with a peck of dry earth, will be found highly serviceable; a handful of this mixture may be put about the roots of cabbages or brocoli in transplanting them, or it may be used in sowing the seeds of almost any kind of vegetables.”

This was the sum of Richard's remarks upon Cottage Gardening, and as every thing recommended by him had undergone the test of experience; and indeed were, for the most part, tried on James Mac Ready's spot of ground, they may safely be adopted by every one who had rather see his children well fed and decently clothed, than in poverty and nakedness. It is true—no rules, however good, are in themselves sufficient without industry to put them in practice; but let a man, to whom Providence has given health and strength, be willing to do

his part, and Richard's little Calendar will be found worthy of his attention. With respect to this good boy, it would be difficult for any language to describe, or to do justice to his feelings, as he handed his little gift into his father's hands, or the still greater joy he experienced, when he perceived how gratefully it was received, and with what full determination to follow its dictates.—Scripture has said, "a wise son maketh a glad father;" but it can be only by a parent that James's happiness will be at all conceived, as he shewed his neighbours the Gardener's Calendar, and assured them, that every word had been written by his Richard.

We might give a great many anecdotes of Richard's boyhood, but it is necessary to hasten on to the time when he is to act for himself, and to practice the good advice which Mr. Alford gave him. He was a good boy, and by this it is not alone meant that he was active, and industrious, and true, but that he was a Christian minded boy: he never profaned the sacred name of God, he never forgot to pray when going to rest at night and when rising in the morning, and he always, that is daily, read a chapter in the Bible; for Mr. Alford had given him one, with very good print, as soon as ever he was able to read—in short he was a good boy on right principles; he desired to please God, and always recollected, that he would, at a

future day, be called to account for every thing he said, or thought, or did, as he had been taught in his catechism.

From Mr. Alford's example also, he had learned duly to reverence each Sunday, as a day set apart for rest and devotion. On Saturday evening, all out work was over at his master's at six o'clock precisely, and the rest of the evening was passed in cleaning all up for the following morning; the labourers were all paid their wages by seven on Friday evening, and those that did not come at that hour, were obliged to wait till Monday. "How could I or they, (Mr. Alford used to say,) go to our place of worship, if my time was taken up on Sunday morning in paying money, or theirs in receiving it and laying in their purchases?"

The benefits of this plan were not at first sufficiently understood, and some of them even supposed, that having money in their pockets they might idle on Saturday; but this he soon checked, by declaring, that such as did not come to work on Saturday, should be considered as having left his employment, and another hired in his place. Some of them also imagined, for a time, that paying on Friday was depriving them of a day's pay; but a little explanation satisfied them on this point, and the advantages of the change were soon generally and gratefully acknowledged. Again, there was no lying late a-bed, because it was Sunday

morning; every one was up betimes, and so much good was produced by this simple regulation, that every one used to remark the cleanliness and tidiness of Mr. Alford's cottage tenantry, and how they were always amongst the first in their place of worship.

It was thus that Richard's character was formed for good. Had he been left with his parents, it is too probable he would have followed their example, and grown up worthless and indolent, if not positively wicked; but, taken from them at the critical time, the care of his master, under God's blessing, gave his mind a different turn, and the consequence was, that not only did he become himself a worthy character, but he was able to improve the conduct and habits of both his parents, whom he tenderly loved.

It has been mentioned that every day for three hours, that is, from ten o'clock till one, Richard was allowed to go to Mr. Alford's school; and it may well be supposed that so good a boy did not leave it without improvement. In the short time that he remained there he had learned to write a good fair hand; he could spell as well as any boy in the school; he knew the four rules of arithmetic perfectly, together with reduction and the rule of three, and had even learned the use of some of the mechanic powers, as they are called; such as the pulley, the lever, or the crow-bar, &c. We

have also said that he was a handy boy; indeed he could scarcely be otherwise, for he was always busy, and always striving to learn something.

There is no kind of knowledge, however unimportant it may appear, that is not worth acquiring; for you cannot tell under what circumstances it may be useful to you; and Richard himself found the truth of this in the following way:—A neighbouring farmer was riding along an unfrequented road, when the lash of his whip broke. His horse was a restive garron, and, as he had no spurs, there was an end to all his hopes of making his beast move, when Richard happened to be passing. “I say,” says the farmer, “can you mend this whip d’ye think?”—“I’ll try, Sir, if you please,” answered the boy; and so well and handily did he do it, that the farmer took a liking to him, and more than once had an opportunity of doing him some service in the way of advice, when he was about buying or selling at a fair.

From what has been said, the reader, doubtless, has been able to perceive that Mr. Alford’s kindness was not thrown away on Richard. He had acquired all the school learning that was requisite for his situation in life. He was not indeed a great scholar, as has been mentioned, but he knew enough to make him take pleasure in reading little books on natural

history; and also the travels which are published in Dublin, and sold so cheaply through the country. "They, at least, contain no harm," said Mr. Alford, "and in many of them I have met with some useful information;" and never was Richard so happy as when the day's work was over, and he could find half an hour to read the history of Tim Higgins, or the Cottage Fire-Side. Richard also gained a very competent knowledge, not only of gardening, as far as regarded the rearing of vegetables, but also of farming; and, by his cheerful disposition, his obliging manners, his straight-forward, and unswerving attachment to truth, had conciliated the affectionate regard of every one around him. It will not seem surprising, therefore, that Mr. Alford's kind feelings towards him should have increased by this uniform good conduct. Richard had been now with him four years, when he was placed under Mr. Loft, the steward, according to Mr. Alford's first intention; and, as an additional encouragement to him, he was to receive 4 guineas yearly, besides being dieted with Mr. Loft, as one of his own family, "You are not strong enough yet for a man's labour," said Mr. Alford, "but you can do me more service than by holding the spade in your own hands. You can superintend my field labourers, and see done whatever I or my steward judge necessary. The more you save of your wages

the better. I shall be satisfied, for it will be a very useful store to you, whenever you take a farm on your own account; and, fortunately, there is a savings bank in the neighbourhood, where it will not only be safe from accidents of every kind, but it will bear interest until you require to draw it out. I believe you are an honest and a good boy, and I do sincerely hope you will never give me cause to change this good opinion I have of you." "Oh! Sir," interrupted Richard, "how shall I ever be able to repay you all I owe you?" "By pursuing the same line of conduct, Richard," replied Mr. Alford, "which has hitherto met my approbation. Keep your eye fixed, my good lad: keep your heart warm by a constant perusal of the Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Be humble, be contented to bear worldly crosses and vexations, provided you have the approbation of conscience. This will give me more pleasure than any other return you could make me."

In a few days Richard was settled with Mr. Loft, the steward. For the next seven years, his story affords nothing remarkable, or deserving of particular mention. Each year, as it passed over his head, saw him improving in the knowledge of his business, and, we would trust, improving also in matters of higher moment. His health was good, his constitution

strong, his frame robust; and, though he was still a favourite with his master, there was not a farm servant on the whole estate more humble. In the course of a few years there was no operation in husbandry which he was not as competent to direct as either Mr. Alford or his steward. If he went to a fair, for the purpose of purchasing or selling cattle, his business finished, he returned at once. He never frequented wakes or patterns, or such disorderly places, having more than once had occasion to remark the mischief they do to those who resort to them, drawing men into riots, and giving them a fondness for spirituous liquors. His money also had grown, in the savings bank, something like a potato under ground; so that at the end of seven years he had no less than twenty pounds at his disposal, even though he gave his father and mother a present, to the value of a one pound note, every Michaelmas day, and clothed himself, in a plain but decent manner. This was a large sum for so young a man to scrape together; but he could not have done so much, in the way of saving, had not Mr. Alford allowed him, now and then, to buy a cow, or a few head of sheep, and to turn them into his grazing fields to fatten. In this way, he had been able to add to his board; and indeed, what is said of Joseph in holy Scripture, might be declared true concerning him, "The Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper."

Under Providence, however, Richard was indebted to Mr. Alford for all he knew, as well as for his good habits. This gentleman saw the vices which opposed the improvement of the labouring classes of his countrymen. He knew, and gave them credit for much natural kindness of disposition towards those of their superiors whom they esteemed their friends, and therefore, under the full conviction, that if he could wean them from those habits, they would become, not only better men and more industrious labourers, but also improve their own comforts. He thought it might influence them more than all his advice, to shew them one of their own class rising out of the abject poverty in which the Irish cottager too frequently lives, gaining for himself, by industry and prudent forethought, the esteem of all, and advancing to the rank of a substantial farmer.* His object, therefore, was two-fold, to reward Richard for his good conduct, and to make him an example to others of successful industry.

* Two striking examples of the reward which, under the encouragement of a kind and observant landlord, attends on industry and good conduct, are given in the report of the Secretary to the Farming Society, upon the Agricultural School of Bannow, in the County of Wexford:—One man who had been a common labourer, farms 30 acres, for which he pays three pounds an acre, and though the rent may appear high, he not only pays punctually but he is every year prospering more and more. Another, who pays fifty shillings an acre rent, for 38 acres, has actually lodged one hundred pounds in the Savings Bank within the last four years.

Keeping this constantly in mind, he lost no opportunity of communicating to Richard that practical knowledge which was to guide him, when he should afterwards be cultivating a spot of ground on his own account; and frequently would he send him to those parts of the farm where any useful operation was going on, or else take him with him when walking amongst his tenants, in order that he might see what was to be imitated, as well as avoided. It was on one of these occasions, while directing that a quantity of manure should be prepared for a tract of common, which he was about to bring into cultivation, that he gave Richard the following hints and directions, which he called the Golden Rules of the Farmer:

“Keep your land dry,

“Keep it clean,

“Keep it rich.”

The first includes the necessity of draining, where the soil is of a retentive quality, or subject to under-water.

The second relates to the good cultivation of the soil, and its freedom from weeds.

The third includes the power of the land to bear continual crops, by keeping it in strength, and preventing its being exhausted and impoverished.

Poor land may be thus made productive, and produce very good land.

Let not the farmer, therefore, grumble at the scarcity of crops, and always accuse the soil or the weather; his being repaid lies, most generally, within his own power, and only requires sufficient exertions." "Sir," said Richard, "I have heard of some lands in the counties of Tipperary and Limerick, which scarcely ever require manuring, but will bear year after year." "Such as these," answered Mr. Alford, are not to be brought as instances to the depreciation of other lands. If the farmer possessed such, he must pay rent accordingly for them. I speak of the ordinary land which is about us; and of this I say, if neglected, it will not long repay or indemnify the farmer for any rent, however low. Now, it is the farmer's fault alone, when the land is suffered to continue in this state, and those are alone to blame who wilfully remain ignorant, or obstinately despise the above simple maxims."

The following day Mr. Alford sent for Richard to his house, and gave him the following to copy: "but recollect," added he, "I do not mean that you should rest satisfied with writing them out fair, or even imprinting them on your memory. There is on my estate, different qualities of land, good and bad, and my wish is, that you should mention it to me, whenever you think that the application of these rules will either improve or reclaim the soil." —What he transcribed was as follows:

“ What is called bad land, may, by altering and changing its quality and substance, be converted into good. By thus improving the soil, the causes of its barrenness will be removed.

“ Where it is too light or sandy, a stiffer clay, or else other strengthening substances, may be applied. Where it is too stiff, gravelly substances are to be introduced.

“ When it is full of vegetable matter, as boggy, peaty, and mossy land, liming may correct it; or, if that should fail, panning and burning may be practised with great benefit; but this should be after draining, which is mostly requisite at first; and draining may, even by itself, correct such a bad quality, especially if it be followed by a coat of lime. Where limestone gravel prevails it is better still.

“ Where there may be too little vegetable matter, as in a loose gravelly or sandy soil, the deficiency is to be supplied by a manure of dung and composts.

“ In some soils, the fertilizing substances lie too low under the surface; and sometimes the manure may have sunk in too far below. In such cases, a deep ploughing will restore the richness to its needful situation near the surface, for the immediate nourishment of the crops.

“ The perfection of a soil consists in its texture and composition. It should be sufficiently loose to admit the warmth of the sun, and the beneficial effects of the air. It should be fine,

and close enough to defend the roots of all the crops. It should be sufficiently stiff in its bottom to preserve enough of the moisture, and the particles of the manure.

“ It should have a due proportion of sand to clay, and should also have a sufficient warmth of quality to promote vegetation.

“ In the improvement of boggy land, the object is to increase the earthy matter.

“ 1st. The water must be drained from under the surface; immediately after which draining, grasses will grow well.

In arable culture, earthy matter must then be added. This is to be obtained from clay, marl, lime, and lime stone gravel; and in this manner, bogs may be gradually changed to a permanently good soil.

We now, however, come to a very important change in Richard's affairs. He had been with Mr. Alford under his gardener, and employed on the farm for eleven years and a half, when James Brennan, a very independent farmer, who tenanted eighty acres of land, met his death in the following manner:—He had been once industrious and honest; one great failing, however, brought him to ruin. He was used to stop in the fields overseeing his men; but, during the cold damp weather he always thought it necessary, on returning into the house, to defend himself against cold by taking a dram of whiskey. In this he was

mistaken, as many a one who drives the public coaches, could have told him. These men are necessarily exposed to all weathers; and though some drunkards are to be found amongst them, the sober will all say, that though *raw* spirits warm the stomach for the moment, they take away the appetite and destroy the health, and that a warm drink of ale or gruel, is, in all respects, better. But there is another reason for guarding against the practice of drinking; what at first was taken as a cordial, became afterwards a necessary of life. And now no day passed without James Brennan taking a dram in the morning, as he said, to warm his stomach and steady his hand; again, if he met an acquaintance in the day, they could not part, he used to say, without a friendly glass; and, at last, it ended with his resorting, night after night, to the village public house, where he met three or four of his cronies, who seldom separated till near midnight. This went on for some time. His poor wife at first wept to see him so changed, she then reasoned, afterwards remonstrated, but all to no purpose. He grew unkind and ill tempered, the never-failing consequence of self-dissatisfaction, and thus made, even his own bad conduct, an excuse for later hours. Often had his faithful black mare brought him safely home in the darkest nights. But, at length, sorrow came; he had left the room, and returned to take a parting glass, and the people all saw him

mounting in the yard, and cautioned him that he had better have a man home with him ; but he was in a state of intoxication, and drunkards are generally obstinate, he therefore refused all assistance; this was his destruction. In an hour after, his black mare reached home without a rider, and it is easy to picture his wife's feelings as she came to the door to assist him in dismounting. After a search, they found him on the road side, with a deep cut on his temple and expiring; he had evidently fallen from his beast in a fit of apoplexy; one leg had got entangled in the stirrup, which frightened the mare and made her plunge to get free. This accounted for the wound in his head, but it gave but little consolation to his poor wife and eight children, that his death was not caused by violence.

Mr. Alford had ridden over, the day after the unfortunate man's funeral, to see how he could assist her ; she spoke of giving up the farm, for she would never, she said, be able for such a rent, and though she understood the dairy, she thought herself quite incompetent to undertake the other parts of farming. " You shall do no such thing : (said Mr. Alford) your interest in it is too valuable to be given up in that way, but as you do not understand it, you will find your time most profitably occupied by your dairy, which you say you can manage. I will send you a steward, who understands a good deal of farming, and besides has a good character to

boot; he is but twenty, but he has the steadiness of an old man, and I think you will have no occasion to repent the hour you admitted him into your family; he shall always have my advice, and what is more, though I shall expect every succeeding half-year's rent, to be paid with punctuality, (for I count *him* the best landlord who is the most exact,) I shall give you a year to pay the sum now due."

This was a generous offer, and yet it required a good deal of persuasion from Mr. Alford to induce the widow to keep the farm in her own hands, for the sudden death of her poor husband, threw her so completely on herself, that she magnified every difficulty, and indeed, she rather yielded out of respect and gratitude for her landlord, than from any expectation that his plan would succeed. How could she be out in the fields early and late, to see every thing going on, at the right time, and in a proper manner? How could she hope that her labourers would work, unless a watchful eye and skilful hand was over them? and again, what hope could she entertain that one so young, as the boy recommended to her by Mr. Alford, should be able to supply the place of him that was gone? There was, however, one part of her character which has not yet been mentioned, which gave her courage amidst all her despondence; she was grieved at the sudden calamity which had deprived her of a husband, and her children of a father, but though cast down,

she never withdrew her trust from Him, who has promised to be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless ; and at length, after serious deliberation, she humbly but firmly resolved that no exertion on her part should be wanting, to give effect to the plan so kindly marked out for her.

It did not take long to transfer Richard to Mrs. Brennan, the distance was only three miles across the country, and it was not like quitting a place altogether, for he might hope to see his old friends and acquaintances as often as before ; still there was something in it which caused much anxious reflection in his mind, as he prepared to quit his old friends the gardener and the steward, and his kind benefactor Mr. Alford. To these three persons he was, under Providence, indebted for every thing he enjoyed ; of their friendship he was sure, but he was now going amongst strangers, who would make no allowance for his faults ; he was about to take upon himself a responsible charge, for he knew that on his exertions depended the support of a widow and eight children. He was to be at once a servant to his new mistress and a master to others. It will not be deemed surprising, therefore, that he made his little preparations for his departure with rather a heavy heart ; such thoughts will cross the mind of almost every reflecting person about to embark in some plan, the issue of which is uncertain, but if they will imitate Richard,

they may at least go on with confidence. The same night that he made up his little parcel, he prayed with fervent earnestness to God, that he would guide him to what was good, and bless his endeavours for the interest of his new employer, and that he might not be too much lifted up with his new station, but conduct himself kindly, faithfully, and affectionately to his fellow creatures. He then read his chapter in the Bible, and found particular satisfaction from the following passage in II Chronicles, xxvi. 5: "As long as he (Uzziah) sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."— And with a mind thus fortified, and spirits encouraged, he lay down to sleep.

The next morning, his parting with Mr. Alford was affectionate and simple; he came, he said, to thank his kind master, his best friend, for all the goodness he had lavished on him. He had intended to say a great deal about his care and kindness, and his never forgetting all that he owed him, but his heart was full, and many know that it is not at such a moment a man is able to say all he wishes. On the part of Mr. Alford all was kindness mixed up with friendly advice. "I feel assured that you have no present intention, Richard, to do discredit to my recommendation, by any misconduct, but recollect how much inclined we are to evil, and be watchful over yourself, as well as mistrustful of your strength. I have

endeavoured to do my duty towards you, to make you an honest man, and teach you to fear God, but nothing, as I conceive, that I have ever done for you, can keep you steady to your duty unless you look for God's assistance. You have your Bible, read it daily, and let its lessons be imprinted on your heart: *be always industrious, honest, single-minded, and contented*, and remember that to hear you are so, will give me more pleasure than I can mention. They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, says the scriptures, and I trust you will experience the fulfilment of the promise."

It was on the evening of this day, that Richard went over to his new residence, after a kind and affectionate farewell to all his acquaintances at Mr. Alford's. In a short time he reached the farm, where indeed he had been often before, though he then little thought he was ever to feel such an interest in its management. It was under a lofty hill, well sheltered from the winds, and having a small river running through its center; the house was a little off the road, and as well as the offices appeared neglected, but he was welcomed with great cordiality by the widow; she told him, that she would give up every thing to his care and management, and therefore, he was to do exactly as if he was acting for himself. "You are young, (said she,) but that only entitles you to all my care, that you may find

the place comfortable, for Mr. Alford's mention of you has left me no apprehension, that because you are youthful you are less qualified for the charge." She then took him over the farm, and the few offices that were in the farm-yard, every thing reminding her of her deceased husband, and no doubt, calling to her recollection how much his mournful end had been accelerated by his unhappy propensity for drinking; indeed there were many traces of neglect on every side. Here the fence had some great gaps in it, which enabled the cattle to stray from one field to another; there, a fine spot of ground was overrun with thistles and other weeds; in another place, for want of a drain, the ground had become quite marshy, as a quantity of sour grass growing there sufficiently indicated, and the roof of the barn had fallen in in several places, for want of due attention to the thatch. With an attentive eye he observed every thing, and no longer wondered that the widow should have had thoughts of resigning the farm, it being a great difficulty, as he thought, that any thing could be made out of a place so conducted. "These must be repaired, Ma'am, (said he,) in the first instance, and Mr. Alford bid me say, that any expense that was requisite, he would lend you money to defray, it being, as he said, his intention, in all respects, to consider you in the light of a new tenant, who ought to receive

every thing in a state of repair from his landlord." "God bless him, (said the widow,) how happy are we and how thankful should we be, to have such a man with us to help the honest and industrious." Richard then walked to the turf bog, where he saw what still more convinced him that he would have much to alter. It was cut irregularly and in patches, and he found a large quantity lying just in the place where it had been piled several weeks before, exposed to the weather, instead of being drawn home as soon as dry; but it is needless to enumerate all the mismanagement which he saw it was necessary to correct, suffice it to say, when he returned home, and had taken his supper, he did not lie down until he had asked that direction and assistance which should enable him to perform his duty. I am young, thought he, and many a one will be ready to blame me, as taking too much upon me; and others will be unwilling to take directions from such a youngster, but what of that: my youth is a fault I shall mend every day, and when they say I am wrong, I can always plead, that it is the way Mr. Alford taught me; and as they all respect him, and he is every where considered the best farmer in the country, I hope, in time, to get over all their objections and prejudices,

END OF PART THE FIRST.

THE
HISTORY
OF
RICHARD MAC READY,
THE
FARMER LAD.

~~~~~  
PART SECOND.  
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IN a few days Richard had made himself acquainted with every thing that was wanting on the farm, and set himself to his duty. His first care was, to repair the farm-house thatch, and also the offices, which, for want of a little attention at first, were in a ruinous condition. It is true this money might have been laid out with more profit on the land, but Mr. Alford had always taught him, that health is the first thing to be sought, and that rheumatism, fever, and other disorders are always lurking in damp cabins, where the rain comes down through the damaged thatch, or the sharp wind blows through the broken panes. Money cannot

make health, whereas health may make money, was Richard's wise maxim, and in the course of his life he had never occasion to change his opinion.

Having thus ensured, as far as was in his power, health the first of earthly blessings, and his mistress's own exertions having added to it the comfort of cleanliness, Richard next turned his attention to the farm. He repaired all the fences, cleaned the ditches, bought a quantity of manure with which he covered 10 acres of ground, intending to set it apart for grazing his mistress's cows, drained another field of four acres, which for years used to be called the rushy field, from its having been almost covered with rushes, and, by Mr. Alford's advice, though some of the neighbours ridiculed it at first, he flooded a sloping field which was intended for meadow, by turning upon it a spring which used to supply the duck pond; but there were two other improvements, the introduction of which might be recommended to every farm, that is industry and hard labour, and to do him justice, the farm had all the advantage of them both. He knew very well that success will not always attend upon these qualities, but he also felt, that where they were found, the rest might be left to Providence. The first year, to be sure, was rough enough, but Mr. Alford was kind and considerate, and not only lent Richard the improved farming implements, which he

had bought in Dublin for the use of his deserving tenants, but accommodated him with the best seeds for his different crops. In this way, therefore, he did as much for his mistress as could be expected; he paid the rent of the farm punctually: he had brought a good many acres of ground into excellent heart; he had increased the farming stock by a cow and two strong working horses, and above all, he kept out of debt, the great bane of success in this world. Indeed he would have made more of the farm, but part of the corn had been smitten by a blight, and so much rain had fallen as made the late potatoes wet, but on the whole he had reason to be thankful—and he shewed that he was so. When any of the neighbours therefore complained, that too much rain was spoiling their oats, Richard never failed to remind them how good it was for the grass. If they feared that the wheat would be indifferent, he was sure the rye would turn out well; and even when they began to fear that the grass would fail, Richard had no doubt but turnips would be plenty. Whoever or whatever was wrong, Providence he was sure was in the right, and it argued but little gratitude to be always complaining of the weather, as farmers too often are inclined.

Richard's wages was considered high for the place in which he lived, ten guineas a year, and bed and board as it is called, but he was

worth it and more also to his mistress, for never did he spare himself when her interests were to be attended to, and so careful as well as skilful was his management, that in less than three years, the farm was the subject of remark to the whole neighbourhood. During all this time, Richard went on practising those lessons which he had received from Mr. Alford, and now and then referring to his opinion whenever he either heard or thought of any thing which seemed an improvement.

For one less steady, however, this would have proved a slippery time. Having no one to earn for but himself, he found himself at the end of each year possessed of more than he wanted for his clothes, for he never was observed to dress above his condition, being always both satisfied and thankful when his working dress was free from holes, and his holyday clothes were plain and substantial. He could now also afford to give his parents a pound at Christmas and another at Easter towards their rent, and yet his first twelve months service saw him master of three pounds, which he had saved from his wages, in addition to his former hoard of twenty pounds; this he might have spent at the public-house, and have thought like many, that what he earned honestly, he had a right to lay out as he liked, or that no one had a right to call him to account so long

as he kept out of debt; but this was not Richard's way of arguing. He was not such a fool as to refuse a glass of ale, now and then, but he steadily refused to lay out his money in an ale-house, or even to enter one. It is an easy thing to get into a wrong way, and once upon it, it is a slippery down-hill road, and it leads to destruction of body and soul. His three pounds he laid up first in a Savings Bank, for it was there safe as in the Bank of Ireland.—Thieves could not get at them; even if the house should take fire the Bank must make it good, and besides, it bears interest, that is, for every twenty-five shillings lodged in it, one shilling a year, or a penny a month interest is received upon it. After a time, however, he found a more profitable way of employing the greater part of his savings. His mistress saw his good management, and she was the more grateful, from contrasting it with the state of her affairs in her husband's life time, she therefore told him he might lay out his money at the next fair to the best advantage, and whatever he bought there, he might put to graze in her fields till he chose to sell it. Richard was a modest man, always most grateful for any kindness, but ever ready to underrate his own services, he therefore declined her generous offer, and it was not till after much urgent solicitation on her part, that he would consent to receive more than the stipulated wages; he

reminded her that his kind master, Mr. Alford, had, for several years, allowed him the privilege of rearing a couple of calves, or a few sheep on the farm, "by which means," said he, with the flush of honest gratitude on his countenance, "I have now above twenty pounds in the savings bank, and hope to add no less than ten to it this next year; for, you know I bought a fine colt at the last Michaelmas fair, which promises to turn out well." "That, however," replied the widow, "is no reason why you should not let me do you the same kindness as Mr. Alford. So draw out of the bank the half of your twenty pounds, and lay it out to the best advantage at the neighbouring fair. You are an honest young man, Richard, and deserve more than that at my hands.

His scruples thus removed, he laid out his ten pounds, according to his mistress's advice, in the purchase of sheep; and, so well did he manage those he bought, that in a short time he had ten shillings upon the sale of each, clear profit. This may appear much, for a man living so far away from the capital; but Richard had a secret which made his cattle always among the first sold. This was, instead of over driving the poor creatures, to carry them to market in one of Mr. Alford's carts, in which a hurdle was fixed, and by this means they entered the fair-ground, fresh and untired.

We are now to speak of Richard Mac Ready in another light than as a farmer, and this we do, in order that the reader may perceive that he was not free from those failings which are common to us all, and, that when himself overtaken in a fault, he may, by Richard's example, know how to avert the consequences which always attend on imprudence. It was about this time, when he had been three years with the widow, that he felt a strong disposition to change his single for a married life; and, it must be acknowledged, it was a custom too prevalent amongst persons of his class, to hope that *he* should be superior to an error which is so universal amongst the poorer classes in Ireland. It is true, he made it his duty to consult Mr. Alford; but then it was more to ask his opinion of the propriety of his entering upon a married life, than to seek his approval of the person he had selected. The fact was, he had suffered himself to be carried away by his attachment, before he thought of calmly reflecting on the consequences; and, like many a one who has acted wrong, he studiously avoided broaching the subject to those who had good sense enough to perceive his error, and influence to dissuade him from it. Darby Kavanagh, a substantial farmer in the neighbourhood of his mistress, had three daughters, of the eldest of whom, Sally, he was extremely fond; and, as report said, the old man intended to give her

fifty pounds as a marriage portion, and to leave her more at his death, she was courted by a great many young farmers. Perhaps it was the idea of being preferred amongst so many, which at first influenced him. He thought, however, he had a lasting affection for her, and took no pains to discover whether her temper and disposition were such as to deserve his choice, and he paid the penalty of his indiscretion. The steward and gardener of a neighbouring squire, who was a middle-aged man, of calculating habits, had lately settled near Darby Kavanagh's house, and it soon occurred to him, that Sally's fortune would materially advance his worldly interests. The girl herself was vain, and this weakness he nourished by several presents, in which he took care that ribbons of the gaudiest colours should be found in profusion. When she could be influenced by such artful conduct, it will not be wondered at that she gave the preference to him who promised to indulge her most. In a few weeks after Mr. O'Rorke's arrival in the neighbourhood, Richard thought her manner altered to him, but his affection made him suppose it impossible that she should change her mind, after the encouragement she had given him; however, an opportunity was not long wanting to open his eyes. He had walked over, one fine evening, to his former school master, who lived hard by Darby's

cottage. As he entered the house he was met by Mr. Allen, who advised him not to go in, for that Sally Kavanagh was there, "and you cannot but have heard that she is immediately to be married to Mr. O'Rorke, the steward." "I have heard it," replied Richard, "but I must know it from herself; for, did you know how often she has told me that nothing could make her false, you would be slow in believing it as well as I."

When Richard entered the room, he held out his hand to salute Sally, and, with as much calmness as he could command, asked her how she did. "I am very well, Mr. Richard," said Sally, putting on her cloak, "but am sorry I cannot stop now, for Mr. O'Rorke is waiting for me at the garden gate, and has promised to walk home with me." "Sally," said Richard, "it is not long since you would have been in no hurry to go if I entered the room, and it is not Mr. O'Rorke you would then have wished to walk home with you. I hope you are not changed, Sally." "I do not know what you mean, Sir; but I think *you* are changed, for you speak and look as if you were my lord and master, which, I assure you, you never will be." "If I look agitated, Sally, believe me, it proceeds from affection, and because I thought, and still think you return my liking; for I cannot suppose that what the neighbours say is true." "Mr. Richard," said Sally with a scornful

toss of her head, "I don't know what you mean. If I am to marry Mr. O'Rorke, I hope I am not obliged to ask your leave when I have got my father's, so let me hear no more of your nonsense." This she said, as she passed Richard and went out of the door, so that she did not see the effect it produced on him. At first he appeared like one that was going to faint; his face grew pale, and he was obliged to lean against the wall. The struggle, however, was short, for in a few minutes his colour returned, and, after thanking Mr. Allen for the kind concern he felt for him, he returned home, grieved indeed, but thankful that his eyes had been opened to her real character before it was too late. Perhaps it may be imagined he went the next day to Darby Kavanagh's, in the hope that Sally's determination was not fixed: but though he had been weak, in placing his affections upon one whose temper and disposition he had not studied, good sense had now returned; the struggle was a sore one, for passion still contended with reason, but he courted Sally no more; indeed a few days served to convince him thoroughly, for within that time she was married to Mr. O'Rorke, who soon after set off to Dublin, and, with the fifty pounds which he had received as a marriage portion, set up a nursery and seed shop, where we shall leave him, to return to Richard, who

now devoted himself with increased ardour to his mistress's interests.

The history of such a man does not furnish many incidents; nor did we undertake to say more of him than could be realized by every one in his station. Industry, prudence, and good conduct being the three great virtues by which all may rise to respect, comfort, and independence: we shall therefore proceed to mention several of those improvements which he had learned at Mr. Alford's, and now reduced to practice on his mistress's farm; assuring the reader, that no one of them shall be mentioned which was not often tried, and always successfully; and also, that they are practicable by every person, who, like Richard, has the management of a few acres.

In the first place, then, there was no rule which Richard attended to more than the checking of weeds. With respect to them he used to say, that they were the means of robbing our crops of the nourishment which the earth intended for them. They grow up, also, with the grain of which our bread is made, and their seeds being ground with it, render it unpalatable and unwholesome; when they raise up their heads, therefore, we, (he added,) should hang down ours for shame. Let the sluggard allow his land to be overrun with those mischievous plants, but let no man of good sense look on them with indifference. The

rooting of them out was troublesome, and even expensive; but then, both were amply made up, by the increased crop he thus secured. There were also some ill-natured persons, who went so far as to say, that it was not right to lead his mistress into so useless an expense; but Mr. Alford had taught him to disregard such prejudiced opinions. When that gentleman first settled down upon his estate, as he afterwards told Richard, and had determined to introduce the most improved modes of farming which were practiced in England and Scotland, he found many prejudices to contend with. He was regarded by his neighbours, and others, as a rash young man, full of wild notions which he had brought home with him, and one whose theories would shortly involve him in embarrassment. He had brought with him, however, all the improved farming implements recommended by the farming society, -and an experienced ploughman; and, disregarding all the gloomy anticipations of the wiseacres about him, went upon the rational plan, of bringing his land into excellent condition, and totally extirpating the weeds. The consequence of this was soon perceived; his fields became more fertile and beautiful than those around him; and though this might have been undervalued by those who ascribed it to his sparing no expense, and caring little for the income, still there was one point which could not be overlooked; they found

that he was becoming, not poorer, but richer, adding occasionally to his patrimony, whenever any land in his neighbourhood was offered for sale. From thenceforth his advice began to be sought for; and it sufficiently proves the esteem in which he was held, that his farm servants, if well conducted and intelligent, were in the utmost request among the surrounding farmers; indeed we have already seen what a comfortable situation Richard obtained through his recommendation.

We shall now proceed to mention how Richard contrived to get the victory over these enemies, recommending to every farmer, whether great or small, who would have a well stocked haggard, to follow his example. When the weeds happened to be what are termed annuals, springing from a seed, and dying the same year, he found it sufficient to let them grow till near the time of ripening their seed, and then to plough them down. He did not, however, confine his attention to those which grew in the field, but was equally careful to destroy those which grew in borders, or neglected corners, and which frequently scatter their seeds to a great distance, such as that of the dandelion, thistle, and ragweed.

It was a far more difficult process to destroy perennial weeds; this being accomplished effectually only by removing the roots from the ground. He at length effected it however by

frequent ploughing and harrowing, to render the ground as tender as possible, and to bring the roots to the surface. Richard often employed two or three children to follow the plough, and pick up every root as fast as it was turned up, and when collected, he used to deposit them in a large heap, mixing them with lime, in order that they might form compost for manure. The weeds once extirpated, Richard was enabled to shew the full advantage of that improved system of farming, which he had seen practised at Mr. Alford's. Of these, one particularly deserves mention, the more especially, that the strongest prejudice exists against it, whilst competent judges recommend it as deserving of universal adoption. This was, the cultivation of white and green crops in succession; by which, fallowing the land, according to the old custom, was no longer essentially necessary. For a long time, as every one knows, it was supposed that there was some resemblance between the ground we till, and the human body, which must recruit its strength, by repose, after very great fatigue. Under this mistaken idea, it was often the custom, after grazing a field, to turn it up with the plough in spring, and then leave it in mould during the summer months, repeating the ploughing occasionally, for the purpose of eradicating all noxious weeds, and then, towards autumn, sowing it with wheat. In

this way, however, a crop was manifestly lost; and, although it certainly improves the wheat crop, the improvement by no means compensated for the actual loss. It may seem strange to those who have been always used to the old method of fallowing, to say, that changing the crops produces equal rest to the land; but let any one who farms a few acres, set apart a small spot for trial, and he will see the advantage of following Richard's example, with an assurance, at the same time, that he cannot lose much, even if the experiment fails. His mode of proceeding was as follows:—

Having reserved a small spot of ground, and sowed it with a few pints of rape seed, at different times, from June to August, he had a succession of plants to remove into some of his early and late potato ground. This rape, which he transplanted in drills on his potato ridges, produced a good crop, and was consumed by the farming stock, (which was now increased,) in time to have the ground ready for spring corn or potatoes, thus giving to the ground three crops, when only two, at most, would otherwise have been produced in the same space of time.

In some of the ground, after digging his earliest potatoes, that is, not later than July, he sowed a small quantity of turnips; and this crop, likewise, left the ground in good condition for spring corn, or vetches.

Richard had sown a little Swedish turnips in June, having forced some potatoes for the early market, when they bring a good price. These turnips were of considerable use to his cattle. Being cleared off early in November, the ground was then sown with winter vetches; they likewise proved most serviceable to his farming stock, in summer and autumn, leaving the ground much enriched; a little oats, or bearded wheat, was sprinkled with them, to prevent their lodging, and afford additional green food for the horses and cows. On this ground, when cleared, he produced a crop of rape for the following spring. Had he been on a large scale, he ought to have sown the ground with wheat after the vetches, or else have employed it for a crop of bere.

“By this early mode of cultivating potatoes,” said Richard to a friend whom he was advising to adopt the same course, “I get a good price for the early potatoes which I am enabled to send to market, for the rich, in June. My main crops come in so early as to prove most useful to my mistress’s family; and, having the ground cleared betimes, and the crops pitted securely before the frosts of winter set in, the land is available for all the purposes already mentioned; added to which, the cabbages and brocoli, the flat Dutch and drum-head, which I raised on some of the early potato ground, is very profitable, and helps to save our hay and

potatoes, by their abundant leaves and fruit, after giving an ample supply of the large hearts, for sale, in the neighbouring town.

Richard was also well aware of the value of all waste leaves, and stalks of his garden, and green field crops, for his pigs; and likewise of the importance of increasing the stock of manure by the litter drawn from the pigs, and collected from weeding the ground. Thus his swine, while prevented from straying, a nuisance to the roads and to the neighbourhood, were not only growing and fattening much better, but also contributing to increase his means of enriching the land for the next season.

He had not at first the means of cultivating onions on a large scale; but as manure increased to him, he began to turn his attention to the extraordinary profits to be derived from them. He bought a few hundreds of young onions, of the white Spanish kind, carefully pulled, and, before planting them, dipped each root in a mixture of one quart of soot and three quarts of good garden earth, well moistened with water till it had become of the same consistency with paint; the quantity might be more or less, as required, but the proportion is always one part soot and three parts earth. He then planted the onions five inches apart from each other, taking particular care to water them twice a day, when the sun was hot on the bed. No more trouble then was necessary, except

to hoe them frequently, in order to keep the roots under soil.

We must now speak of Richard's care, however, in the farm yard as well as in the field. Flourishing crops are the rich reward of the prudent and industrious farmer; but there are many branches to which he must direct his attention, and the prudent management of which not only helps him to make up his rent for the landlord, but gives employment to the female members of a family. We have said that Richard's mistress understood the management of a dairy, and also that Richard laid out ten acres for grazing the cows. This was sufficient for a larger stock than Mrs. Brennan had at first; but, at the end of the second year, she had been enabled to purchase three in addition to the same number which her husband had left her; and in the mean time, until able to possess the full number, she took in the remainder to graze at so much a week. In this manner they went on, making about four pounds by each in the year, after all expenses; salting the butter, which, through Mr. Alford's kindness, they had an opportunity of sending to Dublin, when his cars went for groceries, and selling the buttermilk to the country people round, who, according to the custom of the neighbourhood, came to the house for it.

Nor let it be supposed, that this profitable management of the dairy may not be imitated

by any person, who follows the example of Richard's industry. Mr. Alford had told him of a cow, belonging to a gentleman in England, whose milk and butter, together with the manure of her litter, produced a clear profit, in less than a year, of £41 5s. 11d. for which her owner had obtained the silver medal from the Board of Agriculture, in London. Mrs. Brennan's cows were grazed and treated in the usual way, so that, considering the low price which milk and butter bore in her neighbourhood, the profit we have mentioned was very great. Mr. Alford's plan, however, was different from this, and, in time, Richard not only adopted it for his mistress's benefit, but recommended it to the adoption of several of his acquaintances, as peculiarly fitted for the cottager, who has but an acre of ground with his cabin. We know that in Ireland, to talk of a poor man, who holds but an acre, or less than an acre of ground, keeping a cow for the use of his family, may seem an exaggeration; it is, therefore, useful to shew, that it is easy to provide food for the animal, and that every man who is willing to take advice, may secure for himself and for his family, both profit and healthful nourishment. The history of Richard Mac Ready, is in this respect, no fiction; the possibility of keeping a cow, upon even a quarter of an acre of ground, has been, over and over, proved; and why should the poor

disbelieve it, merely because they have never tried it?

It is true, though the produce of a cow will depend, in a great measure, upon its feeding, yet every one knows, that all well fed cows will not yield an equal quantity of milk. A great deal, however depends, not only upon the feeding, but also on the milking of a cow. A cow should be milked clean, that is, not a drop should be left in the udder; for experience proves, that the half pint that comes out *last*, has ten times as much cream in it as the half pint that comes out first. "The udder is a kind of milk-pan, in which the cream is uppermost, and, of course, comes out last, the drain being at the bottom." But besides this, when a cow is not milked clean, she will by degrees, give less and less, and at length become dry much sooner than she ought.

It has been already said, that a small spot of ground, will afford abundance of food for a cow, the whole year round. As some, however, will require twice as much as others, the best cow for a poor man to provide himself with, is a certain decription, of a small breed, which do not consume above seventy or eighty pounds of good moist food, in the four and twenty hours, and forty roods of land, or a quarter of an English acre, will readily suffice for this supply, if properly managed; but it must be free of trees, clean, and in good order. Such was

the spot of ground which Mr. Alford set apart, for the culture of the food requisite for each cow, and he proceeded on the following plan. Early in the spring he had it dug deeply, or, what is better, he had it trenched, and in May it was laid in ridges, about two feet apart; the weeds, of course, soon appeared, but, before they got three inches high, he turned the ridges into the furrows, and buried all the weeds; and continued to do this, occasionally, as often as the weeds grew, until the middle of August, when the ground being ready, he put a small quantity of manure into two roods of it, and sowed one half with early York cabbage seed, and the other with sugar-loaf cabbage, in little drills about eight inches apart, scattering the seed thin in the drill; and he always considered, if the plants came up at two inches distance from each other, that he had plenty. This, it must be remembered, was the system he laid down for the maintenance of one cow; and he carried on the same, but more and more extensively, according to the number he had to provide for. As soon as the plants became strong, another rood of ground was dug up and manured, and 4000 of them were lined out in rows, at eight inches apart. If well taken care of, these will grow fast, and must again be transplanted. Four roods of the land having been now in use,

the remaining thirty-six must, before November, be ready to receive the 4000 already mentioned, where they will stand the winter. The original bed, with the remainder of the plants, he left undisturbed, and from it he had the means of replacing such of his transplanted cabbages as perished by the weather, or were taken for use. In putting out the cabbages he always lined them out in alternate rows, of the early York and sugar loaf, the former requiring to be used first; and, therefore, by going on in this way, putting down a cabbage for every one he took up, in time he had his nursery, as he called it, cleared, ready for rearing a second crop. This second crop was of Swedish turnips, and by the time they were ready for putting out, there was a vacant space in every second row of the transplanting ground, where the York cabbages had stood. In the course of time, the sugar-loaf cabbages were likewise consumed, and then their places also were occupied by the Swedish turnips; and in order to lose no time between these two crops, he always began to sow the turnip seed, in the first corner of his nursery ground that became vacant, and found that the two roods of land, yielded him nearly 5000 plants, which were, in their turn, removed to the transplanting ground. These turnips, when reared, from good seed, and, properly managed, weighed 5lbs. each; so that sixteen of them would give

80lbs. of food ; and therefore, at that rate, the 5000 would give nearly enough for the whole year, if it were necessary. The cabbages, however, he designed should serve the cow for one half of the year, and the turnips for the other ; so that, so far from his little spot of ground not yielding him a sufficiency, the poor man will find, that when properly turned to account, he may spare himself a dish of good vegetables, even for his own dinner, and save enough for seed afterwards. It is quite a mistake to suppose, that the above-mentioned kinds of turnips and of cabbages, will give any unpleasant taste to the milk and butter. There is indeed a kind of cabbage, called the cattle-cabbage, which never fails to have that effect ; but experience proves, that the early York and sugar-loaf, never communicate the least flavour to the milk. With respect to the turnips, every thing depends, both for the quantity and quality of the crop, on the seed being good ; for which reason, it is always advisable, that a farmer should save his own seed.

But Mac Ready was not more attentive to the rearing of food for the cows, than to the treatment of them in the cow house, and often was he called on to give a neighbour a word of advice on this subject. Cleanliness, says he, is the first rule of health to ourselves, and why should it not be so also to our cattle ; a cow's shed, therefore, should be well swept twice a

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day : the shed likewise should be well thatched, and built in as sheltered a corner as can be chosen ; for the cow that is exposed to wet and cold, will not yield so much milk as one that is kept warm ; the floor should be paved, and a broad trough or box, fitted up at the head of the cow for putting her food into, and this should be kept particularly clean, for a cow will not relish her food out of any vessel that is dirty. She should be fed three times each day, at least ; and the cabbages should be cut off close to the stump, with the dead leaves picked off : and the turnips should be washed and well chopped with a spade before they are given to her ; the latter will keep very well for several months, if the right method is pursued with them ; as soon as they are ripe enough to be taken out of the ground, the tops and roots should be cut off, but not very closely ; they should then be put into heaps like hay cocks, and be covered with a litter of straw or dead grass about three inches thick, over that must be put a layer of earth, and on top of all, a thin sod about eighteen inches in diameter, which will prevent the earth from being washed off ; for these heaps may be made in the open fields, and if the covering is attended to, there is no danger of the turnips spoiling.

“ I think (said Mac Ready, one day to a neighbour,) the man who can afford to keep a cow and is indifferent to doing so, can never

have calculated how great *would* be his profit, and how serious *is* his loss. The annual product of a good dairy cow, during several months after calving, will be on an average, from three to five gallons of milk per day, and about seven pounds of butter a week; afterwards, as her milk declines, you may reckon on about half that quantity of milk, and say three or four pounds of butter, for I have always found it is not too high a calculation, to reckon on one pound of butter from every three gallons of good milk; and besides all this, he has the skim-milk and butter-milk for his children, and fine wholesome and useful occupation for his wife and daughters, to attend the dairy. This is the nicest work a woman can have to do—here must be no dirty vessels, no slovenly ways, but all must be fresh and cool and clean; milk should be set immediately, and if the weather be cold, the pans may be set standing in warm water. In summer time it is quite necessary to cool the pans in cold water, before they are put to use, and the cream should in the latter season be skimmed every twelve, and in winter every twenty-four hours. I have heard of a great many newly invented churns, but have always found the common upright hand-churn, answer better than any other. People, I know, complain that the butter is a long time coming, but believe me it is not good

butter that is made in less than an hour's constant labour, and even the practice of using warm water profusely, or churning near a fire, will spoil the butter. The butter being at length made, must be gathered off the churn, well strained from the butter-milk, and thrown into cold water: it is next to be divided into small lumps upon a sloping board, and beaten with clean wooden pats, instead of with the hand, until entirely free from the milk, cold water being at hand to throw over the board occasionally, and to wash the pats;—having made up into prints as much as necessary, the rest is to be salted for keeping—for this purpose a layer of salt should be put into the bottom of the crock, the butter be well pressed into it with a wooden rammer, not with the hand, and a thin layer of salt strewed over it at top when full. Come home with me, (Richard used to add,) and my mistress will shew you how persuaded she is, that the greatest nicety and cleanliness, are requisite in the management of a dairy: the pans and wooden bowls, she will tell you, must be frequently scalded and even boiled, if there is a convenience for doing so, the floor must be mopped, and the cream shifted into clean pans twice every day in summer, and once in winter. In short, every thing about a dairy must be so tidy and regular, that a sloven has no business to enter it; dirty hands and dirty clothes are the ruin of cream and

butter—of a man's comfort, children's health, and a woman's respectability.

The man who keeps a cow, may readily keep a pig, with but very little additional expense: nay, so small is the cost, that even he who cannot afford the one, may, by good management, be able to do the other. Often indeed did Richard induce his neighbours honestly to confess, that if all the money usually spent in tea for the wife, and drink for the husband, was laid out in supplying good bacon for themselves, and milk for the childrer, many an Irish cabin would present a far different sight, from what it usually does. "I know nothing (Richard used to say,) which gives a place such a comfortable look, as a nice fitch of bacon hanging up about the chimney, and a well stocked dairy close at hand. The cost of a pig until fattening time, is next to nothing, for the waste cabbage leaves, and the tops and roots of the Swedish turnip, with the addition of a little wash now and then, will keep it in very good growing order.

A pig should be bought in March when about four months old, so that it may be a year old before killing time, as until then, its flesh will not be either solid or nutritious enough, to be worth eating. When fattening time comes, the animal should be plentifully fed on pease or barley meal: beans, potatoes, or messes of any kind will never give so good bacon, for though the pig will grow

equally fat on it, his flesh will not be near so tender or well tasted; there are two great mistakes that farmers in general fall into—the one is that they begin to fatten all at once, instead of bringing the animal by degrees to his change of food, which is a much more wholesome method,—and the other, that they do not fatten them sufficiently. A good pig ought to be (as the saying is,) as fat as he can go, or rather indeed fatter—the last bushel of food, even if he lies down as he eats it, is the most profitable; and if he can walk two hundred yards at a time, he is not as fat as he ought to be. His sty should be kept clean, being regularly swept twice a day: and let a farmer always bear it in mind, that the sweepings of the sty of one pig alone, during the fattening time, will yield him three loads of manure, of a much more profitable kind, than any other he could have.”

“ I had as fine a pig (said one of Richard’s neighbours, when talking to him on this subject,) last year as ever this country saw, but I don’t know what may be the reason of it, my bacon is not good, nor do I think, that, on the whole, it turned out profitably to me; I hope the one I have now will do better.” “ Depend upon it, (answered Mac Ready,) it is the management which makes all the difference in a man’s profit.”

It is a nice thing to kill and cure a hog well :

the great mistake that people here fall into, is that they take off the hair by scalding instead of singeing it. I have studied a good deal the management of pigs and bacon, and as you are to kill your pig next week, I think I could give you some advice about it. In the first place, (continued Richard,) it is better to kill in cold weather, and therefore you have done well to wait until Christmas, and remember, the day before killing, you should not give him any food, and keep his litter quite dry; the next thing to be done after the animal is dead is to take off the hair. Now scalding slackens the skin and opens the pores so much, that to burn it off is much better; for this purpose, he should be laid on a narrow bed of straw not wider than his body, and only three or four inches thick, then covered over thinly with straw, which is to be set fire to, at one end, according to which ever way the wind blows—as the straw burns, it of course singes off the hair, and after two or three coverings and burnings, it will be all consumed, after which the animal must be scraped clean, but never washed with water. The upper side being finished, the pig must then be turned over, and the other side be treated in like manner. This work should be done before day-break, for the light of the fire is so much weakened by day light, that you cannot well see whether the hair is sufficiently burnt off. The inward parts are next taken

out, and here, in the mere offals and garbage may be found, what will give a poor man good dinners every day for a week, to say nothing of the hog's puddings, which, if his wife is at all clever, she can now so readily make. Next day the pig should be cut up, and then, it is a goodly sight for a man to see his house full of meat—souse, griskins, blade-bones, thigh-bones, spare ribs, chines, and cheeks, all to come into use, one after the other. These parts being taken away, all that now remains are the fitches, or sides, which are to be cured in the following manner:—They are first rubbed with salt on the inside, and four ounces of saltpetre finely powdered (which will add to the flavour of the bacon and make it red,) being strewed over each fitch, they are then placed one on the other, the flesh sides uppermost, in a salting trough, which has a gutter round its edges, to drain away the brine, for to have sweet and fine bacon, the fitches must not be left sopping in the brine. Every one knows how different is the taste of fresh dry salt, from that of salt in a dissolved state—the one is savoury the other is nauseous; therefore, though it may be let to melt and sink, it should never lie longer unchanged, than four or five days: the fitches also must be shifted, the uppermost one being occasionally put to the bottom. It is true this method will cost a great deal more in salt, than the usual one of letting the bacon

lie soaking in the brine, but it is well worth the difference of expense to have your meat good and wholesome. As to the time it will require to salt them, sufficiently, I could not exactly tell you, for a thick fitch will take longer than a thin one, and in damp weather it is more tedious than in dry, however upon an average, six weeks is generally sufficient.— After this they should be hung up to be smoked, and so placed, that the rain cannot reach them down the chimney, and that they be not so near the fire as to be melted by it—wood smoke (provided it be not that of fir or deal,) is much better than the smoke of either turf or coal. Bacon should be perfectly well dried but not as it is sometimes seen, as hard as a board, and it is a very good way before it is hung up, to scatter the flesh side pretty thickly over with bran, or fine saw-dust, and to rub it into it, for this keeps the smoke from getting into the meat, besides that it preserves it much cleaner than it would otherwise be. After your bacon is sufficiently dried, if you leave it still hanging up, it is apt to become musty or to be attacked by a sort of maggot, against which there is both an effectual and simple remedy; get a clean chest or box, long enough to hold the fitch, put a layer of wood or turf ashes into the bottom of it, then lay in your bacon, piece after piece, strewing in ashes between each, and cover over the whole with a good layer six or eight inches deep, of the same. Dust or

even sand will do equally well, but the box must be kept in a dry place, and the ashes examined from time to time, and dried when ever they are found damp. With these precautions, the bacon will be as good at the end of the year, as the first day, and it will keep well, two, and even three years. Now it is evident that a good store of bacon is a great thing to a poor man. He can sell it to great advantage if he wants to make up his rent; the meat has twice as much nourishment in it as either beef or mutton, and besides that, it is always ready at hand, so that he can never be at a loss for his dinner.

“And now, neighbour, I have but one word more for you—fat bacon keeps better than lean, so in using your bacon, always chuse out the lean pieces first—and I think if you succeed this year, you will agree with me in saying, that a good pig is the most profitable purchase a poor man can make; the keeping as you see is but a very trifling expense, and as for the trouble of curing the bacon, he can readily accomplish that in his evenings at home, after working hours. I hope I’ll live to see the day, when every man round me will have his cow and his pig.”

From what we have said of Mac Ready, the reader will doubtless have perceived ere this, that he was a valuable character not only to his mistress, but to the neighbourhood in general. He had been himself too highly blessed

by Providence in Mr. Alford's kindness, and was too sensible of it, not to wish to return upon others, the benevolence by which he had been himself so much benefitted. Indeed his value began now to be acknowledged by his neighbours, and though some few there were who envied and therefore sought to disparage his worth, the estimation in which he was held was amply testified by the numberless little disputes which he was able to make up, and also by the advice he was often called on to give. It was on one of these occasions, that talking to a very poor man who had not ground sufficient for a cow, even according to his improved management, and who complained of the difficulty he found in providing milk for his family, out of his daily hire he struck out a plan which he had known to succeed, and which he thought deserving of recommendation to every poor man.—It was simply this—to keep a goat, since he was not able to feed a cow.—Nor let the reader smile at the advice, every one who lives near Dublin knows, that invalids are frequently sent by the doctors to Dundrum, a small and healthful village, two miles and a half distant, for the double purpose of enjoying good air and of drinking goat's milk, which would not be ordered, if it were not particularly nourishing. Indeed its milk is as wholesome food as children can take, and it requires neither trouble or expense to maintain it. A good

goat will seldom be dry more than three weeks or a month in the course of the year; while her kid is young she will yield nearly two quarts of milk a day, and on an average you may reckon on more than three half-pints a day the whole year round. Now this is not much to be sure, but still it is better than none; and where two goats are kept, it is a great thing for a poor man to say, that his six children will have half a pint of good milk every morning at breakfast.

No animal is so hardy, nor so little nice in its food as a goat—it will pick peelings out of the kennel and eat them, or will take fusty hay, straw, furze, bushes, heath, thistles—in fact there is hardly any thing comes in its way that it will not eat; any little kennel or vacant corner about the place will do for its bed—it can easily be prevented from wandering by loosely tying its fore and hind legs together, or if there be many, by joining them in couples.

“ We thus see (said Richard,) that if there are many things which the Almighty has put it out of the poor man’s power to have, there are yet a great many more within his reach, than he avails himself of.”

We may here mention two more particulars, in which Mrs. Brennan’s care, within her own sphere of action, seconded her faithful servant’s efforts for her interest; and yet, even in this particular, Richard’s sharp observation had

stored up several useful hints, which he communicated to her. "Every one, (said he,) who has ever had the management of a poultry yard, knows by experience and to her cost, that of all birds, the turkey is the hardest to rear, although when grown, it is one of the hardest of birds. It is the wetness of this climate that chiefly does them injury, for which reason they should never be let out in the early morning, until the dew is quite off the ground, so long as they are not fully fledged and well grown, and in wet weather they should be kept under cover all day. As to their feeding, hard eggs chopped fine with crumbs of bread, or else the fresh curds of two milk whey is much the most wholesome food for them while young—turkeys fed in this way, kept dry and clean, will scarcely fail to thrive; as soon as they are well grown, they may get meal, and grain; in winter, cabbages well chopped up are good feeding, not only for turkeys but for all sorts of fowl.

It is much the best way to breed turkeys under a common hen, because she does not ramble like a hen-turkey,—and it is a curious thing, that those which are bred by the common hen, do not themselves ramble so much as others when they get old; for this reason, when people buy a stock of turkeys in America, where there are such large woods, that the rambling of turkeys is very inconvenient, they always prefer

such as have been bred under hens of the common fowl.

The hen should be fed exceedingly well while she is sitting, but more particularly so after she has hatched, for then her labour is great; she is continually making exertions of some sort or other during the whole twenty-four hours,—has but little rest, and is constantly employed in providing food and safety for her young ones. As to fattening turkeys, the best way is never to let them be poor. Cramming is a most cruel and an unnecessary practice, for birds that are usually given a tolerable sufficiency of feeding, will easily be brought into the best condition for the table, by giving them a greater abundance and a more nutritious kind of food. Barley meal mixed with a little new milk and given to them every day, will make them fat in a short time, either in a coop, in the house, or running about; and boiled carrots and Swedish turnips are also good for them and make a wholesome change in their food.

Geese cannot be kept to advantage except where there is green sod for them to graze on, but kept in that way they are some of the hardiest animals in the world, and live to a great age; it is true they require a little more feeding than what they are able to find for themselves, but not much; and they are a more profitable bird than the turkey, because they are so much more easily reared, and lay a greater

number of eggs. A well fed goose will lay an hundred eggs in the course of the year; the young birds require no other care than to be kept from rain, and to be fed with barley meal wet (if possible,) with milk; after a few days they begin to graze and look about for food for themselves, and after that there is but little danger of them. Water is by no means necessary either for geese or for ducks to swim about in; the young birds especially should never be let to the pond until after they are a month old. The same method that answers for rearing geese is necessary also for the care of ducks, except this, that although a well fed duck will lay ten dozen of eggs in a year, it is much better to give them to common hens to be hatched, in fact a hen will sit more patiently, and is a more watchful mother, than any other farm-yard fowl.

The ailments of fowls are numerous, but they would seldom be seen if proper care was taken, and it is useless to talk of remedies, when there is always the power to prevent the evil. If well fed and kept clean, fowls will seldom be sick—and as to old age, they ought never to be kept more than a couple of years, for after that time they are not good for much as layers, and are quite unfit for food.

A poultry house must be kept very clean, it being a fact sufficiently established, that no fowl will thrive, except they are kept in

cleanliness; it should therefore be frequently cleaned out, and sand or fresh earth be strewn on the floor. The nests for laying hens, should not be on shelves or any thing fixed, but made of separate pieces of basket work, something in the form of small sieves, fastened up to the sides of the house, by means of pieces of wood nailed to the wall for that purpose. By this means the nests are kept perfectly clean, because the basket can be taken down and washed when necessary, and clean hay put in. The roosts ought also to be cleaned every week, and it is a good plan to fumigate the house occasionally, by burning in it a little dry herbs, juniper wood, or brimstone. In short, no means should be left untried to prevent lice and vermin from breeding among poultry.

Fowl can readily be kept about a cottage, and a few good laying hens are a great acquisition to a family, requiring but little trouble and no labour; as to that, however, whatever is to bring profit is worth trouble, and a woman need not spare herself, for the little she can do at home, when her husband is labouring hard for her, abroad.

END OF PART THE SECOND.

THE
HISTORY
OF
RICHARD MAC READY,
THE
FARMER LAD.

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PART THE THIRD.  
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RICHARD was not fond of changing his place, and yet he now began to think of quitting Mrs. Brennan. He had been with her six years, during which time he had consulted her interests as zealously as he could have done his own. He had acted towards her not with what is called in the Bible, eye service, but as one who knew he was accountable for his conduct, to God. He had found her farm neglected—her farm-house and offices out of repair—her farm-stock small, and her rent in arrear.—These evils however had every one been remedied, her affairs were prosperous, and what was more influential upon Richard, her eldest

son, though but a youth when Richard came to her, had taken such a liking to a farming life, and had profitted so much by the example of his virtuous model, that he was quite competent to carry on that system of husbandry which had so prospered. Mac Ready also had saved something more than forty pounds, in addition to what he had when he entered her service, and he therefore began to think, that the moment was come for him to look out for a farm on his own account, where he might practice for himself those rules which he had hitherto so successfully applied to the advantage of others. Nor let it seem extraordinary that he should have saved such a sum: he had been scraping it together, by patient industry, for above a dozen years, and much as it appears, it is perhaps no more than every man in his situation could save in the same time, if instead of rushing precipitately into an early marriage, and bringing about him a young family, before he has the means of supporting them, or else instead of transferring all his spare wages to the landlady of the Shamrock, for whiskey, as so many of our giddy, short sighted, countrymen do, he would lay by from time to time in the Savings Bank, all he does not require for necessary expenses, and never draw out of that strong box, (if we may call it so,) unless when he can make an advantageous purchase. Sixty pounds in truth was not much to save, for a

man with Richard's wages and other opportunities, but we must consider that his parents were now growing old and infirm, and required more assistance from him, besides which, a distemper going at the time amongst cattle, had deprived him of two fine milch cows, of which he had expected to make a handsome profit.

Before he would take any decisive step, however, he thought it advisable to consult Mr. Alford, and not only received his hearty concurrence, but an offer of a farm of twenty-five acres, well situated and at a short distance, from which he had been obliged to eject the former tenant. "The land (said he,) is quite out of heart, and the farm-house in a most ruinous condition,—but the rent shall be no higher than your predecessor paid, and I shall deem it my duty to assist you in rebuilding the house as soon as summer sets in. Industry can do much towards the improvement even of the desert, and I do not despair of seeing it in a few years a different kind of farm, from what it is at present. You shall enter upon possession in three weeks, and I wish you all success in your progress." "Your goodness overpowers me, Sir, (replied Richard, with emphatic earnestness,) but it shall be my endeavour to shew you that it is not bestowed upon an unworthy object."

The plan thus arranged, it took but little time to put it into execution. Mrs. Brennan

was too sensible of all she owed to Richard, to oppose his departure from any selfish consideration; and not only approved of his determination, but added a substantial mark of her good will. "You shall take with you," said she, "one of my milch cows, with her calf, and also, a few of our poultry. If I gave you the half of what I possessed, it would, perhaps, be no more than you deserve; for, next to God, I owe to your faithful and unremitting industry, every thing I possess. May my son profit by your example, and then, much as I should prize your continuance here, I should not miss you much."

Thus far the world had prospered with Richard Mac Ready. He was now established in a farm of his own, and had no reason, as he thought, to fear that the same industry which had advanced him to the station of an independent farmer, should not carry him further. By those who had opportunities of knowing him, he was highly esteemed; and to those below him, he had always behaved so evenly, and so kindly, that they were anxious for his good opinion. He felt, indeed, that he had been highly favoured by Providence, which had given him favour in the eyes of those amongst whom he dwelt; but it was now he was to learn that no earthly happiness is without alloy, and no state so firm as to be above the reach of change. Every one knows the sinful confederacy which prevails in some parts of Ireland,

amongst the lower orders, to prevent the landlord from exercising the undoubted right which he, and every man, possesses over his own property. It was from one of those unlawful wicked combinations, that our friend Richard Mac Ready was to learn the instability of worldly prosperity. The persons who formed it, had, it seems, determined, that land from which the tenant had been removed for non-payment of his rent, should not be occupied for a certain time by any other; in the vain idea, that thus it would deter the landlord from ejecting those, who, from want of industry, as is generally the cause, should run behind in the rent. From this it may be at once seen, what description of persons were the ring-leaders in this wicked conspiracy. The most worthless, the most idle—those who neither feared God, nor regarded man, seeing they daringly violated the great command of the Almighty, “love thy neighbour as thyself.” The tenant who preceded Richard in the farm, was one of these characters; a great talker, a lounging idle man, who had rather lie all day on his back, or sit on the bars of a gate kicking his legs, than take a spade in his hand to cultivate the spot of ground which was to support his family. The consequence of all this was that which might be expected. Sloth brings poverty, and poverty nourishes discontent. Pat Mallowney had been often warned by his

landlord what it would all come to; and several times he had been kindly assisted with seeds, and even, on two occasions, part of his rent had been remitted, but all to no purpose. He was therefore ejected, and Richard put in his place, Mr. Alford taking care to make it known, that the least injury offered to his new tenant, should be punished by the loss of his good will, and also by the severe penalty of the law. Those whom Satan guides, he strives to push on to destruction, and then he leaves them. In a week after Richard had removed to his cottage, he got a threatening letter, warning him not to put a spade in the ground, for that no one but Pat Mallowney should hold the land. This he showed to Mr. Alford, but it was agreed on by both, that such threats were to be disregarded, the laws being sufficiently strong to protect the industrious, and the neighbouring magistrates active and zealous in enforcing them. "If they meet me face to face," said Richard, "I have no fear, in a good cause, of being able to defend myself; and I think I can depend on Paddy Farrel, the herd, that he would stand by me on a pinch. I thank you therefore, Sir," he added, "and will take the offer of your pistols, but I still think, and hope, I shall have no occasion to use them."

Perhaps in all this reasoning of Richard's, there was a little presumptuous self-confidence,

which required to be checked; at least so he thought afterwards, when a long and painful operation had brought him to himself, from the state of insensibility in which he was found, on the road side, two hours after he had left Mr. Alford's. He was indeed so far correct, that his enemies did not dare to attack him openly; for they knew his determined character, having often witnessed the resolution with which he had exposed his person, in putting an end to those broils and fights which so frequently conclude an Irish fair; but, against treachery, no courage can defend us. Richard was going along the road, on his return home, when a stone, from an unknown hand, felled him to the ground. Stunned with the blow, he remained for a few moments insensible; but, just as he was rising upon his feet, he discovered James Mallowney, and three others, springing across a ditch, and making towards him with sticks. He saw and remembered no more, except that they all cried out with oaths, as they struck at him, "see what comes of digging in another man's field." Poor Richard! what a return, for the readiness which you had always shewed to every one who wanted a kind turn at your hands! Doubtless, they believed they had accomplished their murderous work; for it was only the doctor, whom Mr. Alford sent for, who perceived a faint pulsation at his wrist. It was the former who had discovered him,

for, soon after Richard's departure he had ordered his horse, and was riding leisurely along, when the animal he rode started at some object lying in the ditch. But how shall we describe the good man's grief, when he found that he who lay, to all appearance, murdered, was his faithful and industrious tenant, whom he had been talking to but a short time before. With the assistance of some people, who were passing, his servant carried the body to the house; and in order that no means should be neglected to save his life, Mr. Alford sent for the nearest surgeon. How very slow was the operation which brought Richard to his senses. His head was covered with bruises; for the cruel assassins had principally directed their blows at that part. But the most dangerous, was one which had beaten in the bone of the skull, and caused, what surgeons call, a compression of the brain. We shall not weary the reader with a detail of painful remedies; it suffices to say, that he at length opened his eyes slowly, and indistinctly pronounced the name of James Mollowney, which induced Mr. Alford instantly to dispatch a warrant for his apprehension. The constables found him at home, lying upon the bed, and though he loudly protested he was innocent, it was too evident, from his confusion, and from the marks of blood on several parts of his clothes, that he was the guilty man. By the time he was

arrived at Mr. Alford's, Richard had so far recovered, that he could, in a feeble voice, relate the manner of the attack, and tell the names of those engaged in it. The rest were apprehended, and all four committed to prison, to abide their trial on the capital charge; and, as the assizes were distant, we shall leave them to reflect on their crime, and the fate that awaited them, and return to the sick room of Richard.

Those who have known sickness, can feel for the sufferings he now underwent. Through many a long sleepless night he lay, counting the moments as they passed, and wishing for the day; and again, through the day, wishing for the approach of evening, as if the escaping from the present, were to bring him a relief from pain. He was not permitted to speak to any one except his mother, who immediately came over to Mr. Alford's when she heard of her darling child's danger, and watched over his sick bed with the tenderest care. He had therefore full leisure for reflection, and for prayer to Him who had been his shield and defence from his enemies. He reviewed the whole of his past life, calling to mind many occasions in which he had neglected his duty. He resolved, if God should raise him, to walk more circumspectly for the future, and earnestly besought Him to pardon that which had been amiss, and to guide him in the path of life. In the book

of Psalms he had met with many passages which suited his present condition, and these he called to mind, to assist his pious reflections. "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; but thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled."—"Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. O Lord, thou hast been my Saviour; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation." Who is there so Godless, as not to look for comfort in such reflections as these;—and who that has done so, will doubt that Richard felt the improvement of mind, that increasing piety ever brings with it? Indeed it was many years after this, that, speaking to a friend about the uses of affliction, he expressed with earnest fervour, his conviction, that the Almighty had turned into a blessing, that which at first appeared a chastisement, enabling him to say, from the bottom of his heart, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

Time, however, was passing swiftly to all but Richard, and at length it brought with it the month of July. The season was a fine one; but none can see it under such favourable circumstances, as those who have been confined to a sick room, but whose returning health at length permits them to walk abroad into the fresh air. The air feels so balmy, the fields look so fresh, the leaves so green, the song of the birds

sounds so joyful, as they carol among the branches, and the sky so bright; at least, so it appeared to Richard, as he walked about Mr. Alford's demesne, and offered up his silent thanksgiving to God for all his mercy: and yet all his joy was damped by one reflection--in a few days, the assizes would be opened at the neighbouring county town, and he must appear against those who had sought to deprive him of life. The reader however must not mistake the character of Richard; he felt no resentment against them; he had forgiven them the injury they intended; he had prayed that God would turn their hearts, but, at the same time, he felt it a duty to society, that such as they, should not be encouraged to go on in wickedness, by the hope of impunity, and that the prisoners themselves should not be suffered to go at large, to endanger the life, and destroy the happiness of others. At length the day came, Pat Mullooney and his companions were arraigned, tried, and convicted. Richard gave his testimony with clearness, but still the agitation of his manner, shewed how much he suffered, as he identified the prisoners as the persons who ran up to him after he had been struck by the stone, and in the strongest terms intreated the Judge to shew them mercy; but it was not his evidence alone which brought the charge home to the guilty men--their arrest had followed so quick upon the crime, that

they had not time to recover from the agitation into which the act had thrown them ; a strict search had enabled the officers to produce two of the bludgeons which they had used, and though two witnesses came forward to swear that they were all at work together in a distant field at the very time of the assault ; they had been seen by others, at that same time, running across the field from which Richard had observed them coming, and separating in different directions afterwards. Indeed it is but justice to those who were present at the trial, (for both the accuser and the accused were so well known in the neighbourhood, that the court was crowded to excess,) it is but justice to say, that a murmur of horror ran amongst them, when the sticks, still covered with the marks of blood, were produced, and that, as Richard got down from the place where he had given his evidence, the countenances of almost all, shewed how much they were concerned at what he had suffered.

It is painful to come to the conclusion of all this—the jury did not retire from the box, so satisfied were they with the evidence, but at once returned a verdict of guilty against all four, after which the Judge proceeded to utter the fatal sentence of the law.—“ You have been convicted,” he said, “ by a jury of your countrymen, of a crime atrocious in itself, and aggravated by the cruel circumstances which accompanied it.—In cold blood you treacherously

assailed an unoffending man, and for what? because a landlord exercised his undoubted right, in ejecting his tenant for not paying his rent, and preferred another, who was industrious and honest. If there be any present," he continued, "who have been seduced into such a wicked confederacy, let this day be a warning to them, that sooner or later punishment will overtake them—let them also consider, who are those that endeavour to set the poor against their superiors, the labourer against his employer, the tenant against his landlord, and the people in general against the laws?—Are they not the most profligate and the most idle characters.—Men, who are the first to lead their associates to rapine and murder, and the first also, when detected, to seek their own safety by offering to turn approvers; the times may be hard, the crops may fail, the markets may be low, but is this the way to make things better?—No; it makes property insecure, it drives the landed proprietor from the estate on which he would otherwise reside for the advantage of his tenantry, and sends him to another country to look for personal security; and it prevents the wealthy of other countries, from coming over to lay out their money in the establishment of manufactures. Infatuated men, the evils you would inflict, recoil upon yourselves—you pervert the blessings which the Almighty has so bountifully bestowed on this

country, you loosen the bonds of brotherly affection which should unite us together as countrymen and fellow christians, and you incur disgrace and death here, and endless punishment hereafter." He then, in an agitated voice, pronounced on the unhappy culprits the awful sentence of death:—intreating them, as they valued their immortal souls, to employ the few remaining hours, which separated them from eternity, in turning to Him who never rejected the prayers of the repentant, and to supplicate, through the blood of our common Redeemer, a larger measure of mercy than they had themselves been willing to extend to their fellow creature.

Richard was now perfectly recovered from his wounds, and resolved to apply himself with assiduity to the cultivation of his farm. He proceeded however gradually, sensible that prudence and honesty alike enjoined him to keep from debt; at the next cattle fair in his neighbourhood he bought three cows, a couple of farm horses, and his kind friend Mr. Alford procured him a good plough from Dublin. He also bought a large quantity of manure which was sold by auction on a dairy-farm, the owner of which was selling off his stock. This last he spread over his ground as far as it would go, and having used his plough and harrow freely, he cast in the seed, looking to Providence to reward his industry by a plenteous harvest.—

“ I have it in my power (said he,) at present, only to bring twenty acres into heart ; next year, however, I hope to do the same with the remainder, and should I in addition, be able to build a better cabin than the ruined one which my predecessor left me, I might then venture to take a companion, for after all, I begin to think my winter evenings will pass heavily if I remain single, and surely Mr. Alford himself wont blame me for wishing to have a wife, now that I am able to support one.— He is against early marriages, at all times, but more particularly when both parties are poor, but now I am sufficiently old, and no one can say that with due economy I have not enough.”

The reader may perceive from this, that Richard's thoughts were once more turned towards matrimony, but he requires to be told what it was which made him recollect so suddenly, that it would be necessary to have a friend at home to welcome each return from labour. The fact was, during his illness, he had much time for reflection and for forming various resolutions as to his future conduct.— He was not one of those whose farm occupied all his thoughts, for deeply did he regret many mispent hours, and firmly purpose amendment, but he did revolve in his mind various plans of agriculture for his fields, and lay down the improvements he would make in the cabin. “ It is a sorry place, (said he to himself) and between

the breaches in the thatch, and the large crack in the rere wall under the window, would be a cold place in winter;—if I could build another on Mr. Alford's plan, the wind might blow and the rain come down, but all inside would be snug and warm as it is here. From such thoughts as these, the passage to the comforts of a domestic life was easy, particularly when Nancy Toole, an exceedingly modest and well-behaved young woman was coming into his room every third or fourth hour, sent by Mrs. Alford to know if he wanted any thing, and naturally helped to remind him that a dairy could not be carried on without a mistress. He kept his mind however to himself, determined to make his observations in silence, and to speak to Mr. Alford before he opened his wishes to the young woman herself. He knew that a tawdry dressed slovenly woman, however well looking, was not likely to make good butter, or to take care of poultry; or in short to make his home cheerful and happy;—and it was the very neat and tidy appearance of Nancy which drew his observation, and strengthened the favourable impression he had received from her great tenderness in nursing him. Her dress was always clean but never fine, as silly girls call it; it was suited to her station, and seemed to say that the wearer was not vain. She was also active and intelligent, and

often reminded Richard what a clean house-keeper she would make, as she moved lightly about the house, leaving no trace but that of order wherever her industrious hand went. One evening he said to himself, "favour is deceitful and beauty is vain;—it is the woman that feareth the Lord that shall be praised," and he took his hat, and walked over to Mr. Alford's, to open his mind to him and ask his advice.

The result of this conversation was as favourable as he could wish.—Nancy Toole was the daughter of a small farmer in the neighbourhood, whom Mrs. Alford had distinguished for her attention and tractable disposition at school. She had in consequence appointed her to the situation of mistress, and subsequently taken her home to be her own attendant, and to take care of her youngest child, a boy about four years old, about the time that Richard went to live with the Widow Brennan. She was likewise most careful in the choice of her associates, never like too many young girls, allowing her conduct to be mistaken for giddiness or impropriety, by the behaviour of her companions, but keeping steadily out of the way of bad examples, which cannot be wholly without danger, even to those who are best fortified to resist them. "She is sober, prudent, industrious, (said Mrs. Alford,) and though we shall be sorry to lose one so faithful, we have too much

regard for her as well as you, to be a bar to your happiness, if she thinks favourably of your proposal."

The courtship of persons in an humble class of life is seldom long, and perhaps is not always less sincere on that account. Richard's proposal was accepted gladly and without reserve, for Nancy was too correct to conceal that it gave her pleasure,—there was one obstacle, however—the cabin must be thrown down, and another built upon the same site; "for I should not wish to bring you home, Nancy, 'till I had a comfortable place to receive you in."—Nancy's reply to this was simple, but it was sincere; she could be satisfied with any place which satisfied him, but she would willingly wait until the new house was finished, in the mean time, she thought it right to tell him, that Mr. Alford had lodged her little store in the Savings Bank, and that it now amounted to twenty pounds.

The reader may guess, after this conversation between Richard and Nancy Toole, that he lost no time in proceeding to work according to the plan recommended.

The space marked out for his cottage was exactly thirty-four feet in front, from out to out, (as builders call it,) that is, including the wall, having on one side, a neat door, a good latticed window, three feet six inches square, and, nearer to the other end, a smaller window,

two feet square; the chimney also, was placed, not in the gable, as is usually the case, but rose from the roof, about eight or nine feet from the gable. There was no dunghil, nor even a place for one, at the door side, nor yet a great hollow for water and mud to collect in; but a neat small grass plot, which looked green, and was close cut.

The next improvement which Richard made upon the old system of cabin-building, was as conducive to health as comfort. The old plan was to dig the clay which was to build the lower part of the walls, out of the floor, thus making the floor lower than the level of the ground about the house, and, of course, almost always damp, and at the same time difficult to clean. The floor of Richard's cabin was one foot higher than the ground outside, and also even; and the following was the plan he adopted.

He had a trench dug for the foundation eighteen inches deep below the general level of the soil, and so broad that, besides the foundation wall, there was a sewer or drain, a foot broad, all round the outer wall. At regular distances in the foundation, which was built of dry stone, and without mortar, and raised to the height of two feet, he left openings, in order that water springing in the inside might find a ready passage into this sewer. The bottom of the floor was of lime-

riddlings moistened, though, when they cannot be had, clay strongly rammed would answer nearly as well: this he had levelled with common mortar, and then laid on, to the thickness of an inch, a composition of hot lime, powdered, well watered pit sand, and powdered brick dust, mixed up in equal quantities into a plaster, with water; blood would have been better, but he had it not convenient; however his own floor when finished was as hard as flagging.

There is another mode, which costs less, and answers almost as well; it is covering the inside floor to the depth of six or eight inches, with a bed of loosely laid limestone, as level as possible, and covering it with straw or rushes, and laying on top of all, a bed of blue or yellow clay, taking care to join these, by the openings already mentioned, with the outer drain. The walls of the cottage were constructed of bricks, made of mud and straw, well tempered and dried in the sun: if this, however, had not been convenient, of course they might be mud, plastered over and well whitewashed.

The next advantage which Richard's cottage possessed was in the arrangement of the interior: it had often struck him as very indelicate to see men, and women, and children bundled together in the same room. In his cottage, a partition divided the space, which, as has been mentioned, was separated from the

living room by the chimney, into two sleeping-rooms, each six feet by eight; and as they both had windows, one in the front and the other in the back of the house, it was easy, by means of an opening in the upper part of the partition, to air both rooms.

The back of the fire-place kept the two bedrooms dry and warm, so that the whole heat of the fire was kept inside, instead of some of it being lost, as in the old plan. In addition, however, to these conveniences of a room nineteen feet by fifteen, and two bed-rooms each six feet by eight, the other end of the cottage opposite the fire-place contained a recess six feet by four, which exactly held a bed; the remainder of the gable being filled with a good press for clothes or other things.

This was, as the reader will perceive, the counterpart of Tim Higgins' cottage; and the only alteration was that which might be made by any person, who, having originally followed the plan then drawn, had afterwards found himself able to enlarge it. Instead of dividing the space taken off the entire length, into two bed-rooms, it formed but one. The pig-sty was placed against the gable end, and a kitchen was built where the pig-sty was intended. The whole expense did not come to twenty guineas, although the walls were constructed of bricks made of mud and straw well mixed, and dried in the sun, under shelter. Indeed, there was one additional expense which Mr.

Alford took upon himself to defray, which was not covered by the sum we have mentioned; that was, boarding the sleeping-room floor, and setting in it a second window, looking to the east, in order that the airing and ventilation might be good.

There was another improvement, however, adopted by Mac Ready which deserves mention. A short time previously, it had been made known to the Royal Dublin Society that a substitute for the straw thatch, so generally employed in roofing cottages through Ireland, had been brought into use in the parish of Tydaonet, County Monaghan, which was not only more durable, but also more economical, inasmuch as it left the straw to be applied to the use of the cattle and the farm. It had been accordingly tried by them, and found to answer the purpose so well, that they had recommended it for general use throughout the country. Richard had heard of it from Mr. Alford, and being fully persuaded that it deserved the character given by the Society, he at once resolved to introduce it amongst his neighbours. The reader, however, is not to suppose that he was fond of novelties, and ready hastily to adopt every thing which was called an improvement upon old customs: where the change was doubtful, he was one of the last to try it; but when it was advantageous, he was always amongst the first.

His mode of proceeding was taken from a paper of instructions sent through the country by the Society, and as he followed them implicitly, it was quite successful. He first collected a quantity of common moss, or fog as it is called by the country people, from off the ground, among the copse-wood or at the roots of trees, as free from grass and earth as possible, and then spread it in an airy place to dry: the moss was then teased until the stalks were well separated. A quantity of roach lime (none other being fit) was then procured, and after being lightly sifted, to get rid of any ashes or dirt that might have remained among it; water was poured upon it, and it stood until it was completely slacked, leaving about two or three inches of water or liquid above the lime. Upon this he gradually shook the moss, mixing both well together, and working the compost like mortar, until the water was quite absorbed, and the whole formed into a plaister like that laid upon walls.

The roof he had previously prepared as if for thatching, only more level, taking care to place the earth side of the scraw (the same as used in thatching) uppermost. He would have found it preferable however, but for the expense, to lay laths about half an inch asunder. The compost was then laid on with a trowel, about two inches thick, blending it well together, and making the surface as level

as possible. He had laid a weather-board, which projected about three inches, under the cement along the eave-course, to carry the drops from the wall. A few days after, he gave it a slight top-dressing, in order to close any crevices that were found in it. The paper also mentioned that, when properly made, the composition will, when fresh, be quite strong, and draw out like bird-lime, but when dry it becomes a firm cement. It is to be observed, also, that the sooner the composition is used after being made the better; if possible, before it is quite cold.

Richard had learned that this composition may be laid on at any time of the year; but fortunately, for him, it was now the month of March, which is stated by the Royal Society to be the most favourable period, and indeed he found it answer all his expectations. It was fully as warm as thatch, obviously much cleaner, freer from vermin, and, what is not its least recommendation, it is safer from fire, resisting it as mortar would.

I could wish to see it general through the country, said Richard, as he saw it standing the weather through the succeeding winter, which proved uncommonly severe; a thatch must be renewed every three years, and most people know how scarce fodder sometimes is for the cattle. This new discovery, therefore, not only leaves a greater quantity of straw for their use, and thus obviously tends to increase

the quantity of manure, but it gives a much warmer covering to the cottage inmates, as well as one that is safer from the destructive element of fire.

The cottage was now finished, and Richard's next care was to fence in about a quarter of an acre behind it with a quickset hedge, and to furnish it with all sorts of vegetables and a few pretty flowers. They cost nothing even to the poorest, and they make a place look neat and smiling; a few creeping plants grew up before the windows, and promised in a short time, with due care to cover all the front, except the windows and doors. Indeed a prettier cottage was not to be seen in the whole country.

But what was far better than the pretty cottage, or the neat garden, or the creeping plants in front, was the content that smiled within. Here Richard hoped to set forth, by his example, the advantages of industry and good conduct; and here it was he looked forward to spending the remainder of his days in happiness, surrounded by the blessings of domestic life.

The few out-houses which belonged to the farm had been allowed to fall much into decay: a small sum, however, had repaired them sufficiently for the present, until they could be taken down and permanently rebuilt: but we may here describe an improvement which Mr. Alford persuaded him to make. This was a

large tank, or square hole, dug in the ground ten feet deep, and lined with hard and beaten clay, so as to be water-tight like a cistern. Into this tank or reservoir flowed all those animal juices which are about a farm-yard, such as the urine of cattle, the drainings of the dunghil, the ground from the stable and cow-house being made to slope gradually to it, so that by throwing into it occasionally a quantity of the coarsest clay, a compound was produced, the liquid of which cast upon a meadow, and the more solid part spread over the surface, were found to produce the most fertilizing effects. This was a simple improvement, and it had another recommendation, it cost but little, and yet in how many places are these richly impregnated liquids suffered to run to waste, down some slope into a drain or sewer, and thus lost to the purposes of fertilization.

We have not much time to describe the wedding of this virtuous couple, for the reader has still to be informed of several of Richard's improvements. Weddings are always scenes of happiness, and yet if the bride and bridegroom reflect that they have done an act on which their future happiness must depend, because, no matter how ill paired in temper, they are inseparably united, it might serve to chasten the pleasure of the moment with sobriety of thought. Nancy, indeed, was not sorrowful, nor had she reason to be so, for she

had the blessings of her aged father and mother, the congratulations of her master, mistress, and fellow-servants, and the approbation of her own heart, which whispered that she was placing herself in the hands of a man who deserved the trust. These things are better than a wedding-gown, and yet the kindness of her mistress had given her a neat though plain gown; and what still more shewed the interest she took in Nancy's comfort, she had sent into Richard's cottage, the night before the marriage, some substantial and neat furniture for her bed-room. These were four stout oak chairs, a table, and a good clock, which Mr. Alford deemed the most acceptable present he could make to a man who knew the value of time so well, and so much loved punctuality. To these Mrs. Alford had also added a neat family Bible. I feel assured, said she to Nancy, that you will read this best of books with a desire for improvement; and I do hope its presence so constantly before you will prove a check on all that is light, and vain, and trifling. I have no advice to give you, added she, that is not contained in that Scripture, but you will recollect this — the best way to make a husband fond of home, is to make his home happy. A husband may be at times vexed, and perhaps of an ill temper, but your part is meekness, not to add fuel to keep the flame alive. A little mortar keeps out the wind;

but if you neglect the opening, the storm makes its way, and the dwelling is injured: even so small kindnesses, small attentions, make an impression even upon the most unreasonable temper, and insensibly soften the violence of anger.

Mr. Alford also had a word of advice for his humble friend Richard, but it was in a less serious strain. Any other friend, said he, Mac Ready, would on this occasion recommend peace and harmony to you on your marriage; but I, on the contrary, recommend care and strife. Richard began to stare; but Nancy, who knew her master had some meaning in what he said different from the more obvious one, looked serious. Care and strife, sir! said Richard; you are the last from whom I should expect such advice: may I ask what you mean? I mean, replied Mr. Alford, for the first, that your constant care should be to please God, and your strife, who shall serve him best, and do your duty to the other most faithfully. You will always find me disposed to serve you, and, therefore, whenever you want a friend's advice or assistance, come to me frankly and state your difficulty. If I can, I will befriend you, for I think you deserving of all I can do for you: but ever remember that you have another Friend more powerful than man, more willing to hear you, and more nigh to all

that address him than any man on earth, and that is God. His tender mercies are over all his works.

Richard was now happy. He had married a young woman whom every day endeared to him more and more. When he returned each evening, she had always a smile to welcome him, and his meal so clean and so comfortable that he often said he found no place so pleasant as home. This might be expected from one so highly esteemed as Mrs. Mac Ready had been both by Mr. and Mrs. Alford; but we mention it to shew how much a wife has to blame herself who neglects the means of making her husband domestic. There is another particular that deserves to be mentioned. It was not Richard alone who was industrious: Nancy was equally so. He had the management of the farm; she of the dairy and poultry, the pigs and the garden; and we have already seen how well qualified her husband was to guide her whenever she wanted his directions. In short, they both felt they had one common interest, and pulling the rope, as Richard used to say, by the same end, they compassed many things which they cannot do who pull it at different ends.

With minds so qualified to make each other's happiness, and so well disposed to labour diligently and contentedly to get their living,

it may well be supposed that every useless expense or extravagance was avoided; and they justly considered every luxury and superfluity as such. Every shilling they had was wanting for the farm, and therefore every reasonable saving gave them increased means of accomplishing their little plans. It should be mentioned also; that it was principally in small things their management appeared, for they both knew what a dangerous fallacy it is to suppose that this superfluity or that is of no consequence, because the cost is trifling. Let us take care of small matters, and the large ones will take care of themselves. Nor was it a miser, but a prudent and extremely benevolent man who said,—

A penny saved is two pence clear,
A pin a day's a goat a year.

It was only the first day after their marriage that Mrs. Mac Ready and Richard agreed that stirabout and milk, or milk porridge, or occasionally potatoes and milk, was a far better breakfast than tea, though there were very few of their neighbours who thought as they did. The reader, however, it is hoped, will not be at a loss to know which was right, more especially if he has ever calculated the great expense which attends the use of this article, and the little real nourishment it gives to a

working person, whether man or woman. Nor is it the actual cost which makes it the most extravagant way a person can spend his money, next to *whiskey*. The time that is spent over the tea-table is not only taken from better occupations, but actually mispent. Suppose, said Mrs. Mac Ready, I were to sit down regularly to my tea, morning and evening, even though Richard did not partake of it, (except perhaps occasionally in the evening,) I should, even in this way, consume, say, a quarter of a pound of tea in a week and a pound of sugar: the milk I have in plenty; but to those who have not a cow, it would cost at least a penny every day; that is, I should spend every week, in actual money, for tea, 1s. 6d. sugar, 7d., milk, 7d.—the whole making 2s. 8d. every week, and all for that which gives but little nourishment to the body: however, it may be said by many, as I have often heard it said, I should be lost but for the cup of tea. And if I added to this cost, the time which is spent over the said cup of tea. The time of boiling the kettle, making the tea, drinking it, and afterwards washing and putting by the tea things, sweeping up the fire-place, and setting all to rights again; surely it can scarcely be reckoned at less than half an hour at each meal: that is, said Richard, (as they cheerfully and playfully talked it over in the evening,)

seven hours a week; so that the account of the year's tea-drinking will stand thus:

Tea	3 18 0
Sugar	1 10 4
Milk	1 10 4

£6 18 8

Besides, an hour each day comes to three hundred and sixty-five in the year, which make up thirty days, calculating sixteen hours in a working day; that is, equal to one month, and thus a twelfth part of the year is spent in drinking tea. Can any one wonder that the children are dirty, their clothes tattered, and their parents poor, when the mother spends one month and nearly seven pounds a year on tea-drinking alone.

I have often thought, said Nancy, if that sum were to be employed in brewing a little good beer, it could be done with much less cost, either of time or money, and a woman could thus have a good nourishing drink for her husband every day. It is true, it would not be fit for the young children who do not labour; but neither do they get any share of the tea, so that it would be no loss to them. At Mr. Alford's there was a brew-house, where he made drink for his own table; and as I had an opportunity of learning the whole process, it astonished me very much to observe how easy it would be, even for us, to brew a little

for ourselves. Now, supposing a labouring man and his wife to sit down to dinner every day, with a good drink of beer before them, they will consume, say three pints at each meal. It would be found at the end of the year not only more healthful drink, but much more nourishing.

But surely, said Richard, no one makes beer but the brewer.

True, Richard; but I have often heard Mr. Alford say, that when he was a boy he remembers many a farmer like you, who regularly made his own drink: besides, the cost of the brewing vessels is but little; for they consist merely of a large kettle, a tub for mashing the malt in, coolers, for which washing tubs would answer, a half-hogshead, with one end taken out, for a tun tub, and a couple of casks, of twenty-one gallons each. These, continued Nancy, would make up an ample supply of vessels, and, if taken care of, may last a man for his whole life.

Well, said Richard to his wife, Nancy, you speak like a regular brewer, but let us now compare the expense. I think I can assist you to the prices of the malt and hops. I will allow three quarts a day, that is, one thousand and ninety-five quarts, or two hundred and seventy-four gallons, in the year. Now, tell me how much malt and hops will make

two hundred and seventy-four gallons, and the thing is done.

Two hundred and seventy-four gallons, said Mrs. Mac Ready, will be made out of 40 stone of malt, and 15lbs. of hops, the former will cost (for the price varies,) about

	6	10	0
Hops
	1	0	0

£7 10 0

Making the whole expense less than that of the tea, and I grant you, said Richard, infinitely more profitable, for the grains and barm will amply repay the labour and fuel, in feeding pigs with the one, and making bread with the other. A man who brews beer, said Nancy, always has it in his power to have good ale likewise, provided he can afford to drink a glass of it now and then, when a friend calls in to see him. Well, Nancy, you have certainly the advantage of me, for I am quite ignorant of brewing. so let me hear you explain the process from the beginning: when you come out to the field, I hope to be even with you, for I suppose you dont know much about farming.

Nay, replied Nancy good humouredly, you must not expect that I should be able to tell it to you all at once; but I have the whole thing written out from a paper which Mr. Alford lent me to copy; and here it is, added she, going to her box, and opening a small pocket-book: I shall read it to you.

Instructions for Brewing.—The first thing to be considered on setting about brewing, is, the quality of the malt and hops, both of which are very easily, and therefore very frequently adulterated, so that the purchaser cannot be too careful in choosing them. When malt is good, it is full of flour, and it will be found easily bitten asunder, and having a thin shell; if it be hard and steely, the malt is bad: there is both pale malt and brown malt, but the best grain will always be found to be that which contains the most flour.

Hops (which, you know, are the husks or seed part of the hop-vine,) differ much, both in size, colour, and form: however, it is not difficult to choose them of the best quality, for they should be clammy to the touch, of a fresh colour, something between green and yellow; the seeds not too large or hard, and having a lively pleasant smell.

I have often thought, said Richard, of inquiring why hops are put into beer.

Mrs. Alford told me, said his wife, they are used for two reasons; to give it a fine flavour, and to preserve it.

New hops are therefore always preferable to old, which are generally found deficient in the latter quality. Beer then is made of malt, hops, and water; this last must be soft, and, if it can be had fresh from a river or a brook, so much the better, but on no account let it be

pond, or even rain water, except it be just fallen. Suppose a man wants to brew twenty-one gallons of ale and twenty-one of small beer, the following are the directions for these quantities, and the same course may be pursued by any person, according to his proportion of liquor. The first thing wanting will be a boiler, which shall contain twenty-four gallons; for though there are to be but twenty-one gallons of small beer, there must be room for the hops, and to make allowance for the quantity of liquor that goes off by the steam. Having filled the boiler with water, and made it boil, pour as much of it into the mashing-tub as you judge will be sufficient to soak the malt thoroughly; which, according to the proportions already mentioned, must be capable of containing thirty-six gallons. This vessel is generally the shape of a losset, being wider at top than at bottom, though a large washing-tub answers very well, and having either a brass cock or else a spigot and fosset in the side, near the bottom, for letting off the liquor occasionally. Now then begins the brewing. For the quantities which we now suppose the brewer to be making, four stone of malt is to be allowed. This is put *into* the water as soon as it is sufficiently cool;* and to ascertain this point exactly is one of the nicest and most important

* If boiling water were poured on the malt, the latter would clot and become useless.

parts of brewing. According to an instrument called a thermometer, which Mr. Alford had in his brewhouse, it should be of 170 degrees; but those who have no thermometer always put in the malt as soon as the steam has so far subsided, that, by stooping down and looking into the tub, one can see his face clearly in the water. When this is the case, the malt may be thrown in with safety, and the whole be stirred extremely well, with a stick having two or three smaller sticks, eight or ten inches long, crossing the lower end of it, about three inches asunder. These small cross-sticks serve to search the malt, and separate it well in the stirring, or mashing as it is more usually called: at the end of a quarter of an hour, the boiler having been previously filled as first mentioned, and the water boiled, there must be added to the malt in the mash-tub, as much water as will make up thirty gallons in all, including the lukewarm water in which it was first mixed. This is necessary for having twenty-one gallons of ale, for the grains will soak up six gallons or more of water, and it is better to have too much wort (as the liquor in this state is called) than too little. When the proper quantity of water has been poured in, stir the malt well again, and, covering over the tub with a thick cloth, or sack, which will do equally well, let it stand for a couple of hours. The liquor must then be drawn off from the

mashing-tub into another vessel called the under-bucket, by means of the cock or fosset before mentioned.

As soon as the ale wort is drawn off, the water must be put into the mashing tub for the small beer, which is next to be made from the same malt that served for the ale; but before entering on this subject, it is better to continue the process of making the ale.

The next thing to be done now is to lade out the ale wort from the under-bucket into the tun-tub, by means of a large bowl-dish, with a handle to it; and from the tun tub it must be transferred to the boiler, as soon as this latter is empty and ready to receive it; throw in a pound and a half of hops, well rubbed and separated as they are thrown in, and give all one good brisk boil for a full hour or more.— This being done, the fire may be put out, as nothing now remains but to pour the liquor through a coarse wicker basket, which answers as a strainer, to separate the hops from it; when one vessel is filled, go to another, and so on until the whole is poured off, taking care however not to put less into one vessel than another that it may all cool equally.

The next stage of the liquor is in the tun tub, into which it is poured and set to work in a cool place, when it has cooled down to a gentle warmth.* The tun tub should be capable of

* More accurately, the proper heat is 70 degrees.

holding thirty-six gallons, and an old cask of that size which has the head off, and is sweet and clean, will answer the purpose. Having put the liquor into the vessel, half a pint of barm which has previously been mixed with a gallon of the liquor, and a handful of wheaten or rye flour, must be poured, or rather dashed in strongly to the tun tub, the liquor then must immediately be well stirred, lading it up and then pouring it down again with the bowl-dish, until the barm be well mixed through it, The tun tub is now covered over with a couple of sacks; it is necessary however to mention, that in winter it is better to be placed in a warm situation, and two or three sacks may be wrapped about it if the weather be very severe. In about twenty-four hours the frothy head, which will have risen by degrees upon the liquor, must be skimmed off—in twelve hours more it should be again removed, and so on every twelve hours as long as it continues working, but it generally ceases after eight and forty hours. The beer (or ale, for it is of that we are now treating,) is now finished, and when quite cold may be put into the casks by a funnel or tun-dish. Having filled the cask, set it leaning a little to one side that, in case the beer should work any more, the scum may flow off freely; but let not any person imagine that this scum may be thrown away as useless,—on the contrary, here is fine barm for bread,

enough for a large family and plenty to sell to the baker besides. The cask should not be bunged down for as long as the beer continues to work, which will be about two or three days, and a few quarts should be reserved for filling up as fast as the scum comes off. When it is quite done, the cask may be set straight and a handful of fresh hops being thrown in, and the vessel filled up completely full, it may be bunged down, as close and tight as possible, in order to exclude the air; indeed it is quite necessary to attend particularly to this, for if the air gets in, the cask gets moulded and then it is unfit for use.

The ale being now finished we proceed to speak of small beer, for which nearly the same process is to be pursued; twenty-one gallons of water being the quantity that may be used with the malt before mentioned, and according to the same rules that have been already laid down, except, that when it is covered over with sacks and lying in the mash tub, it should be let to stand for only one hour instead of two. When going to boil the small beer wort, the same hops may be used again that served before, and half a pound of fresh added to them. It is right also to explain that these two processes may be carried on at the same time without interfering with each other—for beginning with the ale first, that liquor will be boiling in the boiler when you are ready to

use the mashing tub with your beer, and the ale will be set to cool by the time you are ready to boil the small beer wort; then when it is time to put the latter to cool, although the ale is occupying the cooling vessels, the mashing tub, for which there is now no further use, being well cleaned, will answer the purpose, and the straining basket can be used with it in the same manner as before. Beer requires more barm to be used with it than ale—a pint and a half will be just sufficient for the quantity for which the rules have been laid down; and it should be observed that small beer should be quite cold and not lukewarm when put into the casks.—Here Nancy concluded her paper, and Richard had no longer any objection to urge against their making the experiment.

It is true this system which we have here endeavoured to explain, seems a very difficult and laborious piece of work, but on making the experiment it will be found quite the reverse; there seem to be a great many things to be done and a great expense to be incurred, but in answer to these questions we can say that, there is nothing to be done which any servant woman or decent tradesman or farmer's wife could not do; and that as for the expense, the money that is yearly laid out on tea and whiskey would soon cover it. Every man can proportion the quantity of beer he may require

to brew, and if he has no mind to brew ale, he has only to go through the process of mashing twice, as we have already described, and mixing the two worts, boil them together with the hops; in short, nothing is so simple and easy as brewing good table beer, when one sets cleverly about it. The quantity of which we have described the process may be easily brewed in one day, by beginning early, say at four o'clock in the morning.

Here then is wholesome strengthening drink for a labouring family—far better than whiskey in the public-house, which the wife *ought* not to share, or tea over the fire-side, of which the husband *cannot* partake. Nothing can be gained without trouble, but beer can be made at least without labour.

We have given this process in full, as much because it enables the reader to judge of the domestic happiness which Richard now enjoyed, as in the hope of inducing him to try and brew a little of this wholesome beverage for himself; indeed it is a well known fact, as before mentioned, that formerly the practice prevailed very generally.

We have already mentioned the improvement Richard made in his farm-yard, by the tank for collecting the fertilizing juices of the stable and the dung-hil: but the subject of manure is so important that it deserves a more detailed explanation. In truth there was no part of the

farming economy to which Mr. Alford taught him to give more attention, or which he found it more useful to recommend to his neighbours, we shall therefore give at large his directions, as he wrote them down for Richard's guidance, assuring the reader, that he will be amply repaid for the perusal, if he follows the instructions they give. It is a preparation of treasure for the land, and a mine of wealth to the cultivator.

“Manure is a subject of the highest importance for every one having land or a garden to attend to.—Without it no good crops are to be expected except the soil be of a very fertile nature, and even then it will require to be replenished in some degree to keep it still in good condition. It is usual to make up a heap or dunghil near the house or in the yard, where the materials from the stable, cow-house, and pig-stye, may be swept up together.

“This business is often performed in a very slovenly manner, and much is wasted by the manure being left scattered about at the foot of the dunghil, and the heap not kept well packed up together, for the wind and rain tend very much to impoverish the quality of it, and therefore it should be as little exposed to the weather as possible; for this reason, when the wheelbarrows full of fresh manure are brought to the dunghil, they should be thrown up on the top and sides of the heap, in order that that which is of longest standing may still be kept

undermost, and consequently the best protected from the weather. But in forming a dunghil, there are many substances which may be added to it very profitably besides the refuse from the stable, cow-shed, and pig-stye, by which not only the quantity but the quality may be improved. In beginning to form a heap of manure, it is very much to be recommended, to make, as a foundation for it, a layer of earth taken from some adjoining field or ditch wherever it can be best spared. This may be made about twelve or eighteen inches thick, and the dung being thrown on that, the fluid part will soak down into this bed of soil, instead of running off, or forming into stagnant pools at the foot of the heap. If the soil of the farm be stiff or tough, it will be very useful to the crops whether they are to be of potatoes, corn, or meadow; to throw into the manure heap occasionally some barrows of turf-mould if it can be procured; but even mere earth will be very beneficial if the other cannot be had, and the heap may be made up of alternate layers of soil and dung; every thing about either the dwelling-house or the farm that can turn to account for the dunghil ought to be thrown into the heap;—soap-suds from the washing-tub—pickle and brine, from meat or fish—blood and hair from the slaughter-house, all help much to enrich the quality; and cabbage leaves, potato-stalks—in short every kind of refuse of

vegetables which are usually thrown out from a garden should be added; for these, when well rotted, and mixed up with stable manure make valuable additions to the dunghil, and would only be wasted if not applied to this use.— Those who live near the sea shore, may likewise find many other things which can be usefully applied to the same purpose. Shells, (especially oyster-shells,) when pounded make excellent manure, as also bones, and well rotted sea-weed, and even woollen rags, shavings of horns and hoofs, and soot, will turn to account for the dunghil. Bones of all animals are useful for the same purpose; those of a dead horse, for instance, cannot be better applied, and should be broken as small as possible with a sledge or large hammer: sometimes they are too hard to be broken even in this way, and when that is the case they may first be made brittle by being half burned, though this should never be done but when absolutely necessary, as they are not reckoned so good for manure afterwards.

“ Manure may therefore be divided into three different kinds: the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral, which may be used by the farmer either separately or mixed together.— The first is the cleanings from the stable, cowshed, &c. together with shells, bones, blood, hair, and every kind of animal refuse or offal. The second is derived from the refuse of the

garden and fields, and the last, or mineral manure, consists of lime or other substances, dug or quarried out of the earth, and either spread *raw* on the ground, or else previously prepared by fire in a kiln. Limestone, gravel, and clay may be used in either way, but especially the latter, will be found highly beneficial to some kinds of soil, when burnt in a kiln like lime. In preparing vegetable manure, the plants may either be burnt to ashes, or rotted in heaps with a slight mixture of turf-mould or clay with them.

By pursuing this system, Richard never was without a good heap of manure for his farm, and thus was enabled every year to get productive crops from his land, and yet still to preserve the fertile nature of the soil.

And here it may be well to mention, a new method by which Richard brought a piece of bad mossy pasture into good heart.—He had an old harrow out of which he took the teeth, and put in their place a few sharp coulter, not so long as to go deep into the ground, but sufficient to cut the surface, as the harrow was drawn over the field. The old sod being thus loosened, was easily raked away by women who followed the harrow with rakes for that purpose, and on this fresh surface of the soil he sowed mixed quantities of clover and grass-seed, which in the following year turned out good and profitable pasture; and he thus obtained it without all the delay and expense of the usual tedious method of breaking up the ground with

the plough. So useful are those simple and easy contrivances, which, but for the influence of prejudice, farmers would much oftener have recourse to.

Mac Ready had not been long a brewer till he became a baker also; and for this knowledge also he was indebted to his wife, who, soon after their marriage, induced her husband to build a small oven on one side of the kitchen fire. It has been well said, that every woman ought to know how to make bread, especially as it is so very simple a process; but how essentially necessary is it for her, who has to provide breakfast and supper for a hard working husband and hungry children: eating and drinking, (to those who can afford it,) must come round at least twice a day; and it is surely a woman's duty to make the week's earnings go as far as possible towards procuring these meals, not alone abundant in quantity, but also of the best quality; and she who will only boil a pot of potatoes, when she could, by a little cleverness, give her family so much more nourishing food, by baking good loaves of bread, which is on the whole less expensive, is surely deficient in one important point in a wife—willing, active industry;—the woman who can merely dawdle about with a bucket and broom, and the potato pot, is not of much assistance to her husband, or of much use to her children; for any one that has two hands could do that much.

So thought Mac Ready, as he saw his own industrious, clever wife, attending to every thing that concerned the frugal management of his property. We shall therefore proceed to give her directions for baking, as she gave them to one of her acquaintances who wished for the information. When a bushel of meal or flour, which contains 60lbs. is to be baked, put it into a large clean tub, make a deep hole in the middle of it, and having mixed a pint of good fresh barm, with the same quantity of luke-warm soft water, pour it into the hole in the meal; then with a spoon work it round and round, until by degrees you have thrown in as much of the flour or meal as will bring it to the consistence of thin batter, and continue after this to stir it for a minute or two; a couple of handfulls should then be thrown over the hole, and the tub covered up with a large cloth and left to stand in a warm situation, until you perceive that the barm has risen enough to make cracks in the surface; now is the time for making it into dough, which should be done gradually but thoroughly, throwing in from time to time a little luke-warm, soft water. Before this part of the process, however, is completed, salt must be strewed over the surface of the meal at the rate of half a pound to a bushel; and when you have got the whole sufficiently moistened, it must be well kneaded; this is a most essential part of the process, for if the dough be not well worked, there will be little

round lumps of flour in the loaves, and besides, the original batter which is to give fermentation to the whole, will not be duly mixed.—The dough must therefore be right well kneaded—the fists must go into it—it must be rolled over, pressed out, folded up and pressed out again, until it be completely mixed and formed into a stiff and tough dough; it is hard labour at the time, but it is a task for which the repayment is very ample. When the dough is made, it is to be formed into a large lump in the middle of the trough, and with a little flour thinly scattered over, it is to be covered up with a cloth and left to lie for about twenty minutes.

In the mean while, the oven is to be heated—nothing but experience will teach a person to understand well the management of an oven: but this much may be said by way of rule, if your oven be a brick one, a good smart fire of wood or furze ought to heat it sufficiently in the twenty minutes before mentioned; the fire must then be thrown out, the oven cleaned, and at nearly the same minute take the dough out of the tub, divide it into pieces for separate loaves, and make it up into the proper forms, keeping the board or table on which you are making it up, well dusted with meal to prevent the dough from sticking to it; the loaves should be put into the oven as quickly as possible after they are formed, and when in, the oven door should be shut close; in about two hours they

will be baked—but in order to satisfy anxiety or curiosity about them, the door may be occasionally opened cautiously, to allow you to look in.

Baking bread is one of the cleanest occupations that can be; here is no rubbish, no litter, no slop, such as the washing, and scraping, and paring of potatoes make—with the cottage always in a litter, the wife's hands wet and dirty, and the children eating food so much less nourishing than bread.

It was always one of Richard's maxims, that a man blessed by Providence, should show his gratitude, by making himself as useful to his fellow creatures as possible. "I know how much I have been indebted to example, and therefore I ought surely to benefit others in the same way." This was, indeed, amongst the many useful lessons which had been instilled into his mind, under the care and guidance of the good Mr. Alford; and with this motive, he walked down one evening to Tom Rafferty's cottage, thinking he could give him some useful advice, about establishing spinning-wheels in his family.

Tom was an honest, hard working man himself, and was employed by him as herd and ploughman, at low wages, and the usual allowance, for potatoes, manure, seeds, and other benefits, for his little plot of ground; his wife, however, was neither so active nor so industrious as Tom himself,—and many a time it made Richard sorry enough, to see the

wife and daughter sitting idle at home, whilst Tom himself was labouring hard abroad. 'Tis true, Jenny Rafferty was a decent, honest woman,—kept her place neat enough, and sent her children to school; but a woman can do all that very well, and have plenty of spare time besides: and though it certainly is a matter of great importance to send children to school, (and parents may well be thankful, when they have a school to put them to,)—yet it is also absolutely necessary to make them industrious.

Richard found Jenny Rafferty at home, and soon found means to make the conversation turn upon the subject he had in view.—“Knitting and spinning, (said he,) are highly useful: for they are always ready at hand, can be done in any weather, and taken up at any spare minute, by either girls or boys.” “I never saw boys either knitting or spinning, (said Jenny,) sure that’s much fitter work for girls.” “Fitter, certainly; (said Mac Ready,) but I don’t see what’s to prevent a boy from being as clever at both as a girl: and surely, if their earnings were ever so small, it would be better to employ their time in this way, than to let them spend it in doing nothing.” “The profit of spinning is so small, (said Jenny,) that indeed I never could see much good come of it,—I got very little more for the yarn I spun, than I paid for the flax at first.” “It is true, (said Richard,) you will not get a great deal more; but still it is a great mistake to suppose, that spinning

will bring in but a trifling profit to a family after all, for though you don't get much by it, I reckon it to be a great advantage to a poor person to get even a little—and here is exactly the profit you will have: one pound of hackled flax, fit for two dozen of yarn, can be bought for six-pence; a pretty good spinner will spin that pound of flax into two hanks of yarn in two days, and those two hanks will sell for eleven pence; which gives the spinner a profit of two pence halfpenny per day, or one shilling and three pence a week of six days; and with this consideration too, that it is sold for ready money, an advantage that is not to be overlooked by either poor or rich. Now, if your husband's earnings are, as you have often told me, sufficient for the support of his family, think what a nice little sum of money you would be able to lay up, either against sickness or the failure of your crops, or for buying winter clothing for the children; but more especially is it necessary, as I said before, for a time of sickness—it is that which reduces a poor family more than any thing else—the week's earnings then all go in medicine and other things necessary for them—and if the husband himself falls sick, what is to become of his family? Now fifteen pence per week comes to five shillings a month, and makes three pounds at the end of the year; and this, remember, is from the earnings of one person only; so that if you had another wheel in the house, at which your

daughter, Mary, or the other children in their turn could work, you might have ten shillings a month, or six pounds a year earned, instead of three pounds, and so on, in proportion to the number of your family or the number of wheels you employ."

"My husband and children are all, thank God, very healthy; (said Mrs. Rafferty,) we have never had a day's sickness yet.— I got the little ones vaccinated, so that there is no danger of the small pox; they took the whooping-cough very light, and the measles have not come amongst us yet." "Now, then, (said Richard,) is your time for saving money; and it appears to me, that with the assistance of Mary and your four younger children, you might be able to keep two wheels going besides your own, which, with the ready sale you can have for your yarn, will bring you in a weekly sum of three shillings and nine pence. It would be more profitable still to you, if you could grow your own flax. and with the piece of ground Tom has, I think he might do so—and then indeed your children would spin to advantage; lay out this sum in buying good and decent clothes for your little family, and no one's children in the neighbourhood will be able to make a more respectable appearance. But if your circumstances should enable you to lay up two shillings and six pence weekly in the Savings Bank, why in the course of a few years, you would have almost a fortune

at command. The work of two spinners would come with interest in seven years to fifty pounds, and at the end of twenty years to one hundred and eighty pounds." "Oh, you must make a mistake, (replied Jenny,) sure no one but Mr. Alford could have such a load of money as that—or, perhaps, (added she,) you want to persuade me to follow your advice, and so make it out such a fine"—"Jenny, (said Mac Ready, with seriousness,) I do wish you to take my advice, but I am incapable of telling you a lie even in jest—for I know that all liars have their portion in the lake that burneth for ever.—So think of what I have said, and remember, that God's blessing is with the industrious. I have got some very good seed of which he shall have share with pleasure; and after the first year he will be able to save his own, for it is quite a mistake to suppose, that the saving of the seed injures the flax. I would always recommend you to get it mill-scutched, instead of cloving it according to the common practice; for mill-scutched flax is of a much better quality, and will bring a considerably higher price than that done in the ordinary practice—it will yield much more hackled flax to the stone, and the tow is also of greater value: one reason for which is, that the drying over a fire, which is necessary to prepare the flax for cloving, injures it in such a way that it is never afterwards recovered."

It was rather an extraordinary coincidence, that Richard, within a few days after he had held this conversation with Jenny Rafferty, should have obtained a great deal of information on the very subject of the cultivation of flax, and also from the best sowers. The Linen Board of Ireland had for a long time remarked, the ignorant modes in which this plant is cultivated and prepared for the manufacturer in several parts of Ireland; and as they never left any means untried which could benefit that branch of trade, it struck them that the best way of introducing a better system into the country, would be, to bring a couple of intelligent and experienced flax growers from Holland, where the people are so famous for their linens, in order that they might instruct our countrymen. The two Dutchmen were, at this very time, travelling through the country, in company with the Agent of the Linen Board, and having had letters to Mr. Alford, that gentleman had sent them over to Richard, well knowing that no one was so competent to take their instructions, or more anxious for improvement in the old system.— Richard was sitting at his breakfast when he saw those persons coming towards his cottage, and as Mr. Alford's name was a sufficient introduction, it may well be supposed that no time delayed their entering upon the topic which so much interested them all; the inspector acted as interpreter, and thus Richard was

enabled to gather a very satisfactory statement of the mode practised in Holland.

After breakfast they walked abroad together, and as it was now the latter end of the flax harvest, they passed by several places where a large quantity was laid out in a field after steeping; they took up the plants, and seeing the seed vessels quite green and unripe, they lifted up their eyes in astonishment, at the ignorance that appeared to prevail. "We save our own seed, (said they) and as it is well prepared, we always find a ready market for it." "Suppose, then, (said Richard,) you would have the kindness to explain to me your mode of treating your flax—I know we might improve ours, and I promise faithfully, to give yours a fair trial next year, and if it answers, depend on my exertions to make it known among my neighbours." A long and interesting conversation here followed through the inspector, in the course of which Richard acquired a great deal of valuable information, and so obvious appeared the improvements which these foreigners recommended, that it only astonished him they should have remained so long unknown in this country. The instructions, however, were the same which follow in a more connected form, the Linen Board of Ireland having had them drawn up by their own inspector, and circulated through the flax growers in the country :—

“OBSERVATIONS ON THE TREATMENT OF FLAX
IN THE NETHERLANDS.

“*Soil.*—The soil preferred by the cultivators of Flax in the Netherlands, is a deep loamy clay, or what they term fat land, free from weeds, and capable of giving wheat, which is, in almost every case, the previous crop: it is, however, a general practice in that country, never to sow Flax but in rich, good ground.

“*Preparation of the Soil.*—The mode usually followed in the Netherlands of preparing ground for Flax, if from wheat-stubble, (the general previous crop,) is, after reaping, to have it *immediately lightly ploughed*, and let it lie in fallow until the ensuing spring, when it is again *lightly ploughed*, preparatory to the sowing of the seed.

“*Sowing.*—With respect to the seed sown in Holland and Zealand, it is invariably either Riga, or home saved, none other being used: the latter is sown for *two*, sometimes for three seasons, in succession, never longer, and at the end of that time, Riga seed is again sown; but some of the rich and judicious flax farmers, every year, sow a small parcel of Riga seed, so as to keep up a constant succession of fresh. When selecting seed for sowing, either of Riga or home saved, the most *scrupulous* attention is paid to procure it of the best and cleanest kind. As to the quantity sown in any given portion of ground, much depends on the quality

of the soil, and the age of the seed, which *experience alone* can determine; comparing their measurement with the English and Irish acre, the quantity sown however bears a due proportion to that of *Rigü* seed usually sown in England and Ireland. The time of sowing is generally between the end of March and the middle of April.

“*Pulling*.—In the Netherlands, and in France, flax is always allowed to arrive at maturity, and is *never pulled, particularly in Holland and Zeeland, until the seed is perfectly formed, and the capsule brown and hard, so as to be easily disengaged from the stalk*; when in that state, it is pulled, and at *once* made into *small sheaves*, which are placed in stooks of *eight to the stook*; the root ends on the ground, projecting, and the heads meeting at the top in such a manner as to present the entire of them to the air; in this way it remains eight, ten, and sometimes fourteen days, according to the state of the weather; should occasional rain fall during this time, it is considered of great service, to wash off the impurities and withered leaves that attach to the plant when ripening.

“*Rippling*.—When the flax is sufficiently dried, it is carried to the barn, and the process of taking off the seed immediately commences; this operation in the Netherlands is chiefly done by ripples, or iron pins, about sixteen inches long, and one inch square at the bottom,

gradually narrowing to the top, and formed into squares; the pins are fastened in a block of timber, above four inches thick, eighteen inches wide, and made in the form of an octagon, the upper part sloped off, so as to let the boles run down to the floor; those pins are set at about a quarter of an inch asunder, thirty of them in each block, which is fastened by means of two staples and wedges, to a two-inch plank, that rests on trestles of a sufficient height for grown persons to sit on whilst rippling; two usually work at the same ripple, sitting opposite each other, and drawing the flax *alternately* through the teeth. During this process, great care is taken not to let it slip through the hands, so as to entangle the *root* ends, which in *every process* are kept as *even as possible*. When the seed is discharged, the flax is again made into small sheaves, and, in *every instance*, bound together by platted cords, made of strong rushes, that usually last for years, and are carefully put up from one season to another; when the entire quantity of flax prepared for rippling has undergone that operation, *the boles* are immediately run through a very coarse screen, sufficiently open to admit every particle of waste or dirt to pass through, so that they remain free of all impurities. The waste discharged in this manner is used by bakers in heating ovens, and the bole, by being thus cleaned, remains safe, and the seed can be kept for any time required. The mode

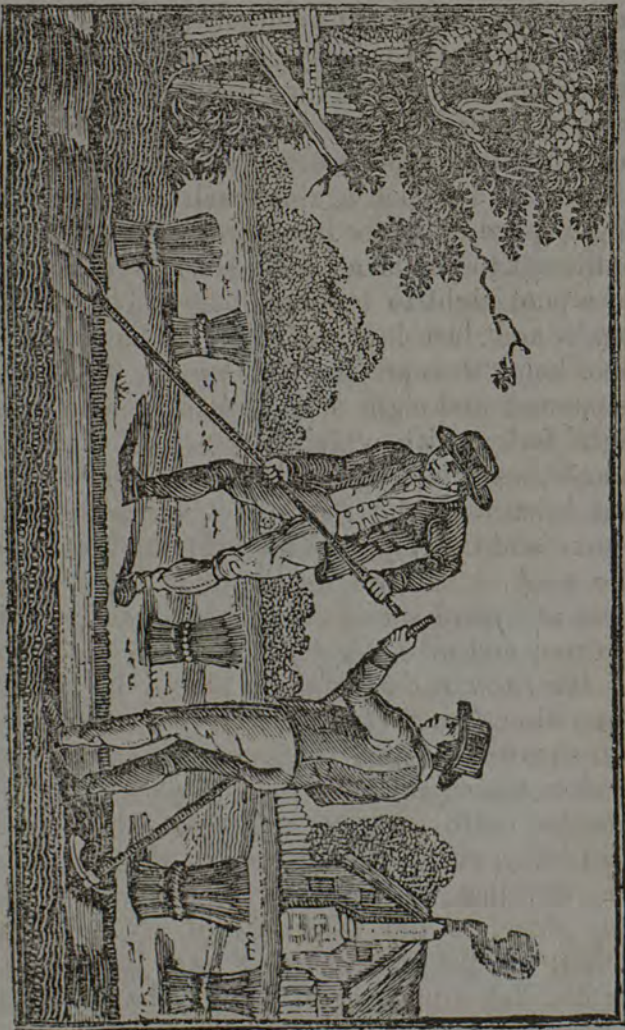
FLAX DRESSING.



most approved of for taking the seed from the bole, is to thrash it, which is done by a flail, the handle of which is similar to a common one, but the *working part* is not more than half the usual length, about four inches diameter; the *hulls*, after the seed is discharged, are sold at the rate of two-pence the *sack*, for feeding *cattle* in the winter; they are chiefly bought by Brabant farmers, who mix them with various other vegetables and *carrots*, which they grow with their flax, in ground suitable; in Brabant particularly, numerous fields, may be seen, with flax standing to dry, and the peasantry weeding carrots that had grown with it, and which appeared in a prosperous state.

“ *Steeping*.—This process, being the most important one which flax undergoes, and on which its value in a great measure depends, claims the most serious attention. In general the steeping pools in Holland are similar to what are known in Ireland as *trenches* of water to drain and divide low grounds, such as abound in various parts of the South and West Provinces particularly, where the soil is best suited for the growth of flax, and most like that of Holland and Zealand. Those trenches, in the summer months, are grown over with light grass and weeds, which are cut a little before steeping time, from the edges of the bank only, leaving the middle of the trench undisturbed. Previous to steeping, a sod or

SLEEPING FLAX.



mud bank is thrown across each end of that *portion of the trench* required, which is seldom more than sixty to eighty yards long. In making those banks, the mud for a distance of eleven to twelve feet from each end, is drawn with iron scrapers from the bottom and middle of the trench, and sloped against each of them, leaving a space of water free from weeds and mud, sufficient to put in a set of sheaves, and admit of a pool eight to ten feet between the cross-bank and last layer of flax. The steeping-pool being thus prepared, a bundle of sheaves is opened, and eight of them laid in with small light forks, with which they are as *regularly* placed, as if laid with a line, each sheaf being put down with the root end towards the cross bank, and the top end towards the bottom of the pool; when the first layer is down, a second and third set of eight sheaves are put in, the root end of *every layer meeting the bands of the former one*, and all placed in an oblique direction. When *three layers*, or twenty-four sheaves, (which is *always the number* put in at a time,) are laid, the steepers, who are provided with scrapers and forks, draw from the bottom of the trench, *mud, slime, weeds, &c. &c.* just as it comes to hand, and this they place, to the thickness of six to eight inches, on the flax, leaving *only as much of the last layer uncovered*, as may be sufficient to receive the first layer of the next, and for which room is made by the removal of the mud,

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slime, &c. used as a covering for the former layer. In laying on the mud, great care is taken to plaister it together, and so combine it as to exclude the air and light completely from the flax.* The entire quantity being thus placed in the pool, nothing appears but a surface of mud.

The next operation is to throw from that part of the *trench* not wanted, a sufficient quantity of water to cover the entire mass to the depth of six to eight inches.—This business is performed by means of a triangle made of slight poles, placed across the trench near one of the banks; from the center of the triangle is suspended, by a slight cord, a shute or oblong box capable of containing about five to six gallons, and which lies a small depth in the water; to the shute is attached a long handle, with which the steeper works it, and so throws the water into a cut made in one corner of the cross bank, by which it is conveyed over the mud; when this is done, the flax remains from six to thirteen days, according to its quality, the temperature of the weather, and in some cases the properties of the water and mud. It is here necessary to observe, that the flax growers in the Netherlands

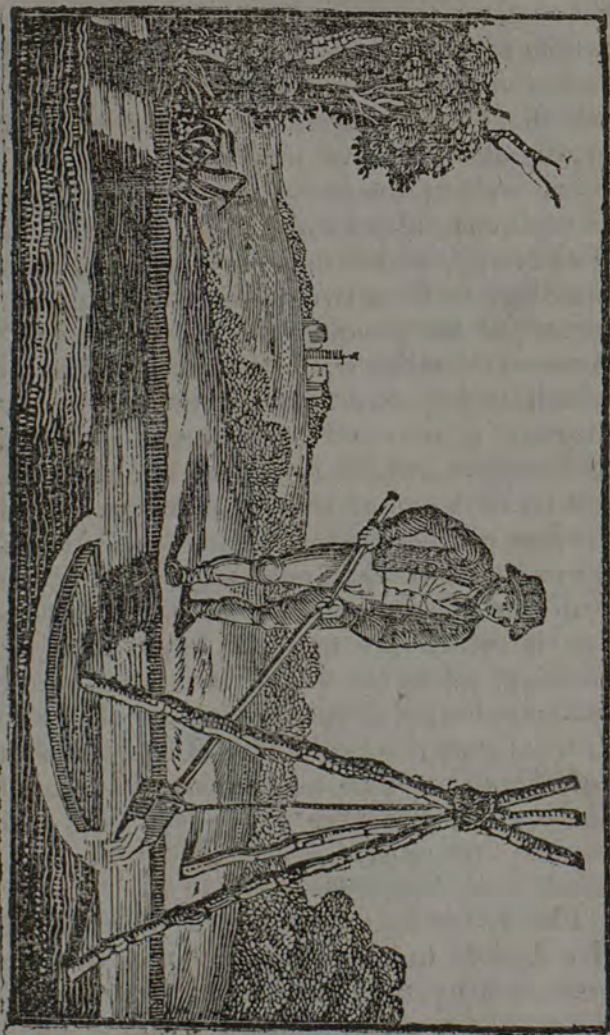
* Only *one* set of *layers* of sheaves in depth is put in each steeping pool at a time, it being found injurious to the flax to let the discharge of *mucilage* from one parcel blend with another. About one foot of water is in the pool, when the flax is laid in.

carefully watch the flax during the steeping process, particularly after the fifth day, when they *once in every twenty-four hours take out a sheaf with a fork, and examine it: if not sufficiently steeped, it is carefully replaced and covered.*

When the flax is found sufficiently steeped, it is drawn out with great care by forks, beginning with the sheafs last laid in, one sheaf only being taken out at a time, which is turned over into the water to disengage the mud from it, when it is gently washed in the pool, and left at the end of the cross bank for that purpose; after washing, it is laid in rows by the side of the pool to drain, from which it is spread on the grass, where it remains until the cultivator finds it *ready for breaking*; for this process, there is no defined time, every farmer judging for himself when his flax should be raised; but it is the uniform practice, *to grass* all flax after steeping; no regard whatever is paid to the situation of the steeping pools as to aspect; they lie in every direction; nor does it appear to be of any moment, in consequence of the *total exclusion of the light and air by the covering of mud, &c.* When removing the flax from the field to the barn, or store, it is again made into *small sheaves* nearly of an equal size, *twelve* of which are bound together similarly to what they were when going to be steeped.

“*Note.*—No persons steeping their flax in the manner described in this paper, will be subject to any of the penalties enacted by law in respect of the steeping of flax.”

TURNING WATER ON FLAX.



“ *Drying*.—Should the flax which has been raised from the grass be found partially damp, which often happens in Holland, it is dried, or rather *aired*, on what is called a kiln, but which is merely a brick building in an open space, about twelve feet long, with a slight brick wall in the center, and projecting walls at each end, about three and a half feet deep. The fire pit, which runs the length of the entire building, is from two to three feet under the surface of the ground; the fuel is always the shoves and other waste that drop in scutching, which is kept continually stirring, so as to throw a regular and gentle heat to every part of the plant, which lies across strong rods that rest on each end of the projecting walls; when the flax can be cleaned without this process, it is so done; but when necessary, it is performed with the greatest care; immediately after the flax is sufficiently aired, it is put in a small building, air-tight, where it remains until it cools: putting flax in this building after airing, is, what gave rise to the idea of its being stoved in Holland previous to cleaning, but from the closest enquiry it does not appear, that such a practice ever existed.”

The following day, Richard walked over to Mr. Alford, to ask his opinion of the directions given by the Dutchmen; he found him, however, already acquainted with the details, and most anxious to set them forward amongst

his neighbours. "I have spoken," said he, "to the most sensible men on the subject, and find them all of the same opinion. My design therefore, is, (continued he,) to offer small premiums to such of my tenants as will follow these instructions, and, as the Linen Board, have themselves, offered a premium of 4s. per barrel for sound seed, I should hope they will find it their interest, to leave off this old and slovenly mode of cultivating this most useful plant: Read the following liberal encouragement," said Mr. Alford to Richard, "and say if we are not without excuse, if we refuse to profit by it."—

"A sum not exceeding £2,000 will be granted towards promoting the saving of flaxseed in Ireland, from the crop of flax to be grown in the year 1823.

"The said sum of £2,000 will be distributed after the rate of 4s. for every barrel or sack containing not less than four Winchester bushels of sound seed saved, which will be paid on the Inspector's certificate of the quantity, who will also stamp the casks or sacks which may contain the same, in like manner as casks or sacks containing imported seed are stamped, and that the flax has been rippled and steeped after the manner described in this document.— No claim to be received after the 1st day of December, 1823; and if the claims shall exceed the sum of £2,000, a rateable deduction will be made from each of the claims,

“ This bounty is intended to draw the attention of the growers of flax to the advantages of looking to the seed as a part of the crop, like the seed of any other vegetable they sow.

“ The general calculation in the countries where seed is so considered, shows, that land, the size of our plantation acre, is expected to produce 5 barrels of good seed, each barrel containing 4 bushels. The profit then of an Irish acre, from the seed alone, may be thus calculated:—

Estimating seed to sell 8s. per						
bushel,	£8	0	0
Premium,	1	0	0
				<hr/>		
				£9	0	0
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all which is within the farmer's grasp, and has not, except in a few instances, ever been received by him, or taken into the account of the profits of his farm.

“ You may depend, Sir,” said Richard, “ that they shall not want an example, for I am resolved to follow the instructions of the Linen Board, to the letter; and perhaps if it is seen that they thrive with me, it will be better than a thousand lectures on the subject.” “ I have no doubt,” replied Mr. Alford, “ of your exertions; and as you mean to make the trial, you shall have the working implements that are used in Holland, provided you will, in turn,

lend them to those who are disposed to make use of them. Here is also, a short comparison of the different modes practised in Holland and Ireland, which shows at a view, the advantages of the Dutch system. The Dutch have always been an industrious, money making people; their soil is naturally marshy—but labour has made it fertile—and as their linens have a great name all over the world, for strength and goodness, I don't think there is much risk in taking a lesson from them.

IRISH MODE.

No settled rule is followed for preparing the soil for flax cultivation. Some plough light, others deep,—some sow under the harrow, in potato ground, without ploughing; whilst others plough two or three times, — and more prepare with the spade.

In Ireland, little attention is paid to the seed, which is of various kinds:—Riga, Dutch, English, home-saved, and American.

In Ireland the time of sowing varies greatly: from the end of March to the first or second week in June.

In Ireland, the flax is generally pulled green, under

DUTCH MODE.

One plan is followed by all. After reaping the wheat, which is generally the previous crop, the ground is lightly ploughed, then let to lie in fallow until the ensuing spring, when it is again lightly ploughed.

In Holland, the seed is of the best description; either the best Riga, or home-saved; the American is decidedly the worst, being subject to fall at every blast of wind or heavy shower; it is also subject to mildew or fire.

In Holland, the sowing time is always between the end of March and middle of April.

In Holland, the seeds are always suffered to come to

the idea that the fibres are then finer and softer for the manufacturer of linen.

In Ireland, the capsule or seed vessel, is allowed to remain on the plant whilst steeping.

In Ireland, the bundles of flax, which are of various sizes, are steeped, sometimes in running streams, where they are subject to floods and partial dryness, sometimes several feet under water, in bog holes. The bundles are thrown in heads and points together, and pressed down by large stones, by which means the discharge from the upper bundles frequently lodges on those below, producing stains which the bleacher finds it very difficult to remove.

In Ireland, the flax is taken at once after it is pulled, to the steeping.

In Ireland, when the flax is taken from the steep it is not washed previous to grassing,—it becomes encrusted with drops of a colouring matter, which prevents the linen from attaining a uniform whiteness.

maturity, the flax being never pulled till the seed vessel is brown and hard, so as to be easily disengaged from the stalk.

In Holland it is always previously removed, the seed forming a principal part of the farmer's profit.

In Holland, the bundles are laid down in steeping pools a foot deep, as regularly as if laid with a line, and so that the roots of each layer meet the bands of the preceding one; the whole is then covered with a coating of mud, slime, weeds, &c. to the height of six or eight inches, so as to exclude the air and light completely from the flax.

In Holland, the bundles are stooked—the heads remaining eight, ten, or fourteen days exposed to the weather.

In Holland, the bundles are carefully washed—then spread out on the grass to dry,—it is then carried to the kiln.

“And, is it possible,” said Richard to Mr.

Alford, "that the seed thus saved would be worth the trouble?" "There is nothing, Richard, which can be gained by honest industry but is worth the trouble. but we have other means of answering your question;—during ten years the number of acres under flax was averaged at 760,000, yearly. Now each acre produced at least twenty bushels to the acre—let us suppose it sold for 10s. the bushel, or £3 10s. the hogshead, the seed alone would have accumulated to seven millions and a half of money—an amazing sum; which would have given employment to many thousands of our working classes—but it is not the first instance that the Dutch have taught us the value of industry; for many years, they supplied the inhabitants of England with herrings caught upon the English shores and salted, and this was the foundation of their commercial wealth. Now you perceive we might actually, ourselves, save the quantity of seed required every year, instead of buying it from other countries." "Well, Sir," said Richard, "you have convinced me, that when the Dutch bestow so much care in the cultivation, we cannot be right in giving it so little.—We may meet with some opposition from those who love to go on in the old way, because it is old—but I think we shall at length convince them, by the most powerful of all methods—example; that they ought to follow our improved method."

Richard had held his farm six years—his wife presenting him during that time three fine children, the eldest of whom, a boy now five years old, was able to walk with his father over the fields, when he was not obliged to go far or stay long from home. Little Peter was a fine child, and though so young, he could read his prayer book, and those parts of the Bible which were easily understood. The history of Joseph he knew almost by heart; for often, even before he could himself read, would he climb his father's knee after work, that he might read to him, how little Joseph was sold by his cruel brothers for a slave; and how he had forgiven them, and brought them all to live with himself many years after, when they had become poor, and he through his good conduct was governor of a great kingdom. He also loved to read of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, who had been a boy like himself, and obedient to his parents; and the many good and charitable things he used to do, and the amusing stories, by which he used to teach man to be just in all their dealings, and good to the poor, and pious to God. We mention this, not in praise of Peter or his father, but to teach parents, that they should begin even from the earliest age, to give their children a fondness for the Bible, and store their little minds with that kind of knowledge, which they are able to comprehend. "They are a most precious gift of God," (Richard used to say,) "and

should I allow them to grow up ignorant of religion, who is to blame but myself, if they in after life become headstrong, vicious, and undutiful?" Did we begin from the first, to check the growth of evil passions, how many hours would we pass in happiness, with our children, which are now made unhappy by their failings; how highly should we be rewarded by their love and attachment, when old age or sickness obliged us to want this return; and how much misfortune should we spare the child, by giving him the right path to walk in, and showing him how much it is his interest, as well as duty, to do what God requires us to do. The great error that people fall into is, that of considering the errors of a little child as of no consequence. They will say, "What signifies it? sure, he is so young, how could he know better? wait till he is older, and then he will be good enough." But let no parent trust to this—the child that is allowed to be naughty when young, will not be tractable when he grows up,—and he well knows the difference between obedience and disobedience before a year and a half old. At this age too, its dispositions are so amenable, and a parent can so easily gain influence over them, that it is his own fault (generally speaking), if he has it to say in after life: "I labour under the greatest of all sorrows—I have an undutiful child." "Please God," cried Mrs. Mac Ready, "that will not be our misfortune;

for you recollect that passage, which we were reading lately in our Bible — “train up a child in the way he should go. and when he is old, he will not depart from it”

We have thus followed Richard Mac Ready, from his first unpromising appearance, as an almost destitute and neglected boy, to his well deserved situation in a comfortable farm, prosperous in the world, and happy both in his wife and children. We have shewn, that the foundation of the success he experienced in life was, a well-grounded sense of religion, as it respected his duty to God and to his neighbour, and as almost every *farmer lad* may obtain the same, by a careful attention to those opportunities within his power, we may venture to hope, that the good example will not be without its followers. We have also exhibited him under those trials and disappointments, from which none are or can hope to be free; and how they may be resisted or overcome, by a faithful exercise of those faculties entrusted to him, and a never failing trust in Him, who has promised, to be with his servants an ever present help in time of trouble. Some misfortunes, indeed befel him, which we have not thought it necessary to mention as we passed along;—two of his children died in their infancy, and both he and Nancy felt all a parent's bitterness of sorrow, as they laid them in their early grave; they did not grieve, however, as without hope: nor did they fail to offer up their thanksgivings

for what the Almighty had left, as well as for what he had taken away; his crops occasionally failed, his best laid plans were sometimes disappointed: but what of all this? these trials kept him humble, and perhaps had they not been sent, his heart would have swelled with pride, and his lips forgotten to praise the Almighty bestower of every good gift.

We now leave him and Nancy, approaching to middle life, surrounded by a thriving family, whom they endeavoured to lead in the paths in which they themselves had walked. May we not hope they will meet a parent's reward, in the love and obedience of dutiful children. These last possessed advantages which Richard had never enjoyed; and we would venture to foretel their future success in life, and their kindly qualities of head and heart, did not experience come in and interrupt our anticipations. What station is so secure that adversity cannot reach it? or what heart so exempted from the frailties of our fallen nature, that even when he thinks to stand, he should not take good heed lest he should fall?

Reader, whoever thou art, the friends longest acquainted must at length part. We brought before you the History of Richard Mac Ready, the Farmer Lad, in the hope that you would make the better parts of his character your imitation, and draw some lessons of useful industry from his practical knowledge. We would willingly dwell upon his life, because

we know that his understanding was sound, his mind well disposed, and his religious sentiments strong; and we know the advantage of placing constantly before the eyes of those who need improvement, the light of a good example. Our regret, however, will be diminished: nay, it will be altogether removed, if we can assure ourselves, that even one individual has been led from idleness to industry, from poverty to comfort, or from ignorance to knowledge. But what is our gratification, compared with that which will be felt by him, whom Richard's example influences for good. He will feel the satisfaction of self-approval; he will call down upon his path the blessing which is promised to the good, even here below. He will be the means of influencing others by his example, and perhaps furnish out to some other person, the pleasing task of painting the life and virtues of another

FARMER LAD.



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