

CONN COYLE'S ELDEST.

By CHARLES KENNETH BURROW.

Author of "The Way of the Wind," "The Fire of Life," "The Lifted Shadow," Etc., Etc.

(Copyright, 1900, by R. S. McElure Co.) It was a sunny, which made it difficult for Maggie's bare legs to carry her toward Carmore as rapidly as the occasion demanded. She made herself as small as possible, held the shawl which covered her head close under her throat and in the lull of the wind increased her pace to a run. There was really no particular hurry, but the unattractiveness of her errand seemed to the girl to give no loophole for delay. Crumpled up in her left hand was a slip of paper, on which was scrawled a list of the articles she was to buy and carry back to Ballylogher. The luxuries enumerated on the slip of paper were for the entertainment of one guest, Maggie's uncle, her mother's brother, whom she had never seen. She understood him to be rich; indeed, he was always held up by Mrs. Coyle as a model for her husband's imitation. "His hundreds," she used to say, "hundreds, and it's my belief they're all in gold; ye can see money in 'is face. It's my belief he's warm, Conn, if ye'd think av the poor childer."

adjoined the forge, Jim left his companion with "Good day, Maggie!" and a wave of hand. He had previously appointed to see her on the following day. When the children came in from school, a riotous mob, they were taken by Maggie to be "put straight," a process which involved much howling and many tears. She was so full of the morning's episode that she would have preferred not to change the dress she wore; it seemed now to be part of the altered life. In the same way she hesitated to wash the mud from her feet. But of course she did both, and in the act was brought nearer to the practical side of things again. When she went downstairs her father had been in from the forge, and was sitting, clean and uncomfortable, near the hearth. Mrs. Coyle sat opposite to him; the nine children were perched on two wooden benches that ran along the wall. They made way for her with many signals and suppressed giggles. "What's the shill, there? Yer uncle is not used to the like av that!" "God help him, then," said Conn. "An' why God help him? Sure, every man marry, an' it's well they don't!" "Have yer say, have yer say," said Conn. "I'm thinkin' Frank Power's a sad man, that's all!" "Faith, thin, 'tis the money do it."

It was decided that Maggie should go, Frank Power, when he made the offer, knew it was inevitable and congratulated himself on the brilliant idea which had sent him to see Ellen's eldest girl. Her attractiveness was beyond his hopes, even in his eyes she was pretty, and he saw no more than the shell of her, the accidents of feature and of health. He advanced a meager sum toward the purchase of the necessary outfit, to be repaid, he said, when she was earning for herself. Maggie's parting from James Phelan was a very simple matter after all. Her heart was too big for speech, and his, if not that, at least prompted him to say no more than might have been overheard with safety by any passer-by. Mary Cregan, as he knew, had long ears and a longer tongue; it was well to be discreet. But Frank Power, who had a habit of silent prowl, both saw and heard. He said nothing, but that night his lean face looked leaner and his crafty eyes drew closer together under bent brows. "Conn's last words to Maggie were: 'Be good, dearie, and when ye come back we'll be proud av ye.'"

The change to Maggie from Ballylogher to Belfast was like moving from free air to a close room. Disappointment met her on the threshold of the new life, for the alderous shop which she had imagined, with a plate-glass front and sumptuous display of millinery, far finer than anything in Carmore, proved to be a dark little place in a side street, with hardly more room than Mrs. MacDonagh's. A god deal of business appeared to come in, but was mainly with poor people, and instead of handling silks and velvets Maggie had to sell such common stuffs as she had been familiar with from childhood. Maggie and a companion worked at one counter, Frank Power sat in the next parlour at another facing it. The new partner was an amiable young man, content, it seemed, to work under his senior's direction, and appearing to have no ideas of his own. Power ruled the place. He sat up late at night over his books, long after the household had gone to bed. Once, when Maggie came down to fetch something she had forgotten, she found him in his little counting house poring over rows of figures like a man whose life depended on the solution of some fantastic puzzle. At the sound of her step he rose, white and trembling; then he cursed her for a plague and drain on him; afterwards he made a stinging apology, accompanied with frigid endearments, which the girl understood less than his rage. She wrote to Jim, of course, and received no answer. This did not trouble her much, because she knew that he was handling with the tongue than with the pen. She had a letter from her parents at rare intervals, but in their letters there was naturally no reference to Jim, as she had told them nothing of that incident of her life. So the weeks passed until six months were over. The expected payment did not begin from that date; she must wait, Power said, until trade was better—six months or nine had been his words. She should think herself lucky for having clothes and free keep and a friend like his partner to show her the world. At the end of the nine months she asked again and was again put off. But Maggie's idea of a contract was very simple, and she had much too strong a spirit to give in tamely to a superior power. She pressed—insisted; Power shuffled, wheedled and raved by turns. When she found that no advantage was gained she determined to appeal to Rioridan. One evening she had been to her mother's house to tea; afterwards he took her for a sail on the Lough. It was as they walked back together that she spoke. "Mister Rioridan," she said, "may I ask ye a question?"

"To be sure, Maggie!" "It's nine months since I ken here, an' at the end of six or nine I was promised some money. "Quite right—an' haven't ye got it?" "You a pithy," she said. "Ye say that?" He stepped short for a moment, then walked on slowly with bent brows. "I thought maybe ye'd see me through wid it, Mister Rioridan. Av course, if I'm worth no pay, I'll have an' welcome." "The old blagyard," Rioridan muttered under his breath. "Ye're aye," she went on, "I want to take a look at me own people, an' till I've money I'm tied here like a dog to a gate." "Maggie, ye'll have ivery penny ye were promised for the last three months tom'orrow. On me an' I thought ye'd had it." Maggie did not grasp the full meaning of this; she only thought there had been some mistake. "An' thank ye, Mister Rioridan," she said, flushing with pleasure. "Ay, an' if I've my way ye shall have more—an' I've got, be-lay, and ye can live away from the old man." "An' I worth more?" she asked. "Ye're worth all a man can give ye, Maggie. Sure, if ye'll have me ye'll never go near the shop, where I'm yours for the takin' child, and that's God's truth!" The meaning of it rushed upon her like a black mist. Her heart sickened. "Ach, not that!" she cried. "There's a boy at home who's waitin' av me, an' it's him I'm wantin' to see!" "Rioridan took the blow like a man. After a moment's silence he lifted his head and laid a hand on her shoulder. "If that's so," he said, "I'm done, and not another word I'll say." Maggie smiled at him through tears. "Ye're a good man," she said, "an' God bless ye."

President McKinley will be re-nominated at Philadelphia June 19 next.

The campaign for his re-election promises to be one of the most hotly waged political battles in the history of our country.

Are You a Loyal Republican?

If so you will want to keep informed of the progress of the contest and you can keep abreast of the events in no way so well as by reading The Bee from day to day.

Do You Want McKinley and Prosperity?

If so, you owe it to yourself and your party to do what you can to strengthen his cause. You can strengthen the republican cause no better than by disseminating good republican literature in the form of a daily or weekly newspaper like The Bee, which will carry republican principles to the home and fireside.

Do You Know Any Doubtful Voters?

If so, get them to subscribe for The Bee and thus inspire them with republican doctrine. The Bee's editorial discussions treat of every day topics in an intelligible and convincing manner from the republican standpoint. You can have The Weekly Bee sent to any of your friends or neighbors from now until after election for 35 cents. We make this unprecedentedly low offer, taking the chances on having the reader subscribe for himself before that time expires.

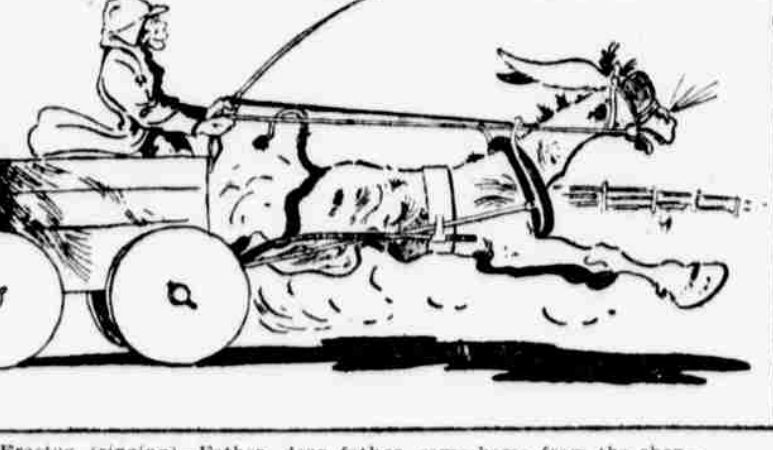
Do You Want Nebraska Redeemed?

That is what The Bee is working for day by day. It is exerting itself in every direction to reinforce the party organization and bring the state again into the republican column. Do you think you can make any better acknowledgment of the prosperity enjoyed under a republican administration than by helping along in this movement by subscribing for The Bee yourself and pushing it among friends and neighbors?

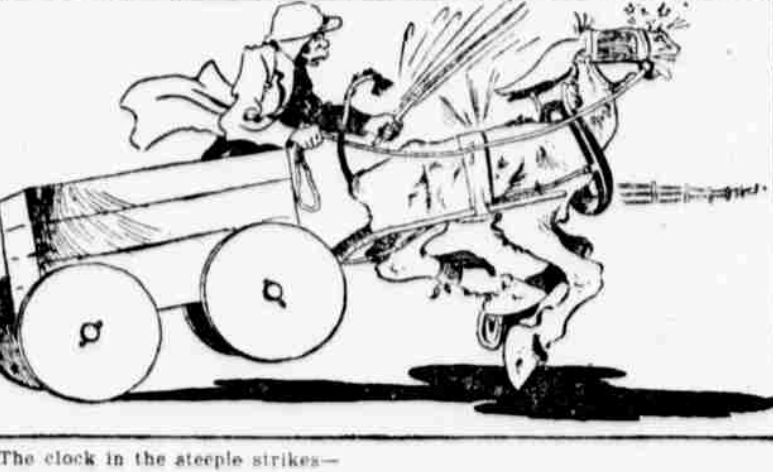
Do You Read The Bee Regularly? If Not, Why Not?

The Bee Daily, Sunday and Illustrated \$8.00 Weekly and Illustrated \$2.00 Weekly 65c The Bee Publishing Co., Omaha, Nebraska.

THE INTERRUPTED SONG.



1—Erastus (singing)—Father, dear father, come home from the shop—



2—The clock in the steeple strikes—



3—Ouel! I

THERE IS A CLASS OF PEOPLE who are injured by the use of coffee. Recently there has been placed in the grocery stores a new preparation called DR. J. C. COLE'S COFFEE. It is a most delicate stomachic coffee, and it does not cost over 14c. Children may drink it with great benefit. It is 25c per package. Try it. Ask for DR. J. C. COLE'S.