O, King of Glory, is it not a great change
Since I was a young man, long, long ago?
When the heat of the sun made my face glow
As I cut the grass, on a fine cloudless day;
Fair girls laughing,
All through the field raking hay,
Merry in the fragrant morning,
And the sound of their voices like music in the air.
The bees were after the honey,
Taking it to their nests among the hay,
Flying against us nimble and merrily,
And disappearing from sight with small keen buzz.
And the butterflies on the thistles,
And on the meadow daisies, and from flower to flower.
On light wing lying and rising up.
Moving through the air—they were fine.
The blackbird and the thrush were in the small nut wood,
Making sweet music like the songs of the birds,
And the sprightly lark with a song in her little mouth
Peeping herself in the air aloft.
The beautiful thrush was on top of the branch,
His throat stretched out in melodious song.
And, O, God of Grace, it was fine to be
In beauteous Ireland at that time!

OUR WEEKLY STORY.

THE SISTERS.

By STEPHEN DEDALUS.

Three nights in succession I had found myself in Great Britain—street at that hour, as by Providence. Three nights also I had raised my eyes to that lighted square of window and speculated. I seemed to understand that it would occur at night. But in spite of the Providence, which had led my feet, and in spite of the reverence of my eyes, I had discovered nothing. Each night the square was lighted in the same way, faintly and evenly. It was not light of candles, so far as I could see. Therefore, it had not yet occurred.

On the fourth night at that hour I was in another part of the city. It may have been the same Providence that led me there—a whimsical kind of Providence to take me at a disadvantage.
As I went home I wondered was that square of window lighted as before, or did it reveal the ceremonial candles in which light the Christian must take his last sleep? I was not surprised, then, when at supper I found myself a prophet. Old Cotter and my uncle were talking at the fire, smoking. Old Cotter is the old distiller who owns the batch of prize setters. He used to be very interesting when I knew him first, talking about "faints" and "women." Now I find him tedious.
While I was eating my airabout I heard him saying to my uncle:

"Without a doubt. Upper storey—he tapped an unnecessary band at his forehead)—gone."
"So they said. I never could see much of it. I thought he was sane enough."
"So he was, at times," said old Cotter.

I sniffed the "was" apprehensively, and gushed down some strababut."
"Is he better, Uncle John?"
"He is dead."
"O . . . he's dead?"
"Died a few hours ago."
"Who told you?"
"Mr. Cotter here brought us the news. He was passing there."
"Yes, I just happened to be passing, and I noticed the window . . . you know."
"Do you think they will bring him to the chapel?" asked my aunt.
"Oh, doe, ma'am. I wouldn't say so."
"Very unlikely," my uncle agreed.

So old Cotter had got the better of me for all my vigilance of three nights. It is often annoying the way people will harry on what you have elaborately planned for. I was sure he would die at night.
The following morning after breakfast I went down to look at the little house in Great Britain-street. It was an unassuming shop registered under the vague name of "Draper." The drapery was principally children's boots and umbrellas, and on ordinary days there used to be a notice hanging in the window, which said "Umbrellas Recovered." There was no notice visible now, for the shop blinds were drawn down and a cape bouquet was tied to the knocker with white ribbons. Three women and a couple of people and a telegram boy were reading the card pinned on the cover. I also went over and read—"July 2d, 189—The Rev. James Flynn (formerly of St. Ita's Church), aged 65 years. R.I.P."

Only sixty-five! He looked much older than that. I often saw him sitting at the fire in the close dark room behind the shop, nearly smothered in his great coat. He seemed to have almost stiffened himself with heat, and the gesture of his large trembling hand to his nostrils had grown automatic. My aunt, who is what they call good-hearted, never went into the shop without bringing him some High Toast, and he used to take the packet of stuff from her hands, gravely inclining his head for sign of thanks. He used to sit in that stuffy room for the greater part of the day from early morning, while Nannie (who is almost stone deaf) read out the newspaper to him. His other sister, Eliza, used to mind the shop. These two old women used to look after him, feed him, and clothe him. The clothes were not difficult, for his ancient, priestly clothes were quite green with age, and his dogskin slippers were everlasting. When he was tired of hearing the news, he used to rattle his sniff-box on the arm of his chair to avoid showing it to her, and then he used to make believe to read his Prayer Book. Make believe because, when Eliza brought him a cup of soup in the kitchen, she used to sit down and talk to him. As I stood looking up at the cape and the card that bore his name I could not realise that he was dead. He seemed like one who could go on living for ever if he only wanted to; his life was so methodical and uneventful. I think he said more to me than to anyone else. He had an egotistical contempt for all women-folk, and suffered all their services to him in polite silence. Of course, neither of his sisters were very intelligent. Nannie, for instance, had been reading out the newspaper to him every day for years, and could read tolerably well, yet she always spoke of it as the Freeman's People. Perhaps he found me more intelligent, and honoured me with words for that reason. Nothing, practically nothing, ever occurred to remind him of his former life (I mean friends or visitors), and still he could remember every detail of it in his own fashion. He had studied at the college in Rome, and he taught me of the esoteric Latin in the Italian way. He often put me through the responses of the Mass, he smiling often and pushing huge pinches of snuff up his nostrils alternately. When he smiled he used to uncover his big, discoloured teeth, and let his tongue lie on his lower lip. At first this habit of his used to make me feel uneasy. Then I grew used to it.
That evening my aunt visited the house of mourning and took me with her. It was an oppressive evening of faded gold. Nannie received us in the hall, and, as it was no use saying anything to her, my aunt shook hands with her for all. We followed the old woman upstairs and into the dead-room. The room, through the lace end of the blind, was suffused with dusky golden light, amid which the candles looked pale and thin flames. He had been confined. Nannie gave the lead, and we three knelt down at the foot of the bed. There was no sound in the room for some minutes except the sound of Nannie's mutterings—for she prays noisily. The fancy came to me that the old priest was smiling as he lay there in his coffin.

But no. When we rose and went up to the head of the bed I saw that he was not smiling. There he lay solemn and corpulent in his brown habit, his large hands loosely retaining his rosary. His face was very grey and massive, with dinted nostrils and circled with scantly white hair. There was a heavy colour in the room—the flowers.

We sat downstairs in the little room behind the shop, my aunt and I and the two sisters. Nannie sat in a corner and said nothing, but her lips moved from speaker to speaker with a painfully intelligent motion. I said nothing either, being too young, but my aunt spoke a good deal, for she is a bit of a gossip—harmless.

"Ah, well! he's gone!"

"To enjoy his eternal reward, Miss Flynn, I'm sure. He was a good and holy man."

"He was a good man, but you see... he was a disappointed man. You see, his life was, you might say, crossed."

"Ah, yes! I know what you mean."

"Not that he was anything mad, as you know yourself, but he was always a little queer. Even when we were all growing up together he was queer. One time he didn't speak hardly for a month. You know, he was that kind always."

"Perhaps he read too much, Miss Flynn?"

"O, he read a good deal, but not latterly. But it was his scrupulousness, I think, affected his mind. The duties of the priesthood were too much for him."