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# BITS OF BLARNEY

BY

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EDITOR OF "THE LIFE OF CURRAN," "SHELL'S SKETCHES OF THE  
IRISH BAR," &c.



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## TO J. S. REDFIELD, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR :—The deified heroes of the Norse mythology are believed to spend their afternoons in drinking something stronger than lemonade out of their enemies' skulls, and some ill-natured persons, seizing on the idea, have declared that publishers use the skulls of their authors as drinking-cups, in the same manner. For my own part, I discredit the assertion—as far as my relations with yourself enable me to judge ; I suspect that the time has gone by when Napoleon's health was drank as “a friend of literature,” because he had shot a bookseller ; and I give you unlimited permission to use my skull, in the Norse fashion, provided that you wait until “in death I shall calm recline,” when I shall have no further occasion for it. In such case, the least you can do will be to drink my memory, “in solemn silence”—the beverage being whiskey-punch, as a delicate compliment to my country.

( III )

Seriously speaking (or writing), however, I take leave to dedicate this volume to you, with the solemn assurance that my doing so must not be taken as—a Bit of Blarney.

The book is Irish—to all intents and purposes, and is put forth with the least possible pretence. It contains Legends—familiar to me in my youth; Stories, which, more or less, are literally “founded upon facts;” recollections of Eccentric Characters, whose peculiarities it would have been difficult to exaggerate;—and Sketches of the two great Irish leaders of the last and present century, Grattan, who won National Independence for Ireland, and O’Connell, who obtained Emancipation for the great majority of his countrymen. The Sketch of the great Agitator has extended almost to a biography—but I knew the man well, and write of him on that knowledge. In *this* volume he is certainly entitled to a niche, having been the greatest professor of “Blarney” these later days have seen or heard.

Yours faithfully,

R. SHELTON MACKENZIE

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## BITS OF BLARNEY.

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How many have heard of "Blarney," and how few know how and why this appropriate term has originated! How could they, indeed, unless they had made a pilgrimage to the Castle, as I did, in order to manœuvre Tim Cronin into a narration of its legends?—They may go to Blarney, whenever they please, but the *genius loci* has vanished. Tim Cronin has been gathered to his fathers. By no lingering or vulgar disease did he perish; he died——of a sudden.

Scarcely any part of Ireland has attained more celebrity than the far-famed village of Blarney, in the county, and near the city of Cork. At Blarney may be seen the mysterious talisman, which has the extraordinary power of conferring remarkable gifts of persuasion on the lips which, with due reverence and proper faith in its virtues, invoke the hidden genii of The Stone, to yield them its inspiration. The ceremony is brief:—only a kiss on the flinty rock, and the kisser is instantly endowed with the

happy faculty of flattering the fair sex *ad libitum*, without their once suspecting that it can be flattery. On the masculine gender it is not less effective. Altogether, it enables the kisser, like History,

"To lie like truth, and still most truly lie."

Immortal poesie has already celebrated the locality of Blarney. The far-famed *chanson*, written by Richard Alfred Milliken,\* and called "The Groves of Blarney," has been heard or read by every one:—in these later days the polyglot edition, by him who has assumed the name of Father Prout, is well known to the public. There is an interpolated verse, which may be adopted (as it sometimes is) into the original *chanson*, on account of the earnestness with which it declares that

"The stone this is, whoever kisses,  
He never misses to grow eloquent:  
'Tis he may clamber to a lady's chamber,  
Or become a member of Parliament."

Blarney Castle is surrounded by the Groves

\*In Lockhart's Life of Scott, this renowned Song is attributed to "the poetical Dean of Cork" (Dr. Burrowes, who wrote "The Night before Larry was stretched"), but really was written by Milliken, a poetical lawyer of whom Maguire says (O'Doherty Papers, vol. ii., p. 181) that not even Christopher North himself—

"Be he tipsy or sober,  
Was not more than his match, in wine, wisdom, or wit."

mentioned in the song. It stands four miles to the northwest of "the beautiful city called Cork," and, of course, in the fox-hunting district of Muskerry. All that can now be seen are the remains of an antique castellated pile, to the east of which was rather incongruously attached, a century ago, a large mansion of modern architecture.

The Castle stands on the north side of a precipitous ridge of limestone rock, rising from a deep valley, and its base is washed by a small and beautifully clear river called the Aw-martin. A large, square, and massive tower—a sort of Keep,—is all that remains of the original fortress. The top of this building is surrounded with a parapet, breast-high, and on the very summit is the famous Stone which is said to possess the power, already mentioned, of conferring on every gentleman who *kisses* it the peculiar property of telling any thing, in the way of praise (commonly called flattery), with unblushing cheek and "forehead unabashed." As the fair sex have to receive, rather than bestow compliments, the oscular homage to the Stone conveys no power to *them*. From the virtues which it communicates to the masculine pilgrims, we have the well-known term *blarney* and *blarney-stone*.

The real Stone is in such a dangerous position, from its elevation, that it is rarely kissed, except by very adventurous pilgrims of the Tom Sheridan class, who will *do* the thing, and not be content

with saying they have done it! The stone which officiates as its deputy, is one which was loosened by a shot from the cannon of Oliver Cromwell's troops, who were encamped on the hill behind the Castle. This stone is secured in its place by iron stanchions, and it is this that the visitors kiss, as aforesaid, and by mistake. The Song, it may be remembered, speaks of the Cromwellian bombardment of the Castle:

"'Tis Lady Jeffreys that owns this station,  
Like Alexander, or like Helen, fair.  
There's no commander throughout the nation  
In emulation can with her compare:  
Such walls surround her, that no nine-pounder  
Could ever plunder her place of strength,  
Till Oliver Cromwell he did her pummel,  
And made a breach in her battlement."

Between Blarney Castle and the hill whereon Cromwell's troops *bivouacked*, is a sweet vale called the Rock Close. This is a charming spot, whereon (or legends lie) the little elves of fairy-land once loved to assemble in midnight revelry. At one end of this vale is a lake of unfathomable depth, and Superstition delights to relate stories of its wonders.

When Sir Walter Scott was in Ireland, he visited Blarney, accompanied by Anne Scott, Miss Edgeworth, and Mr. Lockhart. A few days after he

was there, it was my fortune to tread in his steps to the same classic shrine.

The barefooted and talkative guide who *would* accompany me over the Castle, thus described "the Ariosto of the North," and his companions:—"A tall, bulky man, who halted a great deal, came here, with his daughter and a very small lady, and a dash of a gentleman, with a bright keen eye that looked here, and there, and everywhere in a minute. They thrust themselves, ransacking, into every nook and cranny that a rat would not go through, scarcely. When the lame gentleman came to the top of the Castle, wasn't he delighted, and didn't he take all the country down upon paper with a pencil, while one of us sang 'The Groves of Blarney.' He made us sing it again, and gave me a crown-piece, and said that he'd converse a poem on the Castle, himself, may-be!"

While I am thus gossiping, I am neglecting Tim Cronin, "the best story-teller" (to use his own words) "within the whole length, and breadth, and cubic mensuration of the Island."

After my visit to Blarney Castle, I met this worthy. I had struck from the common path into that which led through the Rock Close. This valley is divided into several fields, all of which are extremely fertile, except that immediately washed by the waters of the lake. It was now far in the summer; and, although the mowers

had to cut down the rich grass of the other fields, there was scarcely a blade upon this. It was as smooth, green, and close-shaven as the trim turf before a cottage *ornée*. While I was remarking this, I was startled by a sudden touch upon the shoulder, and, turning round, I found myself *vis-à-vis* with a Herculean-built fellow, who doffed his hat, with a sort of rude courtesy, made an attempt at a bow, and, before I could say a word, struck into conversation.

"Wondering at this meadow being so bare, I warrant you, sir?"

I confessed that it had surprised me.

"Didn't know the why nor the wherefore of it, may-be? It's Tim Cronin—and that's myself—that can tell you all about it, before you have time to get fat."

I ventured to exhibit my ignorance, by asking who Tim Cronin might be?

"Faith, sir, you may know a great deal of Latin and Greek—and 'tis easy to see that the College mark is upon you—but you know little of *real* literature in old Ireland, if you don't know *me*. Not know Cronin, the renowned Philomath, that bothered the Provost of old Trinity in Algebra—from the Saxon *al*, noble, and the Arabic *Geber*, the philosopher? Never once heard, perhaps, of the great Cronin that does all the problems and answers, for the Lady's Diary, in mathematics—from the Greek

*mathema*, instruction? Nothing like getting at the roots of words—the *unde derivatur*?"

Even at the hazard of appearing as an ignoramus in the eyes of Mr. Cronin, I was fain to admit that I had not previously heard of his name and erudition. I ventured to intimate, as a sort of half-apology, that I was a stranger in that part of the country.

"Strange enough, I'll be bound," said he, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Know, then, that I am that same Tim Cronin,—'our ingenious correspondent,' as the Mathematical Journal calls me, when it refuses one of my articles, 'from want of space,'—bad luck to 'em, as if they could not push out something else to make room for me. Curious, sir, not to have heard of me, that keeps one of the finest academies, under a hedge, in the Province of Munster! Just sit down on the bank here, and I'll soon enlighten you so, about that good-looking lake before your two eyes, that I'll be bound you won't forget me in a hurry."

Complying with the request of this august personage, I had the satisfaction of listening to his legend, thus:

## LEGEND OF THE LAKE.

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ONCE upon a time, and there was no lake here, at all at all. In the middle of the place where that lake is, there stood a large castle, and in it dwelt an unbaptized giant—it was before blessed Saint Patrick came into the country, Heaven rest his soul—and this giant had martial rule over all the country, far and near.

In his time, the Aw-martin, nor any other river, did not flow near us. Indeed, though there was plenty of wine in the Castle, there was a great want of water. This was very inconvenient for the ladies—the fellow had as many wives as a Turk—because they were always wanting to wash their clothes, and their pretty faces, and their white hands, and their well-shaped bodies; and, more than that, they could not make themselves a raking cup of tea, by any means, for the want of good soft water. So, one and all, they sent a petition to the giant, praying that he would have the kindness to procure them a well of water. When he read it, he made no more ado but whipped off through the air—just like a bird of Paradise—to his old aunt, who was a fairy, and had foretold that, some day or other, water would be the

## LEGEND OF THE LAKE.

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death of him. Perhaps that was the reason that he always took his liquor neat.

Well, he told her what he had come about, and after a world of entreaty—for she had a foreboding that something unfortunate would come of it—the old fairy put a little bottle into his hands. "Take this," said she, "and drill a hole in the rock at the foot of the Castle barbican, where the sun throws his latest ray before he sinks into the west. Make a stone-cover for the top of it—one that will fit it exactly. Then pour the water from this bottle into that hole in the rock, and there will be a well of pure water, for the use of yourself and your family. But, when no one is actually taking water out of this well, be sure that the close-fitting stone-cover is always left upon it, for it is the nature of the liquid to overflow, unless it be kept confined."

He gave her a thousand thanks, and home he went. The first thing he did was to drill a hole in the rock (and he did not find *that* a very easy job), then to fit it with an air-tight stone-cover, and, lastly, to pour in the water out of the little bottle.

Sure enough, there immediately bubbled up an abundance of bright, clear, and sparkling water. The giant then assembled all his family, and told them how the stone-cover must always be kept over the well when they were not using it. And then his wives agreed that, as they had been so anxious to get this water, one of them, turn about, should sit

by the well, day and night, and see that no one left it uncovered. They were content to submit to this trouble, rather than run the risk of losing the water.

Things went on very well for some time. At last, as *must* be the case when a woman is to the fore, there came a tremendous blow-up. One of the giant's ladies was a foreigner, and had been married, in her own country, before she fell into his hands. Mild and pale she always was, pretty creature! lamenting the land she had left and the lover she had lost. It happened, one day as she sat by the well, that an old pilgrim came to the gate, asked for a draught of water, in God's name, and held out his pitcher for it. Her thoughts were far away, never fear, but she had a tender heart, and she raised the cover from the well to fill his vessel. While she was doing this, the pilgrim pulled off his gown and his false beard, and who should he be but her own husband! She sprang off her seat towards him, and then, faint with joy and pale as death, she sank back into the oaken chair on which she had been sitting, as the guardian of the well. A bird never flew through the air faster than *he* flew towards *her*. He seated himself beside her in the chair, held her lovingly in his arms, kissed her cheeks and lips twenty times over, called her all manner of fond names, and sprinkled her with water until the fresh color came again into her face, and the warm life into her heart.

All this time the well was left uncovered, and

the waters rose—rose—rose, until they surrounded the Castle. Higher and higher did they rise, until, at last, down fell the gates, and then the stream rushed in, drowning every living soul within the place, and settling down into the very lake that we sit by now.

The moral of the story is, that the lady and the pilgrim escaped—for the oaken chair supported them and floated them until they safely put their feet on dry land. All the rest perished, because they had willingly consented to live in sin with the giant; but this one lady had been kept there entirely against her will. The two thanked God for their escape, and returned to their own country, where they lived long and happily. It had been the giant's pride to put all his best jewels on whoever kept watch over the well, in order that all who passed might notice them and pay respect to his wealth. As this lady had them all upon her when the Castle was swallowed up, she and her husband had money enough, out of the sale of them, to keep them in a very genteel way of life at home. Some people say that, at times, the walls of the drowned Castle can be seen through the waters of the lake,—but I won't swear to the fact, as I never noticed it myself.

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Such was Tim Cronin's account of the formation of the lake—a version more pleasant than probable. I ventured to inquire how the meadow next the

waters came to be so bare, while all the others bore such luxuriant grass and grain? Mr. Cronin asked me, whether I saw a gray rock on the left, with three pines on its summit. I noticed them, as required. "Then," said he, "look well at the place all around, and I shall tell you another story or two about Blarney."

Thus admonished, I took a closer survey of the place. The rock rose with a gentle swell in the distance, but its front was so precipitous as to be nearly perpendicular; and it was thickly covered with ivy, tangled like network, with which were mingled wild honeysuckle, dog-rose, and other parasites. There was a sort of rugged entrance at its base, over which the wild-brier and honeysuckle had formed a natural arch. Except this, the rock had a commonplace aspect.

### THE LEGEND OF CORRIG-NA-CAT.

WE call that rock by a strange name—from a strange circumstance, said Cronin. Upon the top, some hundreds of years ago, there stood a castle, belonging to the old Kings of Muskerry. Some cousin of theirs lived in it with his family, and was as happy as the day is long. How it happened, never could be ascertained; but happen it certainly did, that, one night, castle and people and all suddenly disappeared. I misdoubt that there were bad spirits at work. However, the general belief is, that the rock opened and swallowed all up, and that the lord and lady are kept there, spell-bound, as it were, in the shape of cats. From this, the rock is called Corrig-na-cat, or the Cat Rock. 'Tis a mighty pretty derivation.

Whether the castle were swallowed up in that manner, or not, strange sights have been seen, by the light of the full moon, about that place. There is a little green spot on the brow of the hill, where there is a fairy-circle; on that spot sweet music has been heard by night, and the good people (as well as the fairies) have been seen dancing on the green turf, dressed in green and gold, with beautiful

crowns upon their heads, and white wands in their little hands. Ah, sir, you may smile, but that's the belief in this part of the country, and he'd be looked upon as no better than a heathen who'd venture to say a word against it.

My grandfather, although a trifle given to drink, was as honest a man as ever broke bread. One summer night, while he lay in bed, between asleep and awake, he heard a strange deep voice speak to him. It said, "The words of fate! heed them. Go, at midnight, to Corrig-na-cat; take with you a box of candles and a hundred fathoms of line; fasten one end of the line to the tree that grows just outside the mouth of the cave, and, tying the other end round your waist, boldly advance with a pair of lighted candles in your hands: the use of the line is, that you may roll it up as you come back, and not lose your way. Keep to the right-hand side, and go on until you come to a large room with two cats in it. In the room beyond that, there is as much gold as would buy a kingdom. You may take with you a bag to carry away as much of it as you please; but, on your peril, do not touch anything else; your life will not be worth a brass sixpence, if you do."

You may be sure, sir, that this piece of information astonished my grandfather. But he was a sensible man, and, doubting whether two heads would be better than one in such a serious matter, nudged my grandmother with his elbow, to know if

she was awake. She slept—sound as a top; so he let her sleep on. He was rather too knowing to let *her* into the secret. He thought over all that he had ever heard of Corrig-na-cat; he called to mind how his mother had always said that our family were the real descendants of the lord and lady of the castle. He began to fancy that this was some great oracle that had come to visit him, in order that *he* might break the spell that kept the castle and its inhabitants closed up in the rock. Indeed, he was very much perplexed, but determined to wait a bit, and carefully keep his own counsel.

A warning from the world of spirits is worth nothing, if it is not repeated. The next night, my grandfather again was cautioned to listen to the words of fate. The third night the visitation was repeated. He knew, then, that the thing was no feint; and on the fourth night, he stole out of the house to go on the adventure.

It was as pitch dark as if light had never been invented. He took the hundred fathoms of line, the box of candles, a sack to bring home a supply of gold, and a good-sized flask of strong whiskey. When he reached the rock, his heart began to fail him. The night was so still that he could hear the beating of his heart—thump, thump, thump, against his breast. He could hear the bats flying about, and he could see the owls looking on him with their great, round, brown eyes. Swallowing most of the



contents of the flask at one pull, he found his spirits wonderfully restored, and he pushed forward to the mouth of the cave. He fastened one end of the line to the tree; he said an *Ave* or two—for we are all of us a pious family—he drained the flask, and then he dashed forward.

The way was as straight as an arrow for about thirty yards, but, after that, it took as many turnings and twistings as a problem of Euclid in the sixth book, and branched out into many directions. My grandfather followed on the right-hand side, as he had been told, and soon found himself at the gateway of an old hall. He pushed open the door, and saw that there were doors upon doors, leading off to many a place. He still kept to the right, and in a few minutes found himself in a state-chamber. Pillars of white marble supported the roof, and, at the farthest end, the hall opened into an apartment, through which there beamed a soft and beautiful light, as if it came from a thousand shaded lamps.

Here was the end of his journey. A carved mantel-piece of white marble was over the fireplace, and there lay two beautiful white cats, on crimson-velvet cushions, before the fire. Diamonds and rubies, emeralds and amethysts, pearls and topazes, were piled on the ground in heaps, and ceiling and walls were covered all over with them, so that rays of light gleamed down upon him, wherever he looked.

There was no living thing in the room with my grandfather but the cats. The creatures had golden collars, embossed with diamonds, round their necks; and to these were fastened long gold chains, which just gave them liberty to move round the room, being fastened to the walls, one at each side, by golden staples. He noticed that the animals steadily kept their eyes upon him, and appeared to watch every motion of his.

My grandfather passed on into the inner room. The gold lay on the floor like wheat in a miller's store. He filled his sack with the coin to the brim, until, though he was said to be the strongest man in the whole barony, he had some difficulty in lifting it. As he passed through the room in which the cats were, he paused for a moment, to have a parting glance at all the treasures he was leaving. There was one golden star, studded with diamonds as big as walnuts, and blazing like a lamp, hanging down before him from the ceiling. It was too tempting. He forgot the advice not to touch anything but the gold in the inner room, and reached out his hand to seize the sparkling prize. One of the cats, who had eagerly watched his motions, sprang forward as he touched the jewel, and quick as a lightning-stroke, hit out his right eye with a sharp dash of his paw. At the same moment, an invisible hand whipped off the sack of gold from his shoulders, as if it were only a bag of feathers. Out went all the

lights. My grandfather groped his way out as well as he could, by the help of the guiding-line fastened to his wrist, and cursed his greediness, that would not be content with enough. He got home by day-break, with only one eye in his head, and that, without meaning to joke on his misfortune, was the *left* one.

Next day he sent for the priest, and told him what had happened. My grandmother said that all the misfortune was owing to *her* not being in the secret. The priest said nothing. Before long, all the country heard of the story, and half the country believed it. To be sure, as my grandfather was rather addicted to liquor (and there was a private still, in those days, in almost every corner), it was a chance that he might have dreamt all this:—but then, there was his right eye absent. There were some malicious people, indeed, who hinted that he fell over the cliff, in a drunken fit, and that his eye was scratched out in that manner. But it would ill beseem me to make a story-teller of my dead-and-gone grandfather, and so I maintain the truth of his own statement. If it is not true, it deserves to be.

In this conclusion I fully agreed, and the Philomath, proud of the display of his legendary lore, and happy on having fallen in with a patient and willing auditor, next proceeded to acquaint me with the accredited legend of the meadow next the lake. As before, I shall endeavor, in repeating it, to adhere to the very words of my informant.

### LEGEND OF THE ROCK CLOSE.

ABOUT a thousand years ago, or so—but, of course, *after* this lake was formed, to fulfil the old fairy's prophecy, that the giant would come to his death by water—there was a man who owned all the fields in the Rock Close. He was a farmer—a plain, honest man. Not long after he had purchased the place, he noticed that, though this very field we are now sitting in had the same cultivation as the others, it never gave him any return. He had no idea of having a meadow look like a lawn in front of a gentleman's country-house, and lost no time in speaking about it to his herdsman, a knowledgeable man, who said it might be worth while to watch the place, for, although he often saw the blades of grass a foot high at night, all was as closely shaved as a bowling-green in the morning. His master, who was one of the old stock of the Mac Carthies, thought there was reason in what he said, and desired him to be on the watch, and try to find out the real facts of the matter.

The herdsman did his bidding. The next morning he told Mac Carthy that he had hid himself behind an old gateway (you may see the ruins of it

there to the left),—that, about midnight, he had seen the waters of the lake very much disturbed,—that six cows came up out of the lake, and set to, eating all the grass off the field, until, by daybreak, they had made it as smooth as the palm of my hand,—and that, when the day dawned, the cows walked back into the lake, and went down to the bottom, as much at their ease as if they were on dry land.

This was strange news for Mac Carthy, and set him quite at his wits' ends. The herdsman was a little man, with the heart of a lion, and he offered to watch again on that evening, to seize one of the cows, and either put it into the pound, or go down into the lake with it, and make a regular complaint of the trespass. Aye, and he did it, too. At dusk he went again, hid himself, as before, and waited to see what would happen.

The six cows came up out of the lake, as before, and nibbled off the grass, until the field was quite smooth. They could not get into any other field, because they were surrounded by high, quickset hedges, and I have noticed that cows are not very fond of taking flying-leaps.

Just at dawn, as the last cow was passing by him, on her return to the lake, the herdsman made a dart at her tail, and took a fast hold of it. The cow walked on, as if nothing had happened, turned her head, winked one of her large eyes at him in a

knowing manner, and the herdsman followed, still holding the tail.

Down dashed the beast into the waters—but the herdsman still kept his grasp. Down they went—deep, deep, to the very bottom of the lake. Sure enough, there was the giant's castle, that had been drowned centuries before. A little boy was in the court-yard, playing with a golden ball. All round the yard were piles of armor—spears and helmets, swords and shields,—all ornamented with gold. Into the court-yard dashed the cows, and with them went the bold herdsman.

Out came a lady, richly dressed up in velvets and jewels, and her eyes as bright as the sunbeams that dance on the wall on the morning of Easter Sunday.\* She carried a golden milk-pail in her hand. Loud and shrill was her cry when she saw the herdsman.

I should have told you that, as they were going down, the cow whispered to him, "I want to speak a word with you, in confidence."—"Honor bright," said the herdsman.—"I think," said the cow, "that I'd like to graze on that meadow of your master's, by day as well as by night, for the grass is mighty sweet, and I don't think it agrees with my digestion to be driven up and down the lake as I am. If I

\* There is a popular belief in Ireland that the sunbeams dance on the wall on Easter Sunday morning. In my youth I have often got up at early dawn to witness the phenomenon.

stand your friend now, will you go bail that the master will never put me into any other field but that?"—The herdsman answered, "I'll promise you, by the holy poker, and that is as good as if I was to swear by the blessed mud."—"Then my mind is at ease," says the cow. "For the life of you, don't let go my tail, whatever you may hear and see."

When the young lady shrieked with surprise at seeing a herdsman in that place, out rushed a whole regiment of soldiers, with their cheeks as red as the kitchen-fire five minutes before the dinner is done, and the looks of them as fierce as if they were in the heat of battle—a little fiercer, may-be.—"Oh, that villain!" says the lady, pointing to the herdsman.—"Come here, and be killed," shouted the dragoons. But the herdsman knew better. "Send your master to me," says he, as bold as brass. "I always like to do business with principals."

They wondered, as well they might, at the fellow's impudence, but they thought it best to call out their master. He came, with a golden crown upon his head, and a purple velvet cloak on his shoulders, and a beautiful pair of Hessian boots on his feet.—"I demand justice," said the herdsman, "for the trespass that your cows have been committing on Mac Carthy's field; and I seize this cow until the damage be ascertained and made good."

He was firm as a rock, and neither coaxing nor threatening could make him yield as much as a pin's

point. He stood upon his right, and they could not get him off it. The cow had been seized in the very act of trespass, and all they dared do was to tempt the herdsman to surrender her. He knew better. At last the master of them said, "We must compromise this little matter. Leave the cow here, make out your bill for damage, and if I don't pay it to you either in sterling money, or notes of Delacour's bank at Mallow, or Joe Pike's in Cork, you can have your remedy at law, and summon me, on a process, before the Assistant Barrister and the bench of Magistrates at the next Quarter Sessions."—But the herdsman knew better than that, and said he'd prefer leaving matters as they were. "A cow in the hand"—says he. Then the master of them said, "Take that golden ball that the child has, and leave us the cow."—"Hand it over to me," says the herdsman.—"Come for it," said they, in the hope that he'd leave the cow.—"I've a touch of the rheumatism in my knee," says he, "and 'tis ill-convenient to move the limb."—With that, they handed him the ball, and, as soon as he saw that it really was gold, he put it into his breeches pocket, and said it was not half enough.

Then they began to whisper among themselves, and he could hear them proposing to get out a bloodhound—one of the breed that the Spaniards had to hunt down the Indians in America—and he thought it full time to make himself scarce. So, he

whispered to the cow:—"My little cow," said he, "I'd like to go home." The cow took the hint, like a sensible animal as she was, and stole backward through half the lake before they missed her. "If we get safely back on dry land," says she, "neither you nor any one else must swear in my presence, for the spell is upon me, and then I shall be obliged to return to the lake."

Just then the hound was slipped, and he cut through the water like a dolphin. But the cow had the start of him, by a good bit. Just as she set her foot on land, the dog caught hold of the herdsman, and his bite tore away part of the skirt of his coat. Indeed, it was noticed for some days that the herdsman declined sitting down, just as if he had been newly made a Freemason, so I won't say that the dog did not bite more than the garment.

Mac Carthy had been cooling his heels on the bank of the lake all the while that the herdsman was away, and glad enough he was to see him come back, in company with the little cow. The herdsman told him all that happened, and handed him the golden ball, which, people say, is in the Jeffreys' family to this day. The hound runs round the lake, from midnight to sunrise, on every first of July, and is to run, on that day, until his silver shoes are worn out,—whenever that happens, Ireland is to be a great nation, but not until then.

The field was not visited any more by the cattle

from the lake, for their master, below there, thought that though gratis grazing was pleasant enough, it was not quite so pleasant to have the cows impounded for trespass. From that time, never another field in all Munster gave such produce; sow it, or sow it not, there was always a barn-full of grain out of it. About half an acre of it was kept under grass, and on that the cow from the lake had constant feeding.

In due season, the cow had young ones—the same breed that we now call Kerry cows—those cattle, small in size, but good in substance, that feed upon very little, yield a great deal of milk, and always fetch the best of prices.

Mac Carthy was in a fair way of making a little fortune out of that cow of his, she gave such a power of milk, but that, one day as a nag of his was leaping over a hedge into the pasturage where the cow was, Mac Carthy burst out with a rattling oath. The moment the words left his lips, the cow cocked her ears, winked her eye knowingly at him, gave her tail a toss in the air, and made one spring down into the lake. The waters closed over her, and that was the last that mortal eye ever saw of her.

From that time forth the field was again visited by the cattle from the lake, and that's the reason why it is as smooth as you see it now. It is supposed that so it will continue until somebody has the bold heart to go down again and make another seizure for trespass.

Mr. Jeffreys, hearing a great deal of the treasures which are said to be at the bottom of the lake, laid out a power of money in trying to drain it. But it filled faster than the men could empty it. They might as well think of emptying the Atlantic with a slop-basin.

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Having thanked Mr. Tim Cronin, Philomath, for his legends, I took the liberty of asking if he believed them? "Well," said he, "that same question is a poser. If I am pressed on the point, I must admit that I do not believe them *entirely*; but, when I meet curious gentlemen, I am proud to tell them these stories—particularly when they invite me to spend the afternoon with them at the little inn at the foot of the hill beyond there."

The hint was taken—as far as enabling him, as he said, to partake of his own hospitality, for my own time was limited, as I had to return to dine in Cork. Thus, I was unable to judge whether Mr. Cronin was as conversable after feeding-time as before it. He died some two years ago, I have been told, and it will be difficult to meet with a Cicerone so well qualified to describe and illustrate Blarney Castle and its dependencies.

## CON O'KEEFE AND THE GOLDEN CUP.

IN Ireland, as in Scotland, among the lower orders, there is a prevalent belief in the existence and supernatural powers of the gentry commonly called "fairies." Many and strange are the stories told of this mysterious and much dreaded race of beings. Loud and frequent have been the exclamations of surprise, and even of anger, at the hard incredulity which made me refuse, when I was young, to credit *all* that was narrated of the wonderful feats of Irish fairies—the most frolicsome of the entire genus. The more my disbelief was manifested, the more wonderful were the legends which were launched at me, to overthrow my unlucky and matter-of-fact obstinacy.

I have forgotten many of the traditions which were thus made familiar to me in my boyhood, but my memory retains sufficient to convince me to what improbabilities Superstition clung—and the more wonderful the story, the more implicit the belief. But in such cases the fanaticism was harmless,—it was of the head rather than of the heart—of the imagination rather than the reason. It would be fortunate if all superstitions did as little mischief as *this*.

It is deeply to be lamented that the matter-of-factness of the Americans is not subdued or modified by any—even the slightest—belief in the old-world superstitions of which I speak. Of fairy-lore they cannot, and they do not, possess the slightest item. They read of it, as if it were legendary, but nothing more. They feel it not—they know it—they are, therefore, dreadfully actual. So much the worse for them!

Having imbibed a sovereign contempt for the wild and wonderful traditions which had been duly accredited in the neighborhood, time out of mind, I never was particularly chary in expressing such contempt at every opportunity. When the mind of a boy soars above the ignorance which besets his elders in an inferior station, who have had neither the chance nor the desire of being enlightened, he is apt to pride himself, as I did, on the "march of intellect" which has placed him superior to their vulgar credulity.

Many years have passed since I happened to be a temporary visitor beneath the hospitable roof of one of the better sort of farmers, in the county of Cork, during the Midsummer holidays. As usual, I there indulged in sarcasm against the credulity of the country. One evening, in particular, I was not a little tenacious in laughing at the very existence of "the fairy folk;" and, as sometimes happens, ridicule accomplished more than argument could have

effected. My hosts could bear anything in the way of argument—at least of argument such as mine—they could even suffer their favorite legends and theories about the fairies to be abused; but to *laugh* at them—that was an act of unkindness which quite passed their comprehension, and grievously taxed their patience.

My host was quite in despair, and almost in anger at my boyish jokes upon his fairy-legends, when the village schoolmaster came in, an uninvited but most welcome guest. A chair was soon provided for him in the warmest corner—whiskey was immediately on the table, and the schoolmaster, who was a pretty constant votary to Bacchus, lost no time in making himself acquainted with its flavor.

I had often seen him before. He combined in his character a mixture of shrewdness and simplicity; was a most excellent mathematician and a good classical scholar—but of the world he knew next to nothing. From youth to age had been spent within the limits of the parish over which, cane in hand, he had presided for more than a quarter of a century,—at once a teacher and an oracle! He was deeply imbued with a belief in the superstitions of the district, but was more especially familiar with the wild legends of that rocky glen (the defile near Kilworth, commonly called Araglin, once famous for the extent of illicit distillation carried on there), in which he had passed away his life, usefully, but humbly employed.

To this eccentric character my host triumphantly appealed for proof respecting the existence and vagaries of the fairies. He wasted no time in argument, but, glancing triumphantly around, declared that he would convert me by a particularly well-attested story. Draining his tumbler, and incontinently mixing another, Mr. Patrick McCann plunged at once into the heart of his narration, as follows:

"You know the high hill that overlooks the town of Fermoy? Handsome and thriving place as it now is, I remember the time when there were only two houses in that same town, and *one* of them was then only in course of building! Well, there lived on the other side of Corran Thierna (the mountain in question, though *Corrig* is the true name) one of the Barrys, a gentleman who was both rich and good. I wish we had more of the stamp among us now—'tis little of the Whiteboys or Ribbonmen would trouble the country then. He had a fine fortune, kept up a fine house, and lived at a dashing rate. It does not matter, here nor there, how many servants he had; but I mention them, because one of them was a very remarkable fellow. His equal was not to be had, far or near, for love nor money.

"This servant was called Con O'Keefe. He was a crabbed little man, with a face the very color and texture of old parchment, and he had lived in the family time out of mind. He was such a small, dwarfish, deeny creature, that no one ever thought

of putting him to hard work. All that they did was, now and again, from the want of a better messenger at the moment, or to humor the old man, to send him to Rathcormac post-office for letters. But he was too weak and feeble to walk so far—though it was only a matter of three or four miles; so they got him a little ass, and he rode upon it, quite as proud as a general at the head of an army of conquerors. 'Twas as good as a play to see Con mounted upon his donkey—you could scarcely make out which had the most stupid look. But neither man nor beast can help his looks.

"At that time Rathcormac, though 'tis but a village now, was a borough, and sent two members to the Irish Parliament. Was not the great Curran, the orator and patriot, member for Rathcormac, when he was a young man? Did not Colonel Tonson get made an Irish peer, out of this very borough, which his son William is, to this very day, by the title of Baron Riversdale of Rathcormac? Does not his shield bear an open hand between two castles, and is not the motto, '*Manus hæc inimica tyrannis*'—which means that it was the enemy of tyrants? Did not the Ulster King of Arms make the Tonsons a grant of these arms, in the time of Cromwell? But here I have left poor little Con mounted on his donkey all this time.

"Con O'Keefe was not worth his keep, for any good he did; but, truth to say, he had the name of being



hand and glove with the fairies; and, at that time, Corran Thierna swarmed with them. They changed their quarters when the regiments from Fermoy barracks took to firing against targets stuck up at the foot of the mountain. Not that a ball could ever hit a fairy (except a silver one cast by a girl in her teens, who has never wished for a lover, or a widow under forty who has not sighed for a second husband—so there's little chance that it ever will be cast), but they hate the noise of the firing and the smell of gunpowder, quite as much as the Devil hates holy water.

"'Tis reckoned lucky in these parts to have a friend of the fairies in the house with you, and that was partly the reason why Con O'Keefe was kept at Barry's-fort. Many and many a one could swear to hearing him and 'the good folk' talk together at twilight on his return from Rathcormac with the letter-bag. My own notion is, that if he *had* anything to say to them, he had more sense than to hold conversation with them on the high road, for that might have led to a general discovery. Con was fond of a drop, and, when he took it (which was in an algebraic way, that is, 'any *given* quantity'), he had such famous spirits, and his tongue went so glibly, that, in the absence of other company, he was sometimes forced to talk to himself, as he trotted home.

"One night, as he was going along, rather the

worse for liquor, he thought he heard a confused sound of voices in the air, directly over his head. He stopped, and, sure enough, it was the fairies, who were chattering away, like a bevy of magpies; but he did not know this at the time.

"At first he thought it might be some of the neighbors wanting to play him a trick. So, to show that he was not afraid (for the drink had made him bold as a lion), when the voices above and around him kept calling out 'High up! high up!' he put in his spoke, and shouted, as loud as any of them, 'High up! high up with ye, my lads!' No sooner said than done. He was whisked off his donkey in a twinkling, and was 'high up' in the air, in the very middle of a crowd of 'good people'—for it happened to be one of their festival nights, and the cry that poor little Con heard was the summons for gathering them all together. There they were, mighty small, moving about as quickly as motes in the sunshine. Although Con had the reputation at Barry's-fort of being well acquainted with them all, you may well believe that there was not a single face among the lot that he knew.

"In less than no time, off they went, when their leader—a little morsel of a fellow, not bigger than Hop-o'-my Thumb—bawled out, 'High for France! high for France! high over!' Off they went, through the air—quick as if they were on a steeple-chase. Moss and moor—mountain and valley—

green field and brown bog—land and water were all left behind, and they never once halted until they reached the coast of France.

"They immediately made for the house (there it is called the *château*) of a great lord—one of the Seigneurs of the Court—and bolted through the key-hole into his wine-cellar, without leave or license. How little Con was squeezed through, I never could understand, but it is as sure as fate that he went into the cellar along with them. They soon got astride the casks, and commenced drinking the best wines, without waiting to be invited. Con, you may be sure, was not behind any of them, as far as the drinking went. The more he drank, the better relish he had for their tippie. The 'good people,' somehow or other, did not appear at all surprised at Con's being among them, but they *did* wonder at his great thirst, and pressed him to take enough—and Con was not the man who'd wait to be asked twice. So they drank on till night slipped away, when the sun—like a proper gentleman as he is—sent in one of his earliest beams, as a sort of gentle hint that it was full time for them to return. They had a parting-glass, and, in half an hour or so, had crossed the wide sea, and dropped little Con ('pretty well, I thank you,' by this time) on the precise spot he had left on the evening before. He had been drinking-out of a beautiful golden cup in the cellar, and, by some mistake or other, it had

slipped up the sleeve of the large loose coat he wore, and so he brought it home with him. Not that Con was not honest enough, but surely a man may be excused for taking 'a cup too much' in a wine-cellar.

"Con was soon awakened by the warm sunbeams playing upon his face. At first, he thought he had been dreaming, and he might have thought so to his dying day, but that, when he got on his feet, the golden cup rolled on the road before him, and was proof positive that all was a reality.

"He said his prayers directly, between him and harm. Then he put up the cup and walked home, where, as his little donkey had returned on the previous night without him, the family had given him up as lost or drowned. Indeed, some of them had sagaciously suggested the probability of his having gone off for good with the fairies.

"Now, does not my story convince you that there *must* be such things as fairies? It is not more than twenty years since I heard Con O'Keefe tell the whole story from beginning to end; and he'd say or swear with any man that the whole of it was as true as gospel. And, as sure as my name is Patrick McCann, I *do* believe that Con was in strange company that night."

I ventured to say to Mr. McCann that, being yet incredulous, I must have better evidence than little Con's own declaration.

"To be sure you shall," said he. "Was not the golden cup taken up to Barry's-fort, and to be seen—as seen it was—by the whole country?"

I answered that, "Certainly, if the cup is to be seen there, the case is materially altered."

"I did not say that the cup *is* at Barry's-fort," said McCann, "only that it *was*. The end of the story, indeed, is nearly as strange as the beginning.—When Con O'Keefe came back from his wonderful excursion, no one believed a word of what he said; for though it was whispered that he was great with the fairies, yet, when the matter came tangibly before them, they did not credit it. But Con soon settled their doubts; he brought forward the cup, and there was no gainsaying *that* evidence.

"Mr. Barry took the cup into his own keeping, and, the name and residence of the French lord being engraved upon it, determined (as in honor bound) to send it home again. So he went off to Cove, without any delay, taking Con with him; and, as there luckily was a vessel going off to France that very day, he sent off little Con with the cup and his very best compliments.

Now, the cup was a great favorite with the French lord (being a piece of family plate, given to one of his ancestors by one of the old kings of France, whose life he had saved in battle), and nothing could equal the hubbub and confusion that arose when it was missing. His lordship called for some

wine at dinner, and great was his anger when the lackey handed it to him in a glass, declaring that they could not find the golden goblet. He threw glass, and wine, and all, at the servant's head—flew into a terrible passion—and swore, by all that was good and bad, that he would not take anything stronger than water until the cup was on the table again; and that, if it was not forthcoming in a week, he'd turn off every servant he had, without paying them their wages, or giving them a character.

"The cup was well searched for, but all to no purpose, as you may suppose. At last, the week came to an end—all the servants had their clothes packed up, to be off in the morning. His lordship was getting dreadfully tired of drinking cold water, and the whole house was, as one may say, turned topsy-turvy, when, to the delight and admiration of all, in came Con O'Keefe, from Ireland, with a letter from Mr. Barry and the cup in his fist.

"I rather think they welcomed him. His lordship made it a point to get 'glorious' that night, and, as in duty bound, the entire household followed his example, with all the pleasure in life. You may be certain that Con played away finely at the wine—you know the fairies had made him free of the cellar—so he knew the taste of the liquor, and relished it too. There can be no doubt that there was a regular jollification in the château that night.

"Con remained in France for a month, and was

perfectly in clover, for, from the lord to the lackey, every one liked him. When he returned, he had a heavy purse of gold for himself, and many fine presents for his master. Indeed, while the French lord lived, which was for fifteen good years longer, a couple of hogsheads of excellent claret were annually received at Barry's-fort, as a present from him, and there was no wine in the country to equal it. As for Con O'Keefe, he never had the luck to meet the fairies again, a misfortune he very sincerely lamented. And that's the whole story."

I asked Mr. McCann, whether he really believed *all* of it? That worthy replied in these words:—

"Why, in truth, I must say, some parts of it require rather an elastic mind to take in; but there's no doubt that Con *was* sent over to France, where, it is said, there was a great to-do about a golden cup. I am positive that Mr. Barry used to receive a present of claret, every year, from a French lord, for I've drank some of the best claret in Ireland from Mr. Barry's cellar. If the tale *be* true—and I have told it as I have heard Con O'Keefe tell it, especially when overcome by liquor, at which time, the truth is sure to come out—it is proof positive, that there have been fairies in this neighborhood, and that within the memory of man!"

Such a logical conclusion was incontrovertible, especially when enforced by a facetious wink from the schoolmaster; so, I even left matters as they

were, and listened with all proper attention to other stories in the same vein, and to the same effect. If the narrator did not credit them, most of his auditors did, which amounts to much the same in the end. Some other time, perhaps, I may be tempted to relate them.

## LEGENDS OF FINN MAC COUL.

THERE is a similarity, all over the world, between the popular legends and traditions of different nations. They are reproduced, with slight differences of circumstance and costume, to suit each new locality. For example, the Maiden Tower at Constantinople, actually built by the Emperor Manuel, centuries ago, for the purpose of a double communication—with Scutari, on the Asian side, and with the point of coast occupied by the Serai Bournou on the Asian. Whenever the hostile visit of a Venetian fleet was anticipated, a strong iron chain used to be drawn on both sides, across the entire breadth of the strait. Respecting this are several legends, all of which have their prototypes in the West.

The generally received account has appropriated it as the place in which, for safety, a damsel was held in close retirement until the fatal time named in a prediction should have passed away; but a serpent, accidentally brought up in a basket of fruit, caused the maiden's death. Here is a striking illustration of the similarity between the legends of the East and those of the West. In the Third

Calendar's Story, in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments (which have charmed all of us in youth, and rarely fail to delight us when we return to them in maturer years), the whole interest turns on an incident of the same character. Both stories appear deeply imbued with that fatality which forms the distinguishing feature in Eastern belief and practice. Near Bristol, also, are the remains of a tower, called Cook's Folly, erected to be the dwelling-place of a youth of whom it had been predicted that (like the heroine of the Turkish legend) his life would be in peril from a serpent until the completion of his eighteenth year. The dangerous time had nearly expired, when the youth died from the venomous bite of an adder, which had been accidentally conveyed to his isolated abode in a bundle of fagots.

In the south of Ireland, on the summit of a mountain called Corrig Thierna (the Chieftain's Rock), is a heap of stones which, if there be truth in tradition, was brought there to build a castle in which was to dwell a son of Roche, Prince of Fermoy, of whom it had been predicted that he would be drowned before his twentieth year. The child, when only five years old, fell into a pool of water which had been collected, on the top of the mountain, to make mortar for the erection of the tower, in which it was intended he should be kept "out of harm's way," until the perilous period had elapsed. The child was drowned. In each case, the prophecy

appears to have brought about its own fulfilment. There is a moral in these old traditions, did we but know how to seize and apply it.

Washington Irving has localized several legends as American, but his Rip Van Winkle has been traced to a German origin, and many of his other legends appear to be old friends in a new attire. Who can say whence any traditional stories are derived? Some years ago, a supplement to the *Thousand-and-One Nights*, containing an Arabian tale called the Sage Heycar, was published at Paris, and the translator noted the curious fact that this Oriental story contained many incidents exactly similar to passages in the life of *Æsop*: such as sixteen pages of details of a visit made by Heycar to the court of Pharaoh, which are the same, word for word, with the account of the like visit made by *Æsop*. So, too, the challenge which Pharaoh sent to the King of Abyssinia, demanding him to build a palace in the air, and the ingenious means to which *Æsop* had recourse, are transferred to Heycar. Even the fables of *Æsop*, the Phrygian, have been claimed for Lokman, the Arabian philosopher, and now the very incidents of his life are taken from him by Heycar.

The Coventry legend of Lady Godiva is claimed by the Arabians. In Von Hammer's new *Arabian Nights* is the story called Camaralzeman and the Jeweller's Wife, founded on an incident precisely

similar to that in which the English heroine appears.

The truth is, it is impossible to ascertain what coincident mythology connects the East and the West. We know not what relation Thor of Scandinavia may have with Vishnu of Hindostan. The oldest English and Irish stories appear to have corresponding legends among the Celts, Danes, Scandinavians, and Normans, and, again, these have wandered either to or from the East. Even such thoroughly English stories as Tom Thumb, Jack the Giant Killer, and Whittington and his Cat, are claimed as aboriginal in foreign countries. The Wise Men of Gotham, one of the oldest English provincial legends, is given, nearly verbatim, in one of the German popular stories, collected by the Brothers Grimm, and its incidents may be found in the *Pentamerone* (in the story of Bardiello), but has been translated from the Tamul tongue, which is a dialect of Southern India, as the "Adventures of Gooroo Noodle and his Five Disciples."

The Germans are very fond of legendary lore. Like the Irish, they have their cellar-haunters, who invariably tap the best wine, and make themselves merry with whatever the cellar and larder can supply. Like the Irish, too, they have traditions of gigantic dwellers in the land, in days gone by, and they re-people the Hartz with men of enormous stature and strength, capable of daring and doing

any thing, yet who differ from the Genii, in the Arabian Tales, who are spoken of as possessing supernatural powers, while the giants of Western tradition, having nothing remarkable, except their size and strength, and so far from being endowed with more than human powers, may be noticed, on the contrary, as being slow-witted and rather dull of comprehension,—for, like most very tall people of the present day, their upper story is unfurnished. Such were Finn Mac Coul, and his great rival, Ossian, neither of whom can be named as remarkably bright “boys.” There are a few instances of this which may be worth recording. For example:—

### FINN AND THE FISH.

IN the good old times, “when Malachi wore the collar of gold, which he won from the proud invader,” no Irish hero was more celebrated than Finn Mac Coul. What cabin is there, from the Giant’s Causeway to Cape Clear, which is not full of his glory?

Finn Mac Coul was famous for his strength of mind and body, for his wisdom and his might. The Saxons fled before him when he unfurled Ireland’s ancient banner—which bore the poetical name of The Sunburst—and thousands arrayed themselves around it; mountain and vale, plain and tarn, hall and bower, were full of the glory of his graceful deeds of gentle courtesy. His mighty mind was suitably lodged, for he was tall as one of the sons of Anak, and might have passed for own brother to him of Gath.

Before relating any of his wonderful bodily achievements, it may be as well to mention the mysterious manner in which his wisdom, like a tangible revelation, fell upon him.

In the ancient days of Ireland’s glory, the province of Munster was a Kingdom, and was called Momonia. One of the Mac Carthy family had

sovereign sway. He was a good-natured, soft-hearted, fat-headed sort of neutral character—one of that class, still too common in Ireland, known by the apologetic *sobriquet* of “nobody’s enemy but his own.” He kept open house for all comers, and the effect of his indiscriminating hospitality was, that, a monarch in name, he was next to a pauper in reality, living, as the saying is, quite “from hand to mouth.” This he could have borne, for, like the eels, he was used to it, but the empty state of his exchequer rendered him unable to pay for the military services of his subjects, and the result was, that his dominions gradually fell into a state of partition among his brother monarchs of greater power, richer treasury, and smaller hospitality.

It happened that one of these, named Mac Murragh—an ancestor of him whose daughter’s frailty led to the subjugation of Ireland by Henry II.—ruled over Leinster, while poor Mac Carthy was enjoying nominal empire over the rich plains of Munster. Mac Murragh was ambitious. He saw what an easy prey Momonia might be. He wished to feed his herds upon that beautiful tract of land intersected by the river Suir, which even yet is called “The Golden Vale,” and he declared war to the knife against King Mac Carthy.

It happened that Mac Carthy was fully aware of the value of the golden vale—indeed, it was the very pride of his heart. He determined to resist his foe,

as best he could. But before taking up arms, on the defensive, he resolved to have recourse to other than mortal aid.

It was some time before the avatar of Saint Patrick—that redoubted patriarch whose mission it was to teach the benighted Irish the benefits of religion and the blessings of whiskey. Therefore, under King Mac Carthy, Druidism was the “established church.” One of the most ancient Arch-Druids in Munster resided in a cave near Mitchelstown, dug by his own hands in one of the Galtee Mountains, and to him, in this emergency, King Mac Carthy betook himself for advice and aid.

The Arch-Druid was noted, far and near, as an interpreter of dreams, a diviner of auguries, an unraveller of mysteries, and a reader of prophecies. Common rumor declared that he was master of enchantments,—that the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed at his command,—that he had communion with spirits from another world, and could compel them to obey his bidding.

After the performance of many rites and ceremonies, some penance and much prayer, the Arch-Druid asked the King of Munster whether he knew that part of the West which we now call Mayo? Mac Carthy replied that he ought to know it, for he had been brought up there. “Then,” said the Arch-Druid, “thither we must go. For in one of the rivers which run through that district, by the



foot of a lofty mountain, there is a salmon, which, if caught, cooked, and eaten, will bestow long life and health, wisdom and valor, success in arms and love, upon him who eats it."

The King thanked the Arch-Druid for his information, and gave him a liberal largess, when he added that in the book of the future it was written that this wonderful fish was predestined to be caught by his own royal hands. This put him into excellent spirits, and he proposed to the Arch-Druid that they should "make a night of it," which they did, upon mead or metheglin—for, in those days, whiskey had not been invented.

The next day they set off on their fishing-tour. The way was long, the roads bad, and travelling rather dangerous. But, seating themselves on the Arch-Druid's cloak, its wizard-owner muttering a few cabalistic words, forthwith they were wafted, men and cloak, through the air, on the swift wings of the wind, to the precipitous ridge of hills surrounding the lofty rock now called Croagh Patrick. The cloak and its two passengers finally dropped down on the bank of the river of which the Arch-Druid had spoken.

They followed the course of the stream through one of the most fertile valleys that sunshine ever glanced upon, until they reached a dark cavern where the struggling waters sink suddenly into the earth. No one has yet been able to ascertain whither

the stream finally goes—whether it again rises to the earth—whether it runs through a subterranean channel, or is sucked in to quench the Phlegethon of this world's central fires. No one knows—nor would it much matter if he did.

Close by the mouth of this cavern is a dark, deep hollow, over which the gloom of eternal night ever seems to rest, and into which the stream falls before it sinks into the abyss, whirling in foaming eddies, warring as in agony, and casting up a jet of spray into the air. Loudly the waters roar as they fall on the rugged rock beneath—they are whirled round and round, until, at regular intervals, they descend into the yawning gulf beneath.

In this pool, among thousands of fishes, of all sorts and sizes, was the Salmon of Knowledge, the possession of which was to make King Mac Carthy amazingly wise, and irresistibly mighty. By this pool he sat, in company with the Arch-Druid, day after day, for a whole month, until their patience was nearly, and their provisions wholly, exhausted. They had sport enough to satisfy Izaak Walton himself, for they were perpetually catching fish. There was a little hut hard by, and in it the King and the Arch-Druid alternately officiated as cook. Still, though he was latterly on a fish diet, the King grew never the wiser. He got so tired of that kind of food that historians have gone the length of asserting that even a Hoboken turtle-feed

would have had no charm for his palled appetite. Amid the finest fish that Royalty ever feasted upon, he sighed for the white and red of his own fine mutton from the green fields of Munster.

To add to his misfortune, though he wanted only one salmon, fish of all sorts *would* hook themselves on to his line. There was perpetual trouble in taking them off the hook. They determined to judge of the salmon, as Lavater did of men, by their looks. Therefore the fat and plump fish obtained the dangerous distinction of being broiled or boiled, while the puny ones were thrown back, with the other fish, into the water.

Thus it happened that, one evening at dusk, a lank, lean, spent salmon having been caught, they did not think it worth cooking, and the King took it up to throw it back into the water. He did not cast it far enough, and the poor fish remained on the bank. It was quietly wriggling itself back into its native element, when it was espied by a little boy who had a special taste for broiled fish. He seized it, took it home, made a fire, and set about cooking it.

This youth was the famous Finn Mac Coul:—but he was not famous *then*. He had fled from the South, from some enemies of his family, and, being hungry, the salmon, poor and lean as it seemed, was better to him than nothing.

The fire being red, he put the salmon upon it. The poor fish, not quite dead, writhed on the live

coals, and the heat caused a great blister to swell out upon its side. Finn Mac.Coul noticed this, and, fearing that the fish would be spoiled if the blister were to rise any more, pressed his thumb upon it. The heat soon made him withdraw it. Naturally enough, he put it into his mouth to draw out the pain. At that moment, he felt a strange thrill throughout his whole frame. He was suddenly changed in mind. The moment that thumb touched his lips he had increase of knowledge. *That* told him that he could do no better than devour the salmon. That done, he was a changed Finn—a new and enlarged edition, with additions; quite a tall paper copy.

That night, Finn Mac Coul quietly strayed down to the cavern, and found the King and the Arch-Druid at high words. His majesty had dreamed, in his afternoon nap, that the Salmon of Knowledge had been on his hook, and that the Arch-Druid had coaxed it off, and privily cooked and eaten it. Finn told him that the Arch-Druid knew that the salmon could be caught only by a King's hand, but had intended, even before they left Munster, to cook and eat it himself, and then to usurp the crown. The Arch-Druid, who had a conscience, had not a word of explanation or excuse. The King immediately ran him through the body, and engaged Finn (who, by this time, had shot up to the height of twelve feet) to lead his armies against the invading King of

Leinster, and the result was that, so far from conquering Munster, and appropriating the Golden Vale, King Mac Murragh was obliged to pray for pardon, and to pay tribute to King Mac Carthy, who thenceforward, with the aid of Finn Mac Coul's strength of mind and body, was the most powerful of all the monarchs of Ireland.

#### THE BREAKS OF BALLYNASCORNEY.

CONTEMPORARY with Finn Mac Coul, was the renowned giant, called Ossian. There has been a question whether he were Scotch or Irish. But as Ossian certainly came all the way from Scotland to compete with Finn Mac Coul, it is not likely that they were countrymen.

That contest—it was of the description given by Ovid of what took place between Ajax and Ulysses. Go to that wild and beautiful district near Dublin, that patch of mountain scenery, so splendid and romantic, known as the Breaks of Ballynascorney and learn, as I did, what tradition now reports of the contest between Ossian and Finn Mac Coul.

A mountain road winds through these Breaks, like a huge snake. By the road-side there stands a tremendous rock of granite—perfectly isolated. Many such are to be seen scattered over the island, and the general belief is, that each column-stone marks the spot where some noted warrior had fallen in the old contests between the Irish and their Danish invaders. A different legend belongs to *this* rock.

The day had been beautiful—one of those brilliant days of softness and balm so prevalent in Ireland. The noontide sun may have been a little too sunny,

but this could be remedied by reposing in the pleasant shadow of some of the lofty cairns which abound in that place. The day gently glided on, until, when a summer-shower made the heath glitter with its diamond drops, we sought shelter in a rustic cabin by the wayside.

No one was within, but an old woman, remarkably talkative. She paid us a world of attention—insinuated a world of compliments on the beaming beauty of the fair lady who accompanied me—would “engage that one so pretty was not without a sweetheart,” and, with a smile at myself, “would not be long without a husband”—hoped that she “would be happy as the day was long, and live to see her great-grand-children at her feet,”—was certain she was an Irishwoman, “for she had the fair face, and the small hand, and the dark blue eye, and the long black lash, and the bounding step,” and prophesied more good fortune than (to one of the party, at least) has yet been fulfilled.

This old woman was a good specimen of a shrewd Irish peasant. Her compliments were insinuated, rather than expressed; and, *malgré* the brogue, I question when more delicate flattery—pleasant, after all, to one’s *amour propre*—could be more dexterously conveyed in the circles which we call brilliant. This tact in the matter of compliment appears intuitive.

Allusion having been made to the granite column in the neighborhood, our hostess asked whether we

should like “to know all about it.” The answer was in the affirmative, and then—happy to hear the tones of her own voice, proud of giving information to persons above her own station, and in pleased anticipation of a *douceur*—she told us a legend which, as she was rather prolix, I shall take leave to give you in my own words.

## FINN MAC COUL'S FINGER-STONE.

FINN MAC COUL went hunting one day on the Curragh of Kildare. His sport was indifferent, for he brought down only a leash of red deer, and a couple of wolves. He came back to his house, on the hill of Allen, in such bad spirits, that his wife asked him what was the matter, and said that, no doubt, he would have better sport another time. Heaving a deep sigh, he told her that it was not his bad sport that annoyed him, but that news had that morning reached him that Ossian, the Scotch giant, was coming over to challenge him to a trial of strength, and if he lost the day—for he could not decline the contest—his credit, and the credit of Ireland, would be gone forever.

At this news, Finn's wife became as low-spirited as himself. They sat by the fire, like Witherington, "in doleful dumps," and their thoughts were the reverse of happy.

Suddenly, the lady—for the life of me I cannot bring myself to designate her as plain "Mrs. Mac Coul"—asked her disconsolate lord and master at what time Ossian was expected to arrive? Finn told her that the Scottish Hercules had intimated his intention of paying his visit at noon on the fol-

lowing day. "Oh! then," said she, brightening up, "there's no need to despair. Leave all to me, and I'll bring you through it like a Trojan. A blot is no blot until 'tis entered." This remark, showing at once her philosophy and her knowledge of back-gammon, was very consolatory to Finn Mac Coul, who, like men before and since, was rather under what is called petticoat government. His mind was relieved when his wife saw daylight.

After breakfast, the next day, Finn (by his wife's direction) went into a huge child's-cradle, a feat which he had some difficulty in accomplishing. There he lay, crumpled up uneasily, while she kept busy in the kitchen, baking some cake or griddle-bread.

By-and-bye, up came Ossian, who knocked at the door, and civilly inquired whether Finn Mac Coul lived there, and if he were at home? "No," said his wife, "he's gone to the fair of Bartlemy; but I am his wife, and, perhaps, I can answer for him."

"What!" said Ossian, "did not he hear that I, Ossian of Scotland, was coming over for a trial of strength with him? I hope he does not mean to skulk. Wherever he may be, I shall not return home until I *see* him, and until he *feel* me."

When the wife found that Ossian was too far North to be put off by a "not at home," she put the best face on it, welcomed him to Ireland, hoped he had a pleasant passage, and that the tossing on

the salt-water did not disagree with him, invited him into the house, and said that Finn would soon be back, and ready to indulge him in any way he pleased.

Ossian sat down by the fire, quite at his ease. He had a great conceit of himself, and was, indeed, the strongest man in Europe at that time. He noticed the large cakes that were baking in the oven, each of them taking two stone weight of flour, and asked why she made them of such a size. "They are for that little creature in the cradle, there," said she, pointing over her shoulder to Finn. Then Ossian looked round, and noticed the cradle, with Finn in it, and a night-cap on his head, and tied under his chin, and he pretending to be fast asleep all the time.

Astonished at the immense bulk, Ossian called out, "Who's there? What man is that in the cradle?" "Man!" said Finn's wife, with a pleasant little laugh, "that's our youngest child. I am weaning him now, and I sometimes think the fairies have overlooked him, he's so dwarfed and small, and does not promise to be half the size of his father and his brothers."

Ossian never said a word to that; but he could not take his eyes off the cradle, thinking, no doubt, if the undergrown baby was such a bouncer, what must the father be.

By-and-bye, Finn's wife told Ossian that, as he

had a long journey, and Finn was staying out longer than she expected, he might as well take some refreshment, without waiting for him. The cakes were nice and brown by this time, and she asked him to break his fast with one of them. He took it, and when he made a bite in it, he roared again with pain, for his two best front teeth were broken. "Oh!" he cried out, "it is as hard as iron,"—and so it might be, for she had put an iron griddle into it, and baked it with it in. "Hard?" said she. "Why, that child there would not taste it if it were a bit softer."

Then she recommended Ossian to wash the pain away with a sup of the finest whiskey in the province; and she fetched a wooden *piggin*, that would hold about a gallon to a gallon and a half, and filled it to the brim. Ossian took a long pull at it; as much as a quart or so. Then Finn's wife laughed downright at him for taking so little. "Why," said she, "the child there in the cradle thinks nothing of emptying that *piggin* in one draught." So, for shame's sake, and because he did not like to be thought a milk-sop, Ossian took a little more, and a little more yet, until, before long, the liquor got the better of him.

Now, this was the very pass that the good wife wished to bring him to. "While his father is out," said she, "and I wonder why he is not home before now, may-be you'd like to see the child there throw a stone, or try a fall with you, or do any of the di-

verting little tricks that his father teaches him." Ossian consented, and she went over to the cradle and gave Finn a shake. "Wake up, dear," said she, "and amuse the gentleman."

So Finn stretched himself, and Ossian wondered at his black beard, and his great bulk. "'Pon my word," said he, "you're a fine child for your age." Then, turning to Finn's wife, he asked, "Has he cut any of his teeth yet?" She bade him feel his gums. Then Ossian put two of his fingers into Finn's mouth, and the moment they were there Finn bit them to the bone. Ossian jumped round the room with pain. "Ah!" said Finn's wife, "you should see his father's teeth; he thinks nothing of biting off the head of a two-shilling nail, when he uses it for a tooth-pick."

By this time, Ossian was far from comfortable. But he thought he must put the best face on it; so he said to Finn, "Come, my lad, let us see how your father teaches you to wrestle."

Finn did not say a word, but grappled Ossian round the waist, and laid him sprawling on the ground before he could say "Jack Robinson." Ossian picked himself up, very sulkily, and rubbed the place that had come in contact with the hard floor of the kitchen.

"Now," said Finn's wife, "may-be you'd like to see the child throw a stone." And then Finn went in front of the house, where there was a heap of

great rocks, and he took up the very identical stone which now stands in the Breaks of Ballynascorney, and flung it all the way from the hill of Allen. To this day it bears the marks of Finn's five fingers and thumb—for his hand was not like an ordinary hand—when he grasped it; and to this day, also, that stone bears Finn's name.

Ossian was greatly surprised, as well he might be, at such a cast. He asked, "Could your father throw such a stone much farther?"—"Is it my father?" said Finn: "faith, he'd cast it all the way to America, or Scotland, or the Western Injes, and think nothing of it!"

This was enough for Ossian. He would not venture on a trial of strength with the father, when the son could beat him. So he pretended to recollect some sudden business that called him back, post-haste, to Scotland, thinking he never could get away half quick enough. And the stone remains where Finn threw it, and, if you only go that way, any one on or near the Sigham mountain will show you FINN MAC COUL'S FINGER-STONE.

IRISH STORIES.



## THE PETRIFIED PIPER.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### WHO THE PIPER WAS.

IRISH Legends almost invariably remind me of the Field of Waterloo. When our tourists rushed *en masse*, to behold the plain on which the destinies of Europe had been decided, they exhibited the usual relic-hunting and relic-buying mania. Bullets and helmet ornaments, rusty pistols and broken swords, buttons and spurs, and such things—actually found on the battle-field—were soon disposed of, while of the tourists it might be said, as of the host of Dunsinane, "The cry is still 'they come!'" So, the demand exceeding the legitimate supply, the Belgian peasantry began to dispose of fictitious relics, and a very profitable trade it was for a long time. To this day, they are carefully manufactured, "to order," by more than one of the hardware makers of Birmingham.

In the same manner, Irish legends having become a marketable commodity (Carleton and Crofton Croker, Banim and Griffin, Lover and Whitty,

having worked the vein deeply), people had recourse to invention instead of tradition—like George Psalmanazar's History of Formosa, in which fiction supplied the place of fact. Very amusing, no doubt; but not quite fair. More ingenious than honest. Therefore, the Irish story I shall relate, if it possesses none other, shall have the merit, at least, of being "founded on facts."

Fermoy is one of the prettiest towns in Ireland. It is not very remote from that very distinguished Southern metropolis—of pigs and porter—known as "the beautiful city of Cork." Midway between city and town lies Water-grass-hill, a pretty village, located on the highest arable land in Ireland, and now immortal as having once been the residence of the celebrated Father Prout. Some people prefer the country-town to the crowded city: for, though its trade be small, its society rather too fond of scandal, its church without a steeple, and its politicians particularly intolerant, Fermoy is in the heart of a fertile and picturesque tract, and there flows through it that noble river, the Blackwater, honorably mentioned by Spenser, and honored in later song as the scene where might be beheld

"The trout and the salmon  
A-playing backgammon,  
All on the banks of sweet Castle Hyde."

The scenery around Fermoy is indeed most beau-

tiful, and *above* all (in more meanings than one) towers Corrig Thierna—the Lord's rock, commonly spoken of as Corran—which, to such of the inhabitants as have not seen greater elevations, appears a mountain entitled to vie with what they have heard of the Alps, Appenines, or Andes.

Although Fermoy now contains fully seven hundred houses (exclusive of stables and pigsties), and a population of nearly seven thousand souls, men, women, and children—to say nothing of horses, oxen, sheep, mules, donkies, cats, dogs, and such other creatures as have no souls—it was not always so extensive and populous.

In every town a high traditional authority is constantly referred to as "within the memory of the oldest inhabitant," and it may be stated, on this antique authority, that, not much more than half a century since, Fermoy was a very small and obscure hamlet, consisting of no more than one little pot-house and half a dozen other mud-cabins, luxuriantly located, with some ingenuity, so as to enjoy, front and rear, a *maximum* of the morning and afternoon sunshine. These domiciles were ranged in a row, and hence arose the figurative saying, "All on one side, like the town of Fermoy." The energy, ability, and capital of one man (the late John Anderson, who introduced mail-coaches into Ireland), raised the village of Fermoy into a populous and thriving town, which, in 1809, was a merry place—partly owing to

the mirth whose chief minister was Remmy Carroll, son of old Carroll, the piper.

As Remmy is the hero of my tale, it is only proper that I should describe him. Irish parlance emphatically distinguished him as "a mighty clever boy," which did not mean a compliment to his capacity or acquirements, but was simply a figure of speech to declare that this Hibernian Orpheus stood about "six feet two in his stocking-vamps." Remmy Carroll's personal appearance was not quite as *distingué* as that of his great contemporary, Beau Brummell. His coat, originally of blue frieze, had worn down, by age and service, to a sort of bright gray, tessellated, like mosaic-work, with emendations of the original substance carefully annexed thereto by Remmy's own industrious fingers. The garment, like the wearer, had known many a fray, and Remmy was wont to observe, jocularly, when he sat down to repair these breaches, that then, like a man of landed property, he was occupied in "taking his rents."

Care is not very likely to kill a man who can jest upon his own poverty. Accordingly, Remmy Carroll was as light-hearted a fellow as could be met with in town or country. He was a gentleman accustomed to live how and where he could, and he was welcomed everywhere. It was mentioned, as an undoubted fact, that where men of substance—rich farmers and thriving shopkeepers—had been

very coldly received by bright-eyed angels in petticoats, looks and even words of encouragement had been extended to Remmy Carroll. The fair sex are proverbially of a kind nature, especially towards young men, who, like Carroll, have handsome features and jocund speech, lofty stature and winning smiles, that symmetry of limb which pleases the eye, and that subduing conversation which pleases the ear. What was more, Remmy Carroll knew very well—none better!—that he was a favorite with the rose-cheeked Venuses of Fermoy and its vicinity. It may be mentioned also—as *sotto voce* as type can express it—that he was also perfectly aware that he was a very personable fellow, what Coleridge has described as "a noticeable man." Was there ever any one, no matter of what age or sex, possessing personal advantages, who was not fully aware of the fact?

It would be tedious to expatiate very particularly upon the extent and variety of Remmy Carroll's accomplishments. He followed the hereditary profession of his family, and was distinguished, far and near, for his really splendid execution on the Irish pipes—an instrument which can be made to "discourse most excellent music," and must never be confounded with the odious drone of the Scottish bag-pipes. Remmy's performance could almost excite the very chairs, tables, and three-legged stools to dance. One set of pipes is worth a dozen fiddles,

for it can "take the shine out of them all" in point of loudness. But then, these same pipes can do more than make a noise. The warrior, boldest in the field, is gentlest at the feet of his ladye-love; and so, the Irish pipes, which can sound a strain almost as loud as a trumpet-call, can also breathe forth a tide of gushing melody—sweet, soft, and low as the first whisper of mutual love. You have never felt the eloquent expression of Irish music, if you have not heard it from the Irish pipes.\* It is quite marvellous that, amid all the novelties of instrumentation (if I may coin a word) which are thrust upon the patient public, season after season—including the Jews'-harping of Eulenstein, the chin-chopping of Michael Boiai, and the rock-harmonicon of the Derbyshire mechanics—no one has thought of exhibiting the melodious performance of an Irish

\* This praise of the Irish pipes is by no means exaggerated. The last performer of any note, in Fermoy, was an apothecary, named O'Donnell, who certainly could make them discourse "most eloquent music." He died about fifteen years ago. It was almost impossible to listen with dry eyes and unmoved heart to the exquisite manner in which he played the Irish melodies—the *real* ones, I mean—not those which Tom Moore and Sir John Stevenson had "adopted" (and emasculated) for polite and fashionable piano-forte players and singers. There is now in New York a gentleman, named Charles Ferguson, whose performance on the Irish pipes may be said to equal—it could not surpass—that of O'Donnell.

piper. If he confined himself to the Irish melodies, and really were a first-rate performer, he could not fail to please, to delight, to astonish. But, again I say, do not confound the sweet harmony of the Irish with the drony buzz of the Scotch pipes.

Remmy Carroll's accomplishments were not limited to things musical. He could out-walk, out-run, and out-leap any man in the barony of Condons and Clongibbons; aye, or of any five other baronies in the county of Cork, the Yorkshire of Ireland. He could back the most vicious horse that ever dared to rear and kick against human supremacy. He had accepted the challenge scornfully given to the whole world, by Big Brown of Kilworth, to wrestle, and had given him four fair falls out of five, a matter so much taken to heart by the said Big one, that he emigrated to London, where, overcome with liquor and loyalty, he was tempted to enlist in an infantry regiment, and was shot through the head at the storming of Badajoz some short time after.

Remmy Carroll could do, and had done more than defeat Brown. He could swim like a fish, was the only man ever known to dive under that miniature Maëlstrom which eddies at the base of The Nailer's Rock (nearly opposite Barnäan Well), and, before he was one-and-twenty, had saved nine unfortunates from being drowned in the fatal Blackwater.\*

\* There really was a person named Carroll residing in Fermoy at the date of this story. He was of gigantic stature and strength,

No man in the county could beat him at hurly, or foot-ball. He was a crack hand at a faction-fight on a fair day—only, as a natural spirit of generosity sometimes impelled him, with a reckless chivalry, to side with the weaker party, he had, more than once, been found magnanimously battling against his own friends.

Yet more.—Having had the advantage of three years' instruction at Tim Daly's far-famed Academy, Remmy Carroll was master of what a farmer,

with the mildest temper ever possessed by mortal man. He was noted for his excellence in swimming and his remarkable skill as a diver.. Whenever any person had been drowned in the Blackwater, (which runs through Fermoy,) Carroll was sent for, and never quitted the river until he had found the body. There is one part considered particularly dangerous, opposite Barnaan Well, in which a large projection, called the Nailor's Rock, shelves out into the water, making an under-current of such peculiar strength and danger, that even expert swimmers avoid it, from a fear of being drawn within the vortex. Many lives have been lost in this fatal eddy, into which Carroll was accustomed to dive, most fearlessly, in search of the bodies. It was calculated that Carroll had actually saved twenty-two persons from being drowned, and had recovered over fifty corpses from the river. When he died, which event happened at the commencement of the bathing season, a general sorrow fell upon all classes in the town of Fermoy, and for several weeks no one ventured into the river. It was as if their guardian and safeguard had departed. In my youth, passed on the banks of the Blackwater, there was a belief that whenever one person was drowned in that river, two others were sure to follow, in the same season.

more alliterative than wise, called "the mystery of the three R's:—Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic." He knew, by the simple taste, when the Potheen was sufficiently "above proof." He had a ten-Irishman power of love-making, and while the maidens (with blushes, smiles, and softly-simulated angers) would exclaim, "Ah, then, be done, Remmy!—for a deluder as ye are!" there usually was such a sly intelligence beaming from their bright eyes, as assured him that he was not unwelcome; and then he felt it his duty to kiss them into perfect good-humor and forgiveness.—But I am cataloguing his accomplishments at too much length. Let it suffice to declare, that Remmy Carroll was confessedly the Admirable Crichton of the district.

He was an independent citizen of the world—for he had no particular settled habitation. He was a popular character—for every habitation was open to him, from Tim Mulcahy's, who lived with his wife and pig, in a windowless mud-cabin, at the foot of Corran, to Mr. Bartle Mahony's two-story slated house, on a three hundred acre farm, at Carrigabrick, on the banks of the Blackwater. At the latter abode of wealth, however, Remmy Carroll had not lately called.

Mr. Bartholomew Mahony—familiarly called "Bartle"—was a man of substance. Had he lived now, he might have sported a hunter for himself, and set up a jaunting-car for his daughter. But the

honest, well-to-do farmer had at once too much pride and sagacity to sink into the *Squireen*. He was satisfied with his station in life, and did not aspire beyond it. He was passing rich in the world's eye. Many, even of the worldlings, thought less of his wealth than of his daughter, Mary. Of all who admired, none loved her half so well as poor Remmy Carroll, who loved the more deeply, because very hopelessly, inasmuch as her wealth and his own poverty shut him out from all reasonable prospect of success. He admired—nay, that is by far too weak a word: he almost adored her, scarcely daring to confess, even to his own heart, how closely her image was blended with the very life of his being.

Mary Mahony was an Irish beauty; that most indescribable of all breathing loveliness, with dark hair, fair skin, and violet eyes, a combination to which the brilliant pencil of Maclise has often rendered justice. She had a right to look high, in a matrimonial way, for she was an heiress in her own right. She had £500 left her as a legacy by an old maiden-aunt, near Mitchelstown, who had taken care of her from her twelfth year, when she left the famous Academy of the renowned Tim Daly (where she and Remmy used to write together at the same desk), until some eight months previous to the date of this authentic narrative, when the maiden-aunt died, bequeathing her property, as aforesaid, to Mary Mahony, who then returned to her father.

With all her good fortune, including the actual of the legacy, and the ideal of inheritance to her father's property—with beauty sufficient to have turned the head of any other damsel of eighteen, Mary Mahony was far from pride or conceit. She had the lithest form and the most graceful figure in the world, but many maidens, with far less means, wore much more showy and expensive apparel. Her dark hair was plainly braided off her white brow, in bands, in the simplest and most graceful manner; while, from beneath, gleamed orbs so beautiful, that one might have said to her, in the words of John Ford, the dramatist,

“Once a young lark  
Sat on thy hand, and gazing on thine eyes,  
Mounted and sung, thinking them moving skies.”

The purple stuff gown (it was prior to the invention of merinos and muslins-de-laine), which, in its close fit, exhibited the exquisite beauty of her form, and set off, by contrast, the purity of her complexion, was also a within-doors article of attire: when she went out, she donned a long cloak of fine blue cloth, with the sides and hood neatly lined with pink sarsnet. Young and handsome Irish girls, in her rank of life, were not usually satisfied, at that time, with a dress so quiet and so much the reverse of gay.

But Mary Mahony's beauty required nothing to

set it off. I do not exaggerate when I say that it was literally dazzling. I saw her twenty years after the date of this narrative, and was even then struck with admiration of her matured loveliness;—how rich, then, must it have been in the bud!

Mary, as Remmy Carroll said *before* he knew that he loved her—for *then*, he never breathed her name to mortal ear,—was “the moral of a darling creature, only t’would be hard to say whether she was most good or handsome.” Her hair, as I have said, was dark (light tresses are comparatively rare in Ireland), and her eyes were of so deep a blue that nine out of ten on whom they glanced mistook them for black. Then, too, the long lashes veiling them, and the lovely cheek (“oh, call it fair, not pale”), on which their silky length reposed,—and the lips so red and pouting, and the bust whose gentle heavings were just visible behind the modest kerchief which covered it,—and the brow white as snow (but neither too high nor too prominent),—and the fingers tapering and round, and the form lithe and graceful,—and the feet small and well-shaped, and the nameless air which gave dignity and grace to every motion of this country-girl! Oh, beautiful was Mary Mahony, beautiful as the bright image of a poet’s dream, the memory of which shadows he forth in the verse which challenges immortality in the minds of men.

The *contour* of her face was neither Roman, nor Grecian, nor Gothic;—it was essentially Irish, and

I defy you to find a finer. The only drawback (for I must be candid) was that her nose had somewhat—just the slightest—of an upward inclination. This, which sometimes lent a sort of piquancy to what would otherwise have been quite a Madonna-like face, only made her not too handsome; at least, so thought her admirers. Lastly, she had a voice as sweet as ear ever loved to listen to. No doubt, it had the distinguishing accents of her country, but with her, as with Scott’s Ellen, they were

“Silvery sounds, so soft, so dear,  
The listener held his breath to hear.”

## CHAPTER II.

### WHAT THE PIPER DID.

It was in the summer of 1809, that, for the first time since both of them were children and school-mates, Remmy Carroll spoke to Mary Mahony. Often had he seen her at the dance, which without his aid could not be, but in which, alas, *he* could not join—a dancing piper being almost as anomalous as a hunting archbishop! Often had he admired the natural grace of her movements. Often had he been struck by the bewitching modesty of mien and motion which had the power of suddenly changing the

rakish, rollicking gallantry of her followers (for she was a reigning toast) into a most respectful homage. Often had he noticed her at chapel, whither she came to pray, while others flaunted and gazed as if they had come only to see and to be seen. Often had he followed her very footsteps, at a distance—for the very ground on which she trod was hallowed to this humble lover—but never yet had he dared to hope.

The shortest way from Fermoy to Carrigabrick is by the banks of the Blackwater, and this way, on Whitsunday, 1809, was taken by Mary Mahony and a merry younger cousin of hers on their homeward route. There are stiles to be crossed, and deep drains to be jumped over, and even a pretty steep wall to be climbed.

Remmy Carroll, who knew that they would thus return home, had followed the maidens afar off,—sighing to think, as they crossed the stiles, with a world of gentle laughter, that he must not dare to think of proffering them any assistance. With all his love—perhaps, indeed, because of it—he had hitherto been careful to avoid the chance of even a casual notice from the subject of his untold passion. *She* was wealthy, *he* was poor; and, therefore, he shrunk from the object of his unuttered passion. Her feelings towards him at this time were rather kind than otherwise. She knew, what all the parish were unacquainted with, that Remmy devoted the greater portion of his earnings, not only to the sup-

port of a bed-ridden old aunt, who had neither kith nor kin save himself in the wide world, but even to the procuring for her what might be esteemed rather as luxuries than mere comforts. Whatever might be the deficiencies in Remmy Carroll's wardrobe, his old aunt never went without "the raking cup of tay" morning and evening. Was it because she had noticed how carefully Remmy Carroll avoided her, that the bright eyes of Mary Mahony rested upon him with some degree of interest, and that she even liked to listen to and encourage her father's praises of his conduct towards his aged relative, for whose comfortable support he sacrificed dress—the natural vent for youthful vanity in both sexes?

Mary and her merry cousin went on, through the fields, until they reached the most difficult pass. This was a deep chasm separating two meadows. A deep and rapid stream flowed through the abyss, whirlingly pouring its strong current into the Blackwater. The maidens lightly and laughingly tripped down the steps which were rudely cut on the side of the chasm. It was but a quick, short jump across. Hark!—a sudden shriek! He cleared the wall at a bound—he dashed across the meadow—in one minute he was plunging down the abyss. He saw that Mary's cousin had safely reached the other side, where she stood uselessly wringing her hands, and screaming in an agony of despair, while Mary (precipitated into the deep and swollen stream, her foot



having slipped) was in the act of being hurried into the eddies of the Blackwater. There was no time for delay. He plunged into the stream, dived for the body, which had just then sunk again, and, in less time than I have taken to tell it, had placed his insensible but still lovely *treasure trove* on the bank which he just quitted. The other maiden no sooner saw that her cousin had been rescued than—according to womanly custom in such cases, I presume—*she* immediately swooned away, leaving poor Remmy to take care of Mary Mahony.

With the gentlest care he could employ, he exerted his best skill to restore her, and, in a short time, had the inexpressible delight of seeing her open her eyes. It was but for a moment; she glanced wildly around, and again closed them. Soon the bloom returned to her cheek—and now she felt, though she saw not, that she lay supported in the arms of Remmy Carroll; for, as he leant over her, and her breathing came softly and balmily upon his face, his lips involuntarily were pressed to hers, and the maiden, through whose frame that stolen embrace thrilled, with a new and bewildering sensation, might be forgiven, if, at that moment, she intuitively knew who had thus brushed the dewy sweetness from her lips; might be forgiven, if, from that epoch, there gushed into her heart a feeling more kind, more deep, more pervading, than ordinary gratitude.

By this time, the pretty cousin had thought proper to recover; nor has it yet been accurately ascertained whether, indeed, she had or had not beheld the oscular proceeding which I have mentioned. Now, however, she hastened to pay the feminine attentions, more suitable to the situation of a half-drowned young lady, than those which Remmy Carroll had attempted to bestow. He had the satisfaction, however, of carefully taking Mary Mahony across the stream in his arms. Nay, before he departed, she had softly whispered her gratitude; and in her tone and manner, there was that which breathed hope to him, even against hope. Though he quitted them, he loitered about while they remained in sight, and just as Mary Mahony was vanishing through the stile which opened into her father's lands, she turned round, saw her deliverer watching her at a distance, and she kissed her hand to him as she withdrew.

From that hour the current of his life flowed on with a fresher bound—the fountain of hope welled out its sparkling waters, for the first time, from its depths. To the world—to no living soul, would he have dared to avow his new-born feeling, that Mary Mahony might one day be his own. Within his heart of hearts it lay, and with it was the consciousness, that to win her he must merit her. *How*, he knew not; but the resolve is much.

Three months glided on. Carroll continued to pursue his calling as a music-maker, and not a wed-

ding nor christening passed by, or, indeed, could pass by, without the assistance of his "professional" powers. But he now became what a young and gay Irishman seldom is—a hoarder of his earnings. He laid aside much of the wild and reckless mirth which had made him, despite his poverty, the king of good fellows. Remmy was, in many respects, above the generality of his class; for he had got a tolerably good education; he was quick at repartee, and not without a certain manly grace of manner; his conversation was never garnished with expletives; he had a good voice, and could sing with considerable effect; he was an adept in fairy lore and romantic legends; and he was accustomed to retail news from the newspapers to a wondering auditory, so that the marvel was how he could be "such a janius entirely." Hence his popularity with all classes. But now, as I have said, he laid aside all mirth that might involve outlay. His manners became sedate, almost grave,—nay, if we dared to apply such high words to a man of such low degree as an Irish piper, it might be added, that a certain degree of quiet dignity became blended with his speech and actions. Like the wedding guest described by Coleridge, he seemed "a sadder and a wiser man." Such a change could not pass unobserved, and while one-half the circle of his acquaintance shook their heads, and ominously whispered, "Sure the boy must be fairy-struck," the fairer moiety suggested that the altera-

tion must have been produced by Love, though even their sagacity and observation failed to ascertain the object of his passion.

### CHAPTER III.

#### HOW THE PIPER GOT ON WITH MARY MAHONY.

THE aim and the result of Remmy Carroll's newly-acquired habits of economy and self-denial became evident, at length, when his appearance, one Sunday, in the Chapel of Fermoy—it was the Old Chapel, with mud walls and a thatched roof, which stood in that part of Cork Hill whence now diverges the narrow passage called Waterloo Lane—caused a most uncommon sensation. It was Remmy's first appearance, on any stage, in the character of a country-beau. His ancient coat was put into Schedule A (like certain pocket-boroughs in the Reform Bill), and was replaced by a garment from the tasty hands of Dandy Cash, at that time the Stultz of Fermoy and its vicinity. This was a broad-skirted coat of blue broadcloth, delicately embellished with the brilliancy of shining gilt buttons, each not much larger than a half-dollar. A vest of bright yellow kersey-mere, with a double-row of plump mother-of-pearl studs; a new pair of closely-fitting unmentionables,

with a liberal allowance of drab ribbons pensile at the knees; gray worsted stockings, of the rig-and-furrow sort, displaying the muscular calf and the arched instep; neat pumps, with soles not quite half an inch thick, and the uppers made "elegant" by the joint appliances of lampblack and grease (considered to *nourish* the leather much better than "Warren's jet blacking, the pride of mankind");—a well-fitting shirt of fine bundle-linen, bleached to an exquisite whiteness, and universally looked upon as a *noli me tangere* of provincial buckism, with a silk grinder "round his nate neck," and a tall Carlisle hat, encircled with an inch-wide ribbon—such were the component parts of Remmy Carroll's new costume. True it is, that he left a little too much to the taste of Dandy Cash, the dogmatic and singularly conceited Snip; but still, Nature had done so much for him that he appeared quite a new man, the handsomest of the whole congregation, gentle or simple, and many a bright glance fell upon him admiringly, from eyes which had looked scorn at his chrysalis condition; and not a few fair bosoms fluttered at the thought, "what a fine, handsome, likely boy is Remmy Carroll, now that he is dressed dacent." He was not the first man whose qualifications have remained unacknowledged until such an accident as fine apparel has brought them into notice.

Mary Mahony was at Chapel on that Sunday when Remmy Carroll shone out, like the sun emerging from

behind a rack of heavy clouds. A casual looker-on might have fancied that she was one of the very few who did *not* mind Remmy Carroll. Indeed, she rather hung down her head, as she passed him,—but that might have been to hide the blushes which suffused her face when she met his eye. Her father, a kind-hearted man, who had a cordial salute for every friend, insisted that they should not hurry away without speaking to the piper. Accordingly, they loitered until nearly all the congregation had left the chapel, and, among the last, Remmy Carroll was quietly stealing away. Bartle Mahony accosted him, with a hearty grasp of the hand, and warmly thanked him for having saved Mary's life, adding, "It is not until now I'd be waiting to thank you, man-alive, but Mary never let me know the danger she'd been in, until this blessed morn, when her cousin, Nancy Doyle, made me sensible of the ins and outs of the accident. But I *do* thank you, Remmy, and 'twill go hard with me if I don't find a better way of showing it than by words, which are only breath, as one may say."

Then Bartle Mahony slapped Remmy on the back, in a familiar manner, and insisted that he should walk home with them and take share of their dinner. "Don't hang down your head like a girl, but tuck Mary under your arm, and off to Carrigabrick, where I follow in less than no time, with the heartiest of

welcomes. Don't dawdle there, man-alive, like a goose, but walk off like a man."

So through the town of Fermoy, did Mary Mahony walk with Remmy Carroll—down Cork Hill and King-street, and across the Square, and along Artillery-quay, and by Skelhorne's paper-mill, and Reid's flour-mill, and then, on the Inches, by the Blackwater. History has not recorded whether Mary did actually take Remmy's arm—but it is conjectured that he was too shy to offer it, deeming *that* too great a liberty—but it is said that it was she who took the field-route to Carrigabrick, and, though she blushed deeply the while, she did not make any very violent objection to his taking her in his arms across that chasm, the passage of which, on a former day, had so nearly proved fatal to her. If I said that, while performing this pleasant duty, Remmy Carroll did *not* press her to his heart, I am pretty sure that no one would believe me. Well, then, there *was* this gentle pressure, but of course Mary Mahony believed he could not help it.—Do you think he could?

They proceeded to Carrigabrick, but the short cut through the fields proved the longest way round on this occasion. Bartle Mahony had reached the house fully half an hour before they did, and yet he had gone by the road, which, as every one knows, is nearly a mile round. They had exchanged few words during their walk; it was not quite the lady's

place to make conversation, and Remmy's thoughts were all too deep for utterance. In the earlier stage of love, passion is contemplative, and silence often has an eloquence of its own.

Remmy Carroll had the good fortune to win the particular favor of Mr. Bartle Mahony, who, as he was retiring to rest, kissed his fair child, as usual, and emphatically declared that Remmy Carroll was "a real decent fellow, and no humbug about him." He added, that as he had found his way to their hearth, he must be a stranger no more. And it came to pass, thenceforth, somehow or other, that Remmy paid a visit to Carrigabrick twice or thrice a week. These visits were ostensibly to Mr. Mahony, but it usually happened that Remmy had also a glimpse of Mary, and sometimes a word or two with her. It came to pass that Bartle Mahony, at length, fancied that a dull day in which he did not see his friend Remmy. Finally, as by a great effort of ingenuity, and in order to have a legitimate excuse for having his favorite frequently with him, Bartle Mahony announced his sovereign will and pleasure that Mary should learn music. Accordingly, when Remmy next came, he communicated this intention to him in a very dignified manner, and appointed Remmy forthwith to commence instructing her. But Remmy could play only upon one instrument, and the pipes happen to be so unfeminine, that he ventured to doubt whether the young lady would quite

approve of the proposition. Having hinted this difficulty to Bartle Mahony, that worthy was impressed with its force, but, rather than relinquish his project, declared that, all things considered, he thought it best that he himself should be the musical tyro.

If the truth were known, it would have appeared that the poor man had no desire to learn, and certainly no taste. But as Remmy Carroll, proud as he was poor, had peremptorily refused the money offered as a substantial mark of gratitude for having saved Mary Mahony's life, this was her father's indirect and rather clumsy mode of rewarding him. Very magnificent were the terms which he insisted on making with the piper: he could have been taught flute, harp, violin, psaltery, sackbut, and piano at less cost. Very little progress did the kind old man make, but he laughed soonest and loudest at his own dulness and discords. However, if the pupil did not make good use of his time, the teacher did. Before the end of the first quarter, Mary Mahony had half confessed to her own heart with what aptitude she had involuntarily taken lessons in the art of love.

It would make a much longer story than I have the conscience to inflict upon you, to tell how Mary Mahony came to fall in love with Remmy Carroll—for fall in love she certainly did. Perhaps it was out of gratitude. Perhaps it might have been his

fine person and handsome face. Perhaps, because she heard every girl of her acquaintance praise him. Perhaps, because he was her father's favorite. Perhaps, because they were so constantly thrown together, and he was the only young man with whom she frequently associated. Perhaps she loved him, because she could not help it. Why strive to find a reason for woman's love? It is like a mighty river springing up one knows not where—augmented one knows not how—ever sweeping onward, sometimes smoothly, sometimes in awful rapids, and bearing on its deep and constant current, amid weeds and flowers, rocks and sands, many a precious freight of hope and heart, of life and love.

Fathers and husbands are so proverbially the very last to see the progress which Love clandestinely makes under their roof, that it will not be considered a special miracle, if Bartle Mahony noticed nothing of the game which was in hand—hearts being trumps! Mary's merry cousin, Nancy Doyle, quietly smiled at the flirtation, as "fine fun," but did not seriously see why it should not end in a wedding, as Mary had fortune enough for both.

Winter passed away, and Spring waved her flag of emerald over the rejoicing world. Mary Mahony was walking in one of her father's meadows, for Remmy Carroll was expected, and he was now—though she blushed with a soft consciousness—the very pole-star of her constant thought. He came

up, and was welcomed with as sweet a smile as ever scattered sunshine over the human heart. They walked side by side for a little time, and then, when the continued silence became awkward, Remmy stated, for the maiden's information, what she knew very well before, that it was very fine weather.

"True for you, Remmy," answered she: "see how beautiful everything looks. The sunbeams fall upon the meadow in a soft shower of light, and make the very grass look glad."

"It *is* beautiful," said Remmy, with a sigh, "but I have too heavy a heart to look upon these things as you do."

"Surely," inquired Mary, "surely you've no real cause to say that? Have you heard any bad news?"

"No cause!" and here the pent-up feelings of his heart found utterance: "Is it no cause?—Oh, Mary dear—for you *are* dear to me, and I may say it now, for may be I may never be here to say it again—is it no cause to have a heavy heart, when I have nobody in this wide world that I can speak to about her that's the very life of my life, while I know that I am nothing to her, but one that she sees to-day and will forget to-morrow? Is it no cause, when I know that the little linnet that's now singing on that bough, has as much chance of becoming an eagle, as I have of being thought lovingly of by the one that I love? Haven't I cause to be of a heavy

heart, knowing that I would be regarded no more than that little bird, if I were to try and fly beyond the state I'm in, when I know that I am not many removes from a beggar, and have been for months dreaming away as if I was your equal? You are kind and gentle, and when I am far away, perhaps you may think that I would have tried to deserve you if I could, and then think well of one who loves you better than he loves himself. Oh, Mary Mahony! may God's blessing rest upon you, and keep you from ever knowing what it is to love without hope."

Overcome by his emotion—aye, even to tears, which flowed down his comely cheeks—poor Remmy suddenly stopped. Mary Mahony, surprised at the unexpected but not quite displeasing matter of his address, knew not, for a brief space, what answer to make. But she was a woman—a young and loving one—so she let her heart speak from its fulness.

"May-be," said she, with a blush, which made her look more beautiful than ever,—"*may-be*, tis a foolish thing, Remmy, to love without hoping;" and she looked at him with an expressive smile, which, unfortunately, he was unable to distinguish through the tears which were now chasing each other down his face, as round and nearly as large as rosary-beads.

"It's of no use," he said, not perceiving the nature of her words; "it's of no use trying to banish

you from my mind. I've put a penance on myself for daring to think of you, and it's all of no use. The more I try not to think, the more I find my thoughts upon you. I try to forget you, and as I walk in the fields, by day, you come into my mind, and when I sleep at night you come into my dreams. Wherever I am, or whatever I do, you are beside me, with a kind, sweet smile. Every morning of my life, I make a promise to my heart that I will never again come here to look upon that smile, far too sweet and too kind for such as me, and yet my steps turn towards you before the day is done. But it's all of no use. I must quit the place altogether. I will go for a soldier, and if I am killed in battle, as I hope I may be, they will find your name, Mary, written on my heart."

To a maid who loved as well as Mary Mahony did, there was a touching pathos in the simple earnestness of this confession;—aye, and eloquence, too, for surely truth is the living spirit of eloquence. How long she might have been inclined to play the coquette I cannot resolve, but the idea of her lover's leaving her put all *finesse* to flight, and she said, in a low tone, which yet found an echo, and made a memory in his heart: "Remmy! dear Remmy, you must not leave me. If you go, my heart goes with you, for I like you, poor as you are, better than the richest lord in the land, with his own weight of gold and jewels on his back."

What more she might have said puzzles conjecture—for these welcome words were scarcely spoken, when all further speech was arrested by an ardent kiss from Remmy. Oh! the first, fond kiss of mutual love! what is there of earth with so much of the soft and gentle balm of heaven?

There they stood, by the ruins of that old castle, the world all forgot. There they whispered, each to each, that deep passion with which they had so long been heart-full. The maiden had gentle sighs and pleasant tears—but these last, Remmy gallantly kissed away. Very wrong, no doubt, for her to have permitted him to do so, and, in truth, she sometimes exhibited a shadow of resistance. There was, in sooth,

"A world of whispers, mixed with low response,  
Sweet, short, and broken, as divided strains  
Of nightingales."

"And you won't think the worse of me, Remmy, for being so foolish as to confess how I love you?"

"Is it me, life of my heart? not unless you say that it was foolish to love *me*. Sure, they were the happiest words I ever heard."

"And you will love me always, even as now?"

"Ah, Mary, I see that you are joking now."

"And you won't go as a soldier?"

"Not I, darling; let those who have heavy hearts, and no hope, do that same."

Much more was spoken, no doubt. Very tender confessions and confidences, in truth, which I care not to repeat, for such are of the bright holidays of youth and love, and scarcely bear to be reported as closely as an oration in the Senate, or a lawyer's harangue at Nisi Prius, in a case of Breach of Promise. Such tender confessions and confidences resemble those eastern flowers which have a sweet perfume on the soil to which they are native, but lose the fragrance if you remove them to another clime.

At last, with many a lingering "one word more," many a gentle pressure of the hands, and several very decided symptoms, belonging to the genus "kiss," in the sweet botany of love, Mary and Remmy parted. Happy, sweetly and sadly happy (for deep love is meditative, rather than joyful), Mary Mahony returned home. She hastened to that apartment peculiarly called her own, threw herself on the bed, and indulged in the luxury of tears, for it is not Sorrow alone that seeks relief in tears,—they fall for hope fulfilled as truly, though less often, as for hope deferred. Weep on, gentle girl, weep in joy, while you can. Close at hand is the hour in which, ere you have done more than taste it, the sparkling draught of happiness may be snatched from your lips.

## CHAPTER IV.

## HOW THE PIPER BECAME A PETRIFICATION.

ALIKE delighted and surprised at thus finding Mary Mahony a sharer in the emotions which so wildly filled his own heart, Remmy Carroll returned to Fermoy, in that particular mood which is best denoted by the topsy-turvy description—"he did not know whether he stood upon his head or his heels." He rested until evening at a friend's, and was not unwilling to have some hours of quiet thought before he again committed himself to commerce with the busy world. About dusk, he started with his friend for a farmer's, on the Rathcormac side of Corran Thierna, where there was to be a wedding that night, at which Remmy and his pipes would be almost as indispensable as the priest and the bridegroom.

As they were passing on the mountain's base, taking the soft path on the turf, as more pleasant than the dusty highway, a little lower down, Remmy suddenly stopped.

"There's music somewhere about here," said he, listening.

"May-be it's only a singing in your head," observed Pat Minahan. I've known such things,



'specially if one had been taking a drop extra overnight."

"Hush!" said Remmy, "I hear it again as distinctly as ever I heard the sound of my own pipes. There 'tis again: how it sinks and swells on the evening breeze!"

Minahan paused and listened. "Sure enough, then, there is music in the air. Oh, Remmy Carroll, 'tis you are the lucky boy, for this must be fairy music, and 'tis said that whoever hears it first, as you did, is surely born to good luck."

"Never mind the luck," said Remmy, with a laugh. "There's the fairy ring above there, and I'll be bound that's the place it comes from. There's fox-glove, you see, that makes night-caps for them; and there's heath-bells that they have for drinking-cups; and there's sorrell that they have for tables, when the mushrooms aren't in; and there's the green grass within the ring, as smooth as your hand, and as soft as velvet, for 'tis worn down by their little feet when they dance in the clear light of the full moon. I am sure the music came from that fairy-ring."

"May-be it does," replied Minahan, "and may-be it doesn't. If you please, I'd rather move on, than stand here like a pillar of salt, for 'tis getting dark, and fairies aren't exactly the sort of people I'd like to meet in a lonely place. 'Twas somewhere about here, if I remember right, that Phil Connor, the piper, had a trial of skill with the fairies, as to who'd

play best, and they turned him into stone, pipes and all. It happened, Remmy, before your father came to these parts,—but, surely you heard of it before now?"

"Not I," said Remmy; "and if I did, I wouldn't heed it."

"Oh, then," said his companion, with an ominous shake of the head at Remmy's incredulity, "it's all as true as that you're alive and kicking at this blessed moment. I heard my mother tell it when I was a boy, and she had the whole of it from her aunt's cousin's son, who learned the ins and outs of the story from a faymale friend of his, who had it on the very best authority. Phil Connor was a piper, and a mighty fine player entirely. As he was coming home from a wedding at Rathcormac, one fine moonshiny night, who should come right forenenst him, on this very same mountain, but a whole bundle of the fairies, singing, and skipping, and discoursing like any other Christians. So, they up and axed him, in the civilest way they could, if he'd favor them with a planxty on his pipes. Now, letting alone that Phil was as brave as a lion, and would not mind facing even an angry woman, let alone a batch of hop-o'-my-thumb fairies, he never had the heart to say no when he was civilly axed to do anything.

"So Phil said he'd oblige them, with all the veins of his heart. With that, he struck up that fine,

ancient ould tune, 'The Fox-hunter's Jig.' And, to be sure and sartain, Phil was the lad that could play:—no offence to you, Remmy, who are to the fore. The moment the fairies heard it, they all began to caper, and danced here and there, backward and forward, to and fro, just like the motes you see dancing in the sunbeams, between you and the light. At last, Phil stopped, all of a sudden, and they gathered round him, the craturs, and asked him why he did not go on? And he told them that 'twas dying with the drought he was, and that he must have something to wet his whistle:—which same is only fair, particularly as far as pipers is concerned.

"'To be sure,' said a knowledgeable ould fairy, that seemed king of them all, 'it's but reasonable the boy is; get a cup to comfort him, the dacent gossoon.' So they handed Phil one of the fairy's fingers full of something that had a mighty pleasant smell, and they filled a hare-bell cup of the same for the king. 'Take it, me man,' said the ould fairy, 'there isn't a headache in a hogshead of it. I warrant that a guager's rod has never come near it. 'Twas made in Araglyn, out of mountain barley,—none of your taxed Parliament stuff, but real Queen's 'lixir.' Well, with that he drank to Phil, and Phil raised the little dawny measure to his lips, and, though it was not the size of a thimble, he drank at last a pint of spirits from it, and when he took it away from his lips, that I mightn't, if 'twasn't as full

as 'twas at first. Faith, it gave Phil the boldness of a lion, that it did, and made him so that he'd do anything. And what was it the *omadhaun* did, but challenge the whole box and dice of the fairies to beat him at playing the pipes. Some of them, which had tender hearts, advised him not to try. But the more they tried to persuade him, the more he would not be persuaded. So, as a wilful man must have his way, the fairies' piper came forward, and took up the challenge. Phil and he played against each other until the cock crew, when the lot all vanished into a cave, and whipped Phil away with them. And, because they were downright mad, at last, that Phil should play so much better than their own musicianer, they changed poor Phil, out of spite, into a stone statute, which remains in the cave to this very day. And that's what happened to Phil Connor and the fairies."

"You've made a pretty story of it," said Remmy; "it's only a pity it isn't true."

"True!" responded Minahan, with tone and action of indignation. "What have you to say again it? It's as true as Romilus and Ramus, or the Irish Rogues and Rapparees, or the History of Reynard, the Fox, and Reynardine, his son, or any other of the curious little books that people do be reading—that is, them that *can* read, for diversion's sake, when they've got nothing else to do. I suppose you'll be saying next, that fairies themselves

ain't true? That I mightn't, Remmy, but 'twouldn't much surprise me in the laste, to hear you say, as Paddy Sheehy, the schoolmaster, says, that the earth is round, like an orange, and that people do be walking on the other side of it, with their heads downwards, and their feet opposite to our feet!"

"And if I did say so?" inquired Remmy, who—thanks to his schooling from the redoubtable Tim Daly—happened to know more of the Antipodes than his companion.

"Faith, Remmy, if you did say so, I know one that would misbelieve you, and that's my own self. For it stands to reason, all the world to a Chany orange, that if people was walking on the other side of the world, with their feet upwards and their heads down, they'd be sure to fall off before one could say 'Jack Robinson.'"

To such admirable reasoning as this, Remmy Carroll saw it would be quite useless to reply, so he allowed Minahan to rejoice in the advantage, usually claimed by a female disputant, of having "the last word."

They proceeded to the farmer's, Minahan, as they went along, volunteering a variety of particulars relative to the Petrified Piper—indulging, indeed, in such minuteness of detail, that it might have been taken for granted that he had, personally, seen and heard the matters he described.

It is to be feared that Remmy Carroll was but a

so-so listener. He had no great faith in fairies, and his mind was just then preoccupied with thoughts of his own darling Mary Mahony. At last, Minahan's conversation ended, for they had reached the farmer's house, where Remmy and his pipes received the very warmest of welcomes.

You need not fear that I have any intention of inflicting a description of the marriage upon you. It is enough to say that the evening was one of thorough enjoyment—Irish enjoyment, which is akin to a sort of mirthful madness. Perhaps Remmy was the only person who did not thoroughly enter into the *estro* of the hour, for though successful love may intoxicate the mind, it subdues even the highest spirits, and embarrasses while it delights. There is the joy at the success—the greater if it has been unexpected—but this is a joy more concentrated than impulsive. Its seat is deep within the heart, and there it luxuriates, but it does not breathe its secret to the world,—it keeps its treasure all to itself, at first, a thing to be thought of and exulted over privily. Love, when successful, has a compelling power which subdues all other feelings. The causes which commonly move a man, have little power when this master-passion fills the breast.

In compliance with the custom at all wedding-feasts in Ireland, the company freely partook of the national nectar (by mortals called whiskey-punch),

which was as plenty as tea at an ancient maiden's evening entertainment, where sally-lun and scandal are discussed together, and a verdict is given, at one and the same time, upon character and Souchong. Remmy, of course, imbibed a fair allowance of that resistless and potent mixture, the boast of which is, that "there is not a headache in a hogshead of it." Blame him not. The apostle of Temperance had not then commenced his charitable crusade. How could mortal man refuse the draught, brewed as it specially had been for him by the blushing bride herself, who, taking a dainty sup out of the horn which did duty for a tumbler, had the tempting gallantry to leave a kiss behind—even as "rare Ben Jonson" recommends. What marvel, if, when so many around him were rapidly passing the Rubicon of the cup, Remmy should have taken his allowance like "a man and a brother"—no, like a man and a piper,—particularly, when it is remembered that Love, as well as Grief, is proverbially thirsty. Still, Remmy Carroll had not exceeded the limits of sobriety. He had drank, but not to excess—for his failing was not in that wise. And even if he had partaken too freely of the charmed cup, it is doubtful whether, with strong passion and excited feeling making a secret under-current in his mind on that evening, any quantity of liquor could have sensibly affected him. There are occasions when the emotions

of the heart are so powerful as to render it almost impossible for a man, even if he desired it, thus to steep his senses in forgetfulness.

Remmy, therefore, was not "the worse for liquor"—although he certainly had not refrained from it. Minahan, on the other hand, who was quite a seasoned vessel, most buoyant in the ocean of free-drinking, and to whom a skinful of strong liquor was quite a god-send, had speedily and easily contrived to get into that pleasant state commonly called "half-seas-over,"—that is, he was not actually tipsy, but merry and agreeable; and as he insisted on returning to Fermoy, though he was offered a bed in the barn, the trouble of escorting him devolved on Remmy.

They left the house together, lovingly linked arm-in-arm, for Minahan then had a tendency to zig-zag movements. The next day, Minahan was found lying fast asleep, with a huge stone for his pillow, near the footpath, at the base of Corran Thierna. It was noticed by one of those who discovered him, that his feet were within the fairy-ring which Remmy had observed on the preceding evening. But of Remmy himself there was no trace. If the earth had swallowed him up, he could not have vanished more completely. His pipes were found on the ground, near Minahan, and this was all that remained of one who, so often and well, had waked their soul of song.

The whole district became alarmed; for, indepen-

dent of regret and wonder, on account of Remmy's personal popularity, a serious thing in a country district is the loss of its only Piper. At length, Father Tom Barry, the parish priest of Fermoy, thought it only his duty to pay a domiciliary visit to Minahan, to come at the real facts of the case, and solve what was felt to be "a most mysterious mystery."

Minahan was found in bed. Grief for the sudden loss of his friend had preyed so heavily upon his sensitive mind, that, ever since that fatal night, he had been drowning sorrow—in whiskey. It was now the third day since Remmy Carroll's disappearance; and when Father Tom entered the house, he found Minahan sleeping off the combined effects of affliction and *potheen*. He was awakened as soon as could be, and his first exclamation was, "Oh, them fairies! them thieves of fairies!" It was some time before he could comprehend the cause of Father Tom's visit, but even when he did, his words still were, "Oh, them fairies! them thieves of fairies! they beat Bannagher, and Bannagher beats the world!"

A growl from the priest, which, from lay lips, might have been mistaken for an execration, awoke Minahan to his senses—not that he was ever troubled with a superfluity of them. He testily declared his inability to tell his story, except upon conditions. "My memory," said he, "is just like an eel-skin,

your Reverence. It don't stretch or become properly limber until 'tis wetted." On this hint, Father Tom sent for a supply of Tommy Walker;\* and after summarily dispatching a noggin of it, Minahan thus spoke:—

"'Twas Remmy and myself, your Reverence, that was meandering home together, when, as bad luck would have it, nothing would do me, being pretty-well-I-thank-you at that same time, but I must make a commencement of discourse with Remmy about the fairy people: for, your worship, I'd been telling him before, as we went to the wedding of Phil Connor, who was transmographed into a stone statute. Well and good, just as Remmy came right forenent the fairy-ring, says he, 'Faith, I would not object myself to have a hilt with them!' No sooner had he said the words, your honor, than up came the sweet music that we heard the night before, and with that a thousand lights suddenly glanced up from the fairy-ring, just as if 'twas an

\* At that time, the two great whiskey-distillers in Cork were Thomas Walker and Thomas Wise,—respectively carrying on their business in the South and North suburbs of the city. Both are alluded to in Maginn's celebrated song, "Cork is the Aiden for you, love, and me." The verse runs thus:—

"Take the road to Glanmire, the road to Blackrock, or  
The sweet Boreemannah, to charm your eyes;  
If you doubt what is Wise, take a dram of Tom Walker,  
And if you're a Walker, top off Tommy Wise."

illumination for some great victory. Then, the music playing all the while, myself and Remmy set our good-looking ears to listen, and, quick as I'd swallow this glass of whiskey—here's a good health to your Reverence!—a thousand dawning creatures started up and began dancing jigs, as if there was quicksilver in their heels. There they went, hither and thither, to and fro, far and near, coursing about in all manner of ways, and making the earth tremble beneath 'em, with the dint of their quickness. At last, your Reverence, one of them came out of the ring, making a leg and a bow as genteel as ould Lynch, the dancing-master, and said, 'Mister Carroll,' says he, 'if you'd please to be agreeable, 'tis we'd like to foot it to your pipes (and you should have seen the soothing wink the villain gave as he said the words), 'for,' says he, 'tis ourselves have often heard tell of your beautiful playing.' Then the weeny little mite of a fairy fixed his little eyes upon Remmy, and, that I mightn't, if they did not shine in his head like two coals of red fire, or a cat's eye under a blanket!

"'I'm no player for the likes of ye,' says Remmy, modest-like. But they'd take no excuse, and they all, gathered around him, and what with sootherin' words, and bright looks, and little pushes, they completely put their *comehether* upon him, and coaxed him to play for them, and then, the cajoling creatures! they fixed a big stone for a sate, and he

struck up *Garryowen*, sharp and quick, like shot through a holly-bush. Then they all set to at the dancing, like the blessed Saint Vitus and his cousins, and surely it was a beautiful sight to look at. The dawning creatures worn't much bigger than your middle finger, and all nately dressed in green clothes, with silk stockings and pumps, and three-cocked hats upon their heads, and powdered wigs, and silk sashes across their breasts, and swords by their sides about the size of a broken needle. 'Faith, 'twas beautiful they footed it away, and remarkable they looked.

"Well, your honor, *he* was playing away like mad, and they were all capering about, male and faymale, young and old, just like the French who eat so many frogs that they do ever and always be dancing, when one of the faymale fairies come up to Remmy's elbow, and said, in a voice that was sweeter than any music, 'May-be, Mister Carroll, you'd be dry?' Then Remmy looked at her a moment, till the faymale fairy hung down her head, quite modest. 'Well,' says Remmy, 'you *are* a nice little creature, and no words about it!' She looked up at him, and her cheeks got as red as a field-poppy, with delight at Remmy's praising her;—for faymales, your Reverence, is faymales all the world over, and a little blarney goes a great way with them, and makes them go on as smoothly as a hall-door upon well-oiled hinges. Then, she asked him again if he did not feel dry, and Remmy said he'd been to a wedding, and wasn't

dry in particular, but he'd just like to drink a good husband to her, and soon, and many of them. So, she laughed, and blushed again, and handed him a little morsel of a glass full of something that, I'll be bound for it, was stronger, any how, than holy water. She kissed the little glass as he took it, and he drank away, and when he was handing her back the glass, his eyes danced in his head again, there was so much fire in them. So, thinking that some of the same cordial would be good for my own complaint, I calls out to Remmy to leave a drop for me. But, whoop! no sooner had I said the words, than, all of a sudden, the whole tote of them vanished away, Remmy throwing me his pipes, by way of keepsake, as he dashed down through the earth with the rest of them. I dare say he did not want to be bothered with the pipes, knowing that in the place he was going to he could use those that Phil Connor had taken down before. And that's all that I know of it."

Here Minahan, overpowered with grief and the fatigue of speaking, perpetrated a deep sigh and a deeper draught, which exhausted the remnant of the whiskey.

"But, Minahan," said Father Barry, "you certainly don't mean to pass off this wild story for fact."

"But I *do*, your Reverence," said Minahan, rather testily. "Sure none but myself was to the fore, and it only stands to reason that as one piper wasn't

enough for the fairies, they seduced Remmy Carroll away, bad cess to 'em for that same. And, indeed, your worship, I dreamed that I saw him last night, made up into a stone statute, like poor Phil Connor; and sure there's great truth in dreams, entirely."

Father Barry, of course, did not believe one word of this extraordinary story, but his parishioners did, and therefore he eschewed the heresy of publicly doubting it. He contented himself with shaking his head, somewhat after the grave fashion of a Chinese Mandarin in a grocer's window, whenever this subject was alluded to, and this Burleigh indication, as well as his silence, obtained for him an immense reputation for wisdom.

There was one of his congregation who shared, to the full, the good priest's disbelief of Minahan's "tough yarn" about the fairies. This was Mary Mahony, who was convinced, whatever had befallen Remmy,—and her fears anticipated even the worst,—that he had not fallen into the hands of the fairies. Indeed, she was bold enough to doubt whether there were such beings as fairies. These doubts, however, she kept to herself. Poor thing! silently but sadly did she miss her lover. She said not one word to any one of what had passed between them on the memorable day of his disappearance. But that her cheek grew pale, and that melancholy gently brooded in the deep quiet of her eyes, and that her voice, always low, was now sad and soft as the mournful



murmur of the widowed cushat-dove, even vigilant observation could notice little difference in her. Not a day passed without her father lamenting Remmy's absence, and when he spoke approvingly of our vanished hero, tears would slowly gather in her eyes, and her heart would swell with a sorrow all the deeper for suppression. It was great consolation for her to find, now that he was gone, how all lips praised the good qualities of Remmy Carroll. It is pleasant to feel that one's love is not unworthily bestowed.

Meantime, the deportation of Remmy, by the fairies, became duly accredited in Fermoy and its vicinity. If he had solely and wholly vanished, it might have been attributed to what Horatio calls "a truant disposition;" but his pipes were left behind him, circumstantial evidence of Minahan's narrative. Mightily was this corroborated, a few months after, when Gerald Barry, the priest's nephew, being out one day, coursing on Corran Thierna, discovered a sort of cave, the entrance to which had been concealed by the huge rock which lay close to the magic circle of the fairies! His terrier had run into it, after a refractory rabbit, who would not wait to be caught, and, from the length of his stay, it was conjectured that the cave must be of immense extent. True it is, that no one harbored the audacious thought of examining it; for what mortal *could* be so reckless as to venture into

the stronghold of the "good people,"—but the very fact of there being such a cavity under the rock, dignified with the brevet-rank of a cavern, satisfied the Fermoy folks that Remmy Carroll was within it, changed into a PETRIFIED PIPER!

Some weeks later, Gerald Barry's dog again ran into the cave, and remained there until the young man, unwilling to lose a capital terrier, dug him out with his own hands; for neither love nor money could tempt any one else to do such a fool-hardy exploit. He declared that the mysterious cave was no cave, but only an old rabbit-burrow! All the old women, in and out of petticoats, unanimously announced that it was clear ("as mud in a wine-glass," no doubt), that the cave *had* been there, but that the fairies had changed the whole aspect of the place, to prevent the discovery of their petrified victims; for, argued they, if they could make men into marble statues, they certainly must possess the minor power of making a cave look as insignificant as a rabbit-burrow. Logic, such as this, was sufficient to settle the mooted point, and then it became a moral and physical certainty, in the Fermoy world, that Phil Connor and Remmy Carroll were petrified inmates of the mountain cavern!

When, some eighteen months after this, it was Gerald Barry's ill-fortune to break his collar-bone by a fall from his horse, in a steeple-chase, there arose a general conviction, in the minds of all the



Fermoy believers in fairy-lore, that *this* was a punishment inflicted upon him by "the good people," for his impertinent intrusion into their peculiar haunts.

## CHAPTER V.

## HOW IT ALL ENDED.

SLOWLY, but surely, does the tide of Time carry year after year into the eternity of the Past. As wave chases wave to the shore, on which it breaks—sometimes in a gentle and diffusing ripple, sometimes into feathery foam, if it strike against a rock—so does year chase year away into the memory of what has been. It is the same with empires and villages, with the crowded haunts of men, and the humble huts wherein the poor do vegetate. For each and for all, Time sweeps on; carrying on its tide, amid many things of little value, some with which are linked sweet and tender associations. To look back, even for a single year, and contrast what *has been* with what *is*! How mournful the retrospect, in the generality of cases! Hopes fondly cherished, alleviating the actual pains of life by the promise of an ideal improvement; day-dreams indulged in, until they become fixed upon the mind, as if they were realities; resolutions made, which the heart found it impossible to carry into practice; sunny friendships in full luxuriance, which a few hasty words, too quickly taken up, were to throw into shade, at once and forever; love itself, which promised so much in its glorious spring, grown cold

and careless. Talk of the changes of a year!—look back, and recollect what even a single day has given birth to; but, think not that there is always change, or that all changes are for the worst. Sometimes the bright hopes will have the glad fulfilment; the day-dreams, after passing through the ordeal of expectation, which, when deferred, maketh the heart sick, will be happily realized; the friendship on which we relied will have gone through the trial, and have stood the test; the love will have proved itself all that the heart had ventured to anticipate, and have thrown upon the realities of life, an enduring charm, mingling strength and softness, including in its magic circle, endurance as strong as adamant, and tenderness which subdues even while it sustains. Aye, life has its lights and shadows; and, in the circling course of time and circumstance, the shadow of to-day glides gently on, until it be lost in the sunshine of the morrow.

Let us return to our story. Imagine, if you please, that six years have passed by since the mysterious and unforgotten disappearance of Remmy Carroll, our very humble hero. Many changes have taken place, locally and generally. Fermoy, rapidly rising into opulence, as the greatest military depôt in Ireland, still kept a memory of Remmy Carroll. Death had laid his icy hand upon Mr. Bartle Mahony, whose fair daughter, Mary, had succeeded to his well-stocked farm and his prudent accumulations, which, joined with her own possessions, made

her comparatively wealthy. But, in her, and in such as her, who derive their nobility from God, fortune could make no change—except by enlarging the sphere of her active virtues. In a very humble and unostentatious way, Mary Mahony was the Lady Bountiful of the place. The blessings of the poor were hers. Wherever distress was to be relieved—and Heaven knows that the mournful instances were not a few—there did the quiet bounty of Mary Mahony flow, scattering blessings around by that gentle personal expression of feeling and sympathy, which the highly imaginative and excitable Irish prize far more than the most liberal dole which mere Wealth can haughtily bestow. Oh, that those who give, could know, or would pause to think, how much rests on the manner of giving! Any hand can dispense the mere *largesse*, which is called “Charity,” but the voice, the glance, the touch of hearted kindness soothes the mental pangs of the afflicted. In Ireland, where there are countless calls upon benevolence, casual relief has been demanded as a sort of *right*; but a kind word, a gentle tone, a sympathizing look, makes the gift of double value. And where was there ever kindness and gentleness to equal those exercised by Mary Mahony? She had had her own experiences in sorrow, and was, therefore, well qualified to yield to others that touching sympathy which most forcibly awakens gratitude. She had suffered, and, therefore, she sympathized.

Her beauty remained undimmed, but its character was somewhat changed. If there was less of the fire of earlier days, there was more of intellectual expression, the growth at once of her mind's development into maturity, and of the sorrows which had chastened her, as well as of the circumstances which had thrown her thoughts into contemplation. At her age—she was barely three-and-twenty—it appears absurd to talk of her loveliness having had its peach-like bloom impaired. As Wordsworth says,

"She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years."

What the same true poet has said of that fair Lucy, who yet lives in his exquisite lyric, might have been said, without any breach of truth, of our own Mary Mahony:

"Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown;  
This child I to myself will take;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.'"

At first, after her father's death, when it was known in what a prosperous state she had been left (and rumor, as usual, greatly exaggerated the fact), she had been pestered with the addresses of various persons who would have been happy to obtain a fair bride with her goodly heritage, but it

was soon found that she was not matrimonially inclined, so, by degrees, they left her "maiden meditation fancy-free." Among her suitors were a few who really were not influenced by interested motives, and sought to win her, out of their admiration for herself. Gently, but decidedly, they were repulsed, and many of them, who were much above her in wealth and station, were proud to be reckoned among her warm friends at a later period. It seemed as if she could not have made an enemy—as if she could not awaken unkind feelings in any mind. Even scandal never once thought of inventing stories about her,—goodness and innocence were around her, like a panoply.

Mary Mahony remained true to the cherished passion of her youth. It flowed on, a silent and deep stream. None knew what she felt. None were aware of the arrow in her heart, and her pain was the intenser for its concealment. So wholly unsuspected was her secret, that when, immediately after her father's death, she received Remmy Carroll's bed-ridden relative as an inmate at her own residence, people only admired the charity which had led her to succour the helpless. No one appeared to think, for they did not know, that Remmy could ever have awakened an interest in her heart.

The destinies of Europe had been adjusted. The Imperial Eagle of France had been struck down at Waterloo, when Napoleon and Wellington had met

and battled. After peace had been proclaimed, the Ministry of the day proceeded to reduce the war establishment, by disbanding the second battalions of many regiments. The result was that some thousands of ex-soldiers wended home. Very many of them were from Ireland, and came back mere wrecks of manhood—for the casualties of battle, and the certainties of sharp hospital practice, are only too successful in removing such superfluities as arms and legs.

In the spring of 1816, two or three persons might have been seen walking down the main street of Fermoy. If there could have existed any doubt as to what they *had* been, their measured walk and martial bearing would have promptly removed it. They, indeed, were disabled soldiers. The youngest might have numbered some eight-and-twenty years, and, though he was *minus* his left arm, few men could be found whose personal appearance was superior to his own.

They passed on, unnoticed, as any other strangers might have passed on, and found "choicest welcome" in a hostelry, "for the accommodation of man and beast," at the lower end of the town. What creature-comforts they there partook of I am unable to enumerate, for the bill of fare, if such a document ever existed in that neat but humble inn, has not been preserved. The sun had nearly gone down, however, before any of the peripatetic trio manifested any inclination towards locomotion. At last, he, to whom

I have more particularly drawn attention, told his companions that he had some business in the town—some inquiries to make—and would rejoin them in an hour or two at the latest. He might as well have spoken to the wind, for they had walked that day from Cork (a trifle of some eighteen Irish miles), and were already fast asleep on the benches. Their companion wrapped himself up in a large military cloak, lined with fur—whilom, in Russia, it had covered the iron-bound shoulders of a captain in Napoleon's Old Guard. This completely concealed his figure, and drawing his hat over his face, so as to shade his features, he sallied forth, like Don Quixote, in search of adventures.

When he reached the Sessions House, at the extremity of the town, instead of pursuing the high road which leads to Lismore, he deviated to the extreme left, crossed the meadow-bound by the paper-mill, and found himself on the Inch, by that rapid branch of the Blackwater which has been diverted from the main current for the use of the two mills—illegally diverted, I think, for it renders the natural course of the river a mere shallow, and prevents a navigation which might be carried on with success and profit, from Fermoy, by Lismore, down to the sea at Youghall.

Rapidly pressing forward, the Stranger soon came to the chasm which has already been mentioned as that from which, some years since, Remmy Carroll,

the piper, had rescued Mary Mahony from drowning. He threw himself, at listless length, on the sward by the gurgling stream, and gazed, in silence, on the fair scene before him.

It was, indeed, a scene to delight the eye and charm the mind of any beholder. Across the broad river were the rocks of Rathhely, clothed here and there with larches and pines, those pleasant evergreens—before him swept the deep and rapid waters—and, a little lower down, like a stately sentinel over the fine country around, rose the tall and precipitous rock, on which stood the ruins, proud in their very decay, of the ancient castle of Carrigabrick,—one of the round, lofty, lonely towers, whose origin and use have puzzled so many antiquaries, from Ledwich and Vallancey, to Henry O'Brien and Thomas Moore, George Petrie and Sir William Betham.

With an eager and yet a saddened spirit, the stranger gazed intently and anxiously upon the scene, varied as it is picturesque, his mind drinking in its quiet beauty—a scene upon which, in years long since departed, my own boyhood loved to look. And now, in the softened effulgence of the setting sun, and the silence of the hour, the place looked more like the embodiment of a poet's dream, or a painter's glorious imagining, than anything belonging to this every-day world of hard and cold reality.

The Stranger gazed upon the scene silently for

a time, but his feelings might thus be embodied in words:—"It is beautiful, and it is the same; only, until I saw other places, praised for their beauty, I did not know how beautiful were the dark river, and the quiet meadows, and the ivy-covered rock, and the gray ruin. Change has heavily passed over myself, but has lightly touched the fair Nature around me. Heaven knows whether *she* may not be changed also. I would rather be dead than hear she was another's. The lips that my lips have kissed—the eyes that my eyes have looked into—the hand that my hand has pressed—the form that my arms have folded; that another should call them *his*—the very thought of it almost maddens me. Or, she may be dead? I have not had the heart to inquire. This suspense is the worst of all,—let me end it."

Thus he thought—perhaps the thoughts may have unconsciously shaped themselves into words: but soliloquies may be thought as well as uttered audibly. He rose from the damp sward, sprang across the chasm, proceeded rapidly on, and in ten minutes was sitting on the stile, by which, in other days, he had often parted from Mary Mahony—for, by this time, my readers must have recognized Remmy Carroll in the Stranger.

How long he rested here, or with what anxious feelings he gazed upon the house, just visible through the trees, I am not able to state,—but I can easily imagine what a contention of hope and fear

there must have been in his heart. The apprehension of evil, however, was in the ascendant, for, though two or three half-familiar faces passed him, he could not summon courage to ask after Mary and her father. At last, he determined to make full inquiries from the next person he saw.

The opportunity was speedily afforded. A female appeared, slowly advancing up the path. Could it indeed be herself? She came nearer. One glance, and he recognized her, the star of his spirit—bright, beaming, and as beautiful as Memory and Fancy (the dove-winged ministers of Love) had delighted to paint her, amid the darkness and perils of the Past.

He sprang forward to meet her. There was no recognition upon her part. Nor was this very wonderful—though the lover of romance might expect, as a matter of course, that, from pure sympathy, the maiden should have instantly known who was before her. Years, which had passed so gently over her, softening and mellowing her beauty, had bronzed his face, and almost changed its very expression. The dark moustache and thick whiskers, which he now wore, his altered appearance, his military bearing,—all combined to make him very different from the rustic, however comely, whom she had last seen six years before.

Seeing a stranger advance towards her, Mary paused. He accosted her, with an inquiry whether Mr. Bartle Mahony was to be seen?

"He is dead," said she. "He has been dead nearly six years."

Carroll started back, for the unwelcome news chilled him, and the well-remembered tones struck some of the most responsive chords of his heart.

"I am grieved to hear of his death. I knew him once. He was kind to me in former days, when kindness was of value, and I came to thank him now. God's blessing on his soul! He was a good man." There was a slight pause, and he resumed, "Perhaps you can tell me, young lady, whether his daughter is alive, and where she may be seen? The trifles which I have brought from foreign countries, to mark my recollection of his goodness to me, perhaps she may accept?"

"You are speaking to her," said Mary.

"My little presents are in this parcel," said Remmy. "They are relics from the field of battle. These silver-mounted pistols were given to me by a French officer, whose life I saved,—this Cross of the Legion of Honor was hastily plucked from the bosom of one of his dead comrades, after a fierce charge at Waterloo. Take them:—I destined them for your father from the moment they became mine."

He placed the parcel in her hand.—One question would bring hope or despair. He feared to ask it. He drew closer, and, as composedly as he could, whispered into her ear, "Are you married?"

The blood flushed up into Mary's face. She drew back, for his questioning vexed her, and she wished to get rid of the inquisitive stranger. She handed him back the parcel, and said, "I hope, sir, that you do not mean to annoy or insult me? If you do, there are those within call who can soon release me from your intrusion. I cannot retain the presents which a mere stranger tells me were intended for my poor father.—And, if I must answer your last question, I am *not* married."

"Thank God!" was Carroll's earnest and involuntary exclamation.

People may talk as they please of the quick-sightedness of love. Mary certainly had little of it, for she did *not* recognize her lover, and, turning round, prepared to return home. Carroll gently detained her, by placing his hand upon her arm.

"I pray your pardon," said he, "but I may not have an opportunity of again speaking to you, and I have a word to say about a person whom you once knew, but have probably forgotten. There was a poor, worthless young man, named Carroll, in this neighborhood a few years ago. He was a weak creature, fool enough to love the very ground on which you trod, and vain enough to think that you were not quite indifferent to him."

"I do not know," said Mary, with a flushed cheek, and flashing eyes, "why you should continue to intrude your presence and your conversation

when you see that both are unpleasant to me. I do not know why you should ask me questions which a sense of common decency would have avoided. If I answer you now, it is that my silence may not appear to sanction imputations upon one over whom, I fear, the grave has closed—whom, be he alive or dead, it was no dishonor to have known and have regarded. I did know this Carroll whom you name, but cannot imagine how you, a stranger, can have learnt that I did. It was his misfortune to have been poor, but he never was worthless, nor could have been."

"One word more," exclaimed Remmy, "but one more word. Remmy Carroll, so long believed to have been dead, is alive and in health—after many sufferings he returns home, poor as when he left it, rich in nothing but an honest name. He comes back, a disabled soldier, and he dare not ask whether, beautiful and wealthy as you are, you are the Mary Mahony of other years, and love him still?"

Mary looked at him with intent anxiety. The color which emotion had sent into her face paled, and then rushed back in a quickened life-tide, mantling her very forehead. Even then she had not recognized her lover!

"If he be indeed returned," said she, in a voice so low that Remmy did not know whether the words were addressed to him, or were the mere impulse of her thought, involuntarily framed into utterance,

"and if he be the same in heart—the same frank and honest mind—the same true and loving spirit—the same in his contempt of all that is bad, and his reverence for whatever is good—his poverty is nothing, for *I* have wealth; and if his health be broken, I yet may soothe the pain I may not cure. Tell me," said she, and the words came forth, this time, freely spoken, as if she had determined to be satisfied and to act, "tell me, you who seem to know him, though your description wrongs him, where has Remmy Carroll been during all these long years? Why did he leave us? Why did he not write to relieve the anxiety of those who cared for him? Where is he now?"

What was the response? Softly and suddenly an arm wound itself around that graceful form, warmly and lovingly fell a shower of kisses on the coral beauty of those luxuriant lips.

Was she not angry—fiercely indignant? Did not her outraged feelings manifest their anger? Was not her maidenly modesty in arms at the liberty thus taken, and by a stranger? *This* was the crowning misconduct—did she not reprove it?

No! for, in tones which thrilled through her loving heart, Remmy Carroll whispered "Mary!—my own, true, dear Mary!" In the struggle (for Mary *did* struggle at first) which immediately preceded these words, the large cloak and the hat fell off, and then she recognized the forehead and the eyes—

then she knew him whom she had loved so well, and mourned so long—then she threw her arms around his neck, in the very abandonment of affection and delight—then she clung close and yet closer to him, as if they never more must part—then, remembering how she was yielding to the warm impulses of her nature, she hid her burning face in his bosom, and then, when he embraced her again and again, she could not find words to protest against the gentle deed.

Then, arm in arm, they walked into the house, and there Remmy's aged relative, whose condition and sufferings had been so much improved and alleviated by the kindness and bounty of Mary Mahony—simply because she was Remmy's relative—was made happy by the presence of him over whom she had shed so many bitter tears. Perhaps her happiness was augmented by perceiving on what excellent terms the heiress and he were—perhaps her eyes filled with pleasant tears, when Mary Mahony whispered into her ear "Minny, he will stay with us now, forever, and will never leave us." Perhaps, too, the whisper was not unheard by Remmy—and it would be a difficult point to decide whether or not it were intended to reach *his* ear, as well as Minny's. And then, all that both had to learn. There was so much to be told on both sides. All that Carroll cared to know was this—that he loved, and that his love was warmly returned. A thousand times,



that evening, and forever, did Mary exclaim against herself for not having recognized him immediately, and a thousand times smilingly aver, that, from his changed appearance and studied efforts at concealment, the recognition was all but impossible. And then they sat together, hand clasped in hand, eyes looking into eyes, until an hour far into the night, talking of old times and present happiness, and future hopes. And they spoke, too, of the good old man who had passed away, in the fulness of years, into the far and better land. Old memories were revived, brightened by new hopes. Oh, how happy they were! it was the very luxury of love—the concentrated spirit of passion, purified by suffering, and tried by absence—the repayment, in one brief hour, for years of doubt, pain, and sorrow.

At last came the time to part; but with it came the certainty of a speedy meeting. The next day, and day after day, until that arrived when holiest rites made them man and wife, Remmy Carroll was to be found by the side of his beloved Mary Mahony; and soon, when the news of his return were noised about, crowds came to see him, and far and near was spread the announcement that a wedding was on the *tapis*. General was the surprise—general, too, the satisfaction, for the young people were universal favorites, and time and circumstances had removed the principal objections which even the worldly-minded might have raised to the union of Mr. Bartle

Mahony's daughter and heiress to one who, a few years before, had occupied a position in society so much beneath her. It was universally conceded that, in every sense, the match was extremely suitable and proper; but Remmy and Mary did not require popular opinion to sanctify their attachment. They were all in all to each other.

It is not to be supposed that Mary Mahony was allowed to continue ignorant of the vicissitudes through which Remmy Carroll had passed. He told his story, and

“She gave him for his tale a world of sighs.”

It may be expected that of this tale some notice be here given. But, in very truth, those who look for a romantic elucidation of the mysterious disappearance, and prolonged absence, and unexpected return of Remmy Carroll, will be greatly disappointed. The main incidents were simple enough, and here they are.

It may be remembered that Remmy had acted as escort to Minahan, on their return from that wedding at which the Piper had made his last professional appearance. He had found some difficulty in piloting his companion along the high road from Rathcormac to Fermoy; and, indeed, when they reached the mountain, Minahan, in a fit of drunken obstinacy, *would* throw himself upon the heathy sward,

where, in a few minutes, he was fast in the gentle bonds of sleep. Remmy Carroll, having accompanied him so far, did not like to leave him, and sat down beside him to watch for his awakening, with the purpose, also, of seeing that he fell into no mischief. But, after a time, from the combined influences of the fresh air, want of rest, and what he had partaken at the wedding, Remmy found himself quite unable to keep his eyes open. He was conscious that sleep was creeping over him, and so, taking off his pipes, for fear that he might injure them by lying upon them, he carefully placed them upon the grass, beside him, and resigned himself to slumber.

On awaking, he found—to his excessive amazement—that he was lying “on the sunny side of a baggage-cart,” with his head reposing on the lap of a soldier’s wife. In reply to his inquiries, he was recommended to take it coolly, and, at any rate, not to make any noise until they reached Glanmire, about four miles from Cork, to which city he was informed that he was bound. When the cavalcade of baggage-carts and soldiers reached Glanmire, he was summarily acquainted with the novel information that he had been duly enlisted as a recruit, and his informant—a fierce-looking, hook-nosed, loud-voiced martinet of a Sergeant—asked him to put his hand into his pocket, and *that* would satisfy him that he had regularly and irrevocably become attached to the military

service of “his Most Gracious Majesty King George the Third.” Accordingly, Remmy did as he was desired, and in the pocket as aforesaid found a bright shilling, which certainly had not been there on the previous night—more particularly, as tenpenny pieces were the current coin in Ireland at the period. To Remmy’s possession of the solitary shilling, among a little handful of tenpenny and fivepenny pieces (the sum-total realized by his performance at the wedding), the modern Sergeant Kite triumphantly appealed in proof that he had been regularly enlisted. It is needless to observe that, of this transaction, Remmy Carroll—albeit the person chiefly concerned—had not the slightest recollection. He appealed to one of the officers, and was told that, if the Sergeant said he was enlisted, there could be no doubt of the fact, and that his Majesty was fortunate in having obtained such a promising recruit, as the regiment was on the eve of embarkation. His remonstrances, and denials, and appeals, were in vain. The significant hint was added, that death was the punishment usually awarded for desertion. So, making a virtue of necessity—the more so, as he perceived that he was so strongly and suspiciously watched that flight would have been useless—he had no alternative but to proceed to Cork with the regiment, as cheerfully as he could, and, in despite of himself, as it were, was duly attested, magistrates not being very particular in those days. To all his

assertions, that he had not the slightest recollection of having been enlisted, the reply was that, if he could procure a substitute, they did not require his company—but to do this was impossible.

In a few days, the regiment embarked for the Peninsula, and his friend, the Sergeant, told him on the voyage, as an excellent joke, in what manner they had trepanned him—namely, that, as the regiment was passing by the mountain, early in the morning, en route for embarkation, one of the officers who rode above the highway (for the road is literally cut out of and into the hill) had noticed Remmy and Minahan asleep, and had remarked what an admirable soldier the former would make; Minahan, it seems, was thought nothing of, being, like Othello, “declined into the vale of years.” The remark was taken as a hint, and Remmy was removed, even as he was, fast asleep, to one of the baggage-carts, with the least possible delay. The details of the transaction had been executed by the Sergeant, who chuckled over this narrative, piquing himself not a little on the dexterity of the trick.

Carroll was unable to write to Mary Mahony, on account of what had befallen him, being afraid of his letter falling into other hands than her own. He did write to Minahan, in the hope that, in that circuitous way, Mary might obtain a knowledge of his misadventure. The letter, if ever posted, never came to hand, and thus, for more than six weary

years, Mary Mahony in particular, with the inhabitants of Fermoy in general, was profoundly ignorant of Remmy's fate.

It was fortunate that Remmy was of that easy temperament which takes the world as it finds it, readily accommodates itself to circumstances, and wisely acts on the sensible aphorism, “what can't be cured must be endured.” While he bitterly lamented his enforced absence from the girl of his heart—just at the crisis, too, when he learned that he occupied an enviable position in her affections—he knew that all the regrets in the world would not bring him one furlong nearer to her. He determined to make the best of his situation. In a short time he even came to like it. Good conduct, good temper, and his ability to read and write, soon recommended him to his superiors, and obtained his promotion to the rank of Sergeant. In this capacity, he contrived to save a sum of money, which, in former years, he would have considered quite a treasure, and which, at any rate, was sufficiently large as to warrant its possessor against the imputation of fortune-hunting, should he return to Ireland, find Mary Mahony unmarried, and pay his addresses to her.

When the short peace of 1814 was made, the regiment in which Remmy served returned to England, and Remmy made application for his discharge, and would have purchased it if he could not

procure it by other means. But immediately came the renewal of war, by the return of Napoleon from Elba, and Remmy's regiment was one of the first to return to the Continent. In the battle of Waterloo, Remmy received a severe wound in the left arm, which rendered amputation necessary, after prolonged and painful sufferings. At length, he was able to return to England, with a handsome gratuity for his wound, and a respectable pension, which, with what he had already picked up "in the wars," really made him quite a man of independent means. His plea of poverty had been only a *ruse* to try the strength of the maiden's affection. But, in her eyes, of much greater value than his hoard or his pension was a testimonial of courage and character given him by his Colonel, and especially countersigned by the Duke of Wellington, who had personally noticed his conduct during the six years he had been in the service. Great pride, be sure, had Carroll in handing over this precious document to Mary Mahony. Many tears did she shed over the vicissitudes which had earned it—but tears *will* flow from bright eyes, when there is a handsome lover at hand to kiss them off.

The wedding followed, in due course. *Such* a wedding! that of Camacho was a fool to it. Mr. and Mrs. Carroll, it is true, violated the usage of Irish society (of their rank of life) by quitting the farm, on a honeymoon excursion, shortly after Father Barry had united them "for better, for

worse," as it was fully expected that, according to the immemorial custom among the extensive class which embraces all ranks from the wealthy farmer to the poor peasant, the bride and bridegroom should have presided at the nuptial feast, opened the post-prandial festivities by leading off the dance, and finally gone through the loosening the bride's garters, and be followed by the ceremonial of her "throwing the stocking." But, except during the performance of the nuptial service, the company at Carrigabrick farm saw little, on that day of days, of either Remmy Carroll or his fair and faithful helpmate. Enough, however, for the gay bachelors to admire the beauty (now bright with happiness) of the bride, while the Waterloo medal and the Waterloo wound of our hero won him favor in the eyes and from the lips of all the womankind who were "on their promotion." Despite the speedy flight of "the happy couple," the rites of hospitality were duly celebrated in their homestead, and, indeed, a general holiday was kept in the neighborhood. The warmth of Irish hearts had its effervescence on that occasion, and it wished an infinity of joy to Remmy Carroll and his bride.

About this time, Minahan's character for veracity fell into disrepute, it being pretty clear that Remmy Carroll was anything but a petrification—at least Mary Mahony's testimony would go a great way to disprove *that* imputation. But there ever are peo-

ple who will manfully maintain the superiority of the ideal over the real, and a few of these, vegetating at Fermoy, used to shake their heads when Remmy Carroll walked by, and, having said, all along, that, beyond all doubt, some supernatural agency had removed our hero, think themselves somewhat aggrieved in the unromantic commonplace explanation of his enforced absence. To the hour of his death, Minahan was ready to say or swear that *he* had told no more than the truth—or an equivalent for the truth—and was wont to appeal, when in his cups (which was whenever he had anything to put into them), to Carroll's good fortune in proof of the advantageous influence of fairy favor. He had a few semi-converts—who believed that Remmy Carroll was as much petrified as Phil Connor. Indeed, without any very remarkable development of the organ of marvellousness, I think so too.

It but remains to add that, in due season, Mr. and Mrs. Carroll returned to their farm. Remmy never more played the pipes save for his own amusement (as the Marquis of Carrabas' cat caught mice), and he and his wife lived happily together, after their many trials. One of their family is settled in the State of New York, and doing well.

## THE GERALDINE.

### I.

A MOURNFUL wail, all sad and low, like the murmur  
which the breeze  
On an Autumnal eve might make among the sere-  
leaved trees,—  
Then a rapt silence, soul subdued; a listening silence  
there,  
With earnest supplicating eyes, and hand-clasped  
hush of prayer.  
Talk not of grief, till thou hast seen the tears which  
warriors shed,  
Where the chief who led them on to fame lies al-  
most of the Dead;  
Where the eagle eye is dim and dull, and the eagle  
spirit cold;  
Where fitfully and feebly throbs the heart which  
was so bold,—  
Thou might'st have fancied grief like this, if ever it  
were thine,  
To hear a minstrel sing the deeds of the valiant  
Geraldine.

## II.

Where is that gallant name unknown? wherever  
 Valour shone,  
 Wherever mightiest chiefs were named, the Geraldine was one;  
 Wherever Erin's banner waved, the Geraldine was there,  
 Winning honour from his prince's praise, and favor from the fair,—  
 But now his course is closing, for his final hour has come,  
 And, like a peaceful peasant, 'tis his hap to die at home.  
 The priest hath been to shrive him, and the leech hath been to tend,  
 And the old man, with a Christian heart, prepared to meet his end:  
 "It is God's will, the Abbot says, that, unlike to all my line,  
 I should die, not on the battle-field," said the gallant Geraldine.

## III.

Within his tent the warrior lay, by his side his children three;  
 There was Thomas, with the haughty brow, the Lord of Offaley;

There was gentle Ina, wedded to proud Desmond's gallant son;  
 There was Richard, he the youngest born and best beloved one.  
 Lord Thomas near his father stood, fair Ina wept apace,  
 Young Richard by the couch knelt down and hid his pale, sad face;  
 He would not that the common eye should gaze upon his woe,  
 Nor that how very much he mourned, his dying sire should know;—  
 But the old man said, "My youngest born, the deepest grief is thine,"  
 And then the pent-up tears rained fast on the face of Geraldine.

## IV.

"Lead out my steed—the Arab barb, which lately, in Almaine,  
 I won in single combat, from a Moorish lord of Spain,—  
 And bring my faulchion hither, with its waved Damascene blade,  
 In temper true, and sharpness keen as ever armourer made.  
 Thou seest, my son, this faulchion keen, that war-horse from the plain,

Thou hearest thy father's voice, which none may  
 ever hear again;  
 Thou art destined for the altar, for the service of the  
 Lord,  
 But if thy spirit earthward tend, take thou the steed  
 and sword.  
 Ill doth it hap, when human thoughts jostle with  
 thoughts divine,  
 Steel armour, better than the stole, befits a Geraldine!"

## v.

"My father, thou hast truly said:—this soaring  
 spirit swells  
 Beyond those dreary living tombs—yon dark  
 monastic cells.  
 The cold in heart and weak in hand may seek their  
 pious gloom,  
 And mourn, too late, the hapless vow which cast  
 them such a doom:  
 Give me the flashing faulchion and the fiery steed  
 of war—  
 The shout—the blow—the onset quick where serried  
 thousands are.  
 Thine eldest-born may claim and take thy lordships  
 and thy land,  
 I ask no more than that bold steed, this good sword  
 in my hand,

To win the fame that warriors win, and haply to  
 entwine,  
 In other lands, some honours new round the name  
 of Geraldine."

## vi.

Flashed then into the Chieftain's eyes the light of  
 other days,  
 And the pressure of the old man's hand spoke more  
 than words of praise:  
 "So let it be, my youngest-born! thine be a war-  
 rior's life,  
 And may God safely speed thee through thy coming  
 deeds of strife.  
 Take knighthood from thy father's sword, before  
 his course be run,—  
 Be valiant, fortunate, and true; acquit thee as my  
 son!  
 My harper here?—ere life depart, strike me some  
 warlike strain;  
 Some song of my own battle-field I would hear once  
 more again:  
 Unfurl the silken Sunburst\* in the noontide's golden  
 shine,  
 In death, even as in pride of life, let it wave o'er  
 Geraldine!"

\* "The Sunburst," says Moore, "was the fanciful name given  
 by the ancient Irish to the royal banner."

## VII.

The banner fluttered in the breeze, the harper's strain  
 went on,  
 A song it was of mighty deeds by the dying Chief-  
 tain done.  
 At first he listened calmly,—the strain grew bold  
 and strong,—  
 Like things of life within his heart did Memory's  
 quick thoughts throng:  
 Louder and stronger swelled the strain, like a river  
 in its course;  
 From his couch the Chieftain started,—“To horse!”  
 he cried, “to horse!”  
 And proudly, like a warrior, waved his sword above  
 his head:  
 One onward step—one gurgling gasp—and the Chie.  
 is of the Dead!  
 The harper changed his strain to grief: the Coro-  
 nach was thine,  
 Who died, as thou hadst lived, a Man, oh mighty  
 Geraldine!

## CAPTAIN ROCK.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE WAKE.

THE year 1822 was remarkable for being what in Ireland was called “A Whiteboy Year.” Rents were only paid by compulsion. Tithes were not paid at all. Wages were low. The price of food was high. The middleman system had been on the increase, year after year, until the land and people were crushed under it. The priests from the altar, and O'Connell, from the tribune and through the press, earnestly argued the masses *not* to rebel, no matter how great the aggravation, how intense the despair, and the advice had great weight in most instances. Many causes combined to render the peasantry ripe for revolt.—As, on one side, there were not wanting men able and willing to act as leaders in any popular movement; so, on the other, there was no lack of Government spies to fan the flame, to cajole the peasantry into breaches of the law, and to betray those whom they thus had duped.



The discontented and disaffected were principally concentrated in my native county of Limerick. From time to time, the military force in that county had been augmented, until, at the particular period in question (1822), there were several regiments of infantry, and at least one of cavalry, on harassing duty. What between still-hunting (for the manufacture of mountain-dew was then in full operation) and man-hunting, the military had full occupation day and night. Various pretexts were used, also, to weary the military, by putting them upon a false scent, every now and then, so that the service was particularly severe and fatiguing. Added to the military array was the Constabulary force, introduced by the late Sir Robert (then Mr.) Peel, while Secretary for Ireland, the members of which, after his name, have obtained the *sobriquet* of "Peelers." An active and efficient body of men these Peelers were, and are, although the force, from its original establishment, has been unpopular in Ireland—probably owing to its very activity and efficiency. Be this as it may, it is undeniable that while the bulk of the Irish people, of all classes, cordially have fraternized with the soldiery, they have ever manifested a strong dislike to the police. This unfriendly feeling, too, has sometimes been fostered by many who, from their station, might be expected to entertain gratitude, and exercise courtesy, towards these protectors of their lives and property.

Whiteboyism continued to increase, notwithstanding the strong military and police force poured into the district. Detachments of infantry were quartered in almost every hamlet—the cavalry, called "here, there, and everywhere," upon true and false alarms, were dreadfully overworked. At last, as a necessary matter of protection, two or three Peelers were quartered in almost every respectable country house in certain disturbed baronies. The whole county was in a dreadful state of alarm, excitement, and activity. The newspapers, of course, were filled with reports and rumors of all kinds, and the Whiteboy doings in the South of Ireland had even the honor of being spoken of, in no very complimentary terms, in both Houses of Parliament.

These Whiteboy movements, although not confined to one part of the county Limerick, were remarked as chiefly occurring on that side which is bordered by the county Cork. In a little time, they might be said to radiate from a particular district, spreading into what, from its extent, has been called "The Yorkshire of Ireland." As they increased, more troops were called in, to subdue insurrection and enforce order. All this was in vain. A regular guerilla warfare began to prevail, chiefly for the purpose of obtaining the arms of the military and police.

It became no uncommon event for a sentry, at a country station, to be quietly picked out by the

steady hand and sure aim of a Whiteboy—the shot which gave his death being at once the sole announcement and fatal evidence of the tragic deed. The service thus became so desperate that there arose an evident reluctance, on the part of the military, to continue on such alarming and perilous duty. Desertions became frequent. On the other hand, the police doggedly did their duty. Of a much higher grade than the ordinary rank and file of the army—for no man was allowed to enter or remain in the force without an excellent character and a certain degree of education—they had a high estimate of their duty, and a stubborn determination to perform it. They knew, also, that the peasantry hated them, and that even the thankless gentry, whom they protected, did not bear any affectionate regard for them.

The Rifle Brigade was on duty, in the disturbed district, at the time which I have mentioned. The officer in command was Major Eeles, an English port-drinking officer of the old school, who had fixed his own quarters at The Grove (near Ballingarry,) formerly the seat of Colonel Odell, the member for the county, and remarkable as being the father of about twenty sons, by one wife. The most fatiguing and unpleasant office which the soldiers had to perform was that of night-patrolling. The laws of that time were harsh—indeed, like all other Coercion Acts, they had been expressly framed to put down

the disturbances—and provided that the mere fact of a man's being found out of his house, between sunrise and sunset, should be punishable with seven years' transportation. This severe enactment put a great check, of course, upon nocturnal predatory gatherings, but many an innocent man suffered from the harshness of the law. A strong feeling of hostility arose against the Rifle corps, for their activity in apprehending the suspected. This was greatly augmented by what, under any circumstances, might be considered an "untoward event." One of the peasantry had been met on the high road after dark, and challenged by the patrol. Not giving a satisfactory answer, his instant apprehension was ordered by the officer in command. Attempting to escape, he was in the act of jumping across a deep drain which divided the high-road from the bog, when a sergeant drew a pistol from his belt and shot him on the spot.

The unfortunate man was *not* a Whiteboy. On the contrary, he had steadily resisted the solicitations of many neighbours who were. He had seen better days, and had received rather a good education. Knowing the peril of joining the illegal combinations, and daring the danger of being considered lukewarm in what was called "the cause of his country," he had kept himself aloof from proceedings, which he did not approve of, but scorned to betray. His family had been subjected, for months

past, to the severe privations which poverty causes everywhere, but particularly in Ireland. His wife had been extremely ill, and on her sudden change for the worse, his affection had naturally got the worse of his personal fear, and he had ventured out, after dusk, to solicit the aid of the nearest dispensary doctor, when, challenged by the military, he sought safety in flight, and had met with his untimely fate as I have described.

Those who know anything of the peculiar customs of the South of Ireland, must be aware that the peasantry have especial delight in doing honor to the dead. To celebrate a "wake" is, with them, a social duty. They usually take that mode of testifying, in a merry mood, their grief for the departed. The unfortunate victim of military impetuosity was carried to the nearest public-house on the way-side, and when it was related how he had lost his life, "curses not loud, but deep," most unequivocally indicated the popular feeling that he was a murdered man. Nor was this feeling mitigated by the "justifiable homicide" verdict of the Coroner's jury.

Entertaining such opinions, it was not likely that his relatives and friends would solicit as a favor, at the hands of his slayers, "leave to keep the wake." They did not ask it. Perhaps they had little fear that, in the present instance, their ancient and time-honoured custom would be interfered with. Accordingly, they *took* leave, and a numerous concourse of

the people assembled, after dusk, on the day of the inquest, in the cabin of the deceased.

To one who loved the picturesque, the scene would have been interesting, for it contained all variety of countenance, costume, and manner. But it possessed an intenser and far deeper interest for him who had studied the human heart, its passionate throes, its indignant feelings, its wild energies, its strong convulsions, its lacerated affections. There lay the corpse, a crucifix at its head and twelve mould candles on a table at its feet. By the bedside knelt the widow—actually, by an unnatural excitement, rendered temporarily convalescent by the sharp fact that she had lost the husband of her heart. By the corpse, on the opposite side, sat their only child, a lad of few years, apparently unconscious of the extent of the calamity which thus early had orphaned him. A professional Keener (like the "hired wailing women" of Scripture) was ranged on either side of the deceased, awaiting a full audience for the simulated grief, and now and then muttering fragments of their intended Lament. Around the humble apartment—for the peasant's cabin consisted of only a single room—were ranges of stools, three deep, and here and there were deal tables, on which were placed tobacco-pipes, and "the materials" for the refreshment and enjoyment which, by a strange contrast with the awful occasion which called them together, were considered indispensable.

Such a thing as a *dry* Wake would indeed have been an anomaly, there and then.

The friends of the dead man dropped in stealthily, and at intervals—for there was some uncertainty whether the military would permit such an assemblage. Before long the room was crowded, all fear of being interfered with gradually vanished, and the party, albeit assembled on a melancholy occasion, soon glided into conversation, smoking, and drink.

There was no merriment, however, for the circumstances under which they met forbade it—so early in the night. Their conversation was in a hushed tone. The comparative stillness every now and then became positive when they noticed the voiceless sorrow of the poor widow, as, pale and emaciated by suffering of mind and body, she knelt by the dead, holding his clay-cold hand, and, her eyes fixed upon his comely face, now pallid with the hue of mortality, and placid in repose as that of a sleeping infant. At intervals, there rose the melancholy and eloquent wail of the Keeners' wild poetry, in the native language of the auditors, deeply impassioned, and full of the breathing indignation which stirs men's minds to such a pitch of excitement that they come forth from the listening fitted for almost any deed of daring.

The Keen told how the dead man had won the hearts of all who knew him—how he had excelled his companions in the sports of youth and the athletic

exercises of manhood—how, at pattern, fair, or dance, he still maintained his superiority—how his was the open heart and liberal hand—how he had won his first love, the pride of their native village, and married her—how, when a shadow fell upon their fortunes, that loved one lightened, by sharing, the burthen, the struggle, and the grief—how, amid the desolation, her gentle smile ever made a soft sunshine in their home—how, a victim without a crime, he had fallen in the noon of life—how there remained his young boy to remember, and, it might be, one day to avenge his murder—how every man who was present would protect and sustain the widow and the orphan of him whom they had loved so well—and how, come it soon or late, a day would arrive when expiation must be made for the foul deed which had sent an innocent man to an untimely grave.

As the chief Keener chanted this Lament, in the expressive and figurative language of their native Ireland, the hearts of her auditory throbbed with deep and varying emotions—sorrow swelled into the deeper sense of injury—wild indignation flushed the cheek of manhood—and hand was clasped in hand with a fierce pressure, in well-understood pledge of sorrow for the dead, hatred for his slayers, and stern resolve of vengeance.

About ten o'clock, the door slowly opened, and a tall man, apparelled in the loose great-coat, or *coat-a-more*, which forms the principal dress of the peasantry

in that district, stood for some minutes on the threshold, an interested but unobserved spectator. When he was perceived, many rose to offer him a seat, which he declined, and soon all voices joined in a common cry of "Welcome, Captain! A thousand and a hundred thousand welcomes!"

The stranger returned the salutation cordially and briefly, and advanced gravely and slowly to where the dead man lay. He gazed upon the face for some time, and then, laying his hand on that cold, pallid brow, said, in a tone of deep, concentrated feeling,— "Farewell, John Sheehan! Yours has been a hard fate, but better than remains for us—to be hunted down, like wild beasts, and sent, after the mockery of a trial, from the homes of our fathers, to a far-off land, where even the slavery they doom us to is better than the troubled life we linger in, from which caprice or cruelty may hurry us in a moment. Farewell, then; but, by the bright Heaven above us, and the green fields around, I swear to know no rest until bitter vengeance be taken for this most wanton and barbarous murder."

His cheek flushed—his eyes flashed—his frame trembled with strong emotion as he sternly made this vow, and, when he ceased to speak, a deep "Amen" was murmured all around by the eager-eyed men, who hung upon his slightest word with as trusting and entire a faith as ever did the followers of the Veiled Prophet upon the mystic revelations

which promised them glory upon earth, and eternal happiness in heaven! The widow, roused from the abstraction of grief by this solemn and striking incident, looked the thanks which she then had not voice to utter. When the Stranger laid his hand on the orphan's head, and said: "He shall be my care, and as I deal by him may God deal by me!" her long-repressed tears gushed forth, in a strong hysteric agony, which was not subdued until her child was placed within her earnest embrace, and kissed again and again—with the widowed mother's solacing thought, there yet remained one for whom to live.

Turning from the corpse, the Stranger took his seat among the humble but loving people in that lowly cabin. He was of large mould, with a bold, quick glance, and an air of intelligence superior to his apparent station. It was singular that his appearance among them, while it ardently awakened their respectful attention, had chilled and checked the company. After a pause, one of them ventured to hint that the first allowance of liquor had been drank out, so that "there did not remain an egg-shellful to drink the health of the Captain." There was a murmur of applause at the remark. Thus encouraged, another ventured to suggest that a fresh supply be provided, at the general expense of the company—the gallantry of the men excepting the fair sex from any share in the payment. The necessary amount was speedily collected, and a supply of

whiskey (which had not condescended to acknowledge the reigning dynasty by any contribution to the excise duties) was procured from the next *shebeen*—an unlicensed dépôt for the sale of “mountain dew,”—and placed upon the table.

The stranger, who had appeared quite unobservant of this proceeding, and who—on the principle that “silence gives consent”—had even been supposed rather to sanction than condemn it, suddenly interrupted the hilarious arrangements thus commenced. He started up and exclaimed—“Is it thus, and always thus, that I am to find you?—the slaves and victims of your besotted senses. Is there anything to be done? I look for the man to do it, and find him sunk in drunkenness. Is a secret to be kept?—it is blabbed on the highway, to the ruin of a good cause, by the man who suffers drink to steal away his reason. When I lie down to sleep, I can dream of ruin only, for this subtle devil can tempt the truest into a traitor. And now, with the hour of triumph at hand—the rich hope of vengeance near fulfilment—there is not a man among you, bound to me as you are, heart and hand, soul and body, who would not surrender the victory and the vengeance, if he were only allowed to drink on until he had reduced himself to a level with the senseless brute. Give me that liquor.”

His command was instantly obeyed, for he had rare ascendancy over the minds of those who ac-

knowledgeed him as their leader. Dashing the vessel violently on the hard earthen floor, he broke it, and every drop of its contents—the “fire-water” of the American aborigines—was spilled. “There,” he cried, “who serves with me, must obey me. When a deed is to be done, I *will* have obedience. When the deed is done—drink, if you will, and when you will. But when service is to be performed, you *shall* be sober.”

Not a syllable of dissent—not a murmur of discontent fell from the lips of those who heard him. Not a gesture—not a look—indicated anger at what he had done.

“Mark me, my lads,” he added. “I have arranged all beyond the chance of defeat. I have contrived to turn the main strength of the soldiers on a wrong scent four miles on the other side of Charleville. I have laid my plans so that we cannot be disappointed, except through some fault of our own. Let us on to Churchtown Barracks. The sergeant, by whose rash and ready hand our friend has died, remains there with a handful of his comrades. He was sent thither to escape us. Fools! as if, for those who have a wrong to avenge, any spot can be too remote. Let us seize him, and give him the doom he gave the innocent. If they resist, we can fire the barracks, and burn them in their nest. But they will never be so mad as to offer resistance to such a force as ours, when we tell that we want only that one man.

If they do—their blood be upon their own heads. Who joins me? Who will follow to the cry of 'On to Churchtown?' Now is the long-desired hour of revenge. Will any lag behind?"

Every man present repeated the cry—"On to Churchtown!" Some of the women also joined in it.

The Whiteboys and their leader left the cabin. An ancient crone, almost a reputed witch, and certainly known to be by far the oldest woman in the district, hobbled after them as far as the door, and threw her shoe after them—"for luck!"

Many a "God speed them" was breathed after that company of avengers by young and fair women. What Lord Bacon has called "the wild justice of revenge," and what America recognizes in the unseen but omnipotent incarnation of Judge Lynch, was necessarily the rule of action when injured Right took arms against tyrannic Might. Is it surprising that such should be the case? If wrongdoers cannot always be rewarded, "each according unto his works," within and by the law, why should not their impunity be broken down by the rational sense of justice which abides in the minds of men?

Forth on their mission, therefore, did the Whiteboys speed. Hurrying across the bog, they reached a farm which was almost isolated amid the black waste from which it had been indifferently reclaimed. They drew muskets, pistols, and pikes from the turf-

rick in which they had been concealed. Some of them brought old swords, and scythe-blades attached to pike-handles (very formidable weapons in the hands of strong, angry men), from hiding-places in the bog itself. Stealthily, and across by paths unknown to and inaccessible to the military, that wild gang, "with whom Revenge was virtue," pushed forward for the attack on Churchtown Barracks.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE LEADER.

STEALTHILY and in silence the Whiteboys proceeded to the scene of intended operation. Not a word was spoken—not a sound heard, except the noise of their footsteps whenever they got on the high road. As much as possible they avoided the highway, the course which would the soonest bring them to the appointed place. It would seem as if their leader had bound them together, by some spell peculiarly their own, to yield implicit and unquestioned obedience to his imperious will. It strongly illustrated the aphorism—

"Those who think must govern those who toil."

Whoever knows how lively and mercurial is the



natural temperament of the peasantry in the South of Ireland, must be aware of the difficulty of restraining them from loud-voiced talking in the open air; but now not one of that large and excited gathering spoke above his breath. Their leader commanded them to be silent, and to them his will was law.

Who was that leader? The question involves some mystery which it may be as well to unveil before proceeding with the action of this narrative.

Who, and whence was that leader? His birth would have secured him a "respectable" station in society, if his wild passions, and the strong pressure of Circumstance (that unspiritual god), had not so far

"Profaned his spirit, sank his brow,"

that the ambition which, under better auspices, might have soared to the highest aims, was now directed no farther than to establish an unstable dominion over a few wild, uncultivated peasants, who, like fire and water, might be excellent servants, but with any opportunity of domination would probably prove tyrannic masters. He who would rule the rude peasantry of Ireland, must make up his mind to be governed by them in turn, whenever *his* wishes and aims and actions fall short of *theirs*. They will go with him while his desires and designs run together with their own, but they will speedily leave him behind, or force him with them, if they

find him less eager than themselves. Even under the regular discipline of the army the same may be observed. In battle an Irish regiment cannot, or rather will not, understand any order to retreat. They repudiate all strategy which even *appears* to withdraw them from

"The triumph and the vanity,  
The rapture of the strife,"

and show, by the gallant impetuosity with which they plunge into the attack, that their proper action is assault. If so under the harsh restrictions of military discipline, what must it be when freed from that coercion?

The leader of the Whiteboys in 1822—the veritable CAPTAIN ROCK, whom I have introduced at the Wake of the slain John Sheehan—was no common man. His birth had been respectable, his education good, his fortune had been ample, his mind was affluent in varied and vigorous resources; he had formerly won favor and fame from the world's opinion, and few men in any country could compete with him in the personal advantages which spring from manly beauty of form and feature, activity of body, and a strength of frame which literally defied fatigue and over-exertion.

The father of John Cussen was "a gentleman of independent fortune," in Irish parlance; that is, had succeeded to a pretty good estate, and would have



been in easy, if not affluent circumstances, could he have realized any thing like the nominal amount of his rent-roll. But there were two difficulties, at least. Irish estates have had a fatal facility in becoming subjected to such things as mortgages, which relentlessly absorb certain annual amounts in the shape of interest, and Irish tenants have been apt to cherish the idea that they perform their duty towards society in general, and themselves in particular, by paying as little rent as possible. Still, though Mr. Cussen's property had gradually come under the pressure of these two causes, it yielded an income sufficient for his moderate wants. His children had died, one by one, in the very bloom and promise of their youth, until, out of a numerous family, only one son survived.

This youth, possessing a mind more active and aspirations more ambitious than most of his class, disdained the ordinary routine of every-day life. It was not difficult to persuade his father to permit him to go into the world—the military and naval service, from its danger, being the only profession which that doting parent positively forbade him to think of. The lad, after wavering for some time, determined to become a surgeon, and proceeded to pursue his studies in Dublin.

It would be tedious to narrate into what a circle of extravagance, while thus engaged, the young man became gradually involved; it would be pain-

ful to trace his downward lapse from folly to vice. Sufficient to say that, by the time he received his diploma as a surgeon (having passed his examinations with unexpected and even distinguished success), he had contrived to involve himself so deeply that his paternal property had to be additionally mortgaged to relieve him from heavy involvements. His father, who might have repudiated the creditors' claims, admitted them, without a murmur. Eager to snatch him from the haunts and the society by which he had embarrassed his means and injured his health, and looking on the military service as a good school of discipline, even if it were not free from peril, his father overcame all personal scruples, forgave the past, and looking hopefully at the future, successfully employed his influence to obtain for him an appointment as surgeon to one of the regiments which, just then, had been ordered to Belgium, as the re-appearance of Napoleon, and his triumphant progress from Elba to Paris—his eagle "flying from steeple to steeple until it alighted on the tower of Notre Dame"—had awakened the fears and enmity of Europe, bringing once more into action

"All quality,  
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war."

It was John Cussen's fortune to reach the scene of warfare in time to witness the deadly struggle at Waterloo. But it was his hap, also, to do more

than witness it. He performed an act of heroism on the field, which not only gained him high and merited praise, but had powerful influence upon his future prospects.

Military discipline very properly provides that the surgeons of a regiment shall not take part in any engagement on the field. The lives of so many may depend upon the skill of even a single surgeon that it would be inconvenient, to say the best of it, if, when his aid were promptly required, during an encounter, it were found that he had allowed his ardor to carry him into the actual peril of the strife.

Cussen was sufficiently near to witness the greater part of the contest on the day of Waterloo. It was not without difficulty that his quick Irish spirit could control the almost overwhelming desire to plunge into the middle of the contest—which, on that day, had more single encounters than any since Poitiers and Agincourt. As he stood outside a tent which had been placed for the use of the medical staff, in the rear of the British position, he observed an English officer, on an unmanageable charger (bearing him along with an impetuous speed, which, having received a severe wound in the bridle-arm, he could neither control nor check), followed by a French cuirassier, who had nearly overtaken him. Another moment and the uplifted sabre would have struck the helpless man to the ground. Cussen rushed forward, literally tore the

Frenchman from his saddle, by main strength, and, wresting the sword from his hand, gave him a death-wound. Quick as thought, turning from the fallen foe and bounding forward with an agility which he had acquired on his native hills, Cussen followed the swift horse, and succeeded, by a strong and overmastering grasp, in checking its speed. In its rider, he recognized his own Colonel, whose life he had thus doubly saved, and received a grateful assurance that his service should not be forgotten.

Having dressed the Colonel's wounds, Cussen resumed his position in the rear.—But inaction was terrible to one whose spirit had been awakened to the excitement before him—for “quiet to quick bosoms is a bane.” Nearer and nearer became his involuntary approach to that part of the place in which the contest was hotly proceeding. At last, unable any longer to resist the passionate impulse, he mounted on one of the many war-steeds which were wildly galloping over the battle-field, caught the eye of the officer whom he had rescued, rushed forward to join the *mêlée*, and bravely fought side by side with him, when the “Up, Guards, and at them!” of Wellington urged on the soldiers to that last terrific charge which shook the imperial diadem from the brow of the first Napoleon.

A gallant deed, even though it violate the strict rules of military discipline, is not considered a very heinous offence by any commander. So, while his

Colonel hailed John Cussen as preserver, the brief lapse of duty as a surgeon was forgiven, in consideration of his chivalry as a soldier.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

THE war ended. Napoleon fell. St. Helena received the imperial exile. On this lonely rock, far out in the Atlantic, the chained Prometheus suffered a punishment worse than death—Sir Hudson Lowe being the vulture which continually struck, to prey upon, his heart.

The conclusion of the war influenced the fortunes of others besides its greatest victim. The battalion in which Cussen had served was reduced, and, with many others, his occupation was gone. While yet uncertain what course to pursue, he received an invitation from his late Colonel, very urgently pressing him to visit the veteran at his country seat in Hampshire; and thither he proceeded.

Cussen, it may here be stated, was what old crones (who are good judges of such things, knowing "a hawk from a hernshaw") would simply and expressively describe as "a very personable man." He

was in the spring of early manhood. He had the advantage, whatever *that* might be, of gentle blood; he had received a good education; he had distinguished himself in the greatest battle of the age; above all, he had saved the life of the gallant officer whose guest he was. What wonder, therefore, if, before he had been quite a month at Walton Hall, the bright eyes of Miss Walton beamed yet more brightly when they met his admiring glances.

The lady was young—not decidedly lovely, perhaps, but that most charming of all charming creatures, a thoroughly English beauty. She might not immediately dazzle, but she was sure always to delight. It was impossible to see and not admire her. Besides, she had been largely endowed with intellect by bounteous nature, and had also been well educated, carefully rather than brilliantly. With an undeniable dash of romance in her character, she was so pure in heart and thought, that the very novelty of *such* purity threw such a spell of enchantment upon the fevered passion of John Cussen, that literally, for the first time in his life, his soul was subdued into a tenderness which contrasted strangely, but not unpleasantly, with the wild tumults—rather of sense than soul—which, in former days, he had been wont to dignify with the name of Love.

When he ascertained such to be the state of his own feelings, he became very anxious to learn whether Alice Walton was affected in like manner.

Her impressions appeared to be very much as he desired, for, kissing that fair cheek, which

"Blushed at the praise of its own loveliness,"

and whispering hope to her anxious ear, he proceeded to explain to her father all that he felt—to solicit his sanction for the love which, but just confessed to each other, had suddenly been matured by that confession into a passion at once deep and ardent.

Alice Walton was an only child. What other result, then, can be anticipated than the usual one—the favorable reception of the avowal made by Cussen? Affection raises few difficulties where the happiness of the beloved is felt to be deeply involved. It is questionable whether, on that evening, a happier group could have been found anywhere within the limits of "merry England." The old soldier, pleased with the opportunity of keeping his gallant preserver with him while also securing the happiness of his daughter;—the young man exulting in his conquest, proud of the personal and mental endowments of his lady-love, and firmly resolving never to give her any cause to repent having yielded to the trusting affection which her guileless nature had formed for him;—the maiden herself, with the day-dream of love making an almost visible atmosphere of joy around her heart, softly yielded to glad and genial anticipations of a happy future. Well is it

that Woman's heart can thus luxuriate in imagination, for, in many cases, the romance of their love is far brighter than the reality ever proves to be.

Some arrangements which were to be made respecting his family property, and a natural desire personally to communicate his favorable prospects to his father, required that Cussen, now an accepted suitor, should proceed to Ireland for a short time.

Imagine the parting. The endearing caresses—the gentle beseechings for full and frequent letters—the soft promises as to faithful remembrances—the whispers of that mutual affection upon which a few brief months would put the seal—and the "Farewell," which, though dewed with tears, had not very much of real sorrow in it, so sweetly did it realize the expressive lines of the poet, of the parting, though sad, which

"Brought the hope that the morrow  
Would bring back the blest hour of meeting again!"

Cussen arrived in Ireland just in time to see his father die, and to learn that old involvements, and the early extravagance in which himself had rioted, had reduced their estate to a nominal income. The greater part of its produce had been swallowed up by interest payable to the mortgagees, who, from time to time, had advanced money on the property. In this dilemma, Cussen did, from impulse, what, had he acted simply on calculation only, would have been

the very best thing for him. Without loss of time, he frankly communicated with Colonel Walton on this unpromising condition and aspect of his affairs and prospects—assured him that, when he sued for his daughter's hand, he had not the least idea that he was so near the condition of a ruined man—that his father, when discharging the liabilities in which his early extravagance had involved him, had never breathed a syllable of the price at which they were to be swept away—that, almost beggared as he now was, he felt himself, in a worldly point of view, anything but a match for Alice—and that, while, with a breaking heart, he absolved her from the tender vows which she had made, he still cherished a hope that even yet, pass a few years, he might be able to achieve a position, by the exercise of his talents, which, once again, would permit him, on a more equal footing than at present, to solicit a renewal of their betrothal. The Colonel was brief and decisive. He thanked Cussen for his frank and honourable conduct, assuring him that Alice, as well as himself, fully appreciated his motives; declared that for his daughter's sake, as well as his own, he was unwilling to relinquish the intended alliance with his preserver and friend; and liberally gave the kindest promises of such full and immediate assistance as would speedily relieve the estate from its encumbrances—should it indeed be thought expedient to retain it,

the reversion of the invaluable Walton Hall property inalienably belonging to Alice.

Before, by the fulfilment of this promise, Cussen's brighter prospects could be realized, "the tenth wave of human misery swept" over his heart. There came a sad reverse. I am acquainted with all the details, but they are too melancholy to be related here. Let it be sufficient to say that Alice Walton and her father met with a sudden and tragic doom. By an accident, the origin of which was suspected, but never ascertained, their residence was consumed by fire—father and daughter perishing in the flames. The estate passed, in due course of law, to the next of kin, with whom Cussen had no acquaintance, and upon whom he had no claim. In due course of law, also, the mortgages on Cussen's own property were foreclosed. He was a ruined man.

The cup of misery overflowed. Very bitter did Cussen find the draught. Hopes blighted—the golden promise of his young manhood wholly destroyed—station utterly lost—Poverty with her feet upon his hearthstone—all that made the value of life swept away at once. Amid the maddening whirl of such contending emotions as this desolation caused, no wonder if even his strong mind and large frame bowed beneath the shock.

Months passed by, and bodily health was in a measure restored. But the mind did not recover its elastic spring. Sunk in the torpor of despair, John

Cussen was a broken man. Then came the reaction, after a time, and then he awoke to the sad reality of life. Better far had he continued unconscious or despairing. He might have been miserable, but he would have been unstained by guilt. Gradually, he found a Lethe for his sad thoughts, by passing "the Rubicon of the cup." At first, while this was being done in secret, the neighboring gentry made many efforts to arrange his affairs, liberate him from his more pressing pecuniary involvements, and give him the opportunity of realizing an adequate income by the practice of his profession. Each proffered kindness was rejected. He sat, another Timon, with his household gods shivered around him.

This could not long continue—for man cannot live without society. By degrees Cussen returned to the haunts and the companionship of man. Had he kept within the pale of his own class, perhaps all might still have been well. But a change had passed over and darkened his mind. He fancied that scorn sat upon the lip and glanced from the eye of every one more wealthy than himself, and thus Pride guided the arrow which Poverty barbed. He shunned the society of those to whom, in all save wealth, he had been equal, at the very least, and he found a consolation in the company of those who, remembering his birth (and in no place is that memory so well retained as in Ireland), would have considered him as their superior, even if, like them, he had to till

the earth for a bare subsistence. Thus, by a slow but certain process of deterioration, John Cussen—once the pride of the order of fashion and wealth in his native country—gradually became the associate of the ignorant and excitable peasantry.

Mixing with these poor people,—then, as ever, dissatisfied with their condition, and eagerly anxious for any change which seemed to promise better days and brighter fortunes,—Cussen soon became thoroughly identified with their feelings. Hating oppression, believing that the peasantry were greatly wronged by absentee landlords, oppressive middlemen, and an exacting "Church as by law established," he allowed himself to be seduced into the secret and illegal association of the Whiteboys. The homage which they paid to his birth and education, gave him more satisfaction than, at first, he ventured to own, even to himself. His pride was soothed by finding himself yet looked up to by any class. The energy of his character returned (in part), and assuming strong and unquestioned command over the disaffected peasantry, he became one of their most powerful leaders. Quick in mental resources, superior in physical strength, his influence over his followers was very great. Entire obedience was yielded to his commands, and (as in the present instance, when he undertook to lead the attack upon Churchtown Barracks) his presence was deemed sufficient to insure the success of any enterprise, however

daring. In all this, however, it is scarcely doubtful that John Cussen's actions were those of a man whose mind had lost its balance. Sorrow and suffering had touched his brain, and perhaps *this* was the vent which prevented actual insanity.

There was "method in his madness," however, for when he entered upon this wild and secret career, he took care that the movements which he personally guided should be remote from that part of the country in which he was best known. He strictly forbade any of his troops to indulge in drink, whenever their co-operation was required, and on all expeditions which he personally led (chiefly for the purpose of obtaining fire-arms from the houses of country gentlemen) he suited his attire to that of his companions, and so complete was the disguise, that none could recognize John Cussen as the dreaded Captain Rock, who scattered terror wherever he moved.

The remarkable fidelity which the Irish peasantry make it at once a matter of duty and pride to pay to their leaders against the law, was Cussen's chief protection. His secret was well kept. None of the gentry of the county had the slightest suspicion that Cussen, in whom many of them still professed to take an interest, was in any way mixed up—far less as a leader—with the Whiteboy movements which caused them so much alarm.

Such was John Cussen, whom we left leading a

goodly company of Whiteboys to the attack on Churchtown Barracks, a military position of much strength and some importance.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE ATTACK ON CHURCHTOWN BARRACKS.

THE Whiteboys, and their leader, reached Churchtown Barracks about midnight. All was silent when they arrived, except the measured step of the sentinel. Darkness covered all things as with a pall. But Cussen knew every inch of the ground, and the darkness, instead of being an impediment, was rather auxiliary to his purpose. He posted his men in a favorable position, and, within ten minutes of their arrival, everything was ready, and every one fully instructed as to his particular line of action, and was prepared for the manner of the attack.

Churchtown Barracks, in the centre of a very disturbed district, had formerly been the residence of a private gentleman. When life and property had become insecure, afraid of the doom of Major Going, he had fled the country. Major Going, who had been not only agent to the great Courtenay estates (Lord Devon's), but also a magistrate, had made himself unpopular in both capacities. He *would* have

the rent duly paid at the appointed day, and he sometimes went out of his way, from excess of zeal, to show his vigilance as a dispenser of justice, under the law. After many warnings, which only made him more exacting and more severe, he was assassinated. His successor, a gentleman named Hoskins, followed the same track—dignified by the name or “the path of duty,”—and shared the same doom. Not without warning, for, weeks before that doom was inflicted, he had heard even his own laborers chaunt the Whiteboy doggerel—

“Hoskins and Going  
Are nearly one,—  
Hoskins is GOING,  
And Going is GONE!”

The noon-day assassination of two such active magistrates, and the increase of predial insurrection in the counties of Cork and Limerick, so imperatively called for the allocation of a large and permanent military force at places in or near the disturbed localities, that the Irish Government gladly occupied Churchtown House, at a high rent, as temporary barracks. For some months previous to the night when Cussen and his men appeared before it, several companies of infantry, and two troops of cavalry, had been stationed at Churchtown, whence, on the requisition of a magistrate, detachments might be

detailed for duty, in more or less force, as circumstances might appear to require.

With the strategy of a clever leader, Cussen had contrived to render the place comparatively defenceless, by having notices sent to the officer left in command, that there was to be a midnight assemblage of Whiteboys on the other side of Charleville, and that an attack, to obtain arms, was to be made on a gentleman's residence not far beyond. A strong detachment of infantry and cavalry was sent off, to arrest the midnight conclave, and to defend the house which was to be the object of attack.

The notice which thus put the authorities on the *qui vive* came from a schoolmaster, who was deeply involved in the conspiracy of the Whiteboys, and was also in the pay of Government, as a spy. He had repeatedly given information to the military. It had been remarked, however,—but more as a matter of curiosity than suspicion,—that while they rarely gained anything but fatigue from sallies made at his instigation, they never had been successful, but that outrages were pretty sure to be committed, at the same time, in a quarter opposite to that which he had suggested. In truth, he was a Whiteboy to the backbone, and a traitor to the authorities who employed him. But, like most of the peasantry of Limerick county, he was so very plausible in manner, stolid in countenance, and impenetrable in well-acted simplicity of speech and act, that his fidelity



was not distrusted by the magistracy or the military. The police did not think well of him.

The military force at Churchtown was large enough to be under the command of a Field Officer. On this occasion Major White, to whom that responsible post had been intrusted, deemed the information sufficiently important to place most of his men on active duty. There remained in the barrack a few dragoons, a score of infantry, and one subaltern officer.

Hastily as Churchtown House had been converted into a military station, care had been taken to make it assume something of a garrison appearance. A stone wall had been erected all around the building, inclosing sufficient space as a barrack-yard, in which the soldiers might attend drill, and go through their exercises. This wall was somewhat more than breast high. As there was a strong gate at each side, the place was considered quite able to resist any White-boy attack. But, indeed, such an act of daring had never been anticipated. Who could dream that those who dreaded the lion's paw would voluntarily rush into his mouth?

Having arranged his men for the attack, Cussen did not long keep them inactive. He gave the word, and a volley of slugs rattled against the barrack windows. The alarm was as immediate as the attack was sudden. The soldiers hastily snatched up their arms, hurried to the windows to observe whence came

the assault, and were "picked out" by the quick sight and sure aim of the assailants, so that some were wounded in their very sleeping-rooms. Moving before the lights in those apartments, the soldiers were palpable objects to the armed men outside.

In a few minutes, the soldiers were arranged in the barrack-yard, startled at the unexpected peril, and ready for defence. At that instant, while awaiting the orders of their officer, a second volley was fired upon them, and with fatal effect. The young subaltern on duty—bewildered by the suddenness and manner of this attack—"lost his head," as the saying is, and hurriedly gave the order to "Fire!" Becoming rather accustomed to the darkness, the soldiers fancied that they saw their assailants outside, partly concealed behind the *front* wall. Each soldier aiming at what he imagined to be the head of an enemy, a straggling peal of musketry followed. The soldiers shouted, and were about re-loading, when, with fatal precision, a third shower of slugs and ball, from the Whiteboys, did tremendous execution among them. The beleaguered soldiers even then had not ascertained from what quarter destruction was thus fiercely poured in upon them.

Notwithstanding, they bore themselves gallantly. Men who had faced death, in its worst form, on the field of battle, a few years before, were not likely to quail before such foes as they knew must now be before them. The suspense was worse than the reality,

for their ignorance of the number and position of their assailants, caused doubts more dreadful than would have been the actual knowledge of an ascertained peril.

With as little delay as possible, but still only at a venture, the soldiers fired a second time. Their fire was immediately returned. By this time, six soldiers were killed, and ten lay severely wounded on the ground. Their officer—a gallant youth who had been at school six months before—was shocked and surprised at seeing his men thus dropping around him, taken in a trap, as it were, and shot at like so many marks. Feeling that it was madness to remain in their exposed situation, and anxious to give his men a chance for their lives, he ordered them to throw open the gates, and sally out to meet their enemies face to face, and die—if die they must—in a contest of man to man and hand to hand.

Accordingly, the much-thinned military array, literally

“Few, and faint, but fearless still,”

divided itself—but the alarm and surprise were great when they found it impossible to open either of the gates. In fact, aware that these gates had been absurdly constructed and hung to open *out of*, instead of *into*, the barrack-yard, and anticipating the attempt to pass through them, Cussen had made one

of his few preliminary preparations to consist of the heaping huge masses of rock against them, so as to prevent their being opened to allow egress to the besieged soldiers.

This disappointment drove the military to desperation. When another volley from without struck down two more of them, the remnant of the party were quite bewildered, and would have fled back into cover, on the *sauve qui peut* principle, if their officer, as a last resource, had not ordered them to scale the walls, and boldly meet rather than fearfully retreat from the imminent peril.

As with one impulse, rushing forward, they rapidly crossed the front wall. Here was a new cause for wonder. They found that they had hitherto been wasting their fire. Cussen, to baffle his opponents, had placed his men behind each *side* wall, while, as a decoy, he had made them put their hats on that in *front*. Thus, while the fire of the Whiteboys was masked, that of the military was thrown away upon the range of hats in front, which were easily mistaken for men behind the parapet. It was a clever strategy.

When the soldiers dashed over the barrack-wall, they discovered the trick. The Whiteboys then rushed round from their concealment. A struggle ensued. Both parties were highly infuriated—one with triumph, the other with rage. The contest, though destructive, was not of many minutes' continuance. Desperate as was the bravery of the

soldiers, the overpowering force and courage of their opponents were resistless. The soldiers had no alternative but to demand quarter. At that word, Cussen instantly gave orders that the contest should cease. Scarcely any of his party had even been wounded, while, on the other side, the young officer was the only one unharmed. The sergeant who had shot Sheehan (as related in the first chapter) was mortally wounded, and lay in the barrack-yard, writhing in agony.

By this time, the barrack had been set fire to, and the flames raged fiercely. Dismayed, defeated, and surrounded by their opponents, the soldiers were grouped together on one side. Some twenty or thirty Whiteboys had gathered around the dying sergeant, watching his agonies with fiendish joy. "In with him! in with him to the fire! Burn him—burn the murderer alive!" were exclamations which burst from their lips, and made the doomed man shudder as he heard. Cussen stood a little aloof from all; one might have almost taken him for an unconcerned looker-on, as he carelessly stood with his arms folded, a close-fitting skull-cap of dark fur upon his head, and a narrow slip of crape concealing the upper part of his face. When the Whiteboys seized the sergeant, with the avowed intent of casting him into the flames, the young officer addressed Cussen, and earnestly entreated him to prevent so dreadful a deed. "My men have

fallen," he said, "but I do not know why they were attacked. For the love of heaven, do not allow this wretched man to suffer such a death, in cold blood. Besides, he has a mortal wound. If they want his death, a few hours, at the farthest, will gratify them. Do not let him perish thus."

Cussen answered: "My men came here for revenge upon that man, and I can scarcely prevent their taking it to the fullest. He deserves his death. Blood for blood! When he shot an innocent, unoffending man, as if he were a dog, he drew this vengeance on himself. Still, it need not be pushed to the extremity they call for. A life for a life is all that can reasonably be required. But—what cries are those?"

Turning round, he saw that the flames had now reached the stables in which the horses of the dragoons were. The poor animals were driven almost to madness by fear, and their dreadful cries came shrilly and fearfully upon the ear, filling with awe the breasts of those wild men, who, while human agony appealed in vain, shuddered at this painful manifestation of deep suffering by the brute creation. Help was out of the question, as the flames spread too rapidly for assistance to be rendered. The poor animals were literally burned alive, amid the loudly expressed pity of the beholders.

From this tragedy they turned to the wounded sergeant. He had breathed his last while this scene

had engaged their attention. They would not be cheated out of their revenge. With a yell of triumph, they cast his corpse into the flames, amid a thousand execrations.

They thus had accomplished their work. Cussen turned to the young officer and said: "You are free; but you must pledge me your word that if you have any personal knowledge of me, or think that you have, you will never take advantage of it." This pledge the officer firmly declined giving. Cussen paused for a few seconds, and replied that it did not matter: he would draw off his men. Giving the word, they marched off in good order—were soon out of sight, and the smoking ruins and diminished force remained as evidence of that night's tale of ruin.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE ATTACK ON ROSSMORE.

THE news that Churchtown Barracks had been burned down, and the greater portion of its military defenders killed, spread, like wildfire, through all parts of the kingdom. Magisterial and military inquiries did no more than ascertain the facts, but the persons remained undiscovered. Many were arrested on suspicion, but the actual perpetrators escaped. The policy used was to collect them from distant points, so that domiciliary visits from the patrols and the police in the neighbourhood where the outrage had been committed found the peasantry within their own habitations. Thus suspicion was diverted and detection almost impossible—except by treachery.

Viewed through the magnifying glass of public rumor, the affair at Churchtown appeared very great. In the dearth of more interesting intelligence, it was such an event as the wonder-workers of the Press delighted to snatch up as an especial theme for record and remark. The London newspapers especially gloated over it. Day after day their columns were filled with "important particulars of the massacre at Churchtown, where the Irish rebels, in overpowering numbers, killed a regiment of infantry

and two troops of cavalry, burned the barracks to the ground, and barbarously threw the soldiers' wives and children into the flames, in which they were all consumed by the devouring element." The affray was repeatedly mentioned in Parliament, where the changes rung upon it produced quite a *variorum* edition of horrors.

The Executive offered large rewards for such information as might lead to the apprehension and conviction of the offenders. Though the required knowledge was scattered among hundreds of the peasantry—hunger-stricken men, who often wanted even salt to their potatoes—not one was found to enrich himself by the "blood-money." Two descriptions of persons are held in utter hatred and contempt in Ireland;—the man who, for lucre, turns from the ancient faith of his fathers, and he who becomes a "stag" (informer) to save his own neck, or gain the wages of treachery. Of the two, the informer is considered more harshly than the apostate, who may repent, and in the fulness of time return (even on his death-bed) to the faith he has forsaken; but once that a man becomes a traitor to his colleagues, he does what cannot be undone by any contrition, and may be punished, but cannot be atoned for by Death. It is a strange condition of society, lamented by O'Connell, Sheil, and others, that, in any cases, while the Irish peasantry would pity, and even shield the murderer, (finding or making excuses for

his crime,) they will not, they cannot pardon or excuse the informer.

Up to this time, Cussen had escaped suspicion of any participation in the Whiteboy proceedings. Latterly, whether from distaste for the low companionship into which he had fallen, or from a desire to elude suspicion, he had made a point of frequenting society of a better order. On one of these occasions, while he was spending the evening at the house of Mr. F. Drew, Drewscourt, near Charleville, (in which, by the way, the writer of these Sketches was born,) the affair of Churchtown became a subject of conversation. Cussen took no part in the dialogue, but when all had retired, except Mr. Drew—a very shrewd but eccentric man—he spoke freely upon the subject, and having drank rather more than was good for him, got thrown off his guard so much as, in the excitement of the moment, to give a minute account of everything which had passed on the memorable night in question. With fearful energy he narrated all the details, and at the close, when he told how the mutilated body of the sergeant had been cast into the flames,

"Even in his glance, the gladiator spoke."

The impression which his statement and his manner made upon his listener was (as Frank Drew told me afterwards) that Cussen must have been a prin-

cipal in the frightful scenes which he so vividly described, or must have had his information direct from an eye-witness and participant. As the communication had been unguardedly made, and was protected by the seal of that confidence which exists between guest and host, the suspicion never found words until after it was too late to harm Cussen.

The Churchtown insurgents remained undetected. Emboldened by success, Cussen determined to make a bold attempt to obtain arms. His followers strongly urged him to obtain fire-arms by attacks on the houses of country gentlemen who were known to have provided themselves with large means of defence.

Castletown Conyers (about three miles from Drews-court) was the country mansion of a gentleman of large property, not far from the boundary of Limerick county. Mr. Conyers, an old gentleman whose loyalty and fears were on a par, was living, when the predial disturbances broke out, in a remote part of the county, and, having incontinently taken fright, had applied to the Government for protection, and had a corporal and six of the Rifle Brigade quartered in his house as a defensive force. Thus garrisoned, the place might be considered a stronghold;—for, in addition to the military force, Mr. Conyers had procured two or three cases of Birmingham fowling-pieces, a few kegs of powder, a large bag of flints (this was before the general use of percussion

caps), and a hundred weight of sheet lead, to be cast into bullets.

This formidable supply of arms and ammunition had reached Castletown under strong military escort from Limerick, and report spoke of it as even more considerable than it really was. With these munitions of war, and the soldiers and the servants of the house, Castletown was one of the most formidable places the Whiteboys could have thought of attacking. Yet, with that characteristic, but calculating boldness, which gave him eminence with his followers,

“For those who THINK must rule o’er those who TOIL,”

Cussen determined to invest this fortilage. The arms and ammunition were what he wanted, for no one could harbor enmity against the owner of Castletown, a harmless, neutral character, whose house was open to the poor; while his wife, a matron of the olden school (she was half-sister to Sir John Fitzgerald, now M. P. for Clare), was beloved throughout the district, for her kindness and charity.

Cussen well knew that his party, numerous but badly armed, would have but small chance of success in an ordinary attack upon Castletown, well defended as it was. He determined to win by strategy what he could scarcely gain by force. He

usually preferred such exploits as could be achieved rather by mental ingenuity than mere physical effect. To figure as the contriver gratified him, and encouraged his followers' belief that, no matter what the difficulty, his sagacity could bring it through with success.

About a mile from Castletown, and yet more remote from other large houses—for it was in a part of the country half-bog, half-mountain—was Rossmore, the residence of Mr. John Shelton, owner of a considerable property. Long confined to his chair by gout, which had deprived him of the power of walking, he had not taken any part in the county proceedings, as a magistrate. Nor, while other resident landlords were soliciting assistance to protect their dwellings, had Mr. Shelton joined in the entreaty. Isolated by habits and local situation, from the gentry of the district, he believed that the Whiteboys would not obtrude on the obscurity of one who felt that, as a good landlord, he did not deserve ill at the hands of any one. Of his large family there were then residing with him a son aged about eighteen, and two daughters some years older. As Mr. Shelton was my own uncle, I can speak confidently as to the details which I give.

About ten o'clock, on a fine evening in March, 1822, the peaceful inhabitants of Rossmore House were disturbed by a Whiteboy visit. The doors were speedily forced in, front and rear. The help-

less household offering no resistance, the intruders proceeded to make themselves quite "at home." One division sat down in the servants' hall, threw wood and turf on the fire, and commanded the trembling female servants to cover the long table with provisions. Others ranged through the adjacent apartments in search of arms. More loudly called out for young Charles Shelton. The plan of Cussen was to take this lad to Castletown a prisoner, and threaten to shoot him in sight of the garrison there, unless all the arms and ammunition were given up. The two families were on such friendly terms, besides being related, that Cussen made sure of Mr. Conyers making any sacrifice rather than see his neighbor's son killed. But, in very truth, (as I afterwards knew,) whatever Mr. Conyers might have felt, the military force at Castletown would rather have permitted the murder than part with the means of defence—the catastrophe at Churchtown being in their minds.

Charles Shelton, who slept in an upper and remote apartment, did not immediately hear the tumult below. His elder sister, Alicia, who had high spirit and much self-possession, heard the clamour—readily surmised the extreme danger of her brother—hastily arose, throwing a shawl over her night dress—ran to her brother's room, the door of which she locked, securing the key—and then went down boldly to face the danger, if necessary.

While she stood near the door of the servants' hall, regarding what was going on, but herself unseen, Cussen came in from the back-yard, having kept aloof from the confusion until then. He was just in time. The frightened servants, in compliance with loud demands for drink, had placed the whiskey-jar upon the table. Knowing that success, and even safety depended on such indulgence being abstained from, he broke the jar with the fowling-piece he carried.

His men looked at each other, then at him, but his stern looks awed them. One or two merely muttered a regret that "such prime stuff" should be wasted.

Cussen then, as if anxious to avoid all chance of recognition, returned to the back of the house. He wore a close-fitting skull-cap, with a slip of crape in front, and could see whatever occurred. His followers were more or less disguised, and all, except Cussen, had white shirts over their garments—hence the name Whiteboy.

Perceiving the power of his leadership, Alicia Shelton determined not to waste words or time in entreaties on the men, but to appeal at once to Cussen. She managed to leave the house without being noticed—found Cussen outside, leaning on his fowling-piece, in a thoughtful and abstracted mood. To throw herself on her knees before him—to implore him for the love of Heaven to save her bro-

ther's life—was the impulsive action of a moment. He turned away, not even looking upon her, and then—the present peril giving her new energy and courage—she seized him by the coat-skirt and earnestly said, "You want to take my brother to Castletown. There they will see him torn to pieces before they will surrender their arms. You must know that it will be an idle attempt. Then, in their disappointment, your men will kill him. Save him—save my brother, if you have a human heart. I know that you will do it, and I will bless you if you do."

She sank on the ground before him. He felt that she was speaking the truth. Besides, he was moved by her entreaty. Raising her from the ground, he said, in a kind and soothing manner, "Lady! I am afraid that we must have your brother's company, but no harm shall reach him with my consent."

Her convulsive grasp still held him. Striving to extricate himself, he got into the moonlight, and then, for the first time, he had a view of her features. She was very handsome; and now, with her dark hair dishevelled, her eager glance, her graceful attitude, her earnest tone, her light attire, she looked a Pythoness.

Cussen gazed long and anxiously on the still kneeling suppliant. Some old memory may have



passed through his mind in that brief space—a wave in life's vast ocean. Perhaps some resemblance of form, feature, or voice brought back a glimpse of bygone days of happiness and love. There still was something tender in that troubled heart. He passed his hands across his eyes, as if he would clear them from a mist, and then with a gentle courtesy, as if they were in a ball-room, raised Miss Shelton from the ground.

"Lady," said he, "whatever I can do to aid you, I will do. They have not yet found your brother. If he be concealed, keep him so, and I will make some pretext to draw off my men. They must have whatever arms are in the house; but they shall be content with that."

Miss Shelton would have expressed her warm gratitude, but Cussen did not wait to be thanked. He turned away then. While she yet lingered, with clasped hands to heaven, he suddenly returned, politely raised his cap from his head for a moment, took one of her hands in his, pressed his lips to it, with the gallant air of a cavalier, and then withdrew. Almost before Alicia Shelton had regained her own apartments, Cussen had given his men the word to retire. He led them into the belief that the military and police were approaching, and this made them hastily retreat and disperse, taking with them all the arms in the house except a small pair of pistols

which Captain Shelton had picked up and brought away with him from Waterloo. They are now in my own possession.

Before Miss Shelton had risen from her earnest thanksgiving for her brother's safety, Captain Rock and his force had departed. She then ventured into her father's room, from whence his bodily ailments did not allow him to move, and was happy to learn that he had not heard the tumult which had prevailed in the more distant part of the house. Thus terminated a night of terror.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TRIAL.

MUCH alarm was created, through the county of Limerick, by the attack upon Mr. Shelton of Rossmore. The neighbouring gentry argued from it, and not without cause, that if a gentleman whose advanced years and bodily ailments had kept him aloof from the actual exercise of his magisterial functions, were thus singled out, there was little hope for escape for those who had made themselves marked men, by determined and acknowledged resistance to and denunciation of the Whiteboys

Accordingly, zeal being now quickened by fear for personal safety, it was resolved that neither trouble nor expense be spared to discover the persons implicated in this last affair. Many circumstances tended to establish a conviction that the leader of the Whiteboys must be some one greatly superior to those whom he commanded. The brief conversation which had been held with the officer at Churchtown, and Miss Shelton at Rossmore, almost proved that one and the same person had commanded on both occasions,—that he was a man of education and gentle bearing,—and that it was necessary, above all, if the insurrectionary conspiracy was to be put down, to strike at him, its life and soul.

Weeks passed by, and though many were suspected, and several taken into custody by the police, no clue to the discovery of the veritable Captain Rock was yet discovered. At last, one of the persons apprehended on suspicion—faint-hearted as a weak woman, and far less faithful—let fall some words which first excited suspicion against John Cussen. No notice appeared to be taken of them at the time, but the prisoner, who was kept in solitary confinement for some time, was gradually worked upon by promises of large payment in the event of the conviction of the actual leader of the Whiteboys. He vacillated between cupidity, and fear of his own personal safety. At last, he *staggered*—that is, he

gave some information, on the solemn promise that his having done so should never transpire, that he should not be required to give any evidence in public, and that he should immediately be conveyed out of the country for safety.

At first, the magistrates hesitated to believe that John Cussen could be concerned in the outrages which had spread alarm far and near, and directed particular inquiries to be made respecting his habits, way of living, haunts, occupation, and companions. They ascertained, from this scrutiny and espial, the fact of his frequent absences from home at night; they obtained proof of his having been seen, within the prohibited hours, in remote places where outrages had been committed; and the conviction came upon their minds that Cussen, and none other, was the much-dreaded and long-concealed Captain Rock.

Orders were given to arrest him, and also to search his house. Among his papers were found some documents which could scarcely have been in possession of any but a leader of the disaffected. They were insufficient of themselves, however, to fix him as such.

The police and the military, charged with the warrant to arrest Cussen, received strict injunctions to avoid unnecessary violence. It was anticipated, from his determined character and great personal

strength, that he would resist any attempt to make him a prisoner. Contrary to expectation, he surrendered himself without struggle or hesitation. He was found sitting tête-à-tête with old Frank Drew, at Drew's Court,—the same to whom he had spoken so freely about the particulars of the attack on Churchtown Barracks,—and when he heard the measured tread of the military, as they came up the avenue, he paused in his conversation, and exclaimed, "They have come for me."

In custody his deportment, equally devoid of effrontery and fear, was apparently that of an innocent man, and impressed very many with the idea that he was unjustly suspected. The magistrates, who knew better, but were compelled to conceal the source of their information, even incurred some blame, from public opinion, for having apprehended and detained him.

The difficulty was—how to prove that John Cussen was identical with Captain Rock. In accordance with his compact with the authorities, the craven who had given the clue had been quietly shipped off to England. The most liberal offers were secretly made, on the part of the Government, to induce some of the other prisoners to turn king's evidence, but without avail. They knew, one and all, what share Cussen's had been in the Whiteboy movements; but they were fully aware, also, that to

appear in evidence against him would, in effect, be equivalent to the signing of their own death-warrant. They continued faithful to him—and from higher motives, perhaps, than that of personal fear. For he was a man who possessed the power of winning hearts, and there were many—very many of his followers, who had become so warmly attached to him that they would have laid down their own lives to protect him from harm.

It was believed that Miss Shelton, if she was so minded, could have recognized his figure, his features, and the very tone of his voice. She was strongly urged to do so, in order "to promote the ends of justice;" but, grateful for the service which he had rendered to her brother, and remembering his personal courtesy to herself, she invariably declined doing so, and, to avoid all compulsion or persuasion in the matter, was secretly preparing to pay a visit to her elder sister, who had married an English gentleman, and resided at Bath. On her repeated refusal to assist the Crown, it was determined that, by means of a stratagem, she should be trepanned into identifying him.

Accordingly, Major Eeles, Captain Johnstone, and another officer of the Rifle Brigade, made a morning-call at Rossmore, and, as if by accident, asked Miss Shelton and her sister whether they would not like to see the barrack at Ballingarry, which they had repeatedly promised to visit. A

party of six or seven was made up on the instant. The horses were ordered out, and very soon the party reached the barrack, in which Cussen was detained until his final removal to the county-prison of Limerick. That such a person was there, was unknown to all the visitors. Accompanied by some of the officers' wives, whom they knew, the ladies from Rossmore entered the room occupied by Cussen, heavily ironed and closely guarded. As they were passing through it, Cussen was purposely provoked, by one of his guards, to speak loudly—angrily, indeed—to some taunting remark. Alicia Shelton, recognizing the peculiar and unforgotten tone, seized her sister's arm, with a sudden impulse, and exclaimed—"It is the very man!" and would have fallen, but for support immediately rendered.

Cussen started at her exclamation, looked at her, "more in sorrow than in anger," rose from his chair, raised his hat, and courteously saluted the party. Miss Shelton, who avoided a second glance at him, restrained her feelings, and did not again open her lips; but what she had involuntarily said, slight as it was, sealed his fate—and he knew it. So did the officers who had planned the trick.

Government had directed that Cussen's trial should immediately take place. This was before Alicia Shelton had been betrayed into a recognition of the prisoner. She considered herself bound in honour not to give evidence to the detriment of one who had con-

ferred a signal favour on herself. But, on the night of the attack, Cussen had also been seen and heard by her younger sister, whose bed-room window overlooked the back-yard, and who had witnessed the occurrence between them. Not considering herself bound by any personal ties of gratitude, and somewhat selfishly recollecting her own alarm rather than her brother's secured safety, Susanna Shelton declared that, for her part, she had no scruples in performing what she believed to be an act of justice to society. In addition, two of Cussen's followers, to save their own necks from the halter, promised, almost at the last moment, to turn king's evidence—but as there was no certainty of their remaining in the same mind, when put into the witness-box (or, rather, as it actually was, upon the table in the Court), not much reliance was placed upon *them*.

The Assizes being several months distant, it was resolved not to wait, and a special Commission was sent down for the immediate trial of all persons in custody under the Insurrection Act. At the same time, a messenger from the Castle of Dublin arrived at Rossmore with a *subpœna* to enforce the attendance of Miss Shelton and her sister, as witnesses on Cussen's trial, and they were taken away to Limerick, in a post-chaise, escorted by a troop of dragoons. Apartments and all suitable accommodation had been provided for them at Swinburne's—

then the principal hotel in "the fair city of the Violated Treaty."

The trial is not forgotten by those who were present. The court-house of Limerick was crowded to the very roof. I am proud to say, as an Irishman, that among that large audience, there was not even one female. Irish propriety, by a conventional arrangement rather understood than expressed, very properly prohibits the appearance of any of the fair sex in a Court of Justice, except where necessarily present as a party, or called upon as a witness. I write of what was the rule some thirty years ago—matters may have changed since. On arraignment, Cussen pleaded "Not Guilty." After a long, fatiguing, and nearly inaudible speech from Mr. Sergeant Goold—who had been eloquent, but, in his old age, had become the greatest proser, for a small man, at the Irish Bar—the evidence was gone into. The case had been skilfully got up, but, though no moral doubt could exist as to the prisoner's participation, if not leadership, in many Whiteboy offences, it may be doubted whether the proofs would have sufficed for a conviction in ordinary times. The two informers, on whose evidence much reliance had been placed, told their story volubly enough, but when the usher's wand was handed to them, that they might point at the prisoner in identification, each shook his head and affected never before to have seen him.

Cussen's equanimity was undisturbed throughout the early part of the trial. When Mr. Sergeant Goold, in stating the case, alluded to the attack on Churchtown, the prisoner said that, in the copy of the indictment with which he had been served, there was no charge against him save for certain transactions alleged to have taken place at Rossmore, and he desired to know whether it was purposed, or indeed whether it was legal, to state a case or give evidence out of the record? There was considerable sensation at this inquiry. The Judge replied that Counsel ought to confine himself to the charge in the indictment, and admitted that the prisoner had exercised no more than his undoubted right in checking the introduction of irrelevant matter. The Crown Counsel had only to bow and submit to the opinion and reproof of the Judge. The prisoner appearing disposed to speak again, the Judge asked whether he had any more to say? "Only this, my lord," said he, "that if it be my *right*, as prisoner, to check the introduction of irrelevant topics, having a tendency to prejudice me with the jury, it surely was *your duty*, as Judge, to have done so—particularly as mine is a case of life and death."

This was a well-merited reproof, given with a certain degree of dignity, and (for the Judge was a man of enlarged mind) did no injury to Cussen.

When Miss Shelton appeared on the table, Cussen

appeared startled, for he had been given to understand that she had positively refused to appear against him—indeed, it had been reported that she had even gone to England to avoid it. Compelled to give her testimony, she detailed, in the plain and forcible language of truth, under what circumstances she had seen Cussen at Rossmore—what peril her brother had been threatened with—what supplications she had made in his behalf—how promptly the favour she had solicited had been granted—how kind the prisoner's words and demeanour to herself had been. She took occasion to add that her appearance as a witness was against her own desire. She was then asked to turn round and say whether she then saw the person who had acted as she had described. Not without great delay and hesitation—urged, indeed, by an intimation of the personal consequences of her contumacy—did she obey, but, at last, she did identify the prisoner, saying, "That is the man who saved my brother's life, at my entreaty, and stood between myself and outrage worse than death." Cussen respectfully acknowledged her evident feeling in his favour by making her a low bow as she went down.

Her sister, who was cast in a coarser mould of mind and body, exhibited no scruples, but gave her evidence with an undisguised antipathy towards the accused. The missing links, supplied by her testimony, made up a strong chain of evidence which,

every one felt, it would be difficult for Cussen to beat down, in any manner. It was expected, almost as a matter of course, that he would trust to proving, by an *alibi*, the impossibility of his having been the person who was present on the occasion referred to by the witness. Every one who saw him in the dock, where his bearing was equally free from bravado and fear, anticipated some very ingenious, if not successful defence. He very slightly cross-examined the witnesses for the prosecution, and then only on points which bore on his personal conduct. He declined availing himself of the open assistance of counsel—though he had consulted eminent legal authorities on various technical points, while in prison. But for the place in which he stood, fenced in with iron spikes, and surrounded by the police, one might have thought him merely interested, as a spectator, in the circumstances evoked by the evidence, rather than one whose life depended on the issue. Cool, deliberate, and self-possessed, he entered on his defence.

It was of the briefest;—only a simple negation of the charge—a denial that, even with all probability of its being true, there was legal evidence of such a breach of the law as involved conviction and punishment—a regret that his identity should have been mistaken by the younger Miss Shelton, who, had he really been the person at Rossmore, had never, even on her own showing, been so

close to him as for her to distinguish his features—an expression of gratitude to Alicia Shelton for her evident disinclination to injure one who she believed had treated her with kindness—a strong disclaimer of imputing wilful error to *her*, though he considered her sister not free from censure for her undisguised avidity in seizing upon every circumstance to convict him—a reckless assertion that, come what might, he had outlived the desire of existence, and was prepared for any fortune. Such was the substance of his address, delivered in a manner equally free from bravado and dread. He concluded by declaring that, already prejudged by public opinion (the newspapers, from the first, having roundly proclaimed that he, and none other, was or could be the true Captain Rock), and with the undue weight given to slight and evidently prejudiced evidence, he felt that his prospect of acquittal was small.

Mr. Sergeant Goold then arose to speak to the evidence for the Crown, and was interrupted by Cussen, who asked the Judge whether, when no evidence was called for the defence, the prisoner was not entitled, by himself or counsel, to the last word to the jury? Mr. Sergeant Goold answered that the Crown, in all cases, was entitled to the last speech, and appealed to the Judge for confirmation of the assertion. Cussen again addressed the Judge, and said that, in civil suits, the practice was certainly not to allow the plaintiff the last speech when the de-

fendant did not call witnesses, for he had himself been a jurymen, in the other court, when such a circumstance had occurred. The Judge's decision was that, if he pleased to insist upon it, the counsel for the Crown might desire and exercise the right of speaking to the evidence, even when, as in the present instance, the accused had called no witnesses, nor even made a defence. But, his Lordship added, perhaps under the circumstances, Mr. Sergeant Goold would not exercise the right. Goold grumbled, and fidgeted, and muttered unintelligible sentences about his duty, and finally, gathering up his papers, quitted the Court in a huff, with the air of a person mightily offended.

The Judge then summed up the evidence, and charged the jury very minutely—dwelling, more than was anticipated, on the remote probability that the younger Miss Shelton might have been mistaken as to the identity of the accused. But, said he, even if she were so situated that recognition of his person were even impossible, there is the evidence of her sister, given with a reluctance which was creditable to *her* humanity, gratitude, and womanly feeling, which undoubtedly declared that the prisoner in the dock, and none but he, was the leader in the attack upon her father's house on the night named in the indictment.

The jury retired, and after a long deliberation, returned a verdict of "Guilty." Perhaps, of all per-

sons in the court, the prisoner was apparently the least moved by this announcement. His cheek did not blench, his lips quiver, nor his limbs tremble. He was called upon to declare whether he had anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be passed?

Cussen, drawing himself up to his full height, declared, in a sonorous voice, which filled the Court, and in the same collected manner which had characterized him during the whole trial, that nothing which he could say was likely to mitigate the sharp sentence of the law. "I have had a fair trial," said he, "as from the excited state of the country, and the fears and feelings of the jury, I could reasonably expect. It is evident, from the time they have spent in deliberating on their verdict, that some of the jury, at least, had doubts in my favour. But," he added, "I make no calculation upon that, for I am aware that you, my lord, even while you comply with the formula of asking me whether I have anything to say against my sentence, have no alternative but to pronounce it. For my own part, I have faced death on the battle-field, too often and too boldly, to dread it in any shape. And for the ignominy, I hold with the French philosopher, whose writings your lordship is familiar with, that it is the crime, and not the punishment, which makes the shame. My lord, I stand, as it were, on the threshold of another world. My path is already darkened by

the fast-advancing shadows of the grave. Hear me declare, then, that even if I were the Captain Rock whom your jury declare me to be, my death, nor the death of hundreds such as I am, cannot and will not put an end to disaffection arising from laws oppressive in themselves, and rendered even more so by being harshly and partially administered. The spirit of the people is all but broken by long-continued and strong oppression. Between middlemen and proctors they have been driven almost into despair. Exactions, for rent and tithes, press increasingly upon them. Whatever little property they may have possessed has gradually melted away. Their cattle, under distraint for rent, crowd the pounds. Their miserable cabins are destitute of fuel and food. They feel their wrongs, and have united with the energy of despair to avenge them. Cease to oppress these men, and the King will have no better subjects. So much for them. A concluding word for myself. My lord, I have not called evidence, which I might have done, to show that my general character is that of a man indisposed towards bloodshed and cruelty. It may be too late to hear them now—but for the sake of others I would stand before the world as one who is not the blood-stained ruffian which the learned counsel for the Crown has proclaimed me to be. I would tell *him*, were he here, that whatever else I have done, I have never been publicly branded by the Legislature as a liar. My lord, I have done."



This bold attack on Mr. Sergeant Goold, who, three years before, had been publicly reprimanded by the House of Commons for having prevaricated, when giving evidence before the Limerick Election Committee, was received with applause.

The Judge intimated that he was ready to hear evidence as to Cussen's character, on which several gentlemen of high standing in the county came forward and bore testimony greatly in his favour. The sentence of death was then pronounced, with the usual formalities.

But Cussen's hour was not at hand. A memorial to the Government, from Alicia Shelton, strongly setting forth the humanity which the convict had manifested towards herself, was immediately forwarded. With it went a petition, signed by several who had been interested with Cussen's conduct on the trial, and believed that to execute their leader was the least likely way of conciliating the Whiteboys. In due course, the Judge who had presided at the trial was called upon to state his opinion. It was said that, viewing the case as it came out in the evidence, and without touching on the suspicion or presumption that Cussen had been guilty of other breaches of the law, the report of the Judge was strongly in his favour. At all events, the Government complied with the urgent solicitations in Cussen's behalf, and commuted the sentence of death into transportation for life.

As Cussen had heard his death-doom without any apparent emotion, his reception of the mitigation of punishment was wholly devoid of exultation. He requested that the prison authorities would convey his thanks to Alicia Shelton and the others who had interested themselves in his favour.

It was said that an intimation was made to him, on the part of the Executive, promising him a full pardon if he would give them a clue to the Whiteboy organization, which they greatly desired to put down. It was reported, also, that, in his reply, he declared himself incapable of betraying any confidence which had been reposed in him,—that family circumstances must prevent his desiring to remain in Ireland, on any terms,—and he trusted there was a Future for every man who desired to atone for the Past. This was the nearest approach he ever made to an admission that he had been involved in the Whiteboy movements. The "family circumstances" to which he alluded consisted of his having been privately married to a Miss Fitzgibbon, with whom he lived so unhappily, that even an enforced residence in New South Wales appeared a lesser evil than to remain with her in Ireland.\*

\* The friend who has given me this information respecting Mrs. Cussen, says that when she lived in Limerick, not long ago, her means appeared ample. Her father, who had been a rich cattle-dealer, grazier and farmer, near ———, had probably left her in easy circumstances. He was a Mr. Fitzgibbon, and very little

This, however, did not transpire until some time after he had quitted the country.

He was transmitted to the convict-ship at Cove, on board of which the narrator of this story, then a lad, had the curiosity to visit him. Of course, no conversation arose as to the question of his guilt or innocence. When Cussen learned that his youthful visitor was related to Miss Shelton, he manifested some interest, inquired after her health, begged she would accept his thanks for the favourable manner in which she had given her evidence, and said that she had strongly reminded him of a lady whom he had formerly known, and whose death had led to the circumstances which had brought him to his present position.

The impression which remains on my mind, after

indebted to education. He sent his daughter to a first-rate boarding-school, and permitted her, when grown to womanhood, to invite her former preceptor and a few more "genteels" to an evening party—the first ever given in his house. The young lady was somewhat affected, and, to show her education, used big words. Her father, who heard her say to the servant "Biddy, when the company depart, be sure and extinguish the candles," inquired what was the meaning of the word "extinguish." It means *to put out a thing*, said she. In the course of the evening the pigs got upon the lawn, which was overlooked by the drawing-room window, and made a terrible noise. Old Fitzgibbon, determined to be genteel among his daughter's fine guests, went to the head of the stairs, and loudly called out, "Biddy, go at once and extinguish the pigs from the front of the house!"

the lapse of so many years, is very much in favour both of Cussen's appearance and manners. He was neatly dressed, and looked very unlike what might have been anticipated—considering that he was the veritable Captain Rock. His voice was low—"an excellent thing" in man as well as in woman. There was no appearance of bravado in his manner. The two turnkeys from Limerick jail, who were in charge of him, spoke very highly of his gentle disposition and uniform civility. They declared, such was their conviction of his truth, that if, at any time, he had desired to leave them for a week, with a promise to return by a particular day and hour, they were certain he would not break his parole.

On reaching Spike Island, he was attired in the convict costume,—and the humiliating livery of crime appeared a great annoyance to him for a day or two. After that, he showed no feeling upon the matter. The "authorities" at Spike Island, who were much prejudiced against him, at first, speedily came to treat him with as much kindness as their rough nature and scanty opportunities permitted them to show.

Within three weeks of his conviction, John Cussen was *en route* for Botany Bay. During the voyage, a dangerous epidemic broke out among the convicts and the crew. The surgeon of the ship was one of the first victims. The commander, who had heard the report of the trial at Limerick, recol-

lected that one of the witnesses had stated how gallantly Cussen had fought at Waterloo, when an army-surgeon, and asked his prisoner whether he thought himself capable, in the existing emergency, of taking medical charge of the ship. Cussen replied in the affirmative, but positively declined doing anything so long as he wore the convict-dress. His desire being complied with, he was released from his irons, intrusted with the care of the sick, and succeeded in mitigating their sufferings by the remedies he applied. The disease was checked, so that the mortality was much less than was expected, and this favourable result was mainly attributable to Cussen's skill. On arriving in New South Wales, this was so favourably represented to the authorities, that a ticket of leave was immediately given to him. Proceeding up the country, he took a small sheep-walk, and was getting on prosperously, when a party of bush-rangers attacked and devastated his little place. He immediately devoted himself to a contest with this predatory band—long the terror of the colony—and did not rest until he had so completely routed them, that the leaders were apprehended and executed, while the rest, one by one, came in and delivered themselves up to justice.

The result was that, for this public service, Cussen received a pardon (the only condition being that he must not return to Ireland), within two years after his arrival in the Colony. He practiced for some

time, as a surgeon, at Sydney, and having realized about five thousand pounds, proceeded to the United States. One of his first acts, after arriving in New York, was to send to Ireland for the son of John Sheehan (the man who had been shot on suspicion of Whiteboyism), now doubly orphaned by his mother's death. He adopted him, in fulfilment of his promise at the Wake, as related in the first chapter. His own wife and daughter, whom he had liberally supplied with funds from New South Wales, declined rejoining him there or in America, and were actually residing in Limerick a few years ago. Cussen eventually settled in one of the Western States, where his capital at once enabled him to purchase and cultivate a large tract of land. He has been heard of, more than once, by those who knew his identity, as a thriving and influential citizen, under a slightly changed name.

The fact that Cussen had led the attack upon Churchtown Barracks was not *positively* ascertained for several years after his departure from Ireland. In a death-bed confession, one of the party avowed it. To this day, however, very many of the people in the County of Limerick, who were well acquainted with Cussen, will not believe that he ever could have participated in such a cold-blooded massacre. They appeal, in proof of the gentleness of his nature, to the kind feelings which he exhibited during the attack on Rossmore.

It is clear, at all events, that by the conviction of Cussen, the Whiteboys lost a leader. The confederation was speedily broken up, for want of its CAPTAIN ROCK. Nor, since that time, have the disaffected in Ireland been able to obtain the assistance of any one so competent for command as was JOHN CUSSEN. His successors, from time to time, have been bold, ignorant men, at the highest not more than one degree above the peasantry whom they contrived to band together as United Irishmen, Ribbonmen, or Whiteboys. The peasantry were taught, too, that the redress of grievances is not likely to be brought about by illegal confederations—that agitation *within* the law, may virtually place them *above* the law,—and that he who commits a crime gives an advantage to the antagonist. This was the great principle which O'Connell always endeavoured to enforce. We have seen the last of the Whiteboys, and I have told the story of the undoubted CAPTAIN ROCK, the will-o'-the-wisp of Irish agrarian disturbances.

## A NIGHT WITH THE WHITEBOYS.

IN connection with the leadership of John Cussen, an incident occurred which may be related here, as a sort of appendix to his own adventures. It is only a trifle in its way, but illustrates the manner in which, even after he had quitted the country, he was regarded by his former adherents.

About twelve months after the conviction and transportation of Captain Rock, which eventually led to the breaking up of the Whiteboy organization—though, here and there, a few branch Ribbon lodges remained—I was on a visit to my uncle, the self-same owner of Rossmore, mentioned in the previous story, and father of its heroine. Rossmore House is situated within a short distance of Castletown Conyers, and, by taking a short cut across the fields, this distance might be reduced to a mile. Having spent the day at Castletown, I was returning to Rossmore by the short cut, late in the evening—too late, indeed, as I had been warned, from the chance of meeting some of the prowlers who haunted the by-roads towards the small town. I had no fear, however, and though it was after twelve o'clock, there was a beautiful full moon, which, as the old

song says, "did shine as bright as day." I had got on a narrow by-road which ran between two bogs, and was speeding home with as little delay as possible. All at once, I heard the dull heavy tramp of feet, in a measured tread, and thought that it probably was the police-patrol taking its rounds. As some of the police were quartered at my uncle's, I entertained no apprehension on account of being found out of doors at an untimely hour, as my person was known to these peace-preservers. I walked on, therefore, at my ease, loitering a little to allow myself to be overtaken, in order that I might have an escort home.

The party came up, and when I turned round to recognize and speak to them, I was considerably alarmed to find that I was in the midst of a large assemblage of rough-and-ready countrymen, wrapped up in large blue *coateens*, every man of them with a huge bludgeon in his hand. Knowing that the best plan was to put as bold a front on it as I could, I accosted them with the usual "Good evening, boys." They did not condescend to return the greeting, but gathered together in groups, conversing in Irish, which I did not understand—the acquisition of that ancient and sonorous language having been a neglected branch of my education. From their vehement action, their constant references to myself by gesture, and the repetition of my name, I perceived that they knew who I was, and were speaking about me. Under such circumstances, I thought, with Fal-

staff, that the better part of valour was discretion, and I prepared to effect my escape from such unpleasant companionship, by slipping off as quietly as I could.

The intention, however excellent, was not to be borne out in execution. Before I had taken fifty steps, I felt two or three large, rough, hairy, sinewy hands on the collar of my coat, and the cold muzzle of a pistol under my left ear, with a threat, strengthened by a tremendous oath, that, if I dared move one inch farther, the contents of the pistol should be lodged in my brain. I did not move, having a strong idea that the threat would be carried into execution,—not a remarkably pleasant anticipation for any one, far less for a lad of fourteen.

After some delay, a man, who appeared to be a kind of leader, asked me my name, and whether I was not a nephew of "the old fellow at Rossmore." I said that I was. "Then," said he, "you are the cousin of that fine young lady whose swearing was the means of our Captain being sent across the sea?" I answered that he was quite correct, and that I certainly was the lady's cousin. "Then," said he, "as we cannot lay hands on *her*, for she cut away to England when the trial was over, for fear of our just revenge, I think we must have *your* blood instead." As I had a very strong objection to suffering, vicariously, even for a woman and a cousin, I remonstrated against the design, alleging,

truly enough, that it was hard I should answer for any one's sins but my own; that the lady, as was well known, had given evidence against Captain Rock, under compulsion; and that, after he was sentenced to death, she never rested until she had obtained a remission of the sentence of death passed upon him.

What I said evidently made an impression on my audience—on such, at least, as knew English. To the rest it was duly interpreted; after which, still leaving me in charge of the hirsute giant with the great pistol, the party retired a little way to hold consultation respecting me. This I knew, because the rough gentleman, who held the pistol to my ear, grew a little communicative, telling me that they had all been to the fair of Bruree, where they had indulged pretty freely in strong liquors, and that he thought it likely, as they had made up their mind to take my life, that they were then only deliberating in what manner to carry out their intention. "It is an easy death enough," said this Job's comforter, "to be strangled by a handkerchief, squeezed round the throat to a proper tightness; it is as good a way as any other to put a man into a deep bog-hole like that on the side of the road there; but," he added, "for doing the thing genteelly, and making sure of quick work and little pain, I certainly would prefer a pistol like this, with a decent charge of can-

ister powder, and a brace of bullets or a couple of slugs at the top to make all right."

The conference by the way-side lasted so long, that I grew heart-sick with anxiety. I could see, by their unrestrained movements, that some of the party were disposed to wreak upon my person their revenge against my cousin, and that some were recommending a milder process. Presently, the decision appeared to be made—whatever it might be. The same man who had already spoken to me, came up again, and with him the rest of that precious conclave. "My lad," said he, laying his hand upon my shoulder, "Do you know what we have made up our minds to do?" I answered, that I did not know. "Some of us," said he, "think that, as you have met us to night, and may know some of us again, the best thing we could do would be to put you out of the way at once. And some of us think, that if we took your word, (though you're only a bit of a boy,) not to mention that you have seen us, we might do worse than let you go home, though that home is the nest which *she* came out of."

I fancied, from his manner, that I had not much cause to apprehend the more deadly alternative; and, therefore, I answered, as boldly as I could, that I was quite willing to give my word not to mention that I had seen any of them, nor, at any time or place, attempt to recognize them. "While you are deciding," I added, "recollect that this suspense be-

tween life and death is not the most pleasant thing in the world. And, for God's sake," said I, "rather put this hairy gentleman's brace of bullets through my head at once, than leave me shivering another half an hour in the cold." There was a laugh at what I said; those who did not speak English eagerly required it to be translated for them, and then the laugh grew louder, for *all* enjoyed it. "Faith," said the leader, "You're a bold lad to jest in that way, with the muzzle of a pistol against your ear. Make your mind easy; we would not hurt a hair of your head now. Go your way, and keep your promise. No matter when you meet any of us, don't let on that you have ever seen us before. And if you should ever fall in with bad company, in a by-way, on a night like this, just whisper '*Barry More*' into the ear of any of the party, and you may pass through them as safely as if you were walking in a drawing-room." This said, I had to shake hands, one by one, with each of the party; and they further insisted, with a pertinacity which would not brook denial, that half-a-dozen of them should escort me within a stone's throw of my uncle's house.

A few weeks after this rencontre, I saw a man at work in one of my uncle's fields, who seemed not quite a stranger to me. I took care that the recognition, if any, should come from him. Accordingly, though I made the usual remark that it was a fine day, and asked some questions as to the prospects of the crops,

I did not seem as if I had ever seen him before. However, he had less discretion, for he said, "That was a narrow escape you had, down by the bog, that night, sir." I asked what he meant? "Oh!" said he, "I do not mind talking to you about it now, for we have your word not to tell on us, and I know very well—for we have friends in every house, who tell us what passes—that not even to your uncle did you say a word about what happened that night. We tried to frighten you a bit, sir, but you stood up better than we expected. I had made up my mind, from the first, that not a hair of your head should be touched; but it was not quite so easy to get the rest of the boys to my way of thinking. They had not the cause that I had for wishing you well."

I told him, what was the plain truth, that I had no recollection of any particular cause why *he*, more than any of the rest, should have protected me. "Ah, sir," said he, "people who do a kindness forget it, if the true vein be in them, sooner than those they do the kindness to. You may remember, sir, that about ten years ago, when you were a child, the Master here was very angry with me for having neglected my work, by which the Mistress's garden was quite spoilt, and turned me off, when I had not the chance of getting work anywhere else, and owed a quarter's rent for the little cabin and potatoe garden, and was entirely broke, hand and foot,—aye, and almost heart, too. At that time, sir, you were

to the fore, with the kind word, which you ever had, to turn away the Master's anger, and you got the Mistress to interfere; and when the Master took me on to work again, it was yourself, sir, that ran down to my little cabin and told me the good news, and sat down at the table, with the children, without any pride, and eat the roasted potato and the salt, and drank the butter-milk out of the same piggin with them. From that hour, sir, if laying down the lives of me and mine would prevent injury to one hair of your head, we would have done it. And that's the reason why your life was safe the other night, and they all granted it when I told them the ins and outs of the story."

I saw little more of my champion, for I left that part of the country soon after, and have not been there since.

## VII.

## BUCK ENGLISH.

SOME eighty years ago, there appeared, in that city of Ireland which is called "the beautiful," \* a remarkable character, generally known as Buck English. This name—to which he answered—had been given him, it was said, on account of his fashionable appearance, manners and pursuits, and because his accent clearly indicated that he came from England. At all events, in the year 1770, Buck English was a principal in the fashionable society of Cork—its observed of all observers, its glass of fashion, if not its very mould of form.

Buck English had abundance of money, that great test and framer of respectability, and spent it freely. No man knew whence it came. Inquiries had been cautiously ventured upon by inquisitive people, but the only result arrived at was that rarely, if ever, did any remittance reach him through a banker. He frequently performed actions which might be called generous; but the real objects for benevolence, he used to say, were those who struggled to maintain appearances—who bore the arrow in their breast,

\* "The beautiful city called Cork."—*Irish Song*.



and did not complain—who would rather die than ask for help; for, as there is no energy like that of despair, there is no pride like that of poverty. Gratitude sometimes *would* speak out; for parties whom his timely, unsought aid had rescued from ruin, meeting him accidentally in public, could not be restrained from breathing blessings on the benefactor whose name they knew not; and the occasional occurrence of such things—which really were *not* got up for display—seemed to authorize the conjecture that Buck English was bountiful in many other instances which were not known. This belief, generally received, operated so much in his favour, that many who would have probably disdained intimacy with one whose personal history was unknown, and who, therefore, might be an adventurer, did not hesitate to receive him at their houses—a concession which others, of more unquestioned station and means, vainly endeavoured to obtain. When stamped “sterling” by the select, no fear of his readily passing into currency with all the rest.

Hence, the conclusion may be arrived at, that Buck English was what a facetious friend calls a “populous character.” He might have turned the sharp corner of five-and-thirty, and did not look older, even at his worst. Now, whatever five-and-thirty may be for a lady,—forcing on her, I fear, the brevet-rank of “a certain age,” with Byron’s interpretation,—it is the very prime of manhood. Thus,

in this respect, Buck English was as fortunate as others. There was a drawback, it must be confessed—for who can be perfection? This was the circumstance of his possessing features which, except under particular excitement, might be pronounced very ordinary. One might have excused the compressed lips, the sallow cheek, and the sharp face; but the expression of the eyes was not always favourable. It appeared as if they were almost always anxiously on the watch. At times, when strongly excited, while the cheeks remained colourless, and no word breathed from the lips, the passion which created a heart-quake in the man did not allow its presence to be seen, except that it made the eyes flash—conveying the impression that their possessor must be rather dangerous under the influence of strong and deep emotions. It was not often that such manifestations were allowed to become apparent, for Buck English had powerful self-command.

Notwithstanding the absence of what is called “good looks,” he had succeeded in gaining the favourable opinion of Mary Penrose, a young lady who had recently succeeded to a very considerable property in the vicinity of Cork. Indeed, it was somewhat more than merely her favourable opinion. I will even admit—on the understanding, of course, that it remain an inviolable secret—that Buck English had made a strong impression on the young lady’s mind; so much so, that, at the especial period

at which this narrative introduces her, she was deliberating whether she should frankly admit to him, or deny for a little time longer, that he was master of the heart which fluttered—ah, how anxiously!—within the soft citadel of her bosom.

She had met him that evening at a *rout* (so they called their fashionable parties in those days), and he had ventured to insinuate, rather more boldly than on any previous occasion, how much his happiness depended upon her. On the point of making a very gentle confession, (have you any idea how admirably blushes can convey what language dare not breathe?) a movement towards the retired part of the saloon in which they sat, apart from the dancers, startled the lady, while the exclamation, "Mary Penrose!—where *can* she be?" informed her that inquiries were being made for her. So, withdrawing her hand from that of her suitor, and making an effort to appear calm and unembarrassed, she awaited the advent of the lady who had spoken. Presently came up her *chaperon*, a woman of high birth and scanty means, who *condescended* to reside with her. This personage—a mixture of black velvet and bugles, pearl-powder and pretence—gravely regarding Buck English, whom she did not like (because she thought it probable that he might succeed with Miss Penrose, and thereby make her own occupation "gone," like Othello's), said, with a low courtesy, "I am sure, sir, that, had you known what a pleasure you have been

depriving Miss Penrose of, you would scarcely have detained her here. Mary, my dear, only think who has arrived!—who but your cousin Frank! He has been in the rooms half an hour, and has been anxiously looking for you everywhere."

Before a reply was made the cousin made his appearance, and was received rather formally by Mary. However, Frank Penrose was an Irishman and a lawyer, and therefore not very likely to be put down or taken aback by a cold reception. He was introduced to Buck English, but the greeting between the gentlemen was by no means cordial. Buck English saw a rival; one, too, whom it was said Mary Penrose's father had been desirous to have as a husband for his only child; while cousin Frank, to whom the *chaperon* had previously communicated the intimacy between the young lady and the dashing stranger, saw at a glance that it would have been quite as well, perhaps, if he had not left her so much in the way of becoming heart-stricken.

"Shall I lead you down to supper?" he said. "You know, Mary, that you and I have a hundred things to talk about."

"I am sorry, Frank," she answered, "that I cannot take the arm which you offer me gallantly. I had promised my partner, before you came, to avail myself of the advantage of his escort. Madame, I have no doubt, will be happy under your protection, and you can unburthen your mind to her."

Thus it happened that Mary Penrose retained the arm of Buck English, while Frank was handed over to the dowager.

"Confound the fellow!" said he, *sotto voce*, glancing at his rival. "On what a very familiar footing he has established himself with Mary. Can it be that she, who used to be so hard to please, is smitten with such a face?"

"Very likely," said the *chaperon*. "It was not the countenance, but the mind of Othello, that the bright Venetian was enamoured of. When the manners are agreeable and the intellect quick, the accident of a homely face speedily becomes of no importance. Perhaps it may even help to throw a woman off her guard."

"It is a pity," continued Frank, "that I have delayed my return so long. I thought that your letters had exaggerated, if not invented, the danger. Assist me in deposing this gentleman, and my gratitude shall be more than a name. I have always made so certain that Mary was to be my wife, that this over-security had led me to neglect her. At all events, I can tell you that this Mr. English shall not snatch such a prize from me without a struggle. I confess I do not like him."

"Naturally enough. He is a rival, and apparently on the way to become a successful one."

By this time they had reached the supper-table. Frank Penrose behaved with distant politeness to Buck English, who, as usual, was the centre of con-

versation. As the hour advanced, Mary said to her cousin, "Can you tell me what o'clock it is, Frank? I have been so careless as to let my watch run down."

Frank, with a smile, answered, "Two months ago I could have done so; but one of the knights of the road met me in a lonely part of Kilworth Mountain, when last I was going from Cork to Dublin, and relieved me of all care of purse or watch."

There was a smile at the cool manner in which the young lawyer related his loss, and then followed inquiry into the circumstances.

"A very commonplace highway robbery, I do assure you," said Frank. "All I have to say is, that I was encountered, as I rode on a lonely part of the road, by a gentleman who, taking me quite unprepared, put a pistol to my heart, demanding my cash and other portable property. As I had a foolish desire not to part with it quite so easily, I threw myself off my horse, and closed with my antagonist. His pistol went off in the struggle, without doing me any injury, and I drew my sword. My enemy, who proved himself a better master of that weapon than I was, succeeded in disarming me; forced me to surrender money, watch, and a few rings; mounted on my horse, and rode off, but speedily returned, with the polite assurance that as he never saw a gentleman in distress without wishing to relieve him, he trusted I would accept a

few pieces from him, as he presumed I did not intend remaining on the bleak mountain all night, and he knew, from experience, how disagreeable it was to be in a strange inn without money. He handed me five guineas, kindly adding that, if I wanted more, *his* purse—alas! it had been *mine*—was entirely at my service."

"Would you know the man again?"

"No. His face was partly covered with crape."

Supper ended, Miss Penrose and the rest of the ladies retired, escorted to their carriages by the gentlemen, who then returned (it was the evil fashion of the time) to drink their healths in a brimming bumper. One glass led to another, with the usual result—the libations were not to the Goddess of Concord. By accident, the name of Mary Penrose was mentioned, with a congratulatory allusion to the good terms on which Buck English evidently was with her. Frank Penrose started from his chair, and angrily declared that his cousin's name should not be bandied about at a public table, and in conjunction, too, with that of a person of whom no one knew anything, and who, he could assert, was not acceptable to her family. He was about speaking further, when he was pulled down by his friends, who strenuously urged him to keep silent.

Buck English remained so quiet under the intentionally offensive allusion to himself, that some of the company began to think him deficient in cour-

age. The Irish way of answering an insult, in those days, was to throw a glass full of wine in the offender's face, and follow that up by flinging the decanter at his head. After a pause, Frank Penrose, whom nobody could restrain, repeated the insult in other and harsher words. This broke up the party. As they were leaving the table, Buck English leant across, and said, very quietly, "Mr. Penrose, for the lady's sake, I would not mix up her name with a midnight brawl in a tavern, but you are aware that your words must be withdrawn or atoned for?"

"Take them as you please," said Penrose. "I stand by them."

"Then," answered the other, "I name Captain Cooper as my friend. Whom shall he meet on your part, and where?"

Pausing for a minute, during which he considered his course of action, Penrose said that in two days he expected a friend whose services he could command on such a business, and hoped the delay would not be inconvenient. His antagonist intimated his assent by a distant bow, and thus, in far less time than I have been writing about it, was appointed a meeting for life or death. The outward show of civility was maintained during the short time that they remained in the room, though feelings of deadliest enmity rankled beneath that smooth surface.

As they were retiring, Penrose and English

again were together, and the latter took advantage of this contiguity to ask at what time his friend should call upon Mr. Penrose's second?

"At ten on Thursday morning, at Daly's clubhouse."

"Very well, and for whom shall he inquire?"

"Let him ask for Mr. D'Arcy Mahon, the barrister."

At that name, English shrunk or swerved as from a blow.

"D'Arcy Mahon!" he repeated.

"Yes," said Penrose. "Have you any objection to the gentleman?"

"None."

On that they separated.

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That evening, on returning home, Mary Penrose applied herself, in the solitude of her chamber—the young heart's confessional—to serious thought upon that beleaguered and endangered Sebastopol, the state of her affections. It was evident that her cousin was piqued at the idea of her having a preference for English, and that his arrival was likely to bring the affair to an issue. Mary paused for some time in doubt as to the course she should pursue. She had a regard for her cousin Frank; but she confessed to herself, with conscious blush and sigh, that she

had other and more cherished feelings for English. It is proverbial how a woman's deliberations, in an affair of the heart, invariably end; and so, having made up her mind in favour of Buck English, by far the most delightful companion—although not quite the handsomest—fate had thrown in her way, she retired to rest.

As she was unloosing the golden beauty of her luxuriant tresses, glancing now and then at a flower given to her by *him*, and carefully put into a water-vase on her dressing-room table, Mary Penrose heard a faint tap at the window. Withdrawing the curtain, she saw, in the pale moonlight, the face of him who, even then, was occupying her thoughts. He held up a note in his hand, which he placed upon the window-sill, and disappeared as suddenly as he had come before her.

Opening the casement, she took the *billet*, and eagerly read it. In the strongest and most beseeching words, it urged her to speak with the writer for a few minutes;—hinted that this would be the last time they would ever meet;—and plainly declared that it related to an affair of life-and-death emergency. The urgency of this appeal, as well as her natural desire to see one in whom, now more than ever, she felt a deep interest, prevailed, and Mary Penrose, throwing a large shawl over her hastily-adjusted attire, quitted her chamber, silently proceeded down stairs, and opened the hall-door, at which she found

English waiting. Light of body and active of limb, he had found little difficulty in ascending to Mary's window, by means of the thick ivy which luxuriantly covered the front of the house, and his descent had been yet more easily accomplished.

When alone with Mary in one of the apartments in which she had frequently received him as a visitor, Buck English appeared overwhelmed by emotion. Quickly recovering himself, he addressed her in this manner:—"I have to thank your kindness, Miss Penrose, for thus giving me the opportunity of taking leave of you. I am a dishonoured man, or shall be, and most publicly, too, if to-morrow sees me near this place. After you had retired this evening, your cousin Frank fixed a personal quarrel upon me, which I endeavoured to avoid by acting and speaking with the greatest forbearance. I named the friend who would act for me in a matter so unpleasant, and your cousin asked for a slight delay until the arrival of the gentleman who would perform the like offices for him. The person whom he named is D'Arcy Mahon,—one of the few men in this country, under existing circumstances, who must not see me, because I have the very strongest motives for avoiding him. Our meeting was fixed for Thursday, but I have just heard of Mr. Mahon's arrival, not an hour ago, which is two days earlier than Frank expected him."

"I need not assure you," said Mary, "how very much grieved I am that there should be any differ-

ence between two persons whom I esteem so much—between yourself and Frank. But I know that Mr. Mahon is a most honourable man, and more likely to pacify than irritate any parties who are placed in his hands with hostile feelings to each other."

"There lives not the man," replied English, somewhat haughtily, "who can say that I have at any time shrunk from giving or seeking the satisfaction which, in our strangely-constituted state of society, gentlemen must sometimes require or grant. But it is impossible that I can meet D'Arcy Mahon—whose high character I appreciate and esteem—on any terms, or under any circumstances, without his instantly and fatally recognizing me as one whom he has met before, under a darker and different aspect of affairs."

"You astonish and alarm me!" said Mary. "Will you not remove the veil from this mystery?"

"Yes," said he, after some deliberation. "It is a sad confidence, but *you* are entitled to it. You have heard of a person who is generally known as Captain Spranger?"

Mary said that she certainly had heard of the terror of travellers, the head of a band of highwaymen, who had infested the South of Ireland for the previous two years.

"The same. That man, outlawed as he is, with a price upon his head, I have reason to know is the younger son of one of the first commoners in Eng-

land. Evil example and youthful impatience of control alienated him from his friends early in life, and sent him abroad upon the world, in different countries and among many grades of society, but not always in companionship with those by whom he could profit, in mind, body, or estate. At the close of many wanderings he found himself in Ireland, and accidentally became the companion or guest of a party of smugglers, who were banded together in the county of Waterford, and who, by their audacity and success, had challenged the notice of the Executive. Unfortunately, at the very period when the Englishman's love of wild adventure had thrown him into the society of these smugglers—as it had often led him to spend a night in a gipsy encampment—at that very time treachery had betrayed the band, who were surrounded by a strong military force before they knew they were in danger. To fight their way through this armed array, was what the smugglers determined on at the moment. Unwilling to remain and be captured, the chance-visitor of the night joined in the sortie, and made a dash for freedom. Some effected their escape without hurt, a few were wounded, some were captured. The Englishman was among the prisoners. The Assizes were at hand, and as it was thought fit to make an example, as it is called, the trial of the smugglers was hurried on. The evidence against the Englishman was conclusive. He was found in

armed array against the military, and in company with notorious law-breakers. What could he do? Pride made him conceal his name, he was indicted under that of Spranger (which he had never borne), was tried and convicted. When brought up to receive sentence in the assize court of Clonmel (where, for some reason, the trial took place), he thought he saw the opportunity for a bold effort. Light, active and strong, he vaulted out of the dock. The crowd instantly opened to conceal him, for there is a strong sympathy for persons accused of such breaches against the revenue law as he was believed to have committed. Even while he was crouching down in the midst of the crowd, a great-coat, such as the peasantry wear, was thrown around him by one; another bestowed upon him a cap made of fox-skin; and a third whispered him to keep quiet, as, if he did not betray himself, his disguise was sufficient to defy suspicion and detection.\*

\* Such an escape as this was actually made from the dock, during the Clonmel assizes, by the bold and notorious Buck English, who afterwards found his way into the first society in Cork city and county. Indeed, the actual life of this man was parallel in many of its leading points to that of "Paul Clifford," the hero of Bulwer's brilliant fiction. The term "Buck" was usually bestowed on any fashionable bravo, in Ireland, who wore dashing attire, and indulged in all sorts of extravagances of expenditure and excess. There was "Buck Sheehy" of Dublin, as well as our own "Buck English" of Cork. In-



"Incredible as it may appear—but I perceive that you have already heard something of this affair—Spranger remained in the court-house during the whole day, while a strict out-of-doors' search was made for him, and finally walked into the street, unchallenged, with the rest of the crowd, when the trials ended. He was literally alone, unfriended, penniless, in a strange country. The men who had supplied him, on the impulse of the moment, with the means of baffling detection, kept their eyes upon, and speedily came in his way, giving him the fur-

deed, there were sufficient of the *genus* in Dublin to form the majority of the "Hell-fire Club," who once set fire to their club-room, and remained in it until the flames actually burned the hair from their heads and the clothes from their bodies. This was done to decide the punishments of a future state! Most of the "Bucks" were men of family, education, and wealth. Several peers were members of the community. At one time (the author of "Ireland sixty years ago," relates) there were three noblemen, brothers, so notorious for their outrages, that they acquired singular names, as indicative of their characters. The first was the terror of every one who met him in public places—the second was seldom out of prison—the third was lame, yet no whit disabled from his Buckish achievements. They were universally known by the names of "Hell-gate," "Newgate," and "Cripple-gate." There were two brothers, one of whom had shot his friend, and the other stabbed his coachman. They were distinguished as "Kill-Kelly" and "Kill-coachy." This reminds one of the Irish traveller, who said he had been to *Kill-many* and was going to *Kill-more*.

ther aid of shelter and food. What need I more say than that those men, who lived against the law, succeeded in enrolling their guest among them. Recklessness and utter want, in the first instance, and the fear of being given up to the Government in the other, were his motives. Coupled with this, too, was a strong sense of injury at having been convicted, without crime, upon appearances. Not then, but many times afterwards, did he feel convinced that the Executive had brought him to trial only upon obvious and palpable facts. But, long before he came to take this view of the question, he had become leader of the band—now avowedly associated for plunder, smuggling having been broken up, and the name and the daring of Captain Spranger are sufficiently notorious throughout the country now.

"When he had completely identified himself with them, so as to obtain their unquestioning obedience, Spranger availed himself of the privilege of sometimes leaving them for a short time—continuing, however, to regulate their movements, and participate in their gains—one of them always remaining with him to act as his servant, but actually as an unsuspected channel of communication with the band. Thus this captain of men beyond the pale of the law, has resided, at different times, in the principal cities in the South of Ireland. His last resting-place was here in Cork, where, under a name



rather given to him by common consent than assumed by him, and with ample pecuniary means at his command, he contrived to be received into the best society. But he had tired, long since, of the ruffianly association which he headed. One hope remained—that of offering his sword to one of the foreign States with whom he had formerly performed military service, and thus resuming the condition to which he was born. But, while taking measures to do this, he met, and became deeply enamoured of the loveliest and most engaging of her sex, and delayed his departure—his exile—from a reluctance to quit the heaven of her smiles. Perhaps he even presumed to hope—to trust—that, under better circumstances, he might even have ventured to hope that his suit would not have failed.”

Here he paused, to mark how Mary had borne this relation. Her face was covered with her hands—but he could hear that she was sobbing. He continued:—

“You know, Mary, I perceive, that he who relates this story is the same Spranger whose name has made many a cheek pale, many a bold heart tremble. D’Arcy Mahon was one of the counsel employed against me at Clonmel, and he knows every feature of mine so well that he could not fail to recognize me. He would identify me, also, as Captain Spranger. If I remain, he meets me to-morrow. Shame, disgrace, perhaps even death would

follow. ’Tis true that circumstances have made me what I am, but there is a Future, in action, for all who are willing to atone for past misconduct. I go forth to try and regain the position I have forfeited. Not in this country, nor yet in my own, can I hope to do this. But there other lands where Reputation and Fortune may be won, and in one of them I shall make the effort. To have known *you*—to find this wasted heart capable, even yet, of appreciating the beauty and purity of your mind, will console me in my long and distant exile. Farewell!”

He bent on his knee to take and kiss that delicate hand. Did it really linger in his? He looked upon that face of beauty. Did those violet eyes smile upon him through the dew which diamonded their long, dark fringes? He heard a low, earnest whisper. Did it tell him to retrieve the past, nor doubt, while doing so, of the due reward a loving heart will bestow? Did it softly say that he, and none but he, should hold that hand in marriage? Did it entreat him to write often—always hopefully? A long, long kiss on those ripe lips, on that damasked cheek, on that fair brow, and Buck English was away, as suddenly as he had come,

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How improbable! How unfeminine! How utterly at variance with all the conventionalities of society! No doubt. But it is *true*.

As for Mary's avowed love for such a person as—even on his own showing—English was, why seek to put it to the test of every-day thought?

“Why did she love him! Curious fool, be still;  
Is human love the growth of human will?”

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The morning after the interview between Mary and her lover, considerable anxiety was caused in the minds of his acquaintance by the fact of his disappearance, and the report that he had met with some fatal accident. His horse had returned home riderless, and a hat and glove, known to have been worn by him, were found on the banks of the Lee, about two miles from Cork, a place where he was fond of riding at all hours. It was believed that he had been drowned. The authorities took possession of and examined his effects, which were never claimed. There was not one line of writing among them, giving the slightest clue to his station in life, family, or identity. In a short time, he passed out of the memory of most of those who had known him.

It was noticed that Mary Penrose appeared very much unconcerned at the loss of one for whom she was believed to have felt some partiality. She was abused, of course, by her own sex, (and the more so, as she was very handsome,) for being “a heartless

coquette.” A few months later, when she had attained her legal majority, and with it full possession of her property, she unequivocally astonished her cousin Frank, by declining his proffered hand. Ere the year was ended, her estates were in the market, and their purchase-money invested in foreign securities. This done, Mary bade a long farewell to the land of her nativity and the friends of her youth. Nor did any definite account of her subsequent life ever reach Ireland.

In the fulness of time, there came rumours (which were credited) that somebody very like Buck English had obtained rank and reputation in the German service, and that, eventually retiring to a distant province of the Empire, he had turned his sword into a ploughshare, and cultivated, with much success, a large estate which he had purchased there. It was added that a lady, whose personal description tallied with Mary Penrose's appearance, was the wife of this person; that they lived very happily with their numerous children around them; that their retainers and dependents almost adored them for their constant and considerate kindness; and that, though they ever condemned crime, they united in questioning whether he who committed it might not have been led into it by Circumstance rather than Desire.

ECCENTRIC CHARACTERS

### THE BARD O'KELLY.

FOR many years, an individual, calling himself "The Bard O'Kelly," wandered through the South of Ireland, subsisting on the exacted hospitality and the enforced contributions of such as happened to be so weak as to dread being put by him into a couplet of satirical doggerel, and thus held up to public scorn as wanting in liberality. An Irishman, be it known, will not submit to an imputation upon his generosity; rather than have *that* questioned, he will give away his last sixpence, though the gift leave him without food. O'Kelly was shrewd enough to know this, and like the ale which Boniface so much praises in Farquhar's comedy, he "fed purely upon it"—in fact, it was meat, drink, clothing and lodging to him.

Until he published his "poems," no one knew on what very slight grounds his Bardship rested. His book—a thin, ill-printed octavo, called "The Hippocrene,"—appeared, with a dedication, by permission, to "the most noble and warlike Marquis of Anglesea," and underneath the inscription is the quatrain,

"O dulce decus! thou art mine,  
 What can I more or less say?  
*Presidium!* pillar of the NINE,  
 Illustrious chief ANGLESEA!"

In order, also, that the world might know what manner of man his bardling was, he had put his portrait as a frontispiece, and, with that characteristic modesty which indicated that *he* certainly had kissed the Blarney Stone, had engraved beneath it,—

"Sweet bard! sweet lake! congenial shall your fame  
 The rays of genius and of beauty claim;  
 Nor vainly claim: for who can read and view,  
 And not confess O'KELLY's pencil true?"

The lake here alluded to, is that of Killarney. In the year 1791, O'Kelly wrote what he called "a Poem" on the romantic scenery of Killarney. It was written, but not published—recited by the bard, as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are said to have been by "the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle,"—handed about in manuscript among friends, like much of the verse of the present day, when (because every third man is an author) hard-hearted booksellers refuse to purchase valueless copyrights, or even to publish them, save at the sole expense and risk of the writers.

So, in 1791, was written, not published, the Bard's

"Killarney,"—a poem which (as *he* was wont to speak of it) "has all the depth of the lake it immortalizes, with the clearness, freshness, and sparkling flow of its waters!" It may be thought a little egotistical for O'Kelly thus to praise his own writings—but, surely, a man is the best judge of his own merit, and best acquainted with his own talents. I put it to every man of sense—that is, to every person who completely coincides with my opinion,—whether, if a man does not think and speak well of himself, it can possibly be expected that any one else will? No; O'Kelly's self-praise was only a flourish to remind people what a genius they had among them—a Laputan flap to make the Irish world quite aware of the fact of his immeasurable merit.

There was a rumour—but I hate scandal—that the Bard (being a poet, and lame to boot, like the Grecian) had an ambition to be the new Tyrtæus of the Irish Rebels, in 1798. He has been seen to smile, rather assentingly, at "the soft impeachment," although, no doubt, while the insurgents were liable to punishment, he had very *capital* reasons for denying it. While the Civil War was raging, he went to the north-east of Ireland, and, his enemies say, with rebellious designs. But his own assertion,

("And truths divine came mended from *his* lips,")

was, that the sole object of his tour was to compose a poem on the sublimities of the Giant's Causeway. Such a composition was written—for I have read it. But the greatest and best of men—from Socrates down to O'Kelly—have been subjected to suspicion and persecution, and it happened that when the Bard showed himself in the north, he was taken up by the King's forces, and summarily committed to prison on suspicion that his visit was occasioned by a desire to discover a snug landing-place, on the Antrim coast, for the French—who, at that time, were about invading Ireland.

Bad news travels very quickly. It soon was noised about Kerry, that the Bard had been taken up. As a story, like a snow-ball, increases as it travels, it was even added that the Bard had been—*hanged!*

On this, a wretch named Michael M'Carthy—a Macroom man was this Bathyllus to the Hibernian Maro—constituted himself heir-at-law and residuary legatee to the Bard's poetical effects, and, not having the fear of Apollo's vengeance before his eyes, had the barefaced audacity to publish eight hundred and forty lines of "Killarney," mixed up with certain versicles of his own, under the imposing name of "Lacus Delectabilis."

The Bard O'Kelly heard of this audacious appropriation at the very hour when his trial was coming

on, and it took such effect upon his spirits that, to use his own figurative language, he "did not know at the time, whether he was standing on his head or his heels."

Brought for trial before a military tribunal, quick in decision and sharp in execution, there was so much presumptive evidence against him, that he was convicted without much delay, (his judges were in a hurry to dine,) and sentenced to be hanged early the next day.

The emergency of the case restrung his shattered energies. Recovering the use of his tongue, he made a heart-rending appeal to the Court Martial; narrated the vile plagiarism which had been committed on his beautiful and beloved Killarney; recited a hundred lines of that sonorous composition, and concluded a very energetic harangue, by requesting "leave of absence," for a few weeks, in order that he might proceed to Kerry, there to punish M'Carthy, for his dire offence against all the recognized rules of authorship. He even tendered his own bail for his reappearance to be hanged, as soon as, by performing an act of signal justice towards the plagiarist, he had vindicated that fame which, he said, was of more value to him than life.

The manner and matter of this extraordinary address—such as never, before nor since, was spoken in a Court of Justice—were so extraordinary that the execution of the sentence was postponed. When

the Civil War was over, the Bard was liberated. "It was a great triumph for my eloquence," was his usual self-complacent expression, in after life, when speaking of this hair-breadth escape. To this day, however, there are some who hint that the Court considered him *non compos mentis*—too much of a fool to be a traitor and conspirator—and were merciful accordingly.

When O'Kelly returned home, he did not annihilate M'Carthy in the body—he did so in spirit: he lampooned him. Finally, the plagiarist made a public apology; and an armistice was effected by the aid of copious libations of the "mountain-dew," the favourite Hippocrene of Irishmen.

The Bard's trip to the Giant's Causeway gave him a wonderful inclination for travelling. As itinerary rhyme-spinner, he continued to keep body and soul together ever since, in a manner which nothing but the brilliant invention of a verse-making Milesian could have dreamed of. Under the face of the sun no people so keenly appreciate, and so undeniably dread, satire as the Irish do. Few, it may be added, have greater powers in that line—and this without being imbued with less good-nature or more malice than other people. They particularly shrink from any imputation on their open-handed and open-hearted hospitality. The Bard O'Kelly knew that this sensitive feeling was the blot which he was to hit. And on the results of this knowledge, he con-

trived to live well—to obtain raiment, money, lodging, food, and drink, during the vicissitudes of about forty years.

He committed himself to a pilgrimage from place to place, through Ireland, always fixing his headquarters at the residence of some country gentleman. Here he would abide for a week—a fortnight—or even a month, if he liked his quarters, and thought his intrusion would be tolerated so long. During his stay, his two horses, his son (for, being Irish, he had got married very soon), and himself, always lived "in clover." His valedictory acknowledgment, by which he considered that he repaid the hospitality extended to him, was a laudatory couplet! If there were, or if there seemed to be, the slightest want of cordiality in his reception or entertainment, he would immediately depart, giving the delinquent to immortal infamy in a stinging couplet. When he had written a few score of these rhymes he used to get them printed (ballad-wise) on octavo slips of whity-brown paper, and each new page was added to its predecessor, by being pasted into a sort of scrap-book. This collection he called his "Poetic Tour," and he had only a single copy of it; and to this, which he promised to have printed in a regular book, at some future period, every one who entertained him was expected to subscribe from a crown to a guinea—*subscriptions payable in advance*. To this rule he had permitted only one exception. This was

early in the present century, when the Chevalier Ruspini, (a tooth and corn extractor,) who travelled in Ireland as "Dentist to the Prince of Wales," subscribed, in the name of his Royal master, for fifty copies of the work; and, on the strength of this, managed to dine, on three several occasions, with O'Kelly—being the only instance on record of his Bardship having ever played the host.

I knew O'Kelly personally, when I was a lad, having met him, for the first time, at Drewscourt, in the county of Limerick, whither he came, purposely, to remain one day *en passant*, but did us the honour of staying for a fortnight. He made his first appearance at dinner-time, and his knife and fork were wielded as effectively as if he had not used them during the preceding month. Until I saw O'Kelly feed, I had never realized the description of Major Dalgetty's laying in "provend" not only to make good the dinner he should have eaten yesterday, but to provide for the wants of to-day and to-morrow. In the course of the evening he exhibited other manifestations of industry and genius. He complained of labouring under a cold, which he undertook to cure by a peculiar process. This was no less than by imbibing about a dozen tumblers of hot and strong whiskey-punch, without moving from his seat. This, he assured us, was "a famous remedy for all distempers; good," added he, "for a cure, and magnificent as a preventive." He condescended

to inform us that, well or sick, this quantity was his regular allowance after dinner—when he could get it.

He was loquacious in his cups. The subject of the Royal visit to Ireland, in 1821, having been broached, O'Kelly produced a printed account of his own interview with the monarch. This, he told us, had appeared in a newspaper called the Roscommon Gazette, and it was not difficult to guess at whose instance it had gained publicity. The account which he read for us was rather an improved edition, he said, as his friend, the Roscommon editor, had ruthlessly cut out some of the adjectives and superlatives. What he read was to this effect, accompanied with his own running commentary of explanation and remark:—

"‘THE BARD O'KELLY AND THE KING.’"

"You see, gentlemen, that I put myself first. Genius (he pronounced it *janius*) before greatness any day!

"When his Most Gracious Majesty King George the Fourth—whom God and Saint Patrick preserve!—paid his loving subjects a visit in August, 1821, the most eminent men of Ireland resorted to the metropolis to do him honour. Among them, was our distinguished and illustrious countryman, the Bard O'Kelly. Without *his* presence, where would have been the crowning rose of the wreath of Erin's glory? And it is very creditable



to His Majesty's taste, that his very first inquiry, on entering the Vice-regal lodge, in Phoenix Park, was after that honour to our country, our renowned Bard, to whose beautiful productions he had subscribed, for fifty copies, many years ago.

"Yes, gentlemen, he knew all about me. As he had inquired for *me*, I thought I could not do less, in course of common civility, than indulge *him* with the pleasure of a visit. But you shall hear:—

"When the Bard reached Dublin, and heard of His Majesty's most kind and friendly inquiries, he sent a most polite autograph note, written with his own hand, to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, announcing his own arrival, wishing His Majesty joy on *his*, and requesting Sir Benjamin to appoint a day, mutually convenient to the many important engagements of the Poet and the Monarch, when an interview between these distinguished personages should take place. With that true politeness and chivalrous courtesy which adorn and distinguish the Bard, he notified that, the King being a stranger, the Bard was willing to waive ceremony, and wait upon him, to present a copy of his highly poetical poems, for fifty copies of which the Chevalier Ruspini had subscribed, on behalf of His Majesty, when Prince of Wales.

"Indeed, they were to have been dedicated to him, but, as yet, I have not had but the one copy, which I have made up from the slips which have been separately printed, from time to time. Kind gentlemen, reading always makes me drouthy;—may-be, one of ye will mix a tumbler for me?—not too strong of the water;—christen the spirit, but don't drown it. Ah, that will do! What a flavor it has!

"An answer was immediately sent by three servants in royal livery, requesting, if perfectly agreeable to O'Kelly, that he would do His Majesty the favour of a friendly visit, the next day at four o'clock.

"So I sent word to say that I'd be with him punctual. The next day I dressed myself very neat, put on my other shirt, gave my coat a brushing (a thing I don't often do, as it takes the nap off the cloth), brightened the brass buttons with a bit of chamois leather, went over the seams with a little vinegar and ink, polished my boots, so that you'd see your likeness in them like a looking-glass, had myself elegantly shaved, and to the King I went. But you shall hear:

"To this proposition the Bard politely assented, and went to the Castle of Dublin, at the appointed hour, the next day. There he sent his card to the King, with his compliments; and Sir Benjamin Bloomfield immediately came down the Grand Staircase, and, with a most gracious message from His Majesty, handed him a fifty-pound bank-note, as the royal subscription to his admirable poems.

"I won't deny that the sight and touch of the money were mighty pleasant; but I said nothing. It was a larger sum than ever I had at any one time before, for *my* riches have always been of the head, rather than of the purse. I put the bank-note into my waistcoat-pocket, fastened it safely there with a

pin I took out of my cuff, and then—mind, not until *then*—I told Sir Benjamin——But I'll read it:

"O'Kelly (with that noble disregard for lucre which always distinguished our eminently patriotic, poetic, high-minded, much accomplished, and generous-hearted countryman) immediately told Sir Benjamin, that he would rather relinquish the money than abandon the anticipated pleasure of a personal interview with his Sovereign.

"Mind—I had the fifty pounds snug in my pocket all the while. You may be certain that I wouldn't have spoken that way *before* fingering the cash.

"On this most disinterested and loyal determination having been mentioned to His Majesty, he was so delighted with it, that he desired the Bard to be ushered instantly into the Grand Hall of Audience. This was done, and there the Most Noble the Marquis of Conyngham had the honour of introducing His Majesty to the Poet.

"Wasn't it a grand sight! There was the King on his throne, and all the great officers of State standing around him. In one hand the King held a sceptre of pure gold, and the other was stretched out to receive my book. On his head he wore a crown of gold, studded all over with jewels, and weighing half a hundred weight, at the very least. On his breast, in the place where a diamond star is usually represented in the portraits, His Majesty wore a bunch of shamrock, the size of a cauliflower. Now you'll hear what occurred:—

"Compliments being exchanged, the King descended from his throne, and had the pleasure of introducing the Marchioness of Conyngham, and all the other Ladies of the Bedchamber, to the Bard. His Majesty, then—returning to his throne, and insisting that the Bard should occupy an arm-chair by his right side—said, "Mr. O'Kelly"——"O'KELLY, without the *Mister*, if you please," said the Bard, "Your Majesty would not say Mr. Shakspeare or Mr. Milton." "True enough," said the King, "I sit corrected: I beg your pardon, O'Kelly. I should have known better. Well, then, O'Kelly, I am quite sure that I shall be delighted with your beautiful poems, when I've time to read them." To this the Bard replied, "Your Majesty never spoke a truer word. I believe they'd delight and instruct any one. At this intelligent, and most correct observation, his Majesty was pleased to smile. He then added, "I'm sorry to see, by your iron leg, that you are lame." O'Kelly, with that ready wit for which he is as remarkable as he is for his modesty, instantly replied, "If I halt in my leg, I don't in my verses, for

"If God one member has oppressed,  
He's made more perfect all the rest."

It is impossible for words to describe the thunders of applause by which this beautiful extempore impromptu was followed.

"I knew, well enough, that something smart would be expected from a man like me; so I went prepared with several impromptus, to be introduced when the occasion would allow.

"His Majesty then said, "It is really remarkable that you, and my friend Walter Scott, should both be lame." The Bard replied, "And Lord Byron also." His Majesty then observed, "It is a wonderful coincidence—the three great poets of the three kingdoms." At the request of the Marquis of Conyngh-

ham, the Bard then made the following extemporaneous epigram on the spot, off hand, on this interesting subject :

'Three poets for three sister kingdoms born,

"That's England, Ireland, and Scotland:—

'One for the rose, another for the thorn,

"You know that the rose and thistle are the national emblems of England and Scotland :

'One for the shamrock,

"That's poor old Ireland,—

'which shall ne'er decay,

While rose and thorn must yearly die away.'

"His Majesty was quite electrified at the ready wit displayed in this beautiful impromptu, and took leave of the Bard in the most affectionate and gracious manner. It is whispered among the fashionable circles, that O'Kelly has declined the offer of a Baronetcy, made to him by command of the Sovereign.'

"Indeed," said the Bard, in conclusion, "the King and me were mutually pleased with each other. I'd have had myself made a Baronet, like Scott, but I have not the dirty acres to keep up the dignity. 'Tis my private notion, if the King had seen me first, I'd have had ten times the money he sent me. Well, he's every inch a King, and here's his health."

You may judge, from what he printed and what he spoke, whether the modesty of the Bard was not equal to his genius. It is a fact, I understand, that

he actually made his way to an audience with George the Fourth; he must have rather astonished his Majesty. In his later years the Bard fluctuated between Cork and Limerick (in the last-named city of "beautiful lasses," he had a daughter very well married),\* and, wherever he might be, was open to algebraic donations of strong drink—that is, "any given quantity."

Such a fungus as the Bard O'Kelly could only have been produced in and tolerated by a very peculiar state of society. Out of Ireland he would have starved—unless he followed a different vocation. He was partly laughed at, partly feared. Satire was his weapon. His manners, attire, and conversation, would scarcely be endured now in the servants' hall; yet, even as lately as twenty years ago, he forced his way into the company of respectable people—aye, and got not only hospitality from them, but *douceurs* of wearing apparel and money. One comfort is, such a person would have little chance in Ireland now.

The Bard O'Kelly died about fifteen years ago, having lived in clover for more than forty years, by

\* The saying in Ireland, when the locality of good-looking people is to be indicated, is—"Cork lads and Limerick lasses." In Lancashire, there is something like this in the familiar manner in which the natives speak of "Wigan chaps, Bolton fellows, Manchester men, and Liverpool gentlemen."

appealing to the vanity or the fears of those whom he made his tributaries. Until he published, in 1831, the world took it for granted, that even as *he* said, he had some poetic talent. The list of subscribers to his volume had between seven and eight hundred names, including ladies, peers of the realm, and members of Parliament. The "Bard's" want of ability was companioned by want of principle—for two, at least, of the poems which he published as his own, were written by others. One, commencing, "My life is like the summer rose," is the composition of R. H. Wilde, a distinguished American man of letters; and another, beginning "On beds of snow the moonbeams slept," has been conveyed from the early poems of a writer named—Thomas Moore. There is cool intrepidity in pilfering from a poet so universally known as Moore. When Scott visited Ireland, he was waited on by O'Kelly with the same "extempore impromptu" he had inflicted on George IV., years before, and (Lockhart relates) compelled the Ariosto of the North to pay the usual tribute—by subscribing to his poems.

There are scores of Irishmen now in New York, who were personally acquainted with O'Kelly, and can testify to the accuracy—I might even say the moderation, of my description of him.

## FATHER PROUT.

THOSE who have perused that polyglot of wisdom and wit, learning and fun, wild eccentricity and plain sense, 'yclept "THE PROUT PAPERS," which originally appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, during the editorship of Dr. Maginn, may feel some curiosity respecting the individual whose name has thus been preserved (not unlike the fly in amber) through all literary time. They would naturally think, after admiring the rare facility of versification, the playfulness, the fancy, the wit, the impetuous frolic, the deep erudition which distinguishes the said "Papers," that Father Prout must have been a wonderful man, gifted in an extraordinary manner.

What is there in the language more spirited than the Prout translations from Béranger? As was said of Goethe's Faust, translated by Anster, the fact was *transfused* into our vernacular. What wondrous flexibility is given to the old Latin tongue, by the versions of Moore into that language! What charming mastery of learning, as exhibited in the translations of "The Groves of Blarney" into a variety of tongues! What grave humour in treating that original song as if it were only a translation!

Two wits—who not only belonged to Cork, but had seen a great many *drawings* of it in their time—were the perpetrators of this literary mystification. Frank Mahony and Frank Murphy—a priest and a lawyer. On their own hook, to use a common phrase, they have done nothing worth particular mention; but some plants, we know, produce flowers, while others yield fruit.

For a long time, in England, the full credit of the Fraserian articles was given to Father Prout. Then set in a spring-tide of disbelief, and the very existence of such a man was doubted. Erroneous doubt! for I have seen him—spoken to him—dined with him. The Father Prout, however, of real life was very different from him of the Prout Papers. He was parish-priest of Watergrass-hill, midway between the city of Cork and the town of Fermoy—a locality known as the highest arable land in Ireland. Prout was one of the old priests who, when it was penal for a Catholic clergyman to exist in Ireland, picked up the elements of his education how he could, completed it at a foreign university, and came back to Ireland, a priest, to administer the consolations of religion to the peasantry of his native land. Sometimes, the Catholic priest evidenced to the last, in conduct and manners, that his youth had been passed in countries in which social civilization had extended further than in Ireland. Sometimes, the learning and the polish which had been acquired

abroad were forgotten at home—as the sword loses its brightness from disuse—and, living much among the peasantry, the priest lost a part of the finer courtesy of the gentleman, and assumed the roughness of the bulk of his parishioners. Wherever there was a resident Protestant landowner, the Priest of the olden time instinctively formed friendly relations with him—for, at that time, the priestly order was not invariably supplied from the peasantry, and tolerance was more declared and practiced by members of all persuasions, in Ireland, at that time than it is now. Prout was literally a “round, fat, oily man of God.” He had a hand small as a woman’s, and was very proud of it. He had an unconquerable spirit of good-humour, and it was utterly impossible for any one to be in his company for ten minutes without feeling and basking in the sunshine of his buoyant and genial good-nature. Of learning he had very little. I do not know what his share might have been half a century before, when he was fresh from Douay or the Sorbonne, but few traces were left in his latter years. In the society of his equals or his superiors, Prout could keep up the shuttlecock of conversation as well as any one, and in the fashion of the place and class, but he was equally at home amid the festivities of a country wedding, or the genialities of the hospitable entertainment which followed the holding of a country Station at a rich farmer’s domicile.

What the world has received as "The Reliques of Father Prout," owes nothing to the little *padrone*. He had a strong sense of the humorous, and, when the fancy seized him, was not very particular how or where he indulged it.

Prout, residing only nine miles from Cork, frequently visited that city, where he had a great many acquaintances, at all times glad to see him. In one Protestant family with which he was intimate, there were several very handsome daughters, full of life and high spirits, who especially delighted in drawing out the rotund priest. He had repeatedly urged them to "drop in" upon him, some day; and when the spirit of fun was strong, early on a Sunday morning in June, they ordered out the carriage, and directed their Jehu to drive them to Watergrass-hill.

Now, though that terminus was only nine (Irish\*) miles distant, the greater part of the way—certainly all from Glanmire—was terribly up-hill. The result was that, instead of reaching Father Prout's about ten o'clock, as they had anticipated, they did not draw up at his door until an hour and a half later, and were there informed that "his Reverence had

\* Irish miles are longer than English, in the proportion of 11 to 14. A traveller complained to the chaise-driver of the narrowness of the way. "Oh, then," said the man, "why need you be angry with the roads? Sure, we make up in the length for the scanty measure we get in the width."

just gone off to last mass." They determined to follow him, partly from curiosity to see in what manner divine worship was performed in a Catholic chapel.

The chapel in which Father Prout officiated was by no means a building of pretension. At that time the roof was out of repair, and, in wet weather, acted as a gigantic shower-bath. The floor, then, consisted of beaten earth, which was somewhat of a puddle whenever the rains descended and the winds blew. The Cork ladies soon found the chapel, entered it, and (accustomed to the rich churches of their own persuasion) gazed in wonder on the humble, unadorned place of worship in which they stood. It may literally be said "in which they stood," for there were no pews, no chairs, not even a solitary stool.

Presently the chapel began to fill, and "the pressure from without" gradually drove the ladies nearer and yet nearer to the altar. At length Father Prout entered in his clerical attire, and commenced the service. In Catholic churches the priest officiates, during the early part of the service, with his face to the altar, and his back to the congregation. Thus, it happened that Prout never saw his Cork friends until the time when he turned round to the congregation. Then he beheld them, handsomely and fashionably attired, standing up (for the floor was too puddled to allow them to soil their

vesture by kneeling, as every one else did), the gazed at by all beholders, looking and feeling the reverse of comfortable.

Father Prout immediately looked at his clerk, Pat Murphy,—an original in his way,—caught his eye and his attention, and gently inclining towards him, whispered, “send for three chairs for the ladies.” Pat, who was a little deaf, imperfectly caught his master’s words, and turned round to the congregation and roared out, “Boys! his Reverence says, ‘Three cheers for the ladies.’” The congregation, obedient and gallant, gave three tremendous shouts, to the surprise of the ladies and the horror of the priest. There was a good deal of merriment when the mistake was explained, but to his dying day Father Prout was reminded, whenever he visited Cork, of the “Three cheers for the ladies.”

Pat Murphy, his clerk, was quite a character. He affected big words, and was mortally offended whenever any one called him *clerk* or *sexton*. “I pity the weakness of your intellectual organization,” he would contemptuously exclaim. “If you had only brains enough to distinguish B from a bull’s foot, you would appreciate my peculiar and appropriate official designation. The words ‘clerk’ and ‘sexton’ are appellations which distinctify the menial avocations of persons employed in heretical places of worship. My situation is that of Sacristan, and my responsible duty is to act as cus-

todian of the sacred utensils and vestments of the chapel.”

Murphy had an exaggerated idea of the abilities of his principal, and stoutly maintained that if the Pope knew what was good for the Church, he would long since have elevated Father Prout to the episcopal dignity. His chief regret, when dying, was, that he did not survive to see *this* consummation.

Sometimes Pat Murphy would condescend to enter into a *vivâ voce* controversy with one of the “heretics,” (as he invariably designated the Protestants,) on the comparative merits of the rival churches. His invariable wind-up, delivered gravely and authoritatively, as a clincher, to which he would permit no reply, was as follows:—“I commiserate your condition, which is the result of your miserable ignorance. Unfortunate individual! out of the New Testament itself I can prove that your religion is but a thing of yesterday. With you Protestants the Apostle Paul had not the most distant acquaintance, whereas he corresponded with us of the Holy Roman Church. You doubt it? Know you not that, from Corinth, he wrote an Epistle to the *Romans*, and if the Protestants were in existence then, and known to him, why did he not as well send an Epistle unto *them*?”

Father Prout was short and rotund. His Sacristan was tall and thin. Immemorial usage permits the clerical cast-off garments to descend, like heir-



looms, to the parish clerk. Pat Murphy, in the threadbare garments which erst had clothed the rotundity of Father Prout, was a ludicrous looking object. The doctrine of compensation used to be carried out, on such occasions, with more truth than beauty. The waist of the priest's coat would find itself under Murphy's arms, the wristbands would barely cover his elbows, and the pantaloons, sharing the fate of the other garments, would end at his knees, leaving a wide interval of calf visible to public gaze. On the other hand, by way of equivalent, the garments would voluminously wrap around him, in folds, as if they were intended to envelope not one Pat Murphy, but three such examples of the mathematical definition, "length without breadth." On one occasion I had the double satisfaction of seeing Father Prout, like Solomon, in all his glory, with Pat Murphy in full costume. It happened in this wise:

There was pretty good shooting about Watergrass-hill, and the officers of an infantry regiment, who were quartered at Fermoy, at the period to which I refer, had made Prout's acquaintance, while peppering away at the birds, and had partaken of a capital impromptu luncheon which he got up on the moment. Prout, it may be added, was in the habit of receiving presents of game, fish and poultry from his friends in Cork, (the mail-coaches and other public conveyances passing his door several times every day,) and as long as Dan Meagher, of Patrick-street, was in the

wine-trade, be sure that his friend, Father Prout, did not want good samples of the generous juice of the grape. Of course, he also had a supply of real *potheen*. Cellar and larder thus provided for, Prout was fond of playing the host.

A great intimacy speedily sprung up between Prout and his military friends, and he partook of numerous dinners at their mess in Fermoy Barracks. At last, determined to return the compliment, he invited them all to dine with him at Watergrass-hill. One of my own cousins, who happened to be one of the guests, took me with him—on the Roman plan, I presume, which permitted an invited guest to bring *his shade*. I was a youngster at the time, but remember the affair as if it were of yesterday.

If there was any anticipation of a spoiled dinner, it was vain. Prout, who was on intimate terms with all his neighbours for half a dozen miles round, had been wise enough to invoke the aid of the Protestant rector of Watergrass-hill, who not only lent him plate, china, and all other table necessaries, but—what was of more importance—also spared him the excellent cook who, it was said, could compose a dinner, in full variety, out of any one article of food. Each of the officers was attended at table by his own servant, and Pat Murphy, in full dress, officiated as servitor, at the particular disposal of Father Prout himself.

The dinner was excellent,—well-cooked, well-



served, and worthy of praise for the abundance, variety, and excellence of the viands. There was everything to be pleased with—nothing to smile at.

I beg to withdraw the last four words. There was Pat Murphy, in an ex-suit of Prout's, looking such a figure of fun, that, on recalling the scene now, I wonder how, one and all, we did not burst into a shout of laughter when he first was presented to view. He looked taller, and scaggier, and leaner than usual—his clothes appearing greater misfits than ever! Prout, who kept his countenance remarkably well, evidently saw and enjoyed the ludicrous appearance of his man. On the other hand, the man, taking on himself the duties of Major Domo, ordered the other attendants about in all directions, muttering curses between his teeth whenever they did not do exactly as he commanded. But everything went off gaily, and Prout's rubicund face became redder and more radiant under the influence of this success.

In the course of the entertainment, Father Prout, addressing his attendant, said, "Pat, a glass of porter, if you please." The liquor was poured, and, as it frothed in the glass, Prout raised it to his lips with the words, "Thank you, Pat." Waiting until he had completed the draught, Pat, in a tone of earnest remonstrance, said, "Ah, then, your Reverence, why should *you* thank me for what's your own? It would be decent for these genteels who are dining here, to thank me for the good drink,

but you've no right to do anything of the sort, seeing that the liquor is your own. It is my supplication that you will not do so again; there is an incongruity in it which I disrelish." We had some difficulty in not laughing, but contrived to keep serious faces during this colloquy.

The liberality of the little Padre had provided us with three courses, and just as Pat Murphy was in the act of relieving a noble roasted haunch of mutton, before his master, by a dish of snipe, he happened to look out of the window and see one of his own familiar associates passing along the street. Hastily flinging down the dish, he threw up the window, and, kneeling down, with his long arms resting on the sill, loudly hailed his friend, "Where are ye going, Tom?" The answer was that a dance was expected in the neighbourhood, and at which, of course, Pat would be "to the fore." Now, the said Pat, very much like Ichabod Crane in figure, had a sort of sneaking desire, like him, to be wherever pretty women were to be seen. "No," said Pat, "I do not anticipate to be relieved in any thing like proper time from attendance here this evening. His Reverence, who has been ating and drinking, with remarkable avidity, on the military officers down in Fermoy, is hospitable to-day, and entertains the whole squad of them at dinner. To see them *ate*, you'd think they had just got out of a hard Lent. 'Tisn't often, I dare say, that they get such a feast.

There's the mutton sent by Chetwood of Glanmire; and the poultry by Cooper Penrose of Wood-hill; and the lashings of game by Devonshire of Kilshan-neck; and the fruit by Lord Riversdale of Lisnegar—that is, by his steward, for 'tis little his Lordship sees of the place that gives him a good six thousand a year;—and the barrel of porter from Tommy Walker of Fermoy; and the wine from red-faced Dan Meagher of Cork; and everything of the best. Depend on it, the officers won't stir until they have made fools of all the provender. By-and-bye, that the poor mightn't have a chance of the leavings, they will be calling for grilled bones, and devilled legs and gizzards. No, Tom, my mind misgives me that I can't go to the dance this evening. Here's the officers, bad 'cess to them, that are sedentary fixtures until midnight."

This oration delivered,—and every one had been silent while Pat Murphy was thus unburthening his mind,—he arose from his knees, closed the window, and resumed his place behind Father Prout, with "a countenance more of sorrow than of anger," calm and unconcerned as if nothing had occurred out of the ordinary routine. At that moment, Prout threw himself back on his chair, and laughed until the tears rolled down his cheeks, and thus encouraged, the company followed his example, and laughed also. When the mirth had subsided, it was almost renewed by the solemn countenance of Pat Murphy,

grave rather than severe—a sort of domestic Marius sitting, in sad contemplation, amid the ruins of Carthage.

Father Prout had rather a rough set of parishioners to deal with. He could be, and was, very much of the gentleman, but it pleased him to appear plain and unpolished to those among whom his lot was cast. At times, when nothing else would do, he would address them, in an exhortation, very much in the spirit of Swift's "if you like the conditions, down with the dust!" At such times, Rabelais, "in his easy chair," would have smiled, and Swift himself would have hailed Prout as a congenial spirit.

I have a memorandum of one of these sermons. The object was to collect some arrears of "dues" from certain non-paying parishioners, (constituting rather a large portion of his congregation,) and I have been told that the discourse was much to this effect:

#### FATHER PROUT'S SERMON.

Somewhere in the Scriptures it is written, that whoever gives to the poor lends to the Lord. There are three reasons why I don't tell you exactly where this may be found. In the first place, poor creatures that you are, few of you happen to have the authorized Douay edition, printed and published by Richard Coyne of Dublin, and certified as correct by Archbishop Troy, and the other heads of the Church in

Ireland—few among you, I say, have *that*, though I know that there is not a house in the parish without a loose song-book, or the History of the Irish Rogues. In the second place, if ye had it, 'tis few of ye could read it, ignorant haythens that ye are. And in the third place, if every man-jack of ye did possess it, and could read it, (for the Church still admits the possibility of miracles,) it would not much matter at this present moment, because it happens that I don't quite remember in what part of it the text is to be found;—for the wickedness of my flock has affected my memory, and driven many things clean out of my head, which it took me a deal of trouble to put into it when I was studying in foreign parts, years ago. But it don't matter. The fault is not mine, but yours, ye unnatural crew, and may-be ye won't find it out, to your cost, before ye have been five minutes quit of this life. Amen.

“He who gives to the poor.”—Ye are not skilled in logic, nor indeed in anything that I know except playing hurley in the fields, scheming at cards in public-houses for half gallons of porter, and defrauding your clergy of their lawful dues. What is worse, there's no use in trying to drive logic into your heads, for indeed that would be the fulfilment of another text that speaks of throwing pearls before pigs. But if ye *did* know logic—which ye don't—ye would perceive at once that the passage I have just quoted naturally divides itself into two branches.

The first involves the *giving*; that is, rationally and syllogistically considered, what ye ought to do. And the second involves the *poor*; that is, the receivers of the gifts, or the persons for whom ye ought to do it.

First, then, as to the giving. Now it stands to reason that, as the Scripture says in some other place, the blind can't lead the blind, because may-be they'd fall into the bog-holes, poor things, and get drowned. And so, though there really is wonderful kindness to each other among them, it is not to be expected that the poor can give to the poor. No, the givers must be people who have something to give, which the poor have not. Some of ye will try and get off on this head, and say that 'tis gladly enough ye'd give, but that really ye can't afford it. Can't ye? If you make up your minds, any one of you, to give up only a single glass of spirits, every day of your lives, see what it will come to in the course of a year, and devote *that* to the Church—that is to the Clergy—and it will be more than some of the well-to-do farmers, whom I have in my eye at this blessed moment, have had the heart to give me during the last twelve months. Why, as little as a penny a day comes to more than thirty shillings in the year, and even that insignificant trifle I have not had from some of you that have the means and ought to know better. I don't want to mention names, but, Tom Murphy of the Glen, I

am afraid I shall be compelled to name you before the whole congregation, some day before long, if you don't pay up your lawful dues. I won't say more now on that subject, for, as St. Augustine says, "A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse."

Now, the moral of the first part being clearly shown, that all who *can* give *ought* to give, the next branch is *to whom* should it be given? The blessed text essentially states and declares "to the poor." Then follows the inquiry, who's "the poor." The whole matter depends on *that*.

I dare say, ignorant as ye are, some of you will think that it's the beggars, and the cripples, and the blind travellers who contrive to get through the length and breadth of the country, guided by Providence and a little dog tied to their fingers by a bit of string. No, I don't want to say one mortal word against that sort of cattle, or injure them in their honest calling. God help them. It's their trade, their estate, their occupation, their business to beg—just as much as 'tis Pat Mulcahy's business to tailor, or Jerry Smith's to make carts, or Tom Shine's to shoe horses, or Din Cotter's to make potheen, and my business to preach sermons, and save your souls, ye heathens. But these ain't "the poor" meant in the text. They're used to begging, and they like to beg, and they thrive on begging, and I, for one, wouldn't be the man to disturb them in the practice of their profession, and long may it

be a provision to them and to their heirs for ever. Amen.

May-be, ye mean-spirited creatures, some among you will say that it's yourselves is "the poor." Indeed, then, it isn't. Poor enough and niggardly ye are, but you ain't the poor contemplated by holy Moses in the text. Sure 'tis your nature to toil and to slave—sure 'tis what ye're used to. Therefore, if any one were to give anything to *you*, he would not be lending to the Lord in the slightest degree, but throwing away his money as completely as if he lent it upon the security of the land that's covered by the lakes of Killarney. Don't flatter yourselves, any of you, for a moment, that you are "the poor." I can tell you that you're nothing of the sort.

Now, then, we have found out who should be the givers. There's no mistake about *that*—reason and logic unite in declaring that every one of you, man, woman and child—should give, and strain a point to do it liberally. Next, we have ascertained that it's "the poor" who should receive what you give. Thirdly, we have determined who are *not* "the poor." Lastly, we must discover who *are*.

Let each of you put on his considering cap and think.—Well, I have paused that you might do so. Din Cotter is a knowledgeable man compared with the bulk of you. I wonder whether he has discovered who *are* "the poor." He shakes his head—but there is not much in *that*. Well, then, you give it

up. You leave it to me to enlighten you all. Learn, then, to your shame, that it's the Clergy who are "the poor."

Ah! you perceive it now, do you? The light comes in through your thick heads, does it? Yes, it's I and my brethren is "the poor." We get our bread—coarse enough and dry enough it usually is—by filling you with spiritual food, and, judging by the congregation now before me, its ugly mouths you have to receive it. We toil not, neither do we spin, but if Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed better than we are, instead of being clothed in vermin and fine linen, 'tis many a time he'd be wearing a thread-bare black coat, white on the seams, and out at the elbows. It's the opinion of the most learned scholars and Doctors in Divinity, as laid down before the Council of Trent, that the translation is not sufficiently exact in regard of this text. And they recommend that for the words "the poor," we should substitute "the clergy." Thus corrected, then, the text would read "he who gives to the Clergy, lends to the Lord," which, no doubt, is the proper and undiluted Scripture.

The words of the text are thus settled, and you have heard my explanation of it all. Now for the application. Last Thursday was a week since the fair of Bartlemy, and I went down there to buy a horse, for this is a large parish, and mortification and fretting has puffed me up so, that, God help

me, 'tis little able I am to walk about to answer all the sick calls, to say nothing of stations, weddings, and christenings. Well, I bought the horse, and it cost me more than I expected, so that there I stood without a copper in my pocket after I had paid the dealer. It rained cats and dogs, and as I am so poor that I can't afford to buy a great coat, I got wet to the skin, in less than no time. There you were, scores of you, in the public houses, with the windows up, that all the world might see you eating and drinking as if it was for a wager. And there was not one of you who had the grace to ask, "Father Prout, have you got a mouth in your face?" And there I might have stood in the rain until this blessed hour (that is, supposing it had continued raining until now), if I had not been picked up by Mr. 'Mun Roche, of Kildinan, an honest gentleman, and a hospitable man I must say, though he is a Protestant.\* He took me home with him, and there, to your eternal disgrace, you villains, I got as full as a tick, and 'Mun had to send me home in his own carriage—which is an everlasting shame to all of you, who belong to the true Church.

Now, I ask which has carried out the text? You who did not give me even a poor tumbler of punch, when I was like a drowned rat at Bartlemy, or 'Mun Roche, who took me home, and filled me with the

\* Created Lord Fermoy in 1855.

best of eating and drinking, and sent me to my own house, after that, in his own elegant carriage? Who best fulfilled the Scripture? Who lent to the Lord, by giving to his poor Clergy? Remember, a time will come when I must give a true account of you:—what can I say then? Won't I have to hang down my head in shame, on your account? 'Pon my conscience, it would not much surprise me, unless you greatly mend your ways, if 'Mun Roche and you won't have to change places on that occasion: *he* to sit alongside of me, as a friend who had treated the poor Clergy well in this world, and *you* in a certain place, which I won't particularly mention now, except to hint that 'tis little frost or cold you'll have in it, but quite the contrary. However, 'tis never too late to mend, and I hope that by this day week, it's quite another story I'll have to tell of you all.—Amen.

### IRISH DANCING-MASTERS.

FIVE-and-twenty years ago, when I left Ireland, the original or aboriginal race of country dancing-masters was nearly extinct. By this time, I presume, it has almost died out. Here and there a few may be seen,

“*Rari nantes in gurgite vasto,*”

but the light-heeled, light-hearted, jovial, genial fellows who were actual Masters of the Revels in the district to which they respectively belonged, are nowhere.

There used to be as much pride (and property) in a village dancing-master as in a village schoolmaster, in my young days, and I have heard of “many accidents by flood and field,” caused by attempts to remove a dancing-master or a pedagogue, of high reputation, from one district to another. In such cases, the very abduction being the strongest possible compliment to his renown, the person who was “enticed away by force,” always made a point of offering no resistance, and would passively and proudly await the result. Indeed, care was always taken that such removal should be actual preferment, as, to ameliorate his condition, the residence

provided for him in the new village, township, or barony, was always better than that from which he was removed.

As a general rule, the abduction, of schoolmasters was a favorite practice in Kerry—where every man and boy is supposed to speak Latin\*—while stolen dancing-masters did not abound in the neighbouring counties of Cork and Limerick. The natural inference is that the County Kerry-men preferred the culture of the head, while the others rather cared for the education of the heels.

To have a first-rate hedge-schoolmaster was a credit to any parish. To have engrossed the services of an eminent *mâitre de danse* was almost a matter of considerable pride and boasting, but to possess both of these treasures was indeed a triumph.

\*There are full grounds for this assertion. Classical learning has flourished in Kerry (under a hedge) from time immemorial. I recollect an illustrative anecdote. Two poor scholars who were travelling through Kerry, came to a farm-house, when faint with hunger, and foot-sore with walking; they went in, and modestly wanted "a drink of water," which was given them. On leaving the house, where they had expected something better than this scant hospitality, one of them exclaimed, "Ah, Pat, that's not the way that a farmer's wife would trate a poor scholar in our part of the world. 'Tis the good bowl of milk she'd give him, and not the piggin of cold water. She's a *malus mulier*." The other responded, "Say *mala*—it must be so to agree with the feminine *mulier*. Don't you know that *malus mulier* is bad Latin?" "Hold your tongue," was the answer: "what-ever it is, it is only too good for a niggard like *her*."

There was more pride, perhaps, in having a school-master of great repute—more pleasure in owning a dancer of high renown. The book-man was never known to dance, and the village Vestris was rarely able to write his name. Thus they never clashed. One ruled by day, and the other had unquestioned sovereignty in the hours between dusk and dawn.

Such a being as a youthful dancing-master I never saw—never heard of. They were invariably middle-aged men, at the youngest; but professors of "the poetry of motion," who were about seventy, appeared the greatest favourites. It was dreaded, perhaps, that the attraction of youth and good dancing combined would be too much for the village beauties to resist. On the same system, in all probability, it was a *sine quâ non* that the dancing-master should be married.

The Irish peasantry used to have a sort of passion for dancing. Hence the necessity for a teacher. On stated evenings during the winter, no matter what obstacles wet weather or dirty roads might present, a large company of pupils, from the age of ten to forty years, would assemble, in some roomy barn, possessing a smooth and hard floor of closely-pounded clay, to receive instructions in the saltatory art. Sometimes, when the teacher was ambitious, he would flourishingly open the proceedings with what was called "a bit of a noration,"—the oratory principally consisting of sesquipedalian words and

mythological allusions, being composed by the schoolmaster—utterly unintelligible, but sounding largely, and delivered in an *ore rotundo* manner and with “a laudable voice,” as if the dancing-master really understood the words he uttered. Not taking particular pains to follow “copy,” and frequently putting in words of his own when those written down for him had slipped out of his memory, these orations were amusingly absurd. They invariably commenced with an allusion to Miriam dancing before Moses, after the passage of the Red Sea, (on which occasion, no doubt, was first heard “the piper who played before Moses,” familiarly named in Irish colloquy,) and, passing down, through Homer and the classics, always ended with a warm eulogy on the antiquity of the dance.

In those days, the favourite exhibitions were the jig, the reel, the hornpipe, and the country-dance. The last-named was considered dreadfully genteel—too aristocratic, in fact, for the multitude—and was learned and practiced (as courting and kissing often are) on the sly! The reel was countenanced—and no more. It was rather Scotch than Irish. Every one was expected to be able to go that laborious piece of amusement called “The Sailor’s Hornpipe,”—faint vestiges of which are extant, to this hour, in nautical scenes,—as represented on the stage. Words cannot describe the evolutions of this remarkable dance, when exhibited with all the scien-

tific varieties of which it was capable. The shuffles, cross-shuffles, jumps, hops, leaps, cuttings, slides, and so on, which were introduced, I am unable to describe. The manner in which “heel-and-toe” was employed and varied, some abler historian may record.

That the hours passed away on swift pinions at these dancing academies, may well be imagined. There was any quantity of flirtation at all times, and about half the marriages in the country owed their origin to these *réunions*. It is creditable to the proverbial good conduct of my countrywomen, that loss of character rarely, if ever, resulted from these free-and-easy meetings.

The real glory of the evening, however, was when the dancing-master, after a world of solicitation, would “take the flure,” in order to give his admiring pupils a touch of his quality. On such an occasion, the door of the house would be lifted off its hinges, and placed in the centre of the floor. Abandoning the little *kit* (a small-sized violin) which was his companion at all other exhibitions, he would allow a blind piper to “discourse most excellent music,” and, on the door, would commence that wondrous display of agility, known, in my time, as “cover the buckle;”—a name probably derived from the circumstance that the dancing-master, while teaching, always wore large buckles in his shoes, and by the rapidity of motion with which he would



make his "many twinkling feet" perpetually cross, would seem to "cover" the appendages in question. The great effort was to exhibit all varieties of steps and dances, without once quitting the prostrate door on which the exhibitor took his stand. The jumps, the "cuttings" in the air, the bends, the dives, the wriggings, the hops—these were all critically regarded by his audience, and sometimes rewarded with such exclamations as "That's the way,"—"now for a double cut,"—"cover-the-buckle, ye divel,"—"Oh, then, 'tis he that handles his feet nately." At the conclusion, when he literally had danced himself almost off his legs, he would bow to the company, and—if he were very much a favourite, or had eclipsed all former displays—one of the prettiest girls in the room would go round, plate in hand, and make a collection for him. How the ten-penny and five-penny bits would tumble in, on those occasions—particularly if the fair collector could be induced to announce, with a blush and a smile, that she would take an extra donation on the usual terms, which meant that, for five shillings into the plate, any gallant swain might brush the dew from her own coral lips, on that occasion only and by particular desire. Can you doubt, for a moment, that the likely "boy" who had been sitting by her side all the evening, making babies on her eyes (as the saying is), and with his arm round her waist, just to steady her in her seat, would jump up and fling

his crown-piece into the treasury—though the pecuniary sacrifice would probably involve his being obliged to dispense, for a few weeks more, with "the new Carline hat" on which his dandyism had set its mind, for his Sunday adorning!

It was difficult for "an outsider" to become a spectator of the peculiar modes of teaching adopted and practiced by these masters. At a small extra rate, they would undertake to give instructions in that "deportment," of which the late Mr. Turveydrop was such an illustrious exemplar. I never witnessed anything of this sort, but have conversed on the subject with some who did. From what I could learn, the whole course of tuition in this particular branch must have been ludicrous in the extreme. Besides lessons in standing, walking, sitting, and even leaning with grace and ease, more recondite points were considered. Such were "how to slide out of a room backwards" (on the chance, no doubt, of some of the rustics having to appear at Court, before Royalty)—"how to accept a tumbler of punch from a gentleman," touching the liquid with her lips, so as to leave a kiss within the cup, as Ben Jonson advises,—"how to refuse a kiss," and yet not destroy the hope of its being accepted, a little later in the evening,—and, above all, "how to take a kiss," in the most genteel and approved manner of politeness! These instructions, superadded to a lesson that was called "the Grecian

bend" (which was nothing less than a coquettish way of leaning forward, with the eyes cast down, while listening to soft nonsense from a favoured swain), were peculiar and private. The only way in which the male sex could obtain a glimpse at such Eleusinian mysteries was by taking a recumbent position on the roof of the house, carefully removing a small portion of the thatch, and using eyes and ears in that situation to the best advantage. If detected by the irate maidens, the spy would run a fair chance of a scratched face and well-boxed ears.

As might be expected, the country dancing-master sometimes had stupid and refractory pupils. There was a common method of giving them instruction, which, for its practical simplicity, may be worth relating. When the pupil would persist in *not* recollecting which foot was to be used, at particular periods, the dancing-master would take a rope made of twisted hay, called a *suggaun*, and fasten it around one of the delinquent's ankles. He would then take a similar bracelet of twisted willow, denominated a *gad*, and put this on the other. Then, instead of directing the pupil to the particular use or motion of the right leg or the left, he would exclaim, "Rise upon *suggaun*," or "Sink upon *gad*," and in this manner convey his instructions beyond a possibility of mistake by even the most stupid!

Of course, where there was large company of

young people, full of life and spirit, under pupilage to a not young instructor, a variety of practical jokes would be perpetrated, at his expense, every now and then. They were almost invariably of a good-natured kind. One, which might be considered as to "be repeated every night until farther notice," generally came off towards the end of the evening. A joyous, light-hearted damsel would suddenly start up, while the music was playing, and, placing herself before the dancing-master, with that particular description of curtsy called "a bob," silently challenge him to dance with her. Now, under all circumstances, except actual inability to move, the gentleman so challenged has nothing to do but pick up the gauntlet, and "take the flure." Then, challenger and challenged would commence an Irish jig—a dance so violent that, writing in the dog-days as I do, the very recollection of it makes me feel as if the barometer was some two hundred in the shade. When the damsel had pretty well tired herself, one of her fair friends would take her place, and so on until a round dozen or so had had their turn. All this time, the doomed victim of a man had to continue dancing—and the point of honour was to do so, without giving in, as long as strength and wind lasted. The company would gather round, forming a ring for the performers, and the word would be, "On with the dance" (as it was, at Brussels, on the eve of Waterloo), until, at last,

some male spectator would pityingly dash into the circle, take the tired man's place, and permit the breathless and exhausted victim to totter to a seat, gasping out a protest, as he did, that he could have held out for half an hour longer, and wondered why any gentleman should interfere with another gentleman's *divarshun*.

In the preceding story of "The Petrified Piper," mention is made of a dancing-master commonly known as "Ould Lynch." He was an original, in many respects, and, like many of his profession, was in a constant flutter of faded finery and actual poverty. He was so much a character that my father took rather a fancy to him, and had him often at the house, as a teacher of dancing, in the well populated town of Fermoy. He had small chance of earning what would keep life and soul together. But he was a quiet, unassuming man, better educated than most of his class, and full of anecdote. One social virtue he eminently possessed:—he was one of the best backgammon players I ever saw, and (I speak it modestly,) was very fond of me as a pupil.

Lynch was a County Limerick man, on the confines of "the Kingdom of Kerry," and informed me that, in the parish where he was brought up, the natives had a passion for backgammon, and were wont, on high-days and holidays, to hold tournaments (on their favourite game) with the inhab-

itants of the next parish, in Kerry. Unfortunately, one day when a great trial of skill was appointed to come off, it turned out that no backgammon box was forthcoming. Both parties had contrived to forget it. To send for the necessary implements would have been a waste of time, when the combatants had "their souls in arms," and were "eager for the fray." In this dilemma, a lad who had a decided genius for expedients suggested a plan by which, without delay, their mutual wishes could be realized. Under his advice, one of the meadows was fixed upon as the scene of action. The turf was removed at intervals, so as to make the place present the semblance of a backgammon board, and substitutes for men were readily found in the flat stones and slates with which the ground abounded. The great difficulty was—the dice! They could extemporize board and men, but how to raise the bits of ivory? The lad was not to be baffled. He proposed that two men, one selected from each party, should sit on the ditch opposite each other, with "the board in the centre, with their respective backs turned *from* the combatants, and, in turn, should call out the numbers, as if they had been actually thrown by dice! This brilliant idea was acted upon. A halfpenny was thrown up to decide who should have first play, and the men on the ditch alternately called out, at will, any

of the throws which might have been actually cast had the dice themselves been "to the fore."

Such primitive practice, I venture to say, had never before been applied to the noble *science* of backgammon. I use the word advisedly, because, with skill and judgment, what is called bad luck does not very materially affect the game. The art is to conquer, despite bad throwing.

Lynch succeeded a worthy named Hearne—a *nom de guerre*, his enemies averred, for the less euphonious one of Herring. Whatever his name, the man was quite a character. He fancied himself a poet, and was particularly fond of taking his favourite pupils aside to communicate to them in a confidential manner, *sotto voce*, the latest productions of his muse,—it being expected that, a little later in the evening, the favoured individuals should delicately draw him out and solicit him to a public recital of his verses. After a good deal of pressing on their part, and a show of resistance on his, (which every one understood,) the little dancing-master would mount on a table, deliver a flourishing preface in prose, and then go through the recitation, in a manner which set description at defiance. At the conclusion of this feat, which was duly encored, Hearne was wont to distribute copies of his composition printed on whity-brown paper, and the tribute of a five-penny bit was expected in acknowledgment

of the same—simply, as he said, "to pay for the printing." He had such a peculiar system of orthography—spelling the words by the sound—that I venture, with all due diffidence, to put forward his claim to take precedence of the interesting and worthy founders of the newspaper-nondescript, *The Fonetic Nuz*, at which the Londoners laughed heartily a dozen years ago. By some accident, I have preserved a copy of one of Hearne's poetical compositions, in which his own mode of spelling is carefully preserved, and I subjoin it as a curiosity,—a specimen of what emanated, some thirty years ago, from one who belonged to the peculiar class (of which Grant Thorburn is the head) worthy of being called The Illiterate Literati!

*"A few lions addressed in prease of Mr. Jon Anderson, Esquire, by his humble servant, and votary of the Muses, Wm. Ahearne, profesor of dancing."*

"Who lives in this Eaden wich lyes to the easte  
Of Fermoy ould bridge and its pallasades;  
He is the best man on the Blackwater's breast,  
As thousans from povirty he has razed.

"There's no grand Pear in all Urop this day,  
With him can compare most certinly,  
In bilding a town of buty and sweay  
As Fermoy and its gay sweet liberty.

"Now, weagh well the case betwin him and those  
 Who travel the globe and fair Itly,  
 After skroozhing their tinnants hard when at home,  
 And spinding their store most foulishly."

The most original idea in these "few lions," is the geographical information that Italy is *not* a part of the globe. In the pen-ultimate line, the poet may have hinted a little sly satire at the "at home" in high life, where the crushing of hundreds into a space where tens can scarcely sit in comfort is esteemed a great feat.

A wealthy attorney, named Henley, who had been kind to Hearne, was the object of an eulogistic "pome." It ran somewhat thus:

There is a barrister of great fame  
 In Fermoy, I do declare,  
 Who administers strict justas  
 Without bribery or dessate.  
 May God prolong your days,  
 Your Court to reglate,  
 And force sly roges and villines  
 To pay their dews and rates.

### CHARLEY CROFTS.

IN the immortal "Maxims of O'Doherty," written by the late Dr. Maginn, mention is made of a dinner at the late Lord Doneraile's, in the South of Ireland, in which a reproof was administered to his Lordship's meanness in the article of—tippling. He says, "My friend, Charley Crofts, was also of the party. The claret went lazily round the table, and his Lordship's toad-eaters hinted that they preferred punch, and called for hot water. My Lord gave in, after a humbug show of resistance, and whiskey-punch was in a few minutes the order of the night. Charley, however, to the annoyance of the host, kept swilling away at the claret, on which Lord Doneraile lost all patience, and said to him, 'Charley, you are missing quite a treat; this punch is so excellent.' 'Thank ye, my Lord,' said Charley, 'I am a plain man, who does not want trates; I am no epicure, so I stick to the claret.'"

This free-and-easy gentleman, of whom I have some personal recollection, belonged to a class of which, I suspect, he was the very latest specimen. Charley Crofts, who had acquired no book-learning, because he was born to a large landed property, was

of a respectable family in the west of the county Cork, and, even in his decline, was highly honoured by the multitude, as coming from "the good ould stock." Brought up, but not educated, by his mother, Charley entered the world with very flattering prospects. He had a good property, good looks, good temper, and (what he most prized) good horses. Cursed with an easy disposition, he had never learned how to utter the monosyllable "No," but had unfortunately learned how to sign his name—his friends kindly giving him very frequent opportunities of practicing that autograph, by obtaining it, across narrow slips of stamped paper, ('yclept "bills" and "promissory notes") underneath the words "*Accepted, payable at the Bank of James Delacour, Mallow.*" In the long run, these autographs ruined him—as, bit-by-bit, all his property went to meet the sums to which they pledged him, and Charley Crofts found himself, at the age of thirty, without home or money. He had preserved one thing, however—his personal character. He had committed a great many of the frailties of his sex and youth, but the shadow of a disreputable or doubtful action never rested on his name. He could proudly say, like Francis the First, after the battle of Pavia, "All lost, except honour."

The result was that, in his poverty, he was as highly thought of as in his affluence, and was ever a welcome guest in the first houses of his native county.

Like the rest of his class, (I mean the estated Irish gentlemen of the last century,) Charley Crofts had learned to drink deeply. He used to narrate, with great glee, an incident connected with his entrance into vivacious habits. His mother, having occasion to leave their country residence, in order to transact some business in Cork, left her hopeful son in full possession of the house and full command of the servants, for the fortnight she intended being absent. Charley, who was then in his sixteenth year, determined that he would hold no powerless sceptre of vice-royalty, and invited sundry acquaintances to visit him, which they did. As a hogshead of fine claret was always on tap, there was no difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of drink. One day, however, a guest happened to express a desire to vary the post-prandial proceedings by the introduction of a few bottles of port. Now, it happened that Mrs. Crofts possessed (and was known to possess) some remarkably fine port wine, which she carefully kept locked up, reserving it for "State days and holidays." Charley had been left the key of the cellar, and, considering that his hospitality was especially appealed to, by the hint about the port, went down and had a supply brought up. That afternoon's performance went rather hard against the port. Indeed, so much of it was drank that Charley Crofts was puzzled how to account for it, without making full confession. A few days

after his mother's return, she asked him to accompany her to the cellar, to provide a suitable location for a supply of sherry which she expected from Cork. The first thing which attracted her notice was the remarkable diminution in the stock of her valued and nearly unique port wine. Catching her eye, Charley anticipated her inquiry, by remarking that, in her absence, a remarkable thunder-storm had penetrated to the cellar and broken a quantity of the bottled wine. Taking up two or three of the bottles, and fully aware that it would be useless to repine or get angry over the mischief done, she drew her hopeful son's attention to them, and only said, "A dreadful storm, indeed! It has actually drawn the corks out of the necks of the bottles, instead of bursting them in the usual way!"

For the last five-and-thirty years of his life, Charley Crofts may be said to have literally *lived all around*. He had a number of tried friends, who were glad to have him as their guest and boon companion, for a month at a time. He could tell a good story, knew the private history of every family in the county, was undoubted authority on horse-flesh and every subject connected with the sports of the field, and could take any quantity of wine without its apparently affecting him. Nature had endowed him with great muscular power, immense physical strength, a temper which nothing could cloud, and a mode of expression so terse as some-

times to be almost epigrammatic. He was exactly qualified for the shifting sort of life upon which he had fallen.

When I met him, the brighter portion of his career had passed. He was but the wreck of what he once had been, I was assured by every one; but one may judge, from the ruin, what the structure had been in its pride. Numerous anecdotes were afloat as to his sayings and doings, but it is difficult to realize their effect in our days, unless you could imagine the person on whom they were affiliated. Though I fear that I shall fail in the attempt, I shall endeavour to record two or three.

As a four-bottle man, who could drink every one else under the table, Charley Crofts was not so much of a favourite with wives as with their husbands. They knew, by experience, that with Charley Crofts in the van, a wet evening might be looked for—in the dining-room.

Mr. Wrixon, of Ballygiblin, near Mallow, (father of Sir W. Wrixon-Becher, who married Miss O'Neill, the eminent actress,) had only a small hereditary property when he succeeded to vast estates, on condition that he superadded the name of "Becher" to his own patronymic. As plain Mr. Wrixon, with a small property, he had lived unnoticed, but his circle of friends immensely increased when he became Mr. Wrixon-Becher, and a man of "Ten Thousand a Year." Soon after, he



married an English lady, with some fortune, much pride, a fair share of beauty, and a decided abhorrence of the drinking habits of her husband's friends. She had heard of, and had been cautioned against, the vivacious enormities of Charley Crofts, and had actually declared to her husband (in private, of course) that whenever Mr. Crofts took a seat at her table, she would immediately relinquish hers.

One day, when Wrixon had been out with the Duhallow hounds, and the run had been quick and long, the only man who was in with him "at the death," was Charley Crofts, and under the circumstances—the rain beginning to fall heavily, Crofts' place of sojourn being at least ten miles distant, and Ballygiblin at hand,—Wrixon felt that he *must* invite Charley home, or rest under the imputation of behaving in an unsportsmanlike and inhospitable manner.

So, he told Charley that half a dozen other good fellows were to take "pot-luck" with him that day, and that he must insist on Charley's joining them. Without any pressing or denial, the invitation was accepted.

Now, Charley Crofts knew, just as well as if he had been present when the affair was discussed, how and why it was that, of all the houses in the barony of Duhallow, the mansion of Ballygiblin was the only one to which he had not a general invitation. Wrixon, the moment he reached home, turning over

his companion to the friendly custody of a mutual acquaintance, who was to form one of the party that day, hastened to "his lady's chamber," where he found his wife dressed for dinner, and (as her glass told her) looking remarkably well. A few well-expressed and well-timed compliments on her appearance, a congratulation or two on her exquisite taste in dress, a half-hint and half-promise as to the killing effect of a set of pearl in contrast with her ebon looks, and more "blarney" of the same sort, made the lady so very gracious that the husband ventured to communicate under what circumstances he had been compelled to invite Charley Crofts to her table. The lady took them, as they sometimes do in French courts of justice, as "extenuating circumstances," and consented to receive the dreaded Charley. This done, she found her way into the drawing-room, where the guests waited upon her—the most subdued and quiet of them being Charley Crofts. At first, with his grave air and grave attire, she thought that he might have been a clergyman.

As the only stranger in the party, Charley had to escort Mrs. Wrixon to the dining-room, to sit next her, to perform the duties of carving for her, to supply her with a little of the small change of conversation. Nobody could behave more decorously, more unlike the lady's fearful anticipations of the dreaded guest. Now and then, when addressed by his friends, a quaint remark or a satiric witticism would



make her smile, and convince her that the dangerously seductive companionable character of her guest had not been undeservedly obtained. On the whole, she had every reason to think him very much of a gentleman, and graciously smiled on him when she quitted the table.

"You have conquered her, by Jove," exclaimed Wrixon. "Not yet," said Charley, "but in a fair way for it." The wine went round. The conversation branched off into its usual channels, and settled, at last, upon a meet of the hounds which was to take place on Mr. Wrixon's property, at which all the company present would attend.

In the middle of the discussion, one of the footmen duly announced that his lady was waiting for them, with tea and coffee, in the drawing-room. Heretofore, in that house, such an announcement had always been a mere matter of form. Not so now. Charley Crofts started up and proceeded to obey the summons. "Nonsense!" they all exclaimed. "Don't turn milksop. No one ever goes to tea or coffee in this house." "Say what you may," said Charley, "the lady shall not have to complain of my want of politeness."

In the drawing-room, sooth to say, no gentleman had been expected, and Mrs. Wrixon was taking a solitary cup of tea. She was an admirable musician, and was playing "Gramachree" (that saddest of all Irish airs) just as Charley reached the door.

Now, music was among the things which he thoroughly understood and appreciated, and the moment that he heard her exquisite execution on the harp he paused, spell-bound, listening with rapt attention and delight, while the pathos of the air drew tears from eyes all unaccustomed to the melting mood. When she had concluded, she turned round, saw the effect which she had produced, and (need I say it) was flattered at that proof of her skill.

Quickly recovering himself, Charley Crofts informed her that he had the pleasure of accepting the invitation she had sent into the dining-room. Tea was accordingly provided, and the conversation naturally fell upon music. Charley happened to be a first rate flutist, and having mentioned in what a delightful manner the flute and harp went together, either to accompany the voice or without, Mrs. Wrixon sent for her husband's flute, and allowed him to show her how correctly he had spoken. Presently, she even sang to the double accompaniment, and her husband and his friends, curious to know how Crofts was getting on, having now adjourned from their wine, found him thus engaged.

Meanwhile, in intervals of from three to five minutes, Charley Crofts had gulphed down successive, and almost countless, cups of tea. Again and again had the tea-pot been replenished—and emptied. At last, quite tired out, Mrs. Wrixon said, half in sport, half in earnest, "I am sure, Mr. Crofts, that I never

gave you credit for being such a determined tea-drinker. As my hand is rather tired, may I beg that you will help yourself?"

"Madam," said Charley, with imposing gravity, "I am a plain man. I do not prefer tea to other liquids. You were so good as to send for us to tea. I always obey a lady's summons when I can, and came hither. I am accustomed, for years past, to take a certain quantity of fluid after dinner. I care not what that fluid may be, so that I have my *quantum*. Ale, punch, wine, or, as now, even this tea. I can help myself to the other liquids, but tea has no flavor unless it be poured out by a lady's fair hand!"

Mrs. Wrixon, perceiving that she was fairly caught, exclaimed, "Well, Mr. Crofts, I think that I must leave you to take what you please in the dining-room, but whenever you want a little music you can have it here, and I only hope my husband will treat you so well that you will frequently give me the pleasure of seeing you under this roof."

This was the manner in which Charley Crofts conquered Madam Wrixon, the proud, high-bred lady. Good friends they continued unto her dying day, and Charley would rather hear her play the harp, as she only could play it, (he fancied,) than assist at the broaching of the finest pipe of claret that ever was smuggled over from Bordeaux.

Mr. Wrixon, albeit a man of unbounded generos-

ity, had one *leetle* drawback. He would give sumptuous entertainments; he paid the chief expenses of the Duhallow Hunt; he indulged his wife in all luxuries of attire and adornment; he had a passion for beautiful horses and costly equipages; he was liberal in his charities; he acted as banker for many of his poorer friends who were of the lackland genus; he seemed to fling money away, though, indeed, he was by no means a spendthrift; but the one little "blot" in his tables (I mean, in his character) was a feverish anxiety to economize on such mere trifles as *cream and butter*!

So it was, however. His friends were at once amused and rendered uncomfortable by it. It interfered with the perfection of their tea and coffee, and always prevented their taking a desired quantity of bread-and-butter. To allude to this matter, to show the slightest consciousness of Mr. Wrixon's peculiar idiosyncrasy, in this respect, was what his friends never ventured upon. They were not the less anxious to have it removed.

They determined that Charley Crofts should be the amputator. The next day, at a very early breakfast, preparatory to their taking the field with the fox-hounds, a lively party assembled at Mr. Wrixon's table, in unexceptionable red coats, enviable buckskins, irreproachable top-boots, and the ordinary skull-caps covered with black velvet, which, from time immemorial, formed the costume of the

members of the Duhallow Hunt; "the most sportingest set of gentlemen," I once heard a peasant say, "that mortal eyes did ever look upon."

The breakfast included all that should constitute the matutinal meal of a party of keen sportsmen about to cross the country at break-neck speed—all, except cream and butter, of which, as usual, there was a *minimum* supply, very much short of what might be expected from a dairy of over twenty milch cows. Charley Crofts, as this was his first visit, might be supposed to be in ignorance of his host's feelings upon that point. At all events, he acted as if he were.

The cream and butter were placed close by Mr. Wrixon—the supply for a party of nine or ten consisting of a very small ewer-full of the former, and two or three *pats* of the latter, each about the size of a penny-piece. As if it were a matter of course, Charley, having put the needful quantities of tea into his cup, filled it up with the entire contents of the cream-ewer, and, at the same time, put all the butter upon his plate. Mr. Wrixon, startled by such invasion of his favourites, feebly desired one of the servants to bring "a *little* more cream and a *little* more butter."

By the time the fresh supply was on the table, Charley Crofts had emptied his cup and eaten his toast. He lost no time in appropriating the prized articles, as before, chatting away with his

usual *nonchalance*, as if he had done nothing uncommon. Mr. Wrixon, sitting like one astonished, watched the disappearance of the second supply, and ordered a third replenishment, which went the way of the preceding. Rising in his chair, he addressed the butler and exclaimed, "John, desire that *all* the cream and butter in the dairy be brought up, I think we shall have need of the whole of it." Turning to Crofts, he emphatically said, "I have heard of eating bread-and-butter, but Charley, *you eat butter and bread.*" By this time the laugh which arose gave him the pleasant information that he was *sold*. From that hour he was as liberal with his cream and butter, as he previously had been with every other article in his mansion. He never was able to ascertain whether Charley Crofts had been put up to the trick, or had simply hit the nail by accident.

Charley Crofts did not confine his visits to the gentry in his native county of Cork. In the decline of his fortunes—indeed, as long as he was able to do anything—he always was possessor of a gem or two in the way of horseflesh. For many years, his income was almost wholly derived from the sale of horses, out of which he obtained a large profit, and it was known that any animal which he sold or vouched for might be depended on. In the way of business, having disposed of a fine hunter to one of the family, who was sportingly inclined, he had to pass a few days at the house of Mr. Lyons, of Croom,

in the county of Limerick. This old man had acquired a vast fortune by following the business of a grazier, and had invested large sums in the purchase of landed estates. His sons, determined to cut a figure in the county, indulged in all manner of excess and extravagance. At the time of Charley Crofts' visit, they issued cards for a splendid *déjeuner à la fourchette*, to which the leading people of the district were invited. As Charley Crofts was on intimate terms with everybody who had pretensions to notice, the Lyons family, in solemn conclave assembled, determined that it would be a sagacious and politic move to get him to officiate as a something between Major Domo and Master of the Ceremonies at the intended festival. Desiring no better fun, he cheerfully consented.

The attendance on the gala day was what the newspapers would describe as "full and fashionable." Many went from curiosity, to see in what manner the *parvenu* would attempt "to ape his betters"—i. e., themselves. Several attended, because they owed money to old Lyons (who did a little in *bills* after abandoning *beef*), and did not like to affront him by not accepting his invitation. A good many went, because they had heard that "all the world and his wife" would be present, and a jovial day might be anticipated.

Thanks to Charley Crofts' *surveillance*, the entertainment, well got up, went off admirably.

Among the more aristocratic guests was the Lady Isabella Fitzgibbon, sister to that Earl of Clare who was the schoolfellow and friend most tenderly and lastingly loved by Byron. At that time she was a fine young woman. She is now a stern old maid—like the odd half of a pair of scissors, of no use to herself or any body else. Lady Isabella affected to look down, with some degree of superciliousness, upon the millionaire's hospitality. Having probably laid in a good supply of mutton chops or beef steaks before she went out, she pointedly neglected the delicacies of the season, which were abundantly supplied, and merely trifled with a lobster-salad. Old Lyons, who had a great respect for good feeding, and particularly for substantials, turned round to her, as she sat by his side, the image of aristocratic don't-care-a-pin-for-all-the-world-ativeness, and kindly said, "Ah, then, my lady, why don't you take some of the good beef and mutton, the capons and the turkeys, and don't be after filling your stomach with that cowl'd cabbage!"

The high-born *dama* nearly fainted at what she considered the vulgar good-nature of her host. Soon after, when she had recovered from the shock, she said that she thought she would have a little bread and butter. Immediately opposite her, and within reach of Old Lyons, was a crystal bowl in which floated sundry little *pats* of that delicious butter for which the county Limerick is famed. Lyons made several

vain efforts to spear one of these with a fork, at last, finding that it was impossible to make the capture in that manner, he raised up his coat-sleeve, tucked up the wrist-band of his shirt, and plunging his hand into the bowl, with the exclamation, "Ha, you little jumping Jennies, I am determined to have you now," secured two pieces of the butter, which he triumphantly deposited on his noble guest's plate, with the words, "There, my lady, when I took the matter *in hand*, I knew I must succeed."

Charley Crofts departed this life some twenty years ago. The close of his career was passed in Cove, where he lived upon an annuity provided by the liberality of some of his former friends. His health had failed him, suddenly, a few years before, and he who had been wont "to set the table in a roar," for nearly forty years, subsided into a querulous valetudinarian. He published his Autobiography, shortly before his death, and it deserves mention as one of the dullest of its class, as far as I recollect, (it is a long time since I yawned over it,) the subject matter chiefly consisted of fierce personalities directed against sundry relatives who, he said, had cheated him out of his property.

To the very last, Charley Crofts could give graphic narratives of his former career and companions, but the moment he attempted to *write* them down, their spirit wholly evaporated.

## IRISH PUBLICISTS.

## HENRY GRATTAN.

THE history of Ireland's independence, from the rise of the Volunteers until the treacherous sacrifice of nationality by the passing of the Act of Union—an interval of twenty years, yet crowded with events and eminent characters—can best be read in the lives of the illustrious men who asserted, vindicated, and carried that independence. Looking back at the brief but brilliant period in which they shone, truly did Curran speak of them, to Lord Avonmore, as men “over whose ashes the most precious tears of Ireland have been shed.”

Among this noble and gallant array of public virtue and genius HENRY GRATTAN stands conspicuous and pre-eminent. To condense a memoir of him into the space which I have here reserved would be a vain attempt. Let me sketch him in his youth. The child, Wordsworth said, is father of the man, and this was particularly true as regards Grattan.

Henry Grattan, stated by most of his biographers to have been born in 1750 (the year in which Curran entered into earthly existence), was four years older, his baptismal register in Dublin bearing date the 3d of July, 1746. His father, a man of character

and ability, was Recorder of Dublin for many years, and one of the metropolitan parliamentary representatives from 1761 to his death in 1766. The well-known patriot, Dr. Lucas, was senatorial colleague and opponent of the elder Grattan, who, although nominally a Whig, was actually a Tory,—was the law officer of the Corporation, which Lucas undauntedly opposed,—and on all essential, political, and legislative points, sided with the Government of the day.

The Grattan family were of considerable and respectable standing in Ireland, and Henry Grattan's grandfather and grand-uncles had enjoyed familiar intimacy with Dean Swift and Dr. Sheridan. Henry Grattan's mother was a daughter of Thomas Marlay, Chief Justice of Ireland, who almost as a matter of course in those days, was to be found on the side of the Government, but administered justice fairly, and on some few occasions showed a love for and pride in his native Ireland. Grattan's mother was a clear-headed, well-informed woman. On both sides, therefore, he had a claim to hereditary talent.

At ordinary day-schools, in Dublin, Henry Grattan received his education. John Fitzgibbon, afterwards the unscrupulous tool of the Government and the scourge of Ireland (as Lord Chancellor Clare), was his class-mate at one of these seminaries. Grattan rapidly acquired the necessary amount of Greek

and Latin, and in 1763, being then 17 years old, entered Trinity College. Here, among his friends and competitors, were Foster (afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons), Robert Day, who subsequently adorned the Bench. In the University there was particular rivalry between Fitzgibbon and Grattan; the first was well grounded in classics and science, but almost wholly ignorant of modern literature. Both obtained the highest prizes in the University,—Grattan getting premium, certificate, or medal at every examination.

Before he had completed his twentieth year, Grattan had declared his political opinions. They were patriotic—they were Irish—they were opposed to the principles and practice of his father, and strongly identical with those of Dr. Lucas, his father's constant and bitter opponent. Lucas was a remarkable man. He it was who, immediately after the accession of George III., introduced a bill for limiting the duration of the Irish Parliament to seven years—the custom being, at the time, that a new Parliament should be chosen when a new monarch ascended the throne, and last during his lifetime. It took seven years' perseverance to effect this change—upon which the English Cabinet thrice put a veto. A fourth and final effort succeeded, the limitation being eight years. It was Lucas who, following in the steps of Swift, boldly attacked bad men and bad measures in the newspapers, and thus as-

serted the Liberty of the Press—that which Curran so earnestly desired to be preserved when, addressing his countrymen, he said, “Guard it, I beseech you, for when it sinks, there sink with it, in one common grave, the liberty of the subject and the security of the Crown.” It was Lucas who strenuously denied the right of a British Parliament to govern Ireland, who asserted his country’s right to legislative independence, who insisted on her claim for self-government. For this, the law was strained against him,—for this, Dublin grand juries ordered his writings to be publicly burned by the hands of the common hangman—for this, a venal House of Commons voted that he wrote sedition and was an enemy of his country—for this, the Speaker was ordered to issue a warrant for his arrest and imprisonment in gaol—for this, the Lord Lieutenant was solicited to denounce him by Proclamation—for this, the Corporation of Dublin disfranchised him—for this, he had to fly his country and secure life and comparative liberty by eleven years of enforced exile. On his return, in 1760, that very city of Dublin from which he had fled for his life elected him for one of its representatives, Grattan’s father being his colleague. As such, the elder Grattan, who was a courtier, opposed the Septennial Bill.

Henry Grattan, a patriot from his childhood, ardently adopted Dr. Lucas’ views in favour of Ireland’s independence. The result was that, in 1765–6,

Henry Grattan was at variance with his father. The death of the elder Grattan took place in 1766, and it was then discovered how much he resented his son’s assertion of liberal politics. He could not deprive him of a small landed estate, secured to him by marriage settlement, but bequeathed from him the paternal residence of the family for nearly a century. Thus Henry Grattan had to enter the world, not rich in worldly wealth, and with his soul saddened by the marked and public posthumous condemnation by his father. No wonder that, as he declared in one of his letters at the time, he was “melancholy and contemplative, but not studious.” No wonder that, solitary in the old home, he should sadly say, “I employ myself writing, reading, courting the muse, and taking leave of that place where I am a *guest*, not an *owner*, and of which I shall now cease to be a *spectator*.” His household Gods were shattered on his hearth, and he sat, cold and lonely, among their ruins. Yet, even then, he dreamed that fortune, smiling upon him, would enable his old age to resign his breath where he first received it. Never was that dream fulfilled. Not even did he die

“Midst the trees which a nation had given, and which bowed,  
As if each brought a new civic crown for his head ;”

but his spirit departed, fifty-four years later, in the



metropolis of the haughty land which had crushed the independence and broken the nationality of

"His own loved island of sorrow."

At the age of twenty-one, Henry Grattan went to London to study the law. At that period, as at present, it is indispensable for every one who desires to be admitted to the Irish bar, that he shall have "studied" for two years at one of the Inns of Court in London. Perhaps this, as much as anything else, shows how completely the English habit has been, and is, to treat Ireland as a mere *province*. Candidates for admission to the Scottish bar are not required to pursue this *nominal* course of study in another country. Nominal it is, for the requirement does not involve the acquisition, in the most infinitesimal degree, of any knowledge of the principles or practice of the law. All that is necessary is that the future barrister shall have eaten twenty-four dinners in the Hall of his London Inn of Court (three at each term) during two years, and a certificate of this knife-and-fork practice—which is facetiously called "keeping his Terms"—is received by the Benchers of the Queen's Inn in Dublin, as proof that the candidate has duly qualified himself by study! There is no examination as to his knowledge of law—two years in London, and a somewhat lesser amount of legal feeding in Dublin, being the sole qualification for the Irish Bar!

In Michaelmas Term, 1767, being two months past his majority, Henry Grattan entered his name, as student, on the books of the Middle Temple in London. Although he intended to live by the practice of the law, he devoted little attention to its study. Black-letter, precedents, and technicalities he cared little for. The broad principles of jurisprudence attracted his attention; but he mastered them, not as an advocate, but as a future law-maker. In fact, nature had intended him for a politician and statesman, and his mind, from the first, followed the bias which "the mighty mother" gave. As late as August, 1771, when he had been four years in the Temple, he wrote thus to a friend: "I am now becoming a lawyer, fond of cases, frivolous, and illiberal; instead of Pope's and Milton's numbers, I repeat in solitude Coke's instructions, the nature of fee-tail, and the various constructions of perplexing statutes. This duty has been taken up too late; not time enough to make me a lawyer, but sufficiently early to make me a dunce." In the same letter he said, "Your life, like mine, is devoted to professions which we both detest; the vulgar honours of the law are as terrible to me as the restless uniformity of the military is to you."

During the four years of his English residence, varied by occasional visits to Ireland, Mr. Grattan's heart certainly never warmed to the profession which he had chosen. The confession which I have just

quoted was made only a few months before he was called to the Irish bar in Hilary Term, 1772. Yet he was a hard reader, a close student, an early riser, and a moderate liver. To afford the means of enlarging his library, he avoided expensive amusements and practiced a very close economy. In November, 1768, these saving habits became matter of necessity rather than of choice, when his mother died so suddenly that she had not time to make, as she had purposed, a formal disposition of her reversion to a landed property which she had meant to leave her son. It passed, therefore, to another branch of the family, leaving Grattan such limited resources that it now was necessary for him to follow a profession.

How, then, did Grattan employ his time in England? We have his own regretful confession, that it was not, for the first four years, in the study of the law. Shortly after his first visit to London, he lost one of his sisters; and deep sorrow for her death, and a distaste for society, drove him from the bustle of the metropolis to the retirement of the country. He withdrew to Sunning Hill, near Windsor Forest, amid whose mighty oaks he loved to wander, meditating upon the political questions of the day, and making speeches as if he already were in parliament. Mrs. Sawyer, his landlady, a simple-minded woman, knew not what to make of the odd-looking, strange-mannered young man, and hesitated

between the doubt whether he was insane or merely eccentric. When one of his friends came to see him, she complained that her lodger used to walk up and down in her garden throughout the summer nights, speaking to himself, and addressing an imaginary "Mr. Speaker," with the earnestness of an inspired orator. She was afraid that his derangement might take a dangerous character, and, in her apprehension, offered to forgive the rent which was due, if his friends would only remove her eccentric lodger.

Seventy years after this (in 1838) Judge Day, who lived to almost a patriarchal age, and had been intimate with Grattan in London, wrote a letter, in which, describing him at college, "where he soon distinguished himself by a brilliant elocution, a tenacious memory, and abundance of classical acquirements," he proceeds to state that Grattan "always took great delight in frequenting the galleries, first of the Irish, and then of the English House of Commons, and the bars of the Lords." His biographer records that this amateur Parliamentary attendance had greater attractions for him than the pleasures of the metropolis, and that he devoted his evenings in listening, his nights in recollecting, and his days in copying the great orators of the time. Judge Day also has remembered that Grattan would spend whole moonlight nights in rambling and losing himself in the thickest plantations of Windsor Forest, and "would sometimes pause and address a tree in

soliloquy, thus preparing himself early for that assembly which he was destined in later life to adorn."

Such was Grattan's self-training. So did he prepare himself for that career of brilliant utility and patriotism which has made his name immortal.

Events of great moment took place in England during Grattan's sojourn there. The contest between John Wilkes and the Government was then in full course, leading to important results, and encouraging, if it did not create, the publication of the fearless and able letters of Junius. At that time, great men were in the British Senate, and Grattan had the good fortune to hear their eloquence, to watch the deeds in which they participated. The elder Pitt, who had then withdrawn from the Commons, and exercised great power in the Upper House, as Earl of Chatham, still took part in public business. There, too, was Lord North—shrewd, obese, good-tempered, and familiar. There was Charles James Fox, just commencing public life, alternately coquetting with politics and the faro-table—his great rival, Pitt, had not then arisen, nor his eminent friend Sheridan, but Edmund Burke had already made his mark, Barrè was in full force, as well as Grenville, and the great lawyers Loughborough and Thurlow had already appeared above the horizon, while Lords Camden and Mansfield were in the maturity of fame. Then, also, flourished Charles Townshend, who would have deserved the name of a great statesman

but for his mistake in trying to obtain revenue for England by taxation of America. There was the remarkable man called "Singlespeech" Hamilton, from one brilliant oration which was declared by Walpole to have eclipsed the most successful efforts even of the elder Pitt. In the Irish Parliament, too, which he always visited when in Dublin during the Session, were men of great eminence and ability, with some of whom—Flood, Hutchinson, and Hussey Burgh—not long after, Grattan was himself to come into intellectual gladiatorship. In both countries, therefore, he became familiar with politics and politicians. What marvel if he deviated from the technicalities of the law into the wider field of law-making and statesmanship?

How closely he observed the eminent persons who thus came before his notice, may be judged from the character of Lord Chatham, which was introduced in a note to "*Barataria*," (a satirical *brochure* by Sir Hercules Langrishe), as if from a new edition of Robertson's History of America. Many persons, at the time, who looked for it in Robertson, were disappointed at not finding it there. *Apropos* of Langrishe; it may be added that he it was who said—that the best History of Ireland was to be found "in the continuation of *Rapin*," and excused the swampy state of the Phoenix Park demesne by supposing that the Government neglected it, being so much occupied in *draining the rest of the kingdom*.

Greatly admiring the nervous eloquence of Lord Chatham, it is evident that Grattan's own style was influenced, if not formed by it. He could not have had a better model. Grattan, out of pure admiration of the man, reported several of his speeches for his own subsequent use. Writing about him many years later, he said, "He was a man of great genius—great flight of mind. His imagination was astonishing. He was very great, and very odd.\* He never came with a prepared harangue; his style was not regular oratory, like Cicero or Demosthenes, but it was very fine, and very elevated, and above the ordinary subjects of discourse. He appeared more like a pure character advising, than mixing in the debate. It was something superior to that—it *was teaching the lords, and lecturing the King*. He appeared the next greatest thing to the King, though infinitely superior. What Cicero says in his 'CLARIS ORATORIBUS' exactly applies: '*Formæ dignitas, corporis motus plenus et artis et venustatis, vocis et suavitas et magnitudo.*' 'Great subjects, great empires, great characters, effulgent ideas, and classical illustrations formed the material of his speeches.'†

\* This refers more particularly to the year 1770.

† Grattan used to say that nothing ever was finer, in delivery and effect, than Chatham's appeal, on the American question, to the bishops, the judges, and the peers:—"You talk of driving the Americans: *I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch.*"

Until he permanently and finally took up his residence in Dublin, Grattan was greatly prejudiced in favour of England. In August, 1771, he wrote to a friend that he would return to Ireland that Christmas, "to live or die with you," and added, "It is painful to renounce England, and my departure is to me the loss of youth. I submit to it on the same principle, and am resigned." At that time he was twenty-five years old.

In his letters to his friends at this time, he commented on Irish politics so forcibly as to show that he was a close observer. Alluding to the means used by the Viceroy (Lord Townshend) to corrupt the legislature, he said, "So total an overthrow has Freedom received, that its voice is heard only in the accents of despair." This sentence very probably suggested the concluding part of Moore's beautiful lyric, "The harp that once through Tara's halls,"

"Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,  
The only throb she gives,  
Is when some heart indignant breaks,  
To show that still she lives."

Early in 1772, Grattan was called to the Irish bar—not from any predilection for the profession, but from the necessity of eking out his limited means by the exercise of his talents. It is recorded that having gone the circuit, and failed to gain a

verdict in an important case where he was specially retained, he actually returned to his client half the amount of his fee—fifty guineas. A man who could act thus, was clearly not fitted for the profession, nor destined to arrive at wealth by its means.

At that time the rising talent of Ireland was decidedly liberal, and in favor of progress. Grattan was thrown into familiar intimacy with this society, and his own opinions were influenced, if not determined, by the Catholic spirit of their avowed principles. Lord Charlemont, Hussey Burgh, Robert Day, (afterwards the Judge,) Dennis Daly, and Barry Yelverton—men whose names are familiar to all who have read the history of Ireland's later years of nationality—were his familiar friends.

Grattan wished for the lettered ease of literary retirement, but his narrow means did not permit him to live without labour. He said, "What can a mind do without the exercise of business, or the relaxation of pleasure?" He took to politics as a relief from the demon of *ennui*. He attended the debates in Parliament. He said "they were insipid; every one was speaking; nobody was eloquent." He had become a lawyer, as he sadly confessed, "without knowledge or ambition in his profession." He would fain have gone into retirement, but complained that, in his too hospitable country, "wherever you fly, wherever you secrete yourself, the sociable disposition of the Irish will follow you, and in every bar-

ren spot of that kingdom you must submit to a state of dissipation or hostility." He said that his passion was retreat, for "there is certainly repose, and may be a defence, in insignificance."

He was destined for better things. He had married Henrietta Fitzgerald, who claimed descent from the Desmond family, (actually from that branch of which that Countess of Desmond, who died at the age of 162, was the foundress,) but had, as her own dowry, the far greater wealth of youth, beauty, virtue, talent, and devoted affection. The union was eminently happy. Mrs. Grattan became the mother of thirteen children, and it is known that on many occasions, but especially in the troublous times of 1798 and 1800, (the rebellion and the betrayal of Ireland by her parliament,) Grattan frequently consulted and acted on the advice of his wife, which invariably was to do what was right, regardless of personal consequences. After his marriage, he went to reside in the county Wicklow, where, almost from early youth, he had been enamoured of the beautiful scenery, and even then spoke of Tinnahinch, which he subsequently purchased, as a place which might be "the recreation of an active life, or the retreat of an obscure one, or the romantic residence of philosophical friendship." "Here," said his son, "he mused in when melancholy, he rejoiced in when gay; here he often trod, meditating on his country's wrongs—her long, dreary night of oppression; and here he first

beheld the bright transient light of her redemption and her glory." Here, too, in the moments of grief he wept over her divisions and her downfall. The place continues a family possession, and, identified as it is with the name of Grattan, should never be allowed to pass into the possession of any others.

Grattan's wife, highly gifted by nature, and with her mind cultivated and enlarged by education, urgently pressed him to embark in political life. She knew, even better than himself, what his mental resources were, how patriotic were his impulses, how great his integrity, how undaunted his courage. She interested his friends in his behalf, and, at last, on the death of Mr. Caulfield (Lord Charlemont's brother), Grattan was returned to Parliament for the borough of Charlemont, and on the 11th of December, 1775, in his thirtieth year, Henry Grattan took his seat as member for Charlemont. On the fourth day after he made a speech—a spontaneous, unstudied, and eloquent reply—and it was at once seen and admitted that his proper place was in Parliament. From that day the life of Grattan can be read in the history of Ireland.

What he did may be briefly summed up. He established the Independence of Ireland, by procuring the repeal of the statute by which it had been declared that Ireland was inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, and bound by British acts of Parliament, if named in them—that the

Irish House of Lords had no jurisdiction in matters of appeal—and that the *dernier resort*, in all cases of law and equity, was to the peers of Great Britain.

For his great services in thus establishing Ireland's rights, the Parliament voted him £50,000. He considered that this was a retainer for the future as well as a mark of gratitude for the past, and henceforth devoted the remainder of his life—a period of nearly forty years—to the service of his country.

Grattan's last act, as an Irish legislator, was to oppose the Union, which destroyed the nationality he had made—his last act, as a public man, was to hurry to London, in his seventy-fifth year, under the infliction of a mortal disease, to present the petition in favour of the Irish Catholics, and support it, at the risk of life, in Parliament.

Grattan's great achievements were all accomplished in early life, while the "*purpurea juvenus*" was in its bloom, while the heart was in its spring. Great men, of all shades of political and party passion have been eager and eloquent in his praise. Byron, speaking of Ireland, ranked him first among those

"Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,  
And redeemed, if they have not retarded, her fall."

Moore, who knew him well, said,

"What an union of all the affections and powers,  
By which life is exalted, embellished, refined,  
Was embraced in that spirit—whose centre was ours,  
While its mighty circumference circled mankind."

Faithfully too, as well as poetically, did he describe his speeches as exhibiting

"An eloquence rich, wherever its wave  
Wandered free and triumphant, with thoughts that shone  
through,  
As clear as the brook's 'stone of lustre,' and gave,  
With the flash of the gem, its solidity too."

Lord Brougham said that it was "not possible to name any one, the purity of whose reputation has been stained by so few faults, and the lustre of whose renown is dimmed by so few imperfections." After describing the characteristics of his eloquence, he added, "It may be truly said that Dante himself never conjured up a striking image in fewer words than Mr. Grattan employed to describe his relation towards Irish independence, when, alluding to its rise in 1782, and its fall, twenty years later, he said, 'I sat by its cradle—I followed its hearse.'"

Sydney Smith, in an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, shortly after Grattan's death, thus bore testimony to his worth:—"Great men hallow a whole people, and lift up all who live in their time. What Irishman does not feel proud that he has lived in the days of Grattan? who has not turned to him

for comfort, from the false friends and open enemies of Ireland? who did not remember him in the days of its burnings, wastings and murders? No government ever dismayed him—the world could not bribe him—he thought only of Ireland: lived for no other object: dedicated to her his beautiful fancy, his elegant wit, his manly courage, and all the splendour of his astonishing eloquence. He was so born, so gifted, that poetry, forensic skill, elegant literature, and all the highest attainments of human genius, were within his reach; but he thought the noblest occupation of a man was to make other men happy and free; and in that straight line he kept for fifty years, without one side-look, one yielding thought, one motive in his heart which he might not have laid open to the view of God or man."

The man to whom tributes such as these were voluntarily paid, must have been a mortal of no ordinary character and merit.

## DANIEL O'CONNELL.

DANIEL O'CONNELL, at one period called "the member for all Ireland," was born, not at, but near Derrynane Abbey, in Kerry, on the 6th of August, 1775, and died at Genoa on the 15th of May, 1847. He had nearly completed his seventy-second year. For nearly forty years of that extended period he had been a public man—perhaps the most public man in Ireland. For at least a quarter of a century his reputation was not merely Irish—nor British—nor European—but unquestionably cosmopolitan.

Fallen as we are upon the evil days of Mediocrity, it may not be useless to dwell upon the conduct and the character, the aims and the actions, of one who, think of him as we may, candour must admit to be one of the great men of the age,—one of the very few great men of Ireland's later years.

"Some men are born to greatness—some achieve greatness—and some have greatness thrust upon them." Daniel O'Connell stands in a predicament between the two latter postulates. He certainly was the artificer of his own fame and power, but, as certainly, much of it arose out of the force of circumstances. When he launched his bark upon the

ocean of politics, he may have anticipated something—much of success and eminence, but he never could have dreamed of wielding such complete and magnificent power as was long at his command. Strong determination, great ability, natural facility of expression, the art of using strong words without committing himself, and a most elastic temperament, ("prepared for either fortune," as Eugene Aram said of himself)—all these formed an extraordinary combination, and yet all these, even in their unity, might have been of little worth, but for the admitted fact that circumstances happily occurred which allowed these qualities a fair scope for development. Many poets, I dare swear, have lived and died unknown—either not writing at all, or writing but to destroy what they had written. Noble orators have lived and died, "mute and inglorious," because the opportunity for display had never been given. In truth, we may say, with Philip Van Artevelde,

"The world knows nothing of its greatest men."

It is the curse of Authorship that until the grave fully closes upon his ashes, the fame of the writer is scarcely or slightly acknowledged. When the turf presses upon his remains, we yield tardy justice to his merits, and translate him, as a star, into the "heaven of heavens" of renown. But the Orator,



on the other hand, has *his* claims admitted from the commencement—he may make his fame by one bold effort—he may win admiration at one bound, and each successive trial, while it matures his powers, increases his reputation. He lives in the midst of his fame—it surrounds him, like a halo: he is the observed of all observers,—he has constant motive for exertion—he breathes the very atmosphere of popularity, and has perpetual excitement to keep up his exertions. Of this there scarcely ever was a more palpable example than O'Connell. Originally gifted with all the attributes of a popular if not a great orator, he advanced, by repeated efforts, to the foremost rank, because the public voice cheered him—the public opinion fostered him. Had he, for three or four years, spoken to dull or cold audiences, the world would probably have lost him as an orator. He might, indeed, have been a great forensic speaker, but of that eloquence which placed seven millions of Irish Catholics in a situation where, without being branded as rebels, they might openly demand “justice for Ireland,” the chance is, the world have known nothing. What man, before this man, had ever succeeded in awakening at once the sympathy of the old and of the new world? Few men so well out-argued the sophistry of tyranny. Far above the crowd must he be, who, at one and the same time, affrighted the Russian autocrat by his bold invectives, and was appealed

to as the common enemy of misrule, by the unhappy victims of the “Citizen-King”—who not only asserted the rights of his fellow slaves in Ireland, but hesitated not, at all times and in all places, to express his

“ Utter detestation  
Of every tyranny in every nation !”

O'Connell was often denounced as a “Dictator.” What made him one? The exclusive laws which kept him humiliated in his native land. The wrongs of Ireland made him what he was, and Misrule carefully maintained the laws which made those wrongs. Had Ireland been justly governed, there would not have been occasion for such “agitation” as Mr. O'Connell kept up. If the “agitator” was indeed the monster which he was represented to be, Misrule is the Frankenstein which made him so. The wrongs of Ireland and the tyranny of evil government goaded him into action, and gave him power. Misrule sowed the wind, and reaped the whirlwind.

It has been strongly asserted, and as strongly denied, that a long line of ancestry gave O'Connell an hereditary right to take part in the public affairs of his native land, as if he, and all of us, did not inherit that right as an heir-loom derived from the first principles of nature. The tradition of his house was that the O'Connell family were entitled to rank among the most ancient in Ireland, antiquarians

having avowed that his surname was derived from Conal Gabhra, a prince of the royal line of Milesius—that they originally possessed immense estates in the county of Limerick, and removed to the barony of Iveragh, in the western extremity of Kerry, where they enjoyed the almost regal office of Toparchs;—that, in the time of Elizabeth, their then chief, Richard O'Connell, made submission of his lands to the British crown;—that the rebellion of 1641 removed the sept O'Connell to the County Clare, by forfeiture (a certain Maurice O'Connell it was who forfeited his property in the Civil Wars of 1641, and received the estates in Clare as a partial indemnity; his uncle, Daniel O'Connell of Aghgore, in Iveragh, took no share in the Civil War, and thus preserved his estate);—that the Clare branch of the family supported James II., and, on the triumphs of the Orange party, had to seek in foreign lands the distinctions from which the Penal Laws excluded it in its own.

One of these, a certain Daniel O'Connell, who subsequently was created Count of "the Holy Roman Empire," disqualified, by his religion, from holding military or civil rank in his own country, entered the French service in 1757—when he was only fourteen years of age. He served in the seven years' war—at the capture of Port Mahon, in 1779, and was severely wounded at the grand sortie on Gibraltar in 1782—remained faithful to Louis XVI., until fidelity was of no further use—emigrated to

England—was there appointed, in 1793, Colonel of the 6th Irish Brigade—retained that command until the corps was disbanded—returned to France, at the Restoration, in 1814—was there and then restored to his rank of General and Colonel-Commandant of the regiment of Salm, and named Grand Cross of the Order of St. Louis—refused to take rank under Louis Philippe—and died in 1834, aged ninety-one, a military patriarch, full of years and honours, holding the rank of General in the French, and being oldest Colonel in the English service. Count O'Connell was grand-uncle to "the Liberator."

It may not be generally known that the military tactics of Europe at the present day have emanated from Count O'Connell. The French Government resolved, in 1787, that the art of war should be thoroughly revised, and a military board, consisting of four general officers and one colonel, was formed for that purpose. Count O'Connell, who then commanded the Royal Suedois (or Swedish) regiment, was justly accounted one of the most scientific officers in the service, and was named as the junior member of that board. The other members soon discovered how correct and original were the views of their colleague, and unanimously confided to him the *redaction* of the whole military code of France. So well did he execute this important commission, that his tactics were followed in the early campaigns of revolutionized France, by Napoleon—and

finally adopted by Prussia, Austria, Russia and England.

To Morgan O'Connell, father of "the Liberator," descended none of the property originally held by the family. His elder brother, Maurice, succeeded to a large portion, (that which eventually was bequeathed to Daniel,) and it had the peculiarity of being free from all chiefry, imposts, or Crown charge—an unusual thing, and occurring only in the instance of very remote tenure. This portion was held under what was called Shelburne leases—renewable for ever, and first granted *before* the enactment of the Penal laws, and therefore not "discoverable;" that is, not liable to be claimed from a Catholic holder by any Protestant who chose to claim them.

Daniel O'Connell's father became a petty farmer and a small shop-keeper at Cahirciveen. At that time he was simply known as "Morgan Connell,"—there being some to this day who wholly deny the right of the family to the prefix of "O." The Irish proverb says:

By Mac and O,  
You'll always know  
True Irishmen, they say;  
For if they lack  
The O or Mac,  
No Irishmen are they.

The same doubters have contended that the inde-

pendence realized by Morgan O'Connell was gained, not by farming nor by shop-keeping, but by extensive smuggling. But it was gained in some manner, and with it was purchased a small estate at Carhen, within a mile of Cahirciveen, where his years of industry had been passed, and not far from Derrynane. It was at Carhen that Daniel O'Connell was born, on the 6th August, 1775—the very day (he used to say) on which were commenced hostilities between Great Britain and her American colonies.

Daniel O'Connell's grandfather was the third son of twenty-two children. He died in 1770, leaving as his successor his second son, Maurice (John, the eldest, having predeceased him). This gentleman was never married, and it was on his death, in 1825, that the "Agitator" succeeded him as owner of the Derrynane estate. Morgan O'Connell (father to the "Liberator") died in 1809, and left two other sons, who are also handsomely provided for—John, as owner of Grena, and James of Lakeview, both places near Killarney.

I trust that I have not travelled out of my way to give this sketch of the descent of the family connexions of O'Connell. It shows that, at any rate, *he* is not the *novus homo*—the mere upstart, without the advantages of birth and fortune, which he was often represented to be. At the same time, no O'Connell need be ashamed of what honest industry accomplished—that much of

the landed property which O'Connell's father inherited, held by John O'Connell of Grena, was purchased from the profits of his business as a farmer and general shop-keeper.

From the first, Maurice O'Connell, of Derrynane, attached himself to his nephew Daniel, whom he educated. The earliest instructions in any branch of learning which the future "Liberator" received, were communicated to him by a poor hedge-school-master, of a class ever abounding in Kerry, where every man is said to speak Latin. David Mahony happened to call at Carhen when little Daniel was only four years old, took him in his lap, and taught him the alphabet in an hour and a half. Some years later, he was regularly taught by Mr. Harrington—one of the first priests who set up a school after the repeal of the laws which made it penal for a Roman Catholic clergyman even to live in Ireland. At the age of fourteen he went abroad with his brother Maurice to obtain a good education.

Seventy years ago, the policy, or rather the impolicy of English domination actually prohibited the education of the Catholics within Great Britain and Ireland. They were, therefore, either compelled to put up with very limited education, or forced to go abroad for instruction,—rather a curious mode of predisposing their minds in favour of the English laws. Mr. O'Connell was originally intended for the priesthood, and was educated at the Catholic

seminary of Louvain, next at St. Omer, and, finally, at the English college of Douay, in France. But, at that time, there were fully as many lay as clerical pupils at that college.

At St. Omer, Daniel O'Connell rose to the first place in all the classes, and the President of the College wrote to his uncle, in Ireland—"I have but one sentence to write about him, and that is, that I never was so mistaken in all my life as I shall be, unless he be destined to make a remarkable figure in society."

The two brothers commenced their homeward journey on the 21st of December, 1793—the very day on which Louis XVI. was guillotined at Paris. During their journey from Douay to Calais, they were obliged to wear the revolutionary cockade, for safety. But, as good Catholics, they were bound to abhor the atrocities perpetrated, at that time, by the Jacobins, in the sacred name of liberty, and when they stood on the deck of the English packet-boat, indignantly tore the tri-colour from their hats, and flung them, with all contempt, into the water. Some French fishermen, who saw the act, rescued the cockades, and flung imprecations against the "aristocrats" who had rejected them. At the same time, when an enthusiastic Irish republican, who had "assisted" at the execution of Louis, exhibited a handkerchief stained with his blood, the young students turned away and shunned him, in

disgust and abhorrence. Not then, nor at any period of his career, was O'Connell an anti-monarchist. It is said that, during the trial of Thomas Hardy, at London, (October, 1794,) for high treason, he was so much shocked at the unfair means used by the Crown lawyers to convict the accused—means foiled by eloquent Erskine and an honest jury—that he resolved to place himself as a champion of Right against Might, and identify himself with the cause of the people. While he was on the Continent, that relaxation of the Penal laws took place which allowed the Catholic to become a barrister. It is probable that *this* was the immediate cause of his becoming a lawyer. A young man of his sanguine temperament was likely to prefer the bar, with its temporal advantages,—its scope for ambition,—its excitement,—its fame, to the more secluded life of an ecclesiastic. Accordingly, I find that he entered as a law-student at Lincoln's Inn, in January, 1794—eat the requisite number of term-dinners there, for two years—pursued the same qualifying course of "study" at King's Inn, Dublin, and was called to the Irish bar, in Easter term, 1798, in the 23d year of his age.

The Rebellion was in full fling at the time, and (in order, no doubt, to show his "loyalty" as a Catholic) he joined what was called "the lawyers' corps," associated to assist the Government in putting down revolt.

The period of his admission was singularly favourable. Catholics had just been admitted to the Irish bar—to the minor honours of the profession; although it was hoped, and not extravagantly, that, in time, all its privileges would be thrown open to them. It was impossible to say what was Mr. O'Connell's ambition at the time; however high, he could not have had a dream of the elevation which he subsequently reached. He must have felt, however, that he had a wide field for the exercise of his abilities. His ostensible ambition, for many years, was to become a good lawyer. During what is called "the long vacation," and at other periods when he could spare time, he resided a good deal with his uncle in Kerry, where he pursued the athletic sports in which, almost to the close of his career, he delighted to participate. On one occasion, while out upon a hunting expedition, he put up at a peasant's cabin, sat for some hours in his wet clothes, and contracted a typhus fever. In his delirium he often repeated the lines from Home's tragedy of Douglas:

"Unknown I die—no tongue shall speak of me.  
Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,  
May yet conjecture what I might have proved,  
And think life only wanting to my fame."

His son has preserved a letter, written in December, 1795, when he was in his twenty-first year, in

which he communicates his views to his uncle Maurice, of Derrynane. A passage or two may be worth quoting, to show with what earnestness he devoted himself to the career upon which he was then preparing to enter. He says, "I have now two objects to pursue—the one, the attainment of knowledge; the other, the acquisition of all those qualities which constitute the polite gentleman. I am convinced that the former, besides the immediate pleasure which it yields, *is calculated to raise me to honour, rank, and fortune* [how prophetic were the young man's aspirations!]; and I know that the latter serves as a general passport or first recommendation; and, as for the motives of ambition which you suggest, I assure you that no man can possess more of it than I do. I have, indeed, a glowing, and—if I may use the expression—an enthusiastic ambition, *which converts every toil into a pleasure, and every study into an amusement.*"

He adds, in the same honourable spirit, "Though nature may have given me subordinate talents, I never will be satisfied with a subordinate situation in my profession. No man is able, I am aware, to supply the total deficiency of abilities, but every body is capable of improving and enlarging a stock, however small, and, in its beginning, contemptible. It is this reflection that affords me most consolation. If I do not rise at the bar, I will not have to meet the reproaches of my own conscience. \* \* \* In-

deed, as for my knowledge in the professional line, that cannot be discovered for some years to come; but I have time in the interim to prepare myself to appear with greater *éclat* on the grand theatre of the world."

As a barrister, he naturally took the Munster circuit, and here his family connexion operated very much in his favour. In the counties of Clare, Limerick, Kerry and Cork, he had relatives in abundance, and being, I believe, the first Catholic who had gone that circuit, he naturally engrossed a considerable portion of the business which the Catholics had previously, *ex necessitate*, distributed among the barristers of a contrary persuasion. He succeeded, moreover, in establishing the reputation of being a shrewd, clever, hard-working lawyer, and briefs flowed in so abundantly, that he may be cited as one instance, amid the ten thousand difficulties of the bar, of great success being immediately acquired. There was nothing precarious in this success: he was evidently a shrewd, clever, long-headed lawyer, and while the Catholics gave him briefs, because of his family and religion, the Protestants, not less wise, were not backward in engaging his assistance—not that they much loved the man, but that his assistance was worth having, as that of a man with a clear head, a well-filled mind, strong natural eloquence, and, from the very first, a mastery over the art of cross-examining witnesses.

O'Connell's friends scarcely anticipated, from what his youth had been, the success which met him on his first step into active manhood. He held his first brief at the Kerry Assizes, in Tralee. Between a country gentleman named Brusker Segerson and the O'Connells there long had been a family feud. Brusker accused one of the O'Connell tenants at Iveragh, of sundry crimes and misdemeanors, which judge and jury had "well and truly to try and determine." Young O'Connell had his maiden brief in this case. Brusker, knowing the young lawyer's inexperience, anticipated a triumph over him, and invited a party of friends to witness the "fatal facility" with which the accused would be worsted. But it happened not only that the accused was the acquitted, but there was a general opinion, from the facts on the trial, that Brusker Segerson's conduct had been oppressive, if not illegal. Brusker turned round to his friends and soundly swore that "Morgan O'Connell's *fool* was a great lawyer, and would be a great man." Henceforth he always employed O'Connell—but with the distinct and truly Irish understanding that the hereditary and personal feud between them should in no wise be diminished!

One of O'Connell's earliest displays of acuteness was at Tralee, in the year 1799, shortly after he had been called to the bar. In an intricate case, where he was junior counsel (having got the brief more as a family compliment than from any other cause), the

question in dispute was as to the validity of a will, which had been made almost in *articulo mortis*. The instrument was drawn up with proper form: the witnesses were examined, and gave ample confirmation that the deed had been legally executed. One of them was an old servant, possessed of a strong passion for loquacity. It fell to O'Connell to cross-examine him, and the young barrister allowed him to speak on, in the hope that he might say too much. Nor was this hope disappointed. The witness had already sworn that he saw the deceased sign the will. "Yes," continued he, with all the garrulousness of old age, "I saw him sign it, and surely *there was life in him at the time.*" The expression, frequently repeated, led O'Connell to conjecture that it had a peculiar meaning. Fixing his eye upon the old man he said,—“You have taken a solemn oath before God and man to speak the truth and the *whole* truth: the eye of God is upon you; the eyes of your neighbours are fixed upon you also. Answer me, by the virtue of that sacred and solemn oath which has passed your lips, *was the testator alive when he signed the will?*” The witness was struck with the solemn manner in which he was addressed, his colour changed—his lips quivered—his limbs trembled, and he faltered out the reply—“*there was life in him.*” The question was repeated in a yet more impressive manner, and the result was that O'Connell half compelled, half cajoled him to admit

that, after life was extinct, a pen had been put into the testator's hand,—that one of the party guided it to sign his name, while, as a salvo, for the consciences of all concerned, a living fly was put into the dead man's mouth, to qualify the witnesses to bear testimony that "there was life in him" when he signed that will. This fact, thus extorted from the witness, preserved a large property in a respectable and worthy family, and was one of the first occurrences in O'Connell's legal career worth mentioning. Miss Edgeworth, in her "Patronage," has an incident not much different from this; perhaps suggested by it. The plaintiffs in this case were two sisters named Langton, both of whom still enjoy the property miraculously preserved to them by the ingenuity of O'Connell; they were connexions of my own (Sarah Langton, the youngest, was married to my cousin, Frank Drew, of Drewscourt), and I have often heard them relate the manner in which he had contrived to elicit the truth.

It is no common skill which can protect innocence from shame, or rescue guilt from punishment. Nothing less than an intimate knowledge of the feelings of the jury, and the habits and characteristics of the witnesses, can enable an advocate to throw himself into the confidence of a jury composed of the most incongruous elements, and to confuse, baffle, or detect the witnesses. There is no power so strong as that of good cross-examination; and I never knew

any man possess that power in a more eminent degree than O'Connell. The difficulty is to avoid asking too many questions. Sometimes a single query will weaken evidence, while a word more may make the witness confirm it. Some witnesses require to be pressed, before they bring out the truth—others, if too much pressed, will turn at bay, and fatally corroborate every thing to which they already have sworn. It is no common skill which, intuitively as it were, enables the advocate to perceive when he may go to the end of his tether,—when he *must* restrain. The fault of a young barrister is that *he asks too many questions*. It is a curious fact, that, from the first moment he was called to the bar, O'Connell distinguished himself by his cross-examinations. If he was eminent in a criminal trial, he was no less so in civil cases. Here he brought all his legal learning to bear upon the case, and here, too, he had the additional aid of that eloquence which usually drew a jury with him.

John O'Connell gives an anecdote which illustrates his father's success in the defence of his prisoners. It had fallen to his lot, at the Assizes in Cork, to be retained for a man on a trial for an aggravated case of highway robbery. By an able cross-examination, O'Connell was enabled to procure the man's acquittal. The following year, at the Assizes for the same town, he found himself again retained for the same individual, then on trial for a burglary, com-



mitted with great violence, very little short of a deliberate attempt to murder. On this occasion, the result of Mr. O'Connell's efforts rose a disagreement of the jury; and, therefore, no verdict. The Government witnesses having been entirely discredited during the cross-examination, the case was pursued no farther, and the prisoner was discharged. Again, the succeeding year, he was found in the criminal dock; this time on a charge of piracy! He had run away with a collier brig, and having found means for disposing of a portion of her cargo, and afterwards of supplying himself with some arms, he had actually commenced cruising on his own account, levying contributions from such vessels as he chanced to fall in with. Having "caught a tartar," whilst engaged in this profitable occupation, he was brought into Cove, and thence sent up to Cork to stand his trial for "piracy on the high seas." Again Mr. O'Connell saved him, by demurring to the jurisdiction of the Court—the offence having been committed within the jurisdiction of the Admiralty, and, therefore, cognizable only before an Admiralty Court. When the fellow saw his successful counsel facing the dock, he stretched over to speak to him, and, raising his eyes and hands most piously and fervently to heaven, he cried out—"Oh, Mr. O'Connell, may the Lord spare you—to me!"

Here let me give my opinion, that the disqualifi-

cation of his religious tenets, which kept him in a stuff gown while his juniors in standing, and inferiors in talent, were strutting about with all professional honour, was *not* much detriment to O'Connell's advancement. Here was a man, confessedly at the head of his profession, yet excluded from its honours by unjust and intolerant laws—it became, therefore, a practice to consider him a martyr for the sake of his religion, and he got many and many a brief because such was the feeling. His disqualification as a Catholic gained him business as a Barrister.

The Union failed to make Ireland happy—because the chains of the Catholics were still allowed to gall them, instead, as Mr. Pitt contemplated, of being removed with the least possible delay. George III. threw himself between Ireland and justice. Relief was expected from Mr. Fox, and might, perhaps, have been granted, but the death of that statesman, almost immediately succeeded by an Anti-Catholic Ministry, sounded the knell to the hopes of the people of Ireland. It was at this time that Mr. O'Connell came forward as a politician; he had personal reasons for doing so, because, now being in the enjoyment of a very excellent practice at the bar, he found numerous vexations arising from the privileges enjoyed by men less talented, less qualified than himself, but who enjoyed the advantages which religious and political "ascendency" gave them.

The Catholics at last threw themselves into an

attitude of defence. O'Connell's first decided step\* was the taking part in the proceedings of a meeting of Catholics, held in Dublin in May, 1809. Then, for the first time for over a hundred years, Catholics literally "spoke out." Their daring appeared to draw strength for their despair. What was called "the Catholic Committee" was formed, and this, strongly against O'Connell's advice, violated the law by assuming a *representative* character. Lord Killeen (eldest son of the Earl of Fingal, a Catholic peer), and some others of the leaders, were prosecuted by the Government. They were defended by O'Connell, and Ireland then witnessed the almost unprecedented circumstance of Catholic agitators being acquitted by a Protestant jury in Dublin.

The Catholic Committee, however, became alarmed, and broke up. Then was formed the Catholic Board, at which it was a matter of dispute whether Emancipation might not be purchased by allowing the Crown to pay the Catholic clergy, and giving the head of the Church of England a veto on the appointment of Catholic bishops in Ireland. Feeble and vacillating, the greater portion of the Catholic nobility held aloof from the struggle, in which O'Connell took the popular side. Later in the day,

\* O'Connell's first public speech was against the Union. It was made on January 13, 1800, at a Catholic meeting in Dublin, in unequivocal condemnation of that measure. The resolutions that day adopted were drawn up by O'Connell.

Sheil entered the arena, and assumed an antagonistic position.

The late Duke of Richmond (Viceroy of Ireland) put down the Catholic Board by means of his Attorney-General Saurin. The members of that Board, as some small acknowledgment for the services of their colleague, voted Mr. O'Connell a piece of plate, of the value of 1000*l*. The Board being put down, the Catholic cause would have fallen but for the intrepidity of O'Connell, who assumed the leadership at once, and published a letter, continued annually for a long time, in which he stated the wrongs of Ireland, with her claims for relief, and suggested the mode of action. This annual message had the motto, from Childe Harold,

"Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not,  
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow."

Mr. Saurin is said to have seriously contemplated prosecuting O'Connell for sedition because of this motto from "Childe Harold."

The Catholic Board was suppressed, it is true, but there remained a thousand modes of action by which the spirit of patriotism might be kept alive in Ireland. Aggregate and other public meetings were instantly held, and at one of these Mr. O'Connell, in 1815, designated the Corporation of Dublin as a "beggarly corporation." A member of that "beggarly" and bankrupt body took upon himself to

play the bravo in its defence. This man was a Mr. D'Esterre, and is understood to have had a promise of patronage from the Corporation (in the shape of a good berth), if he humbled the pride of O'Connell. It is more charitable than reasonable to hope that the Corporation were not so ruffianly as to hold out this hope to D'Esterre, because he was notoriously the best shot in Dublin; and yet, such "honourable" assassination is exactly what such a body would reward, if they did not suggest it.

D'Esterre paraded the streets of Dublin with a horse-whip in his hand, and vowed vengeance against O'Connell. He did not meet him; but he afterwards challenged him. O'Connell refused to apologize—met the challenger, and mortally wounded him. D'Esterre, as I have said, was a crack shot, and O'Connell was not; but it sometimes happens that the practiced duellist suffers the penalty which he has inflicted upon others.

D'Esterre had been an officer of marines, and it has been stated, and always believed, that he constituted himself the Champion of the Corporation, not only in the hope, but with a direct promise of obtaining a lucrative appointment, provided that he "silenced" O'Connell. The odds were five to one in his favour—for he was cool and determined, and could snuff a candle with a pistol shot at twelve paces. His skill, his coolness, availed not. At the first shot he fell, and his death speedily followed.

Soon after, Sir Robert Peel (the then Irish Secretary) fastened a quarrel upon Mr. O'Connell, who again placed himself in the hands of his friends. A hostile meeting was appointed—the authorities in Dublin interfered—the parties were bound over to keep the peace—they agreed to meet on the Continent, but the duel was ultimately prevented by the arrest of Mr. O'Connell, in London, on his way to Calais. He was held to bail before the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, not to fight Mr. Peel; and since that time declined any further meetings of the sort.\* It would have been well if, when he determined to avoid duels, O'Connell had also resolved to abstain from language offensive to men of honour and men of feeling. His chief fault, during his last thirty years, was the application of epithets towards

\* It was the late Dr. England, Catholic Bishop of Charleston, S. C., who then resided near Cork, who pointed out to O'Connell the conjoint sin and folly of duelling, and induced him to promise that he would never again appeal to arms. It was reported, at the time, that O'Connell had lingered in London, when Peel expected him at Calais, awaiting news of his wife's health (he had left her ill in Dublin), and that another public character had declined a challenge on the plea of his daughter's illness. The late Chief Justice Burke thus commemorated the double event:

"Two heroes of Erin, abhorrent of slaughter,  
Improved on the Hebrew command;  
One honored his wife, and the other his daughter,  
That 'their days might be long on the land.'"

his political opponents, which appear to have been culled rather in the market of Billingsgate, than in the flowery garden of Academe!

For several years after the duel with D'Esterre, O'Connell was almost alone in the struggle for Emancipation. His practice steadily increased, and his legal knowledge, ability and tact, united with wondrous art in the examination of witnesses, and great influence with juries (by the union of a species of rhetoric consisting of common sense, humour, and rough eloquence, cemented together by a good share of "Blarney"), soon made him a very successful barrister. Whenever a Catholic victim was to be defended or rescued, whether an Orange oppressor was to be assailed and punished, O'Connell was in the van. The Catholics readily took him as their champion, and he won their gratitude by his services, and gained their personal attachment by a good humour which nothing could daunt, and a plain, straightforward, affectionate manner of eloquence which went directly home to their hearts. To this hour it is a moot point whether the Irish had greater admiration for his talents, gratitude for his services, confidence in his fidelity, or attachment for his person.

He continued increasing in influence for many years. From 1815, until he relinquished most of his practice in 1831, the annual income from his professional pursuits cannot have averaged less than

from £6000 to £8000—an immense sum for a lawyer to make in Ireland. No man could make such an income, except one who was at once an excellent Nisi Prius pleader, as well as a good Crown lawyer. He united the highest qualifications of both. He could wield at will immense power over a jury, and argue with a success rarely equalled, so as to reach the understanding of a judge. Hence, he had the most extraordinary versatility. You would see him at one o'clock joking a jury out of a verdict in the Nisi Prius court, or familiarly laying down cases for the information of the judge; and, the next hour, you might behold him in the Crown court, defending an unhappy man accused of murder, and exercising a caution and prudence in his unparalleled cross-examination of witnesses which would alike surprise and please. No man could more readily get the truth from a witness, or make him say only just as much as suits the particular point he had in view.

In 1821, when George the Fourth visited Ireland, Mr. O'Connell made "his first appearance, by particular desire," in the part of a courtier. He presented a laurel crown to the monarch on his departure, and eulogized him to the seventh heaven as "a real friend of old Ireland," anxious to see her

"Great, glorious, and free,  
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea."

He did more than this. He sacrificed his feelings, as a Catholic, in order to conciliate the Ascendancy party. Intent on conciliation, he even dined with the Dublin Corporation, and drank their charter toast of intolerance,\* "The pious, glorious and immortal memory." Concession was vain. The leopard would not change his spots; and, throwing away the scabbard, O'Connell drew the sword, and threw himself, body and soul, into the stormy battle of Agitation.

In 1823, O'Connell, finding how little was to be anticipated from George IV. (who, as king, forgot the promises he made when Prince of Wales), organized a great plan for uniting his Catholic countrymen into an array against the laws which excluded them from the enjoyment of their civil and

\* This celebrated toast, the drinking or refusal of which, for many years, was the great test of (political) Protestantism in Ireland, was drank on the knee, and ran thus: "The glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good King William, Prince of Orange, who saved us from Pope and Popery, brass money and wooden shoes. He that don't drink this toast, may the north wind blow him to the south, and a west wind blow him to the east; may he have a dark night, a lee shore, a rank storm, and a leaky vessel to carry him over the ferry to hell; may the devil jump down his throat with a red-hot harrow, that every pin may tear out his inside; may he be rammed, jammed, and damned into the great gun of Athlone, and fired off into the kitchen of hell, where the Pope is roasted on a spit, and basted with the fat of Charles James Fox, while the Devil stands by pelting him with Cardinals!"

religious rights. He had great difficulty in arousing the languid energies of the Irish people, so hopeless had they been for a long time. At last, the Catholic Association assumed a "local habitation and a name." The subscription to the somewhat aristocratical Catholic Board had been five pounds a year—one fifth of that amount was the payment to the Association; and, at last, the Catholic Rent was instituted on the basis of admitting contributions of a shilling a-year. Every subscriber to this small amount thereby became a member of the Association, and crowds eagerly joined it, on these terms, from all parts of Ireland. Here were agitation and combination. Here was money, the very sinews of war. Here was a fund, large in amount, annually augmenting, applicable to a variety of purposes connected with the assertion of the Catholic claims and the defence of Catholics, who thought themselves individually wronged or injured by their Orange masters. Here, with O'Connell at their head, was a band of leaders, most of them in the practice of the law, who had station, influence, audacity, courage, integrity, and the art of moving the multitude by voice or pen. The Government speedily feared, and felt, it to be an *imperium in imperio*.

Armed with a vast numerical combination, strong in the possession of large funds, headed by able and fearless men, the Association assumed the duty of standing between the people and the mal-adminis-

tration of the law. Every local act of tyranny, intolerance and oppression was exposed, if it were not visited with exemplary punishment. The complaints of the people were heard, through the influence of the leaders, within the very walls of the Imperial Parliament. A brilliant arena was opened for Catholic talent, for the Association held its discussions like a regular legislative assembly, and its debates were spread abroad, all over the kingdom, on the wings of the press. Of the whole system O'Connell was the motive power—the head—the heart. His influence was immense.

Such an array could not be beheld by any government with indifference. It was determined to put down the Association by act of Parliament. In 1825, O'Connell formed one of a deputation to England, to make arrangements for an adjustment of the Catholic claims—committed the error of consenting to take Emancipation clogged with "the wings" (that is, to State payment for the Catholic clergy, and confiscation of the 40s. elective franchise), but finally admitted his mistake, and his error of judgment was forgiven by his countrymen. The Association was suppressed. O'Connell, whose policy was to baffle rather than to contest, and whose boast ever was that he agitated "within the law," allowed the Catholic Association to dissolve itself, but continued the agitation by "aggregate meetings" in nearly every county of Ireland, and by the

establishment of a new Catholic Association, formed ostensibly for purposes of charity alone. The Government could do nothing against this.

In 1826, when a general election took place, O'Connell brought into unexpected operation the forces which he commanded. He started popular candidates in several Irish counties, and defeated the former members, who had always voted against the Catholics. The lesson was a striking one, but the Executive in Downing-street heeded it not, and declared unmitigated and perpetual enmity against the Catholics. On the other hand, the Association pledged itself to oppose every candidate connected with the government. In 1828, a vacancy occurred, by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald (who himself had always voted for Catholic Emancipation) having accepted a seat in the Duke of Wellington's Cabinet, and then O'Connell ventured the bold experiment of contesting the representation of Clare. He was returned after a most severe contest—forced Wellington, by that election to concede Emancipation—claimed his seat under that concession—was refused by Manners Sutton, the Speaker—was re-elected for Clare\*—since sat for Waterford, Kerry, Dublin, Kilkenny, and Cork—made the best speech upon the Reform Bill—supported the Melbourne ministry when the contest between them and Peel came on—invariably main-

\* Mr. Grattan says, at an expense of £20,000—an amount which seems incredible, as there was only a brief shadow of opposition.

tained the most liberal principles, and supported the most liberal measures—diminished, if he did not conquer, the dislike which England and Scotland felt towards him as a Catholic and Irish agitator—and had a parliamentary influence greater than any man ever before possessed, being able to count on the votes of *forty* members, who formed what is called the joints of his “tail.”

Had O’Connell’s labors as an agitator ceased when they achieved Emancipation, no reputation could have stood higher. But, from 1829, he attempted to make “Repeal” his party-cry. In April, 1834, he moved for the Repeal of the Union. Thirty-eight members voted *with*, and five hundred and twenty-three *against* him. Only *one* English member supported him—Mr. James Kennedy, who sat for the small borough of Tiverton.

The influence of O’Connell continued great, with the Government, as well as in Ireland, while the Whigs were in office. But the Melbourne ministry broke up in the autumn of 1841, and “Othello’s occupation” was gone when they went over to the opposition benches. In 1843, it is true, he made renewed, important and remarkable attempts to excite Ireland—to agitate (within the law) against the government of which Sir Robert Peel was the head, but he was prosecuted, and the Monster Trials, lasting twenty-five days, and ending in his conviction and imprisonment, first taught his countrymen that

he was not infallible nor invulnerable. His conviction was subsequently annulled by the House of Lords, on appeal, but the iron had entered into his soul, and when he resumed his seat in Parliament he evidently was breaking. Then followed the revolt against his supremacy by the vigorous and more decided “Young Ireland” party, and, with failing health and defeated aims, he went to the Continent—his desire being to visit that imperial and Papal Rome of which he had long been the energetic and obedient servant. He died before he accomplished his pilgrimage; but his heart rests in the Eternal City.

Here it can scarcely be out of place to glance at O’Connell’s success as a Parliamentary orator.

In the British Parliament, where oratorical success is usually very difficult, Irishmen have generally shown themselves not merely good, but even eloquent speakers. Edmund Burke may challenge mention alongside of the great Chatham—and will have a more permanent place of honour, because his speeches, admirable even as compositions, now belong to the standard classics of the Anglo-Saxon race. Sir Philip Francis (the reputed author of “The Letters of Junius”) was not inferior, in power and effect, to the younger Pitt. Richard Brinsley Sheridan and George Canning nobly maintained the national credit, as transcendently eloquent men. Lord Wellesley and Henry Grattan occupy a first position as great orators. In later days, assuredly

Daniel O'Connell and Richard Lalor Sheil have not been surpassed by any of their rivals. Whenever Irish parliamentary eloquence is spoken of, William Conyngham Plunket cannot be overlooked. He was, perhaps, the very best speaker in the British Parliament at any time. He had few of the ordinary characteristics of Irish eloquence. Wit he possessed in a high degree, but was chary in its use. Pathos he rarely ventured upon—though there are some incidental touches at once tearful and tender. He relied on clear arrangement of facts, logical closeness of reasoning, strong earnestness, remarkable sagacity, and the exercise of tact and common sense which a spirit at once strong and ardent had disciplined and exercised. His manner, also, grave and almost austere, added weight to his words of power. He succeeded Grattan in the leadership of the Catholic party in Parliament, and his speech (in 1821) converted nine votes from hostility to justice. It was on this occasion, alluding to the great departed who had joined in the discussions relative to Ireland's claims for civil and religious liberty, that he said—"Walking before the sacred images of the illustrious dead, as in a public and solemn procession, shall we not dismiss all party feelings, all angry passions, all unworthy prejudices? I will not talk of past disputes; I will not mingle in this act of national justice anything that can awaken personal animosity."

It was not, however, in the English legislature, but during the last twenty years of the Irish Parliament, that Irish eloquence was in its zenith. On one hand were Fitzgibbon and Scott (afterwards Lords Clare and Clonmel), Connolly, Cavendish, and Arthur Wolfe. On the other side was such an array of talent, patriotism, and eloquence as, in the same period of time, has never been surpassed—never equalled. There were Hussey Burgh and James Fitzgerald, Flood and Grattan, Curran and Barry Yelverton, Plunket and Saurin, Parnell and Denis Daly, Brownlow and Saxton Perry, Foster and Ponsonby, Goold and Peter Burrowes, silvery-tongued Bushe and honest Robert Holmes. Most of these were lawyers, and made an exception to the general rule that the eloquence of the Bar and of the Senate are so different in character as to seem almost incompatible in practice. In Ireland, during her last days of nationality, the great cause for which they were contending, appeared to have animated the members of the bar with a spirit which disdained all narrow limits of conventionality, and elevated them above the ordinary routine of common life. We read, in Holy Writ, how one of the seraphim touched Isaiah's lips with fire, and, with little effort of the imagination, we may well believe that Patriotism, in like manner, touched the lips of Irishmen, during that hard struggle for the very existence of their nation, at once hallowing and



purifying the words which fell from them. But such eloquence was only a flash amid darkness, too brilliant to stay, and force and fraud were evil spirits superior, at that time, to Truth, Virtue, and Eloquence. The day may come when Ireland shall once again be a nation,—may the Past then and forever be a lesson and a warning.

It is singular that, in the Irish Parliament, nearly all the great speakers have been lawyers. With few exceptions, men of law have not succeeded in the English Parliament. Lords Mansfield, Lyndhurst and Brougham, with Romilly and Follett, are the chief exceptions. Camden, Thurlow, Eldon, Gifford, Cottenham, Truro, St. Leonards, Erskine, Scarlett, Stowell, Tenterden, Best, and a great many more did not maintain, in Parliament, the reputation they had won at the bar. Three Irishmen, however, albeit members of the legal profession, have taken the lead in the British Senate, even in our own time. These were Plunket, O'Connell, and Sheil.

Of Plunket and Sheil there may be another occasion and opportunity of speaking. It is of O'Connell that I would record a few impressions now. It must be remembered that when he entered Parliament, in 1829, he had entered into his fifty-fifth year. Plunket was at least ten years younger when he too entered the British House of Commons. Sheil was little more than thirty-six

when he took his seat. It was feared by his friends and hoped by his enemies that, like Erskine and other great advocates, O'Connell would fail in Parliament. True it was that Grattan was fifty-nine before he first spoke in the English House of Commons—but Grattan was one in ten thousand. Besides, he was all his life a parliamentary speaker, which is very different from being a lawyer in full practice also—the essentials for success at the bar and in the Senate being far apart. Grattan himself, speaking of his great rival, Flood, who had greatly distinguished himself in the Irish, and as greatly failed, in the English Parliament, said “he forgot that he was a tree of the forest, too old and too great to be transplanted at fifty.”

O'Connell's opponents confidently anticipated his failure. He is too much of a mob-orator, was the cry of one set. He will never please so refined an assembly as the British House of Commons; he is too much of a lawyer, said another section of ill-wishers, and we know how perpetually lawyers fail in the House. His accent is dead against him, lisped a few others, and will be laughed at as vulgar. One of his most violent antagonists was Lord Eldon, before whom he had appeared, in an appeal case before the Lords, when he visited London in 1825 (on the memorable occasion of “the Wings”); but this Chancellor, inimical as he was, turned round to Lord Wynford (then Sir W. D. Best), when the

speech was ended, and said, "What a knowledge of law!—how condensed, yet how clear his argument!—how extremely gentlemanly, and even courtierly is his manner. Let him only be in the House once, and he will carry every thing before him." Many even of O'Connell's own friends doubted whether he could accommodate himself to the manners, fashion, habits, and restrictions of that very artificial assemblage, presumed to contain "the collective wisdom of the nation," but the slightest doubt on the subject does not appear to have cast its shadow into his own mind. To him, as to Lady Macbeth, there was no such word as—fail! Like Nelson, he did not know what fear was.

His putting up for Clare Election, in 1828, was one of the boldest measures ever ventured on—short of raising the banner of revolt against the government. It compelled Wellington and Peel to concede Catholic Emancipation—a concession ungracious and ungrateful, since it was clogged with a clause, the result of personal spite, prohibiting O'Connell, because he had been elected in 1828, from taking the oaths contained in the Relief Bill of 1829. That prohibition sent him back to Clare for re-election, and he entered Parliament with his mind not unnaturally angry at the injustice for which *he* had been singled out as a victim.

He took his seat, and, almost immediately, it was perceived that he was not to be trifled with. Na-

ture had been bountiful to him. In stature tall, and so strongly built that it was only by seeing, when a man of ordinary height was by his side, how much he over-topped him. Physical vigour and mental strength were well combined in him. Then, his voice—a miraculous organ, full of power, but not deficient, either, in mellow sweetness. His glance told little—but his lips were singularly expressive, as much so as the eyes are to ordinary mortals. Add to this, a full consciousness of power—a conviction that he had been the main agent for opening Parliament to his hitherto prohibited coreligionists—that Ireland looked to him, and not without cause, for a great deal more—that he virtually represented, not the men of Clare only, but was "Member for all Ireland,"—that he was a tactician, trained by thirty years of public life,—that he had also the practiced skill in handling all the available points of an argument which his professional career had given him,—and that he then looked upon Emancipation only as an instalment. Put all these together, and it will be seen, at once, that the man in whom they were embodied could scarcely fail to make himself felt, dreaded, and much observed.

In the first twelvemonth—that is, from his re-election in 1829, until the meeting of the new Parliament in November 1830—O'Connell disappointed a great many by playing what may be

called a waiting game. It was expected that he would be perpetually speaking, upon all occasions, and, in that case, attempts would have been made to laugh, or cough, or clamor him down. He voted regularly, and always on the right side. In 1831, when the Grey ministry were in power, O'Connell, now strengthened by a strong and compact body of Irish members pledged to work with and under him (their return was the result of the General Election), took the station in the Legislature which he maintained for nearly fifteen years. During the prolonged struggle for Parliamentary Reform, one of the most impressive speeches in advocacy of the measure was O'Connell's. On all great occasions his voice was heard and his vote given. It cannot be asserted that he invariably spoke and voted as now, when we read the events of those days as history, it may dispassionately be thought he should have done; but he was undoubtedly an indefatigable, earnest, eloquent member of Parliament, through whose pertinacity and tact many concessions were made to Ireland which were calculated to serve her. The geniality of his nature was as unchecked in the Senate as it had been at the Bar, or in the Catholic Association. He was eminently a good-tempered man, and this availed him much in the House of Commons, where, if it so please him, a man can readily make himself and others uncomfortable by the exhibition of even a small portion of ill-temper.

Sometimes he laughed at his opponents, but so good-naturedly that they also enjoyed the jest. Such was his cut at John Walter, proprietor of the *Times*, who had remained on the ministerial benches after his Tory friends had quitted them. He removed, speedily enough, when O'Connell pointed to him as—

“The last rose of summer, left blooming alone.”

So, when Lord Stanley (now Earl of Derby) separating from the Whigs, started a party of his own, which was lamentably small, O'Connell quoted against him a couplet from a familiar poet—

“Thus down thy side, romantic Ashbourne, glides  
The Derby dilly, carrying six insides.”

And so, pre-eminent over all was his parody on Dryden's celebrated comparison. Three Colonels (Perceval, Verner, and Sibthorpe) represented Sligo, Armagh, and Lincoln. The two first were smooth-faced and whiskerless as a maiden. Sibthorpe is “bearded like a bard.” O'Connell, alluding to them in the House, thus hit them off, amid a general roar, in which the victimized trio could not refrain from joining—

“Three Colonels in three distant counties born,  
Sligo, Armagh, and Lincoln did adorn.  
The first in matchless impudence surpassed,  
The next in bigotry—in both the last.  
The force of nature could no further go,  
To beard the third she shaved the other two.”

Like other politicians, O'Connell did not escape without occasional personal passages at arms. In one of these, with Mr. Doherty, then Irish Solicitor-General, in May, 1830, O'Connell may be said to have come off second-best. He had attacked Doherty for his conduct as Crown lawyer in what was called the Doneraile conspiracy. The whole of the Tory party sided with Doherty, who made a forcible defence, attacking his assailant in turn, and the Whigs did not very warmly support O'Connell, who had then only been a few months in Parliament. This *rencontre*, which took place while "The Duke" was Premier, raised Doherty to the Chief Justiceship of the Common Pleas in Ireland—and led to Peel's offering him a seat in the Cabinet in 1834, and a Peerage in 1840. O'Connell used to say, and with truth, that *he* had placed Doherty on the Bench.

On another occasion O'Connell was far more successful. This was the celebrated Breach of Privilege case.

Victoria ascended the throne in June, 1837. Shortly after there was a General Election, and a great many of the members returned were petitioned against. The Tories had raised a large fund to defray the cost of these proceedings, and it was called "The Spottiswoode Subscription," as Spottiswoode, the Queen's printer (a patent life-office of much emolument), acted as its treasurer. Angry debates arose in the House of Commons on this

subject, and personalities were so much and so tumultuously bandied to and fro, that Mr. Abercrombie, the Speaker, threatened to resign if they were repeated,—as if, grasping Scotchman as he was, he *could* ever have brought himself to resign the £6,000 a-year attached to the office!

The controverted elections were duly referred to the usual Election Committees, ballotted for out of the members then in the House. These committees were duly sworn, as juries are, to do justice between man and man. But it was unhappily notorious that when the majority were Whigs, they almost invariably decided against Tory members, and *vice versa*. As ill luck would have it, the majority of the decisions went to unseat Liberal members. As parties were nearly balanced in Parliament, at that time—indeed the Whigs remained in office merely because there was a new and inexperienced sovereign who would have been puzzled how to act on a change of ministry—the Liberals complained of the decisions of the Election Committees.

On February 23, 1838, Lord Maidstone, who had been elected for Northamptonshire, and was the eldest son of the intolerant Earl of Winchelsea, who fought a duel on the Catholic Relief Bill, with Wellington, in 1829, drew the attention of the House of Commons to a Breach of Privilege. He complained that, two days before, at a public dinner given at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, Mr. O'Connell had de-

clared that in the Election Committees "Corruption of the worst description existed, and above all there was the perjury of the Tory politicians." Also, that he "was ready to be a martyr to justice and truth; but not to false swearing, and therefore, he repeated, that there was foul perjury in the Tory Committees of the House of Commons."

What followed I saw, and can never forget. O'Connell, who had been reading (or appearing to read) a newspaper while Lord Maidstone was accusing him, keenly arose, sternly looked around the House, folded his arms, and, in his deepest tones and most impressive manner, said, "Sir, I did say every word of that—every word of that; and I do repeat that I believe it to be perfectly true. Is there a man who will put his hand on his heart and say that it is not true? Such a man would be laughed to scorn."

Maidstone then gave notice of a motion condemnatory of O'Connell, and the discussion was adjourned until the following Monday. Maidstone moved that O'Connell's speech was an imputation on the whole House, and that he be censured for it as a breach of privilege. O'Connell replied in a speech of great power, in the midst of which he was self-designated "The pensioned servant of Ireland," and plainly declared that whenever an Election Committee was appointed, it was known that the decision would be exactly according to the political

majority of its members; and repeating that he had spoken only the truth, and would stand by his words. The Agitator then retired.

A great many members spoke,—the Whigs making a lukewarm defence for O'Connell, instead of admitting and lamenting the truth of his remarks. The Tories clamoured for a heavy censure. In a House of 517 members, out of 658, a majority of *nine* were for the censure. Next Daniel Callaghan, member for Cork city, Edmund Burke Roche, member for Cork county, W. D. Gillon for Falkirk, and J. P. Somers for Sligo, severally and seriously declared that, each and all, they adopted Mr. O'Connell's words and sentiments! It was then carried by 298 to 85 (Lord John Russell voting in the majority) that the words were "a false and scandalous imputation on the House."

Next, on the motion that O'Connell be reprimanded in his place, an exciting debate ensued. Mr. Callaghan repeated his endorsement of O'Connell's imputation, and his words were taken down by the Clerk of the House, on the motion of Mr. Hume, who called on the Speaker to notice his contumacy. But the Speaker was mute. Next day, Mr. Roche also repeated his full adherence to O'Connell's charge. The vote of censure was carried by a majority of twenty-nine.

O'Connell duly attended in his place, was gravely reprimanded by the Speaker (his own particular

friend!), and said, when the farce was over, "Galileo remarked 'the world does move, after all.' And so, despite the censure of this House, I repeat all I said before. The system I condemn reminds one of the Judge in Rabelais who decided cases by throwing three dice for the plaintiff and two for the defendant. I had rather take the dice-box and say 'seven's the main,' than take my chance on an Election Committee of this House. I express no regret for what I have said. I have retracted nothing. I will retract nothing. I have told the truth."

So saying, having bearded the House by strongly repeating his accusation, he sat down. It was considered that he had gained a victory, and the conclusion of all was a total change and reform in the system of Parliamentary election committees.

But it was in Ireland—whether in the Catholic Association, at an Aggregate Meeting, at a public dinner, or in a court of law—that O'Connell was to be seen "in all his glory." In Ireland his influence was extraordinary—not only for its vast extent, but for its continuance. No other public man, no matter what the country or the age, has maintained his popularity, as O'Connell did, for nearly forty years. I think that this may be partly attributed to the belief, long and widely entertained by his followers, almost unbroken to the last, encouraged by himself, and generally borne out by circumstances, that he was above the law, that the law could not reach *him*.

that he "could drive a coach and six through any Act of Parliament."

In February, 1831, he was indicted and tried (with Tom Steele and Barrett, of *The Pilot* newspaper) for holding political meetings which the Viceroy's proclamation had forbidden. They pleaded guilty, but as the law under which they were tried was allowed to expire before they were brought up for judgment, his prophecy, that the law could not reach him, was fulfilled. In 1843 he was less fortunate. Three months in prison!—*that* destroyed the *prestige*.

This man was eminently endowed by nature with the bodily and mental qualifications for a Tribune of the People. In stature he was lofty, in figure large. His bold, good-natured face was an advantage—as were his manly appearance and bearing. His voice was deep, musical, sonorous and manageable. Its transitions from the higher to the lower notes was wondrously effective. No man had a clearer or more distinct pronunciation—at times, it even went to the extent of almost syllabizing long words. How lingeringly, as if he loved to utter the words, would he speak of "Cawtholic E-man-see-pa-tion!" He rather affected a full Irish accent, on which was slightly grafted something of the Foigardism which, in his youth, had attached itself to him when he studied in France. No one who noticed his capacious chest could wonder that O'Connell was able to

speak longer than most men without pausing to take breath. When making a speech, his mouth was very expressive; and this has been noticed as the characteristic of that feature, in Irish faces. In his eyes (of a cold, clear blue) there was little speculation, but the true Irish expression of feeling, passion and intellect played about his lips. Looking at him, as he spoke, a close observer might almost note the sentiment about to come from those lips, before the words had utterance—just as we see the lightning-flash before we hear the thunder-peal.

His eloquence was eminently characteristic. Irishmen, in general, have "the gift of the gab,"—that is, the power of expressing their sentiments in public with ease to themselves and to their hearers. It gives them little trouble to make a speech; and this faculty and this facility arise, very probably, from the political circumstances of their country as much as from anything else. In England there is no necessity why a man should have decided political opinions. In Ireland no man dare be neutral. Persons may disagree, and do; but they unite in despising and condemning the unhappy wight who does not belong to any party. An Irishman, in Ireland, *must* be a partisan. Being so, there is no earthly reason why, attending any public meeting, he should not be induced to take part in the proceedings, and make a speech. Oratory is a very catching thing,—listening begets the desire to be

listened to, in turn; and, once that a man has heard his own voice in public, depend on it he will be anxious to hear it again.

Self-possession, which is "half the battle" in public life, is an essential in public speaking. However, it is not *the* essential. There must be a copious flow of words—a happy and rapid selection of language—an earnestness of manner—a knowledge of human character—and, above all, a considerable degree of information, with a certain portion of the "imagination all compact," which breathes fervour and poetry into the spoken speech. Great is the orator's power. He can touch the human heart—he can move the secret springs of action—he can sway the popular will as he pleases—he can comfort the afflicted, infuse hope into the oppressed, alarm the oppressor, and make ill-directed Power and Might tremble on their lofty thrones.

Ireland has been particularly profuse in her contribution of eminent orators. Burke, Canning, Plunket, Grattan, Sheil, Wellesley and Curran, stand pre-eminent on the roll; but I doubt whether O'Connell, when the length of his reign is considered, as well as the great extent of his influence, derived chiefly from his power as a speaker, was not greater than any of these great orators. He had less wit than Canning—less imagination than Curran—less philosophy than Burke—less rhetoric than Sheil—less pure eloquence than Plunket—less clas-



sical expression than Wellesley—less pathos than Grattan; but he had more power than any of them. There was wonderful force in his language. And when addressing an Irish audience, there was such an alternation of style—now rising to the loftiest, and now subsiding to the most familiar—that he carried all hearts with him, and those who listened seemed as if under the spell of an enchanter, so completely did he move them as he pleased. Judging by their *effect*, O'Connell's speeches must be considered as among the best, if not the very best, of the time and country.

O'Connell's versatility as a speaker was wonderful. He was "all things to all men." In a Court of Law he would often joke a jury into his view of the case, and when this did not succeed, would convince them by subtle argument, bold declamation, and a natural eloquence. At a political meeting, where he had to address a multitude, they would alternately smile or get enraged, as he jested with or excited their feelings. In Parliament, which he did not enter until he was fifty-four years' old, he generally was more calm, more careful, more subdued, more solicitous in his choice of words, and more vigilant in restraining the manner of delivering them.

The great secret of his power, as a speaker, was his earnestness. He ever had a great object in view, and he always applied himself, with a strong and earnest mind, to achieve that object. Whenever he

pleased, he could rise to the greatest height of eloquence; but he preferred, when speaking to the people, to use language which each of them could understand. He varied his speeches, too, with badinage and jokes, which, though merely humorous, made his audience smile, and keep them in good temper with each other, with themselves, and with him. The Irish, who thronged to listen to him, went to be amused as well as to be harangued. Nor did he disappoint them. I may illustrate what I mean by giving an example of one of his familiar illustrations.

In 1827, during the time of what was called "The New Reformation," in Ireland, O'Connell made a speech at the South Chapel, in Cork. It contained the following passage, after a very elaborate denial of the assumed conversions which the "New Reformation" gentry had boasted of:—"They remind me, gentlemen, of a Frenchman who waited on Lord Kenmare, and offered to drain the lakes of Killarney, which would restore a great quantity of arable land. Lord Kenmare happened to think that he had land enough, and civilly declined having his property deprived of the beautiful lakes, its proudest ornament. The Frenchman, however, being one of those who

'Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame,'

persisted in his fancy, and accordingly rose at break of day to drain the lake. And, boys, how do you



think he was doing it? Why, he was baling it out with his hat! (Great laughter.) Now, there are seven millions of Catholics in Ireland—the New Reformation folk do not boast of more than six or seven conversions, or perversions, in the week—so that, allowing (which is impossible, where there are bright eyes and warm hearts such as flash and throb around me, in this large assembly) that the Catholics of Ireland will not increase in the meantime, there must, at this rate, be a million of weeks elapse before all of them are drained out by conversion. (Cheers.) Boys, these Reformation gentry remind me mightily of the Frenchman baling out the Lake of Killarney with his hat!"

It was with pleasant, homely jokes like this—yet each having a tendency to work out the argument—that O'Connell was wont to amuse the Irish. In point of wit, I doubt whether O'Connell's little Frenchman be not as original a character as Sydney Smith's far-famed Mrs. Partington.

O'Connell's friends lamented, and with ample cause, at his aptness to abuse the license of public speech. He was very fond of bestowing nicknames on his opponents, and of applying offensive epithets to them.\* As early as July, 1808, at a meeting of

\* O'Connell had high judicial authority for the use of bad language. Sir Archibald Macdonald (who was Chief Baron of the English Court of Exchequer, from 1793 to 1813) once told Mr. Fletcher Norton, afterwards Speaker of the House of

the famous Catholic Board, he had commenced that sort of speaking—which lowers him who adopts it rather than those against whom it is levelled. He then said "the present administration are the personal enemies of the Catholic cause; yet if the Catholics continue loyal, firm, and undivided, they have little to fear from the barren petulance of the ex-advocate, Percival, or the frothy declamations of the poetaster, Canning—they might with equal contempt despise the upstart pride of the Jenkinsons, and with more than contempt the pompous inanity of that Lord Castlereagh, who might well be permitted to hate the country that gave him birth, to her own annihilation." In the same vulgar spirit he spoke of Cobbett as "a comical miscreant," and declared that the Duke of Wellington was "a stunted corporal," and maintained that Disraeli, whose Jewish descent is well known, must be a lineal descendant of the impenitent thief who was crucified, when the great sacrifice of Salvation was consummated at Calvary.

Once only, as far as my memory serves, O'Connell gave a nickname, with point and wit in the application. He was denouncing the present Earl of Derby, who was then a member of the House of Commons, and filled the office of Chief Secretary of Ireland. In some way Stanley had taken official

Commons, that he was a "lazy, indolent, evasive, shuffling, plausible, artful, mean, confident, cowardly, poor, pitiful, sneaking, and abject creature."

notice of the "sayings and doings" of O'Connell, whereupon the Agitator declared that, from that time, he must be called "Shave-beggar Stanley." Amid roars of laughter (for this was at a public meeting in Dublin), O'Connell proceeded to justify the *nom de guerre*. It was the custom, he said, that barbers' apprentices should learn their business by shaving beggars, who, as the job was done for nothing, could scarcely complain if a blunt razor gave them pain, or an unskilful hand cut the skin, as well as the beard. So, he added, with British statesmen. They were first sent over to Ireland, to get their hand in, and when that was accomplished they were considered to have sufficient dexterity to be placed in office in England. He argued, by analogy, that the political, like the actual "shave-beggar," gave a good deal of pain, and inflicted many cuts, which the Irish, like the pauper shavelings, were compelled to submit to, without complaint. From that day until the day he left Ireland, Lord Stanley was always spoken of, by the Irish Liberals, with the prefix of "shave-beggar" to his surname!

Two things, through life, O'Connell strenuously affirmed and inculcated. First, that the man who committed outrage supplied the enemy with a weapon to be used against the country. Second, that Ireland would never be prosperous until the Union was repealed.

He did not join the United Irishmen in 1798,—not because he, like them, had not an aspiration for

the political independence of his country, but because he disapproved of *their* mode of striving for it, by force. From first to last he was opposed to violence. The "Young Ireland" schism, at Conciliation Hall, which so much annoyed him, during the last eighteen months of his career, was caused by his resistance to the doctrine of "physical force."

As to the Union—it is only just to say, that O'Connell's first public effort was against that measure. His maiden speech, delivered on January 13th, 1800, at a Catholic meeting, in Dublin, unequivocally condemned the Union. The Resolutions adopted by the meeting, drawn up by O'Connell, declared the proposed incorporate Union to be, "in fact, an extinction of the liberty of Ireland, which would be reduced to the abject condition of a province, surrendered to the mercy of the Minister and Legislature of another country, to be bound by their absolute will, and taxed at their pleasure by laws, in the making of which Ireland would have no efficient participation whatever!" During the struggle for Emancipation, as well as from that era until his death, O'Connell always declared that he would not be satisfied with less than "the Repeal." He never cushioned, never concealed that such was his object. I mention this, because it has been said that, "having got Emancipation, he ought not to have gone for Repeal." As a matter of *policy*, perhaps, Ireland would now be better off if the Repeal agitation had

not taken place; but it is indisputable that from 1800 to 1846, O'Connell declared that he would not be satisfied with less than "the Repeal."

Here it may be well to notice the *questio vexata* of the famous "O'Connell Rent." The amount has not been exactly ascertained, but it is believed to have varied from 10,000*l.* to 20,000*l.* a year. It commenced after Emancipation was granted, and was continued until 1846, when, from the pressing wants of the Irish, it was announced that Mr. O'Connell wished it to be discontinued until they could better afford to pay it. Here it may be best to give Mr. O'Connell's own apology, in a letter to Lord Shrewsbury, in 1842. He said, "I will not consent that my claim to 'the Rent' should be misunderstood. That claim may be rejected, but it is understood in Ireland. My claim is this:—For more than twenty years before Emancipation, the burthen of the cause was thrown upon me. I had to arrange the meetings—to prepare the resolutions—to furnish replies to the correspondence—to examine the case of each person complaining of practical grievances—to rouse the torpid—to animate the lukewarm—to control the violent and inflammatory—to avoid the shoals and breakers of the law—to guard against multiplied treachery—and at all times to oppose, at every peril, the powerful and multitudinous enemies of the cause. To descend to particulars: At a period when my minutes counted by the guinea—when my emolu-

ments were limited only by the extent of my physical and waking powers—when my meals were shortened to the narrowest space, and my sleep restricted to the earliest hours before dawn; at that period, and for more than twenty years, there was no day that I did not devote from one to two hours (often more) to the working out of the Catholic cause; and *that* without receiving, or allowing the offer of any remuneration, even for the personal expenditure incurred in the agitation of the cause itself. For years I bore the entire expenses of a Catholic agitation, without receiving the contributions of others to a greater amount than seventy-four pounds in the whole. Who shall repay me for the years of my buoyant youth and cheerful manhood? Who shall repay me for the lost opportunities of acquiring professional celebrity; or for the wealth which such distinction would ensure?"

There is considerable force in this. But O'Connell's character, out of Ireland, would have stood higher, had he not received "the Rent." It was often alleged, by his adherents, as a set-off, that Grattan had also been remunerated by his countrymen. But the cases were not parallel. In 1782, Grattan, almost single-handed, had achieved the Independence of Ireland, by obtaining the recognition of the principle that "the Crown of England is an Imperial Crown, but that Ireland is a distinct Kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole

Legislature thereof." He had accomplished a bloodless Revolution. He had thrown himself into political life, abandoning the profession on which rested nearly his whole worldly dependence. A grant of £100,000 was proposed to him in the Irish Parliament, "to purchase an estate, and build a suitable mansion, as the reward of gratitude by the Irish nation, for his eminent services to his country." It was intended as a mark of national gratitude to a nation's Liberator. So unanimous was the feeling that, on the part of the Viceroy, a member of the Government offered "as part of the intended grant to Mr. Grattan, the Viceregal Palace in the Phoenix Park [Dublin], to be settled on Mr. Grattan and his heirs for ever, as a suitable residence for so meritorious a person." Grattan's own impulse was to refuse the grant. His services had been rendered without expectation or desire of reward. But his private fortune was so inadequate to his public position that he must retire from politics or become a placeman under the Crown. The grant would give him an independent position. He consented to accept half of the proffered amount (£50,000), and determined under no circumstances to take office. He was, ever after, the retained servant of the nation. Yet, high as he stood, he did not escape contempt. Even Henry Flood, his rival, publicly said, in a Parliamentary controversy, "I am not a mendicant patriot, who was bought by my country

for a sum of money, and then sold my country to the Minister for prompt payment."

O'Connell's "Rent" was estimated as yielding from £10,000 to £20,000 a year—thrice the amount, probably, that he could have realized at the bar, had he not devoted his time to politics. It was duly paid for nearly twenty years. Thus O'Connell received, in this annuity from his party, about five times as much as the Irish Parliament had given to Grattan. Besides, since 1825, when Derrynane became his by the death of his uncle, O'Connell's landed property was not less than £4,000 a year. The most potent objection to "the Rent" was that, collected year after year, it rendered its recipient liable to the imputation of keeping up Agitation in order to collect the Rent.

When O'Connell's uncle died, in 1825, at a very advanced age, (he was several years past ninety,) the news reached O'Connell when he was on circuit, at Limerick. He hastened to Kerry, to attend the funeral, and did not again appear in court until the trials were proceeding in Cork. I had taken my seat, as a reporter, on the very day he made his appearance, attired in full mourning. Setting immediately under him, I heard one of the counsel congratulate him on his accession to his uncle's large estate. "I had to wait for it a long time," said O'Connell. "If this had happened twenty years ago, what would I now have been? A hard-living, sporting, country

gentleman, content with my lot. As it is, I have had to struggle. I have succeeded; and look how bright are now the prospects of Ireland! I thank God that I had to struggle, since it has placed them as they are now."

To sum up the character of O'Connell's *political*, essentially different from his *forensic*, eloquence, I need not say more than that he put strong words into fitting places. No man had a greater or more felicitous command of language; no man cared less how his words were marshalled. Many of his speeches are models of the truest eloquence, and perhaps he was the first Irishman, of modern days, who made a decided hit in the Commons, as a sound and eloquent speaker, entering that House at the mature age of fifty. Powers such as his commanded attention;—but, in general, he spoke better in Ireland, among his own people, than in England. Yet who can forget his magnificent oration in favour of the Reform Bill? Who can forget the later, and briefer, but not less stirring speech, which he delivered, as a member of the Anti-Corn-law League, on his first visit to London, after the reversal of the Monster-Meetings' sentence of imprisonment.

In sarcasm O'Connell was unequalled. I shall give an instance of quiet sarcasm which I think inimitable. In his domestic relations O'Connell was peculiarly happy. His marriage with his cousin Mary, was one of pure affection on both sides, and

their love continued to the last, as warm as it had commenced in their youthful days.\* John O'Connell, in 1846, writing of his mother, who was not long dead, said, with as much beauty as truth, "We can say no more than that doubting, she confirmed him—desponding, she cheered him on—drooping, she sustained him—her pure spirit may have often trembled, indeed, as she beheld him exposed to a thousand assaults, and affronting a thousand dangers; but she quailed not, she called him not back. She rejoiced not more in his victories over them, than she would have heartily and devotedly shared

\* In 1802, O'Connell married his cousin, the daughter of Dr. O'Connell, of Tralee. By this lady he had four sons and three daughters. Two of the sons are now [1855] in Parliament. Maurice, the eldest, was a barrister, but never distinguished himself either as a lawyer or a politician. Morgan was for some time in the Austrian service, and distinguished himself as a gallant officer. His "affair of honour" with Lord Alvanley showed cool determination and honourable feeling. Mr. John O'Connell, who tried to take his father's place in Conciliation Hall, as Repeal Leader, has displayed little of the talent and tact which distinguished the Liberator. The youngest son, Daniel, is a very commonplace person. It is usually said, that the children of a great man rarely arrive at eminence, and the limited talents of O'Connell's sons keep up the proverb in full force, as far as he and they are concerned:

"Few men achieve the praise of their great sires,  
But most their sires disgrace."

with and soothed him in the sufferings, in the ruin, that might have come upon him had he failed and been overthrown." On the other hand, the Marquis of Anglesey, in 1831, as Viceroy of Ireland, had O'Connell prosecuted for an imputed breach of the law. The Marquis had seduced the first wife of the late Lord Cowley, and married her after he was divorced from his wife, and Lady Cowley (then Mrs. Henry Wellesley) from her husband. O'Connell, commenting, at a public meeting in Dublin, on Lord Anglesey's conduct to him said, "This prosecution has cost my wife what none of *my* transactions ever cost her—a tear for me. Does Lord Anglesey know the value of a *virtuous* woman's tear?"

O'Connell's attempts at authorship were not very successful. His letters to the "Hereditary bondsmen" were diffuse and declamatory. They were full of repetitions, putting the points of a case in a variety of phases, but they were by no means equal to the force, power, and nervous eloquence of his speeches. He was eminently an extemporaneous speaker, and, like Fox, appeared to more advantage as an orator than a writer. Yet many of his letters contain true eloquence. He hit hard, and could be terse when he pleased. Who can forget the alliterative satire of the three words "base, bloody, and brutal," as applied to the Whigs?

His only substantive and independent work was

Vol. I. of "A Memoir on Ireland, Native and Saxon," published early in 1843. This book was dedicated to the Queen, in order, as the Preface stated, "that the Sovereign of these realms should understand the real nature of Irish history; should be aware of how much the Irish have suffered from English misrule; should comprehend the secret springs of Irish discontent; should be acquainted with the eminent virtues which the Irish have exhibited in every phasis of their singular fate; and, above all, should be intimately acquainted with the confiscations, the plunder, the robbery, the domestic treachery, the violation of all public faith, and of the servility of treaties, the ordinary wholesale slaughters, the planned murders, the concerted massacres, which have been inflicted upon the Irish people by the English Government." This one sentence will sufficiently indicate the character of the work. O'Connell further stated, in his preface, that "there cannot happen a more heavy misfortune to Ireland than the prosperity and power of Great Britain." He endeavoured to justify this assertion, by adding that "justice to Ireland" had never been granted except when Great Britain was in difficulties. The work brought the "proofs and illustrations" of British misrule in Ireland down to the Restoration. A second volume was to have carried them down to the present period, but it never was published. Nor has Literature nor History sus-

tained any loss,—unless it was much superior to the first volume. The seven opening chapters, rapidly sketching the history of English dominion in Ireland from 1172 to 1840, are not devoid of a certain degree of eloquence, but is anti-English to a degree. The historical “proofs and illustrations,” are simply statements from partisan writers, with connecting comments by O’Connell.

It was as a lawyer that O’Connell achieved his first distinctions. His success at the bar was assurance to his countrymen of his general ability. But, of late years, Mr. O’Connell was so exclusively before the public as a legislator, that he was forgotten as a barrister. Yet, in the opinion of many, (among whom are those who have known him long and well,) it was in the latter character that the peculiar idiosyncrasy of the man was fully developed—that his very rare and peculiar talents were fully displayed.

Many men have obtained eminence at the Irish bar, but it has been for some one peculiar merit. Thus, Harry Deane Grady was remarkable for the knowing manner in which he conducted a cross-examination. By that he alternately wheedled and frightened a witness into admissions which were as opposite to his evidence in chief as light is from darkness. Thus, Chief Justice Bushe, while at the bar, was distinguished for that classic eloquence by which admiring juries were seduced, and admiring judges were delighted. Pity that his elevation to

the bench should have extinguished this noble oratory. Thus, Curran was renowned for “that sarcastic levity of tongue” which solicited a contest with those elevated in rank above himself. Thus, Shiel was remarkable for introducing a style of speaking—full of antithetical brilliancies—which reminds us of the flashing speeches of the most distinguished advocates of France. Thus, Serjeant (now Judge) Perrin was almost unrivalled in threading through the intricacies of an excise case. Thus, George Bennett won fame by his clear and plausible method of stating a case. Thus, Devonshire Jackson (now a Judge) was excellent in taking exceptions to the form of an indictment. Thus, the late Recorder Waggett (of Cork) put that seeming of right into a case, by which trusting jurymen are so often deceived. But there was only one man at the Irish bar who, more or less, united the excellencies of all whom I have named. He was as good at cross-examination as Harry Grady—he could rise with the occasion, and be eloquent as Bushe—he could sport the biting sarcasm of Curran—he even ventured on the antitheses of Shiel (though he seldom meddled with such sharp-edged weapons)—he was a match for Perrin in the excise courts—he could state a case plainly and plausibly as Bennett—he was as good a lawyer as Jackson, and could appeal to “the reports” with as much success—and, like Waggett (against whom, in the Munster Courts,



he was often pitted), he could show his case to be one of the utmost *seeming* right, his client, like the late Queen, of virtuous memory, to be clear as "unsunned snow." The man who combined all these apparently dissimilar qualifications—the man whom universal consent named as the best general lawyer in Ireland—the man to whom Orange clients invariably ran with their briefs (a confidence equally honourable to clients and lawyer), was O'Connell.

By far the best account of O'Connell, in his different phases as a lawyer, is that in the "Sketches of the Irish Bar." Its essence is contained in the little sentence—"Every requisite for a barrister of all work is combined in him; some in perfection, all in sufficiency."

An anonymous writer in an English paper has given this reminiscence of O'Connell: "I recollect at the spring assizes of I think it was '27, walking into the county court-house of Limerick. O'Connell was retained in a record then being heard, and with him on the same side was his son Maurice, who was bred to his father's profession, though he has since ceased to follow it. It was a cold day, and both wore huge cloth cloaks: the Agitator's right arm was thrown very affectionately round his son's neck, who, seemingly used to these public exhibitions of paternal fondness, took it very composedly. There was a rough-and-ready looking peasant at the moment under examination: in lieu of the ordinary

box used in most English courts, he was seated in a chair in the centre of the table between the fires of the counsel on either side; his shaggy hair and unshorn beard, his shirt collar open, the knees of his small clothes in the same free and easy state, and one stocking fallen so as to leave a portion of his embrowned and hirsute leg bare; he had the chair partially turned round, so as to present a three-quarter front to O'Connell, who was *raking* him with a cross-examination, which elicited laughter from every person in the court, including the witness himself, who, with his native freedom, impudence, and humour, was almost a match for the Agitator. The Agitator's face was beaming with fun, and he seemed very well disposed to show off, as if conscious that his auditors expected something from him. The country fellow, too, appeared to think there were laurels to be earned in the encounter, for he played away with all his might, and though he failed repeatedly in his attempts to be witty, he was always sure to be impudent. He waxed gradually more familiar, until at length he called the learned counsel nothing but 'Dan;' it was, 'Yes, Dan,' or 'No, Dan,' or 'Arrah, you're not going to come over me so easily, Dan.' Dan, to do him justice, enjoyed the joke, and humoured the witness in such a manner as at length to throw the fellow off his guard, and lead him into a maze of contradictions notwithstanding his shrewd-



ness. O'Connell showed the utmost adroitness, and a thorough knowledge of the Irish peasant character, which is perhaps in no place so well acquired as in a provincial court. I cannot this moment recollect any single repartee which is worth repeating, but it was the manner, the brogue, the laughing eye, the general and humorous tone of the whole examination, and perhaps the very spectacle of O'Connell himself trying legally to entrap and upset the veracity of one of his own "fine peasantry," which gave that peculiar interest and pleasantry to the scene. Nothing could surpass the seeming enjoyment which the country people took in the examination; and as the Agitator would throw off now and again one of his broad flashes of humour in the "keen encounter of their wits," and the witness would fire back some jocular effort at equivocation, you'd hear buzzed around, 'Bravo, Dan,' 'Dan's the boy,' or some such phrase of approbation, which it was out of the question to suppress. Blackburn,\* then, I think, the Attorney-General, was on the bench, having taken the circuit for some judge who was unwell; and though a dark and stern man, he was compelled to give way to the general fit of pleasantry in which the whole court indulged."

O'Connell's business, on circuit as well as in the

\* Afterwards Chief-Justice of the Queen's Bench, whence, in 1852, he was raised to the Chancellorship of Ireland, which he retained during the nine months of the Derby Administration.

Four Courts of Dublin, was very great. On circuit, it was so overpowering that, except on very important cases, he could not read his briefs, when employed to defend prisoners. The attorney for the defence used to condense the leading facts, and set them down on a single sheet of foolscap; and O'Connell would peruse and master this abstract during the speech of the counsel for the prosecution, relying on his own skill in cross-examination of witnesses, and his own power with the jury. Like Belial, he "could make the worse appear the better reason," as many an acquitted culprit had cause to know and thank him for.

Let me close this sketch with a glance of O'Connell, as I have often seen him, in an Irish Court of Law. *There* he was to be met "in all his glory." As I write, the shadows of long years roll away, and every thing appears as vivid and life-like as it was at that time.

To have seen O'Connell in the Law Courts of Dublin, was to have seen him not exactly as himself. Before the judges, and in the capital of the kingdom, a certain *etiquette* is preserved, very decorous and proper, no doubt, but very chilling also. It is on circuit that you best can see the Irish bar, as they really are, and it is on circuit, also, that an observer may advantageously study the character of the Irish people. Leave the chilling atmosphere of the Four Courts, give the reins to imagination, and

sit, with me, in the Crown Courts of Cork, as I have sat in bygone years. To give something like reality to my sketch, I shall write as if I still were in the year 1827, when O'Connell and the rest whom I have to name were alive and flourishing.

What a difference between this court and that of a circuit court in England! Look around you:—there stands not a single female in the Irish court. To attend there, with the chance of having it ever hinted that delicacy requires their absence, would ill suit the modest precision of the fair dames of Ireland. Nor do I think that the course of justice suffers from the absence of the fair sex. What business have ladies in a court of justice? Do they want information as to the trials?—they can see them reported in “those best possible instructors,” the newspapers. Do they want to see the manner in which justice is administered?—if they *will* be so curious, and if that curiosity must be gratified, let them come once and no more. As it is, the English courts have female stagers, who attend day after day, and listen to arguments which they cannot comprehend. I suspect that their chief design is to show off; they come to see, but they also come “to be seen.” The only preventive would be to enforce their attendance; when, if they be true women, the spirit of opposition will make them remain at home!

Whatever be the cause, there is a non-attendance of females at the Irish courts of law. The galleries

are filled with rough-coated and rough-faced folks; some, who have not visited the city since the last assizes—some, who have relatives to be tried—some, out on bail, and honourably come to take their own trial—all, even to the mere looker-on, deeply interested in the proceedings; for the Irish, from the highest to the lowest degree, are fond of the *forms* of justice. Of the *reality* they have hitherto got but little; but they like to see that little administered with the due formalities of the law.

The judge enters the court, and takes his seat on the bench. You ask, with astonishment, “When will the barristers come?” Why, *there*, do you not see his lordship rise, and make an obeisance to the gentlemen who sit in the box above us? These are the barristers. You may seem as unbelieving as you choose, but such is the case. The fact is, and I should have mentioned it before, when Irish barristers go on the circuit\* they do not burthen themselves with wigs or gowns—forensic paraphernalia, to which their legal brethren on the English side of the Channel attach such infinite importance, that you might fancy they thought all wit and wisdom† to be attached to *them*. You can scarcely imagine a more unformal or uncereemonious court than that to which I have introduced you. The attorneys sit round the table,

\* I write of 1827. I know not what may be the practice now.

† “The wisdom's in the wig.”—*Old Song*.

mingled with the "gentlemen of the press," the barristers are in the boxes immediately over the attornies, and the audience sit or stand where and how they can.

There is a pause—for a great murder trial is to come on—O'Connell has just been engaged for the defence—is occupied in the other court, and the judge must wait until he can make his appearance. During this pause you see a familiarity between the bench and the bar which seems strange to your English eyes. Yet, after all, what is it? Will the laws be a whit less honestly administered or advocated because the judge and one of the lawyers (Chief Baron O'Grady and Recorder Waggett) are laughing together? Depend on it, that, if the opportunity comes, the judge will fling out one of his bitter sarcasms against the barrister, and I know little of the barrister if he does not retort—if he can!

A bustle in the court. Does O'Connell come? No; but a message from him, with the intimation that the trial may go on, and he will "drop in" in half an hour. The clerk of the peace reads the indictment—the murderer pleads "Not Guilty," stands in the dock with compressed lips, and bursting veins, and withering frown, and scowling eyes—a fit subject for the savage pencil of Spagnaletto.

While the indictment is reading, a very dandified "middle-aged young gentleman," attired in a blue coat, with enormous brass buttons, a crimson silk

neckcloth, and a most glaring pair of buckskins, jumps on the table, makes way across it with a "hop, step and jump," and locates himself in a box directly under the judge. You inquire, who is that neophyte?—the answer is, Carew Standish O'Grady, the registrar\* of the circuit, barrister-at-law, and nephew to the judge. You turn up your eyes in wonder—the prothonotary of an English court would scarcely sport such a fox-hunter's garb.

The trial commences. Serjeant Goold states the case—advantageously for the prisoner, for the learned Serjeant has so defective an utterance that he is scarcely audible even to the reporters below him. But his serjeantcy gives him that precedence at the bar, on account of which the chief conduct of Crown prosecutions devolves to him. Meanwhile the Chief Baron turns to the High Sheriff, and cracks jokes; his hopeful nephew, less ambitious, produces a bag and some salt, and merely—cracks nuts.

The opening is over—the chief witness (probably an approver or King's evidence) is brought on the table—he is sworn, and attempts to baffle justice by kissing his thumb instead of the book. There is a dead silence in the court; for it is felt that the moment is awful with the fate of a fellow-creature.

\* It may be noticed that, in New York, the Registrar is called the *Register*—the name of the *book* being applied to the man who has the *office* of keeping it.

Hark! a shout outside,—O'Connell comes. He has just been successful *for* an Orangeman *against* a Catholic; but what does that matter? The people do justice to his merit; so *he* succeeds, what care they against whom?

Another pause—a buzz in the court—"quite a sensation," as a dandy might exquisitely exclaim—the prisoner's eyes brightens up with the gleam of hope—he sees O'Connell, at last, seated among the barristers. What! is that O'Connell? that stalwart, smiling, honest-looking man? The same. Never did a public man assume less pretension to personal appearance. Yet, if you look closely, you may observe that he does anything but neglect the graces. His clothes are remarkably well made, the tie of his cravat is elaborate, his handsome eye-glass is so disposed that it can be seen as well as used, and his "Brutus" (for 't would be heinous to utter the word "wig") gives an air of juvenility which his hilarious manners fully confirm.

Until this moment of his entering the court, he knows nothing of the case—he has not yet received a brief. Mr. Daltera (you will remember that the scene is in Cork—the time 1827), the lame attorney, hands him a bulky brief, (which he puts, unread, into the bag,) and an abstract of the case, written on one sheet of paper. His blue eyes calmly glance over this case—he takes in, at that glance, all its bearings, and he quietly listens to the evidence of

the accomplice. The cross-examination commences. Every eye is watchful—every ear on the *qui vive*—every man in court stretches forward to see the battle between "the Counsellor" and "the witness." You may see the prisoner with an eager glance of expectation—the witness with an evident sense of the coming crisis. The battle commences with anything but seriousness; O'Connell surprises the witness by his good humour, and instantly sets him at ease. He coaxes out of him a full confession of his own unworthiness,—he tempts him, by a series of facetious questions, into an admission of his "whole course of life,"—in a word, he draws from his lips an autobiography, in which the direst crimes are mingled with an occasional relief of feeling or of fun. The witness seems to exult in the "bad eminence" on which his admissions exalt him. He joins in the laugh at the quaintness of his language,—he scarcely shrinks from the universal shudders at the enormity of his crimes. By degrees he is led to the subject of the evidence he has just given, as an accomplice,—the coil is wound round him imperceptibly; fact after fact is weakened, until, finally, such doubt is thrown upon *all* that he has said,—from the evident exaggeration of *part*,—that a less ingenious advocate than O'Connell might rescue the prisoner from conviction on *such* evidence. The main witness having "broken down," (as much from the natural doubt and disgust excited in the minds of

an Irish jury, by the circumstance of a *particeps criminis* being evidence against one who may have been more sinned against than sinning,—who may have been seduced into the paths of error by the very man who now bears testimony against him,) the result of the trial is not very difficult to be foreseen. If there is any doubt, the matter is soon made clear by a few *alibi* witnesses—practiced rogues with the most innocent aspects, who swear anything or everything to “get a friend out of trouble.” The chances are ten to one that O’Connell brings off the prisoner. If he is not acquitted, he may, at least, be only found guilty on the minor plea of “manslaughter.”

But the chances are that he will be acquitted, for few juries ever resisted the influence of O’Connell’s persuasive eloquence.

Such is the scene exhibited by one glance backward:—such, five-and-twenty years ago, was constantly occurring in the Irish courts of law when O’Connell practiced at the bar.

Even at the risk of being accounted tedious, I cannot conclude this sketch without mentioning another anecdote, which, even better than a lengthened disquisition, may show that I do not overrate the extraordinary ingenuity and quickness for which I give O’Connell such ample credit. One of the most remarkable personages in Cork, for a series of years, was a sharp-witted little fellow named John

Boyle,\* who published a periodical called *The Freeholder*. As Boyle did not see that any peculiar dignity hedged the corrupt Corporation of Cork, his *Freeholder* was remarkable for severe and satirical remarks upon its members, collectively and personally. Owing to the very great precautions as to the mode of publication, it was next to impossible for the Corporation to proceed against him for libel;—if they could have done so, his punishment was certain, for in those days there were none but “Corporation juries,” and the fact that Boyle was hostile to the municipal *clique*, was quite enough for these worthy administrators of justice. It happened, on the occasion of a crowded benefit at the theatre, that Boyle and one of the Sheriffs were coming out of the pit at the same moment. A sudden crush drove the scribe against the Sheriff, and the concussion was so great that the latter had two of his ribs broken. There could be no doubt that the whole was accidental; but it was too lucky not to be taken advantage of. Mr. Boyle was prosecuted for assault. O’Connell was retained for the defence. The trial came on before a Corporation jury. The evidence was extremely slight; but it was an understood thing that on *any* evidence, or *no* evidence, the jury would convict Boyle. Mr. O’Connell (who was personally inimical to the Corporation) scarcely cross-examined a witness and called none in defence.

\* Boyle died at Limerick, in 1833, of cholera.

He proceeded to reply. After some hyperbolic compliments on the "well-known impartiality, independence, and justice of a Cork jury," he proceeded to address them thus:—"I had no notion that the case is what it is; therefore I call no witnesses. As I have received a brief, and its accompaniment—a fee—I must address you. I am not in the vein for making a speech, so, gentlemen, I shall tell you a story. Some years ago I went, specially, to Clonmel assizes, and accidentally witnessed a trial which I never shall forget. A wretched man, a native of the county of Tipperary, was charged with the murder of his neighbour. It seemed that an ancient feud existed between them. They had met at a fair and exchanged blows: again, that evening, they met at a low pot-house, and the bodily interference of friends alone prevented a fight between them. The prisoner was heard to vow vengeance against his rival. The wretched victim left the house, followed soon after by the prisoner, and was found next day on the roadside—murdered, and his face so barbarously beaten in by a stone, that he could only be identified by his dress. The facts were strong against the prisoner—in fact it was the strongest case of circumstantial evidence I ever met with. As a matter of form—for of his guilt there could be no doubt—the prisoner was called on for his defence. He called, to the surprise of every one,—*the murdered man*. And the murdered man came forward. It seemed

that another man had been murdered,—t at the identification by dress was vague, for all the peasantry of Tipperary wear the same description of clothes,—that the presumed victim had got a hint that he would be arrested under the Whiteboy Act,—had fled,—and only returned, with a noble and Irish feeling of justice, when he found that his ancient foe was in jeopardy on his account. The case was clear: the prisoner was innocent. The judge told the jury that it was unnecessary to charge them. But they requested permission to retire. They returned in about two hours, when the foreman, with a long face, handed in the verdict 'Guilty.' Every one was astonished. 'Good God!' said the judge, 'of what is he guilty? Not of murder, surely?'—'No, my lord,' said the foreman; 'but, *if he did not murder that man, sure he stole my gray mare three years ago!*'"\*

The Cork jurors laughed heartily at this anecdote, but, ere their mirth had time to cool, O'Connell continued, with marked emphasis, "So, gentlemen of the jury, *though Mr. Boyle did not wilfully assault the Sheriff, he has libelled the Corporation,—find him guilty, by all means!*" The application was so severe, that the jury, shamed into justice, instantly acquitted Mr. Boyle.

It is time to hurry this sketch to a conclusion.

\* Mr. Love has "conveyed" this incident into his romance of "Rory O'More."

Yet a few words about the man. In person, Mr. O'Connell was well made, muscular, and tall. He looked the man to be the leader of a people. He was fond of field sports, and while at Derrynane Abbey, for four months in the year, lived like a country gentleman, surrounded by his numerous relatives, and exercising the wonted hospitality of Ireland. His features were strongly marked—the mouth being much more expressive than the eyes. His voice was deep, sonorous, and somewhat touched with the true Kerry *patois*.

He was seen to much advantage in the bosom of his family, to whom he was greatly attached, a feeling which was reciprocated with veneration as well as love. His conversation was delightful, embracing a vast range of subjects. He was a great reader—and, even in the most busy and exciting periods of his political life, found (or made) time to peruse the periodicals and novels of the day.

He was well acquainted with modern poetry, and was fond of repeating long passages from Byron, Moore, Scott, Crabbe, Tennyson, and others. He was a good classical scholar, though I have heard him say that he doubted whether, after the age of twenty-one, he had ever opened a Latin or Greek book from choice. French he spoke and wrote extremely well. Many of his classical hits, in Court, were good—but few are remembered. I shall give one as a sample. In a political trial he charged

Saurin, the Attorney-General, with some official unfairness, and Burke, his colleague, chivalrously assumed the responsibility. "If there is blame in it," said Burke, "I alone must bear it.

'Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum.'"

"Finish the sentence, Mr. Solicitor," said O'Connell; "add

'*Mea fraus omnis.*'"

When at home, he lived in the good old Irish style. He kept a well-spread table, and was idolized by the peasantry. His residence, Derrynane Abbey, is built on a bold situation, next the Atlantic, and commands a view of the Skelligs. The "Abbey," as it is called, is a comparatively modern edifice, which has received various additions from successive residents. It is irregularly built; so much so, indeed, as to be any thing but a model of architecture. It is convenient, and, in the wilds of Kerry, that should suffice; for who expects a Grecian dome in such a place? The real Derrynane Abbey (or rather its ruins) stands on a little island in the Atlantic.

There is little statute-law about Derrynane, and nearly all the disputes in the neighbourhood were allowed to rest until O'Connell could decide on them. He used to sit, like a patriarch, upon a huge rock, in view and hearing of the tumultuous throbbing of the Atlantic, and there give judgment, against which no one presumed to appeal. Already that rugged seat is called "O'Connell's Chair."

On the 15th day of May, 1847, having nearly completed his seventy-second year, Daniel O'Connell departed this life. He had quitted the land of his birth to seek for renewal of health beneath more clement skies,—so, before him, had Sir Walter Scott. But the great novelist was happier than the illustrious orator; and died, at least, in his own country, and in his own house. From the first, it seems that O'Connell entertained no hope of completing his pilgrimage. He feared, and I think he felt, that he was not destined to reach Rome, the Eternal City.

The account of his last days, as given, at the time, by *Galignani's Messenger* (the English journal published in Paris), is full of deep interest. It is from the pen of Dr. Duff, the English physician who attended him at Genoa. This gentleman first saw him on the 10th May—just five days before he died. On the first visit, he found that the patient had chronic bronchitis, of some years' standing. The next day it was found that congestion of the brain had commenced. On the 12th, the illness increased; for the patient, like Byron, had almost an insuperable objection to take medicine. Then, for the first time, the mind began to waver. On the 13th he became worse, slept heavily during the night, breathed with difficulty, fancied himself among his friends in London, and spoke as if among them. On the 14th the words fell, half-formed, from his lips. Thus he lingered until the next night, unable

to move or speak, but conscious of the presence of those around him. At half-past nine on that night he died. Had he taken nourishment and medicine, he might have lived a few days longer. But not all of him is dead—his memory remains, and will long be kept green in the hearts of his countrymen.

Had O'Connell lived until the 6th of August, he would have completed his seventy-second year. He enjoyed excellent health through the greater part of his life, and had every chance of living to extended old age. His family are proverbially long-lived; his uncle Maurice, from whom he inherited Derrynane Abbey, was 97 when he died; and O'Connell repeatedly said that he intended to live quite as long, *if he could*, nor was it unlikely that he also might approach the patriarchal age of one hundred years.

His last words to his physician conveyed a request that, as he was sure he would present the appearance of death before he actually breathed his last, they would not suffer the grave to be closed too promptly over his remains. His strong hope was to die in Rome, his last moments soothed and sanctified by the blessing of Pope Pius IX. He repeatedly expressed a desire that his heart should rest (as it does) in one of the Churches of the Eternal City. This wish was suggested, it has been said, by the recollection that Robert Bruce had desired his heart to be conveyed to the Holy Land and deposited



in the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. He died without pain, gently as an infant sinks into repose, calmed by the consolations of religion; and, it seemed to his attendants, not only content to quit mortality, but even anxious to be released. His body was embalmed, and is deposited in the Cemetery of Glasnevin near Dublin.

As to the ability, the mental resources, the vast power of O'Connell, there can be no dispute. Unquestionably he was the greatest Irishman of his time. In estimating the conduct and character of public men, two things, it appears to me, should be considered: the value of their labours and their motive. O'Connell, on starting into life, found that his religion debarred him from many privileges and advantages enjoyed by persons of another creed, and he applied himself, earnestly, to remove these disabilities. He succeeded, and in the long and persevering struggle which he headed, acquired vast influence, and a popularity which helped, with the aid of his own legal knowledge and skill, to place him in the foremost rank of his profession. At the age of fifty-four—in spite of the saying that an oak of the forest rarely bears transplanting—he entered the British Parliament, where he soon took a prominent position. Thenceforth his constant aim was to coax or frighten the Government into the concessions which were included in the demand for "Justice for

Ireland." The threat of Repeal was used for this purpose.

The question whether he really desired to carry Repeal is difficult to be answered. That Ireland should have laws made for herself, by her own legislature, may or may not have been a desire with O'Connell. But that, when agitating for the Repeal of the parchment union between Ireland and Great Britain, he had the remotest intention or wish to effect the *separation* of the two countries, no thoughtful observer can imagine. Separation, in O'Connell's eyes, meant a Republic, and O'Connell was essentially a Monarchist. He had an antipathy, also, to the exercise of physical force to procure the restitution of a people's rights. In all probability, had he lived during the struggle of the American colonies, O'Connell would have sided with those who condemned the Americans as "rebels to their King." Truth to say, he was rather an ultra-loyalist. This appeared, in 1821, when, kneeling on the shore, at Dunleary, he presented a crown of laurel to George IV.,—in 1832, when he glorified William IV. as the "patriot King"—in 1837, when he appealed (at the elections) in favor of Victoria as "a Virgin-Queen," forgetful that this distinctive epithet, belonging to all unmarried girls of eighteen, would be forfeited, of course, *when she became a wife!*

It may be conceded, however, that though O'Connell would have shrunk from seeing Ireland actually

separated from England, he was sincere in his exertions to obtain Emancipation, and, subsequently, to wrest other rights and privileges from successive administrations. "Ireland for the Irish" was his favourite cry; but it meant little when uttered by a man who feverishly feared all *real* agitation, tending to assert and secure the actual independence of the country. With him, "Repeal," if it meant any thing, meant continuance under the rule of the British Sovereign. "Repeal" was a capital party cry, but he dreaded it when it was taken up by men not less patriotic, though a little less "loyal" than himself, who thought that boldness, courage, union, and talent could raise Ireland from a provincial obscurity into a national independence.

Great good was undoubtedly performed by O'Connell. His course was often eccentric, capricious, inexplicable. His abilities were great. He made much of opportunities. He wielded all but sovereign power over his countrymen for years. He naturally became impatient of contradiction, and very impracticable. But, with all his faults, O'Connell was essentially a great man.

THE END.

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