

Reddy was intolerably vain; he thought himself the handsomest "boy" in the barony; and more than that, he had the impudence to declare that no woman could refuse him! I must confess that the country girls had, if not sown, cultivated this vanity to a very considerable extent; they paid him a great deal too much attention, which is any thing but good for men in general; and the consequence was, that Reddy considered himself very much as a sort of Irish grand sultan, who had nothing to do but throw his handkerchief upon the favoured fair one; and be she who she might, she would rejoice to become his bride.

"Ah, thin, Reddy dear!" exclaimed his mother one Sunday morning, when Reddy had, even in her opinion, taken a very long time to dress for mass—"Ah, thin, Reddy dear, what ails the shoes?"

"Mother dear, it's *boots* that's in it; and I'm thinking they'll wrinkle on the instep."

"Well, dear, why are ye faulting them so? sure they're mighty slim and purty to look at; and the only wonder I have is how ye ever got yer feet into them. Oh, thin, what would yer father say to see ye turning out on the road in single soles, without so much as a sparable in the heel. Oh, my! why, thin, Reddy, *you have* a mighty purty fut, God bless it!"

"Well, mother, it's nate, I don't deny it," he answered, elevating his foot and viewing it in every position; "I never *go out on the floor*\* without seeing the notice that's taken of it, especially in heel and toe; that's the step to show the shape to advantage—whoop!"

And Reddy cut a caper, while his mother said, "Aisy, Reddy; it's time enough to begin that sort of *divarshin* afther mass. That's a mighty purty handkerchief ye've got about yer neck, dear; they do be saying you don't close up yer throat because it's so handsome; ye always had a mighty clane† skin."

Reddy showed his teeth at the compliment.

"Darling boy, yer hair is a thrifle too long; I'll cut it the morrow morning if you like."

"Mother," answered Reddy, somewhat indignantly, "ye may dock all the

children in the parish, but ye shan't *massacree* my curls any more. Ye spoilt me intirely last fair-day."

"Well, dear," answered the mother, who was perfectly conscious of her son's weakness, though she encouraged it, "there's the bowl dish I always put on yer father's head when I cut his hair, that I might trim it all round, even; one would have thought the dish made on his head, it fitted so beautiful: that was when first we war married; but, bedad! after a fair or a faction fight, the knocks would grow up, and grow out, and push it up—I always allowed for them in the cutting—and he never said—not he (the heavens be his bed!) 'Nell, it's not to my liking.' He was as handsome to the full as yon, Reddy, *avick!* but never took as much pride out of himself as you do. Now, don't put a frown upon *your joy of a face* to your ould mother, my son. The times are changed now; and the young men think more of themselves than they used—times and fashions do change, *agra!* Sure I mind the mistress at the big house riding to church on a pillion behind the coachman, in a green joseph, a gould watch as big as your fist, and a beautiful beaver and feathers—jog jump! jog jump! all along the road. And then of a week day, my darlint! to see her up before the maids in the morning at day-break, and rowling out the pasthry for company, and clearing jelly!—that was her glory. And now, why, the ladies rides in coaches, and leaves word with the maids to get up, and orders the pasthry, and faults the jelly, *avick machree!* There's not the heartiness in the country of the good ould times; we're fading from sunbames into moonbames: *that's* what ails us!"

"Am I a moonbame, mother?" inquired the son, with an insinuating look.

"A moonbame, *avick!* Ah, thin, no; that you aint. You'er a flash-o'-lightning-boy—oh! that's what *you* are. And if you do take a taste of pride out of yerself, *who* has a better right, and all the counthry putting it into you!"

Reddy perfectly agreed with his mother, and after giving her a hearty kiss, as it was yet too early for second and too late for first prayers, he thought he would open his heart to her, as he had long intended to do.

\*Dance.

†Fair.