

like heady Zeit

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THE GLOW-WORM.—The glow-worm is the wingless female of a beetle insect. The male is of a dusky hue, without much beauty or peculiarity of markings. The female is more like the grub of a beetle than a perfect full-grown insect. The light which is of a perfect sulphur colour proceeds from the three last rings of the body. From the circumstance of the male being a winged animal and the female not, it was necessary that some contrivance should be had recourse to for directing the male to his sedentary mate. What more beautiful, and at the same time sufficient guide could possibly be contrived than this self-lighted hyemal torch.

POETRY.

THE BUTTERFLY.

The butterfly was a gentleman
Of no very good repute;
And he roved in the sunshine all day long
In his scarlet, and purple suit;
And he left his lady wife at home
In her own secluded bowyer;
Whilst he, like a bacchanal, flirted about
With a kiss for every flower.

His lady wife was a poor glow-worm;
And seldom from house she'd stir;
She loved him better than all the world,
Though little he cared for her.
Unheeded she passed the day—she knew
Her lord was a rover then;
But when night came on, she lighted for love
To glide him over the gleam.

One night the wanderer homeward came,
But he saw not the glow-worm's ray;
Some wild-bird saw the neglected one,
And flew with her far away.
Then beware, ye butterflies all, beware,
I'll to you such a fate should come;
Forsaken by wandering lights, you'll wish
You had cherished the lamp at home.

ROMANCE OF THE IRISH HISTORY.

THE EARL'S PASS.

Dressed in the silken and tattered garments of a way-worn wanderer, Dermot Mac Murrugh, the deposed chief of Leinster, presented himself before the warlike Henry the Second, in the imperial tent on the plains of Aquitain. Prostrating himself at the feet of the English monarch, he pleaded the cause of his grievances so effectually, that Henry, struck by the recital and his wretched appearance, offered on the instant to aid him in the recovery of his kingdom. We have nothing to do with considering whether Henry's frankness to the exiled chief was the result of calculating policy or spontaneous humanity; our business is with facts and romance, not with speculation. By reason of his war with France the English king could not personally assist Mac Murrugh, but, by letters patent, he authorized his subjects to carry his resolutions into effect. With such a permission, the Irish chief soon succeeded in engaging many Norman knights and adventurers in his quarter, and enlisting them in his service. Amongst the rest, he prevailed upon the daring and powerful Baron De Clare, Earl of Gloucester, to second his cause by the promise of his daughter Eva in marriage, and the reversion of his kingdom of Leinster. This Norman baron was a man of fierce passion and indomitable courage; he was possessed of immense strength from whence came his well-known title of Strongbow; and having been by promise extravagance rendered desperate in his fortunes, he was consequently the fittest leader that could be chosen to forward and conduct so hazardous an expedition.

Having completed all the necessary arrangements, Dermot sailed for Ireland, where, in the Abbey of Ferns, he sojourned himself through the winter in the company of the reverend churchmen, with whom, doubtless for efficient reasons, he was a favourite. In the May following (A. D. 1170) he was cheered in his retirement by the gratifying announcement that an English fleet was hovering

ing on the eastern coast; and in two days after he had the satisfaction of welcoming Robert Fitz-Stephen, Maurice Prendergast, Mober Fitz-Henry, and Hervey of Mountmaurice, to the coast of Wexford, and witnessing the disembarkation of the first British battalions that ever made footing on Irish ground. This armament consisted of forty knights in complete armour, sixty men-at-arms in jacks, and four hundred choice archers and pikemen. Being joined by numbers of the native Irish, they quickly conquered that part of the country, and sat down in the town of Wexford, which had surrendered after four days' siege. Here they were soon after reinforced by Maurice Fitz Gerald and Raymond de Gos, with a further supply of troops.

In August of the following year, Strongbow, at the head of a numerous force, landed at Waterford, and, with the assistance of the other invaders, reduced the surrounding country; after which they fortified the town of Waterford, and spent many days in feasting and merriment, at one of which entertainments the proud Earl was first introduced to his betrothed bride, Eva, and saluted *Righ-Damhina* "his" to the crown of Leinster. The nuptials of the earl and the fair Eva were solemnized with all the parade and pomp which the times and circumstances allowed of. The abbot of Ferns performed the ceremony; and the delighted Mac Murrugh gave away his daughter, rejoicing in his heart of an alliance that promised him prosperity for the rest of his days, and complete triumph over his turbulent rivals.

At the banquet, profuse hospitality prevailed; the rich wines of France displayed their purple vintage, and the more fiery spirit of Ireland did its office; healths were pledged, in carved chalices, to the "strong in beauty and in arms"; the dance proceeded; the native harps poured forth their warmest floods of melody, believed occasionally by the more brilliant, but less enchanting, performances of two Norman jongleurs who had followed in the English train; every tongue yielded words of joy, and every eye sparkled with animation. Amidst this scene of universal hilarity, one alone seemed to disregard the surrounding mirth—one face alone seemed overshadowed with gloom. The proud De Clare turned even from the confiding and smiling looks of his gentle bride—he appeared to disregard her winning advances, and a cloudy melancholy seemed settling his moody spirit on his brow.

"Will not my lord walk down the room?" asked the loving Eva, as she placed her arm playfully upon his shoulder, and gazed with looks of affection on his face.

"I pray thee, pardon me, my lovely Eva," answered the earl, as he pressed her hand gently, and smiled languidly upon her. "In sooth, I know not why I am so sad, when my heart is full, and should be joyful—but it is only foolish custom. By thy leave, sweet bride, I will but take a turn or two in the night air, and all will be well—I will be back presently."

Tenderly embracing his bride, the earl murmured some words of love, and left the apartment. The night was beautifully fine; and the unbroken light of a full autumn moon invested the still ocean with a garment of glory, that seemed extending from the land, until it faded towards the horizon, and mingled with the violet tints of a cloudless sky.

"On such a night," soliloquized the Earl, as he trod the pebbly beach, "and on such an occasion, it is too wretched to be haunted by the familiar fiend of melancholy! Why am I thus persecuted? Why is my free spirit thus tortured? My father died without raid or violence—the blood of neither wife nor kindred is on my hands—opponents I have cloven to death in the tournament, and en-

* The descendants of those first British settlers still inhabit the Barony of Ferns, and are distinguished from the absolute Irish by peculiar dialect and customs.

† The ancestor of the noble family of the Geraldines, whose lineal representative is the present Duke of Leinster.

place recalled to Strongbow's mind his interview with the white phantom; but he laughed at her warning as a mere raving whimsy, when he saw the rear guard of his army leaving the woody dingle far behind; and uttering a joyful shout, he spurred his charger to the advance, without encountering the smallest incident that could lead him to suppose the spirit's rhyme any thing save idle nomenclature.

It is not part of our object to give a detailed account of Strongbow's various achievements in the field; we therefore pass by his victory over Roderick, and the subsequent conquests that made him master of Dublin. Here we shall leave him in the enjoyment of power and peace, while we request our readers to go with us a twelve month or so forward.

Beneath the dim twinkling of the stars, and the pale light of a crescent moon, a little skiff, urged by a single rower in the bow, was making its way up the river Liffey, towards that part of the city then called O'Connell's-town. In the stern was seated a fair-haired, noble-looking youth, who, by his dress and appearance, appeared to be Norman-English. His limbs were moulded in perfect symmetry, well set off by his scrupulously-cut clothes. His face bore the impress of manly beauty; and from beneath his small cap, surmounted by a single feather, his light-coloured locks fell in ringlets down his back. In his hands he held a small viol, after the fashion of the Norman trouveres, which ever and anon he touched with peculiar grace, swelling its music with a voice at once strong and harmonious. He seemed to have been well versed in logic science; and, doubtless, to use the words of old Pierre St. Cloud—

"Full many a taffy tale he knew—
A goodly?—convey to you
Could tell of Melibee, Nosten, ten,
Or Arthur brans, or Tristan bold,
Of Charpel, of St. Brandon old."

"Speed to the ear, good William," quoth the youth, "and if thou leatest me well, the spotted ger-falcan shall be thine."

"That I will, master mine," answered the man; and tugged with new vigour at the oar.

"Canst thou see any light, William?"

"Ay, my lord, there is a light flame dancing on the ripple of the river above the Grey Friars."

"By the blessed rood!" cried the youth, in ecstasy, "that is her signal, sure enough! Speed—speed, for my favour."

The rower pulled lustily; and in a few moments the little skiff came to a landing-place leading to a rudely built tower, from the casement of which, facing the river, a small lamp shed a glimmering light, that flashed on the volatic current below.

"Heaven be blessed," cried the youth, "my beautiful Agatha has not forgotten her vigil of love!"

"And her father, the rough Harold," said the boatman, "sleeps, as is his wont, so soundly, that the blast of a Norman trumpet, or a wild Irish liltree, would fail to wake him."

"In good sooth, the maiden deserves something for her pains. I would that I had hand and voice practised enough to make a ditty pleasing to her; and yet, in the country bowers of Normandy fair ladies have been charmed with my songs, and English dames have owned the sweeteners of my viol. I will essay a little."

He played a soft prelude, and sang the following:—

"To you, enamoured, noble youth,
As unto your dith you go:
She above bath little woe—
Cross her, and in, in south,
Shed not a dither bolt below.
When the lattice open flies,
Vain is all your hope and care;
Then, when, her red and eyes
Take thee captive by surprise—
Nedage sure shall thee there:
Wounds in battle might avail;
Each may cure the cut of the red;
But if once her eye assail,
Art and skill of o'clock dith—
That would can never heal."

chances of a warlike title—and yet I am continually the sport of tormenting and capricious demons? Ye powers that rule us, why is this? I have laboured by all the arts of arms to instil the spirit of a warrior into the bosom of my only son."

As the earl uttered the last word, a wild cry rang through the air, and then died away in a dismal cadence, like the wailing tone of an Eolian mournfully touched by a passing breeze. The earl was as brave as a lion; but the superstitious of his times had not failed to render his heart susceptible to supernatural terrors. He who had often borne unmoved the bloodiest brunt of battle, now quailed and trembled before what seemed to be nothing more than an airy sound. Summoning courage, however, he drew his sword, and strode towards the spot from whence the strange sounds had issued. He had just turned the angle of a projecting rock, when, to his utter astonishment, he discovered, partly shaded by the overhanging cliff, and partly revealed by the dazzling light of the moon, the form of a female dressed in floating garments of white; her hands were clasped, as if in an agony of grief, and her long black hair, streaming downwards in disorder, covered her face and shoulders.

"Who art thou?" demanded the Earl stoutly, "and with such piteous meaning struck the night, and disturbest holy reveries?"

Again the wild cry swelled and died away as before, and the maiden seemed to renew her show of sorrow. De Clare would have approached, but a wave of the figure's hand warned him back, and he felt, as it were, fascinated to the spot where he stood. Without moving her position in the slightest degree, or looking upwards, the maiden in a solemn and chant-like tone addressed herself thus to the amazed Earl:—

"De Clare—De Clare—De Clare!—
Through the shadow moonlight air,
Spirits thus their tidings bear—
Thy hand, that now is marble fair,
Will soon a crimson livery wear;
By father's hand a son shall bleed—
A rebel nature works the deed.
The Earl's Pass! beware—beware—
De Clare—De Clare—De Clare!"

She ceased, and a third time the doleful cry filled the air. At that instant a cloud passed over the disk of the moon, veiling its light; and a mist enveloped the place where the figure sat, which, ascending, dissipated itself by degrees in fantastic tracery over the bow of the cliff. The earl trembled, but the phantom had disappeared. For some moments he stood bewildered in doubt, like one who strives to recall to his mind the seat of sensations of some fearful nature. At length he persuaded himself that he had not been dreaming—but his thoughts rolled in chaotic confusion. Vainly he tried to discover the object of so strange a visitation, and the ominous import of its warning was equally beyond his comprehension. With sunk eye and dejected step, he retraced his way to the banquet-room. The revellers were gone—the music and song had ceased—and a single lamp burned dimly in the lately gladsome hall. De Clare seized it, and, hurrying to his chamber, cast himself on his bridal couch, where tradition leaves him, and most unparadoxically fails to inform us whether he slept well or ill.

Short was the time allowed for Strongbow to indulge either his melancholy or his love. Information had arrived that Roderick, the monarch of Ireland, was assembling a mighty army; which was shortly after confirmed by the news that he had encamped at the village of Clonalkin, near Dublin, with a force of thirty thousand men, and was determined to oppose the further progress of the invaders. These tidings were most welcome to the earl; who sought in the wild phantasy that snatched at his vitals, and came like a blight over his heart in peace. The army was quickly organized, and on the second day it rested in Droine, and on the county of Carlow, near a place called "The Earl's Pass," through which their road lay to Dublin. The name of this