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At such times Marion blessed the Major. Squire Harden's temperament was as changeable as it was vehement. The first transports of his rage having cooled down, he now treated Marion with more gentleness. The fire, however, only smouldered in his breast, and between father and daughter there was a perceptible estrangement. The decisive explosion occurred suddenly. Squire Harden and his military assistant were riding home through the Castle grounds from an expedition, when they caught sight of Marion seated on a rustic bench commanding the picturesque of the demesne. "Look at the hussy!" said the Squire, a curious mixture of fondness and bitterness in his tone. "Ever since that fellow has turned out and made off with himself she has done nothing but moan and mope in holes and corners. They were so like brother and sister, she cannot help being lonely. D—n the fellow! how he has disappointed me!" ejaculated the impetuous old man. "I am sorry to say," remarked Raymond, inclined to feel his way somehow, "that the friendship Miss Harden seems to entertain for my brother by no means extends to myself."

"You can say nothing to interest me, Mr. Raymond." "I love you," and, seizing her hand, he covered it with kisses. She shrieked with the fair shock of this incident. Raymond shrank before the eye of maidenly scorn and indignation she turned upon him. She could only say: "How dare you, fellow?" and bursting into tears, rushed to the house. The squire was startled by the entrance of his daughter, in tears and with shame and affronted feelings depicted on her countenance. She told him all. He heard her with confusion. "Why, girl," said he, "it was I sent him to you. If I dreamed you would have taken it this way I should not have done so. I intended he should supply the place of his blackguard brother." "Father, you will not allow this man to insult me. If you will force his acquaintance on me, at least protect me from the consequences." "Mighty fine! Now, if it had been that rebel rascal," cried the Squire, with sudden anger, "I'll engage I should hear no complaints about his love speeches or his hand-kissings. Stay, what is this?" and he plucked her lover's letter from her bosom, where she had hurriedly thrust it, on the approach of Raymond. He recognised the handwriting. Squire Harden had not read half a dozen lines before Marion saw that all the demon in him was roused. He looked from the letter to his daughter. "Are you this man's plighted wife?" he asked. "I am, father!" He stood white and speechless.

CHAPTER XIII. The squire was utterly confounded by the emergency which thus unexpectedly befell. In the effort to recollect himself he resumed the reading of the luckless missive. Its perusal did not help him, for with an imprecation he repeated its conclusion, which was thus:—"Address, under cover, to Reverend Father O'Hanlon"—A Popish priest, too, in the plot! This was the last drop in the cup of wrath. It acted like a spell and inspired the old man with a sudden determination. There was an ominous determination in his words and manner when he spoke. "Do you know this priest, girl?" "No, father." "Have you answered this letter?" "No." "Sit down and answer it, now." Marion obeyed, and at his mandate took a pen in her hand. "Write as I tell you, 'Raymond.'" She hesitated. "Well, then, 'Sir' if you will be polite to the Croppy—go on." She began—"Sir," "My father has discovered our correspondence, as well as the nature of the relations which existed between us." She wrote this, the squire sternly overlooking her. "A rebel against your lawful King, and a traitor to the man who was your friend." Her pen refused to move. "Well, Marion, you shall not say I was too harsh with you," said her father, with some gentleness, for her compliance so far had pleased him. He changed the tenor of his dictation—"It is needless to remind you of my father's opinion of the part you have taken in the present wicked rebellion. She wrote the sentence. "He considers you have betrayed his hospitality and friendship, as well as the loyalty you owed to your Sovereign." She committed this hard sentence to paper. "You have abused his confidence, and employed base treachery in your endeavor to win the affections of his only child, an object pursued by you from mercenary motives." "O, father, I cannot write these cruel words," cried poor Marion, and, dropping the pen, her overcharged feelings found vent.—She leaned her head on her hands and burst into tears. Squire Harden forced the pen between her fingers, and lifting her head, said sternly:—"Write, girl. This must end, once for all. If you respect this scoundrel's feelings more than mine—so be it. I will gratify you once more. Put it this way:—"Outlawed rebel that you are, I cast you from my thoughts for ever." "Father, I cannot write an untruth," sobbed Marion. "You have acted one—a most shameless one—towards me. But I will indulge you still." And with a self-control wonderful to him, the Squire cogitated a new form. "Tell the fellow this—'As a felon in arms, and an enemy to the State—whose best deserving is a halter.' Go on."

CHAPTER XIV.—THE COURT OF CROSS-PIKE. Villemont, after the successful debut of his force related in a preceding chapter, retained possession of the camp he had occupied at that time. No definite intelligence had reached him from the other inflamed districts. He had heard of a disaster at Tara Hill, in Meath, and of a brilliant victory at Oulart, in Wexford, in which the detachment of militia his men had overawed a couple of days previously, and compelled to turn out of their line of march, were all but exterminated. In the variety of rumors which reached him, he determined, with the concurrence of his second in command, Charles Raymond, to await further developments in his present favorable position. Upon our second visit to the camp we find it agitated by an extraordinary ceremonial. This is the Court of Cross-Pike. On the plateau which crowns the encampment and on a clear grassy space, surmounted by the dense high gorse and bramble which covers most of the eminences, are gathered two or three hundred men. All save those immediately conducting the proceedings sit or stand round the margin of the enclosure, so as to leave the central ground as unobstructed as possible. Here the tribunal is fixed. The president, an intelligent-looking fellow of martial mien, is seated on a drum. In front of him, three on each hand, squat the jury, and directly before him, completing the small square disposition of the court, two pikes stand, an extremity of each fixed in the ground, and crossed midway the length of their shafts. This instrument gave its name to the court. Taking his place at the intersection of the poles, and confronting the president, the deponent laid his right hand upon the junction, and uttered the following formula:—"By my faith, as an Irishman, and upon this cross, I swear to speak the truth!" The president looked grave, like a man conscious that he held a difficult and responsible position. The jury had the expression of all jurors—that of people rousing their intellects to the consideration of matters unusual to them. As for the spectators, they were all attention. It was evident that every man present had a personal interest in the questions to be tried. The president, in the midst of a deep silence, read from a written list the name, "John Hunter, Ballyin," and after a short pause, asked, in the Irish language first, and then in English:—"Who accuses John Hunter of Ballyin?" An old man stepped forward, and, uncovering his head, laid his hand upon the cross, repeating the oath after the president. "What is your charge against this man? Speak loudly, that all may hear you." "A curse light upon him and his. May his race and memory perish off the face of the earth!" The greybeard spoke in the national tongue, which every man present understood. "On the tenth of this month I was in my cabin; I had an only son, an idiot, and crippled in both his legs; I saw Hunter and his bloodhounds coming, and hid myself, thinking that no harm would come to my helpless boy; they entered; they questioned him, and because he did not answer to their satisfaction, Hunter had him dragged out upon the road and shot. May he have a bloody end!" "Retire. Does any other man present accuse John Hunter of Ballyin?" A stalwart young fellow came forward this time, and repeated the oath. "Hunter came in search of me; he caught my sister, a girl of seventeen; she refused to tell him where I was, and for that he had her stripped and flogged with a lash of wire; my sister is dying, and if it is in mortal hand to do it, Hunter dies too." "Retire. Brothers you have heard, what do you say? Is this man guilty or not?" "He is guilty," said the jury in one voice. "Your sentence?" "Death."

WHICH WAS THE TRAITOR?

A STORY OF '98. (From the Dublin Weekly Freeman)

CHAPTER XII.—MARION'S TRIAL.

Squire Harden's new lieutenant entered upon his duties with a zeal and energy which delighted the commander of yeomanry, who never tired of his commending his adjutant and congratulating the corps upon the good fortune which had found it so active and efficient an officer. The secret of Richard Raymond's zeal was twofold—he wished to defy and overbear the contempt and dislike which his attitude had caused among some of his new circle. He realized also, now that he had thrown off the mask of his friends, to so thoroughly enter upon his new character that there should remain no possibility of a renewal of previous relations, no chance for the influences of fraternal sentiments, and no hope for those who might appeal to them. So far his perfidy had succeeded, and but that his brother was at large he would have considered the first part of his purpose accomplished. As it was, he was now master of Raymond Park and lord of an estate which would enable him to gratify tastes denied indulgence previously, and would, besides, give him vantage ground from which to spring into a situation more desirable still. When he calculated his position, what he had done and what he had gained, he determined on one thing—Charles Raymond should never more rule his inheritance. The lieutenant was now a constant guest at Castle Harden, where his host made much of him, and showed him hourly more favour. Here he had frequent opportunities of meeting Marion, and could indulge, in the contemplation of its object, a passion which every visit fanned into a fiercer flame. He was, in fact, desperately in love. Marion had of course heard from Norah Donnelly her convictions regarding her lover's younger brother, while her own knowledge of his proceedings confirmed the statements of the waiting maid. Her feelings towards Richard Raymond may, therefore, be imagined. But Marion had all the tact of her sex, and did her utmost for the sake of the absent one to suppress her sentiments. She knew her father's anger towards Charles, and judged that it would be increased by any show of resentment or dislike on her part towards the new favourite. Richard Raymond misunderstood her demesneur. He imagined that nothing more obstructive than a coldness of manner stood between him and her good graces; if not more tender thoughts. Only one person at Castle Harden disconcerted the latest addition to its circle. This was Major Craddock, who, with his detachment, was at present quartered on the premises for Squire Harden had sagacity enough to know that his yeoman were not to be depended upon in case of an attack upon his dwelling, a visitation which, in common with the neighbouring gentry, he had then reason to fear. Craddock took no pains to conceal his dislike for Richard Raymond; and always treated him with a distant hauteur which the yeoman officer was sometimes disposed to resent.

"Well, why the devil don't you try it, then?" was the blunt retort. "And, should I succeed in doing so, might I hope for the approval of Miss Harden's father?" Raymond gave point to the inquiry by bowing from his saddle. The squire reined up and looked at him. The tone and manner of the question enlightened him. He laughed. "Call a spade a spade, Dick," he cried. "Don't beat about the bush. I tell you at once, if Marion will have you, I won't say nay. There now! Good! man, you deserve a good wife for the part you have played. And as there is an hour to dinner, and my daughter is by herself yonder, you might do worse than break the ice at once." Richard Raymond, elated beyond measure at this unexpected encouragement, was of the same opinion. They had by this reached the house, and delaying only to arrange those details of the toilette which, however the wise may condemn them for trifles, often form the hinges on which turn the affairs of love, he set out upon his enterprise, with pulses beating faster and faster as he approached the white-robed figure of Marion Harden. Hearing footsteps she turned at sight of him. A flush of surprise, and displeasure overspread her face, and, with a slight inclination of the head, she resumed the reading of a letter the perusal of which had occupied her for a long time before. It was from Charles—written on the chance that the mails might escape capture, which in this case they did. Richard Raymond, his ardour considerably cooled by his reception, nevertheless acknowledged it with a profound bow; and advancing, hat in hand, mustered courage to stammer forth a common-places on the beauty of the evening. Marion, still flushed, was looking extremely lovely. Had she been a boggart at that moment, he would have joyfully laid his fortune and himself at her feet. She rose and made a movement away. But he remained standing before her, barring the path. "Forgive me Miss Harden," he said, "if I venture to ask what is the reason of your studied coldness to me?" An explicit reply arose to her lips, but she withheld it, and said: "I am not aware, sir, that our acquaintance has been of a character to warrant such a question." "I must allow that," he said; and added, with a sigh which he could not suppress, even if he would. "Still, if you knew what constant pain it gives me—" She had interrupted him. Stepping forward, she said: "Allow me to pass." "Have you no pity? Will you neither explain your demeanour to me, nor alter it?" "Allow me to pass, Mr. Raymond. This is ungentlemanly." "Certainly, madame. But, first, will you let me say one word?" She looked round, but no champion was in sight. She appealed to him again: "Your conduct is offensive to me," she said. "Ah, if you knew all, you would forgive it. May I say one word?"

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