

mouth, the poking forward of her head to the invited scrutiny, and the wide-open expression of her eyes as they afterwards met his, plainly said—

"Yes, Murty, a wonder o' the world you are—an' good rason I have to be proud o' you."

"Here it is, now, for you, admiral," said Murty, then presenting the document to its owner: "an' it's loock we wish you wid it, admiral avic!" his tones, air, and manner, were graciously patronizing.

CHAPTER V.

After due reflection and consolation on the matter, Terence O'Brien, or the ould admiral, arrived at several pretty accurate conclusions touching the further disposal and progress of the "memorandum o' service."

He had heard—beyond doubt he was sure—of such a place as the Admiralty office, "in the port of London," and judged that thither he ought to forward it. As a first step towards this, he soon became aware that the document should be "put aboard the post-office," in the neighbouring town, and thence that it was to continue its voyage "aboard the mail coach." Right well was he aware that he at present lived on an island separated from another island, in which was the "port o' Lunnun," by a sea. That his "memorandum" was to be received and forwarded, on and from, the coast of that first island, as one of "ould ship's papers," without at the same time shipping the mail-coach or its other contents, Terence rather suspected, but indeed could not be quite certain of the fact; nor did he find Murty Meehan, who had never yet caught a glimpse of the sea, nor received nor forwarded a letter of any kind, in his life, able to enlighten him on the subject. It might be so, or it might not be so; this they decided between them: and eventually the admiral, suddenly struck with the conviction that the question, turn out as it might, was no concern of his, made up his mind to leave it undecided.—"The Capt'n o' the Post-office" was the man whom it concerned, and not him, Terence O'Brien. Every commander of a vessel knew how every thing ought to be done aboard his own ship, from the splicing of a cable to the firing of a broadside; and agreeably to this notion of the post-master's competency in his duties, Terence argued that his paper, once delivered into the hands of that person—just as it had come out of Murty Meehan's hands—by-the-way, unfolded and undirected—ought to arrive safe at the end of its voyage; a mere announcement of its destination being obviously sufficient to enable the captain to supply and superintend all the details of its press upon the way.

"What else was the ould loober on that station

for?" and so Terence set forward for the post-town nearest to his residence.

The post-master was in the act of delivering the morning letters, and a crowd of people gathered round the window of his office. Had we leisure we might attempt to produce some pathetic and some ludicrous surmises as to the different feelings in which different individuals of the throng stretched forward their hands, and exerted their voices, claiming their expected despatches; but we must not pause to indulge our speculations, or show our skill at the expense of the reader's patience. With one person alone, of all present, we dally for a moment.

He stood on the outskirts of the crowd, quietly awaiting his turn to go to the window, saying nothing, pushing or hurrying nobody, and resting both his hands upon his stick. He seemed a very personification of patience and humanity. Either he had never, even in youth, possessed any dash in his character, or the pinching poverty now visible in his sharp features, and peculiar attire, had long ago frozen it out of him. His head-gear was very ancient, and yet made the most of; he would seem fully to have studied and approved the celebrated adage, that "the life of an old hat consists in cocking it." His person was draped in a kind of frock-coat of course grey kersey, reaching below his knees, so fashioned as to save him from the sarcasm of going too heavily clad in summer, or of having an appearance of almost nakedness in very cold weather: for the garment could not be called an outside coat at the one season, nor a thin coat at the other. Originally his leg had been well shaped; and at such a period of its existence, had first taken possession of that part of the pantaloons which at present covered it; but abstemious living, for many years, since then, had shrunk its calf, so that it now allowed its vesture to ruffle in wrinkles to the wind. And it was not difficult to conjecture, from his general appearance, and the hints supplied by the face and deportment, that his blay stockings had been "darned" by his own careful hands; while his shoes were water-proof, in sole, upper, and quarter, because from year to year, they had been diligently watched, and the moment time made a rent or a crack in them, no matter how small, immediately and intently patched in the frail place, with a view to prevent each breach from widening.

We have not a great deal to do with this man, so we crave pardon for volunteering a short sketch of him.

"A-hoy, my hearty!" bellowed Terence O'Brien at his ear, in a tone that would have made him start, or at least look offended, had he not long abandoned all hastiness of movement or of feeling; or he might have deemed that, as the term "hearty" could certainly not apply to him, he was not the person addressed. At all events, he only turned,