

THE O'TOOLE'S STORY.

FROM "NED FORTESCUE; OR, ROUGHING IT THROUGH LIFE."

"I should say by the way your friend Bob handles his pipe, and takes his grog, that he could spin a good yarn for us," suggested Sergeant Vincent. "No doubt of it," cried several voices, "let's have a twister from the hero of Powenghur." "Faith, it's little I know about spinning yarns and the like as you call it, however, I'll tell ye's an anecdote I had wid a black devil of a bear in Ameriky." "In America I did not know that you had been such a traveller, Bob," "Arrah, hould yer whisht, Corporal Sims, for a meddlesome cockney that ye are; it's many more things ye don't know, nor ever will. Do you remember, Ned, avic, where I first met ye?" "Yes, I remember very well," was my reply, "it was at Quebec." "Well, then, I'll tell ye how I got there. My father was what they call one of the better class of immigrants; that is to say, he had a few sovereigns in the heel of an ould stocking, when he wint to Canada, where he was to get ever so much land just for the axing, and live like a foin gentleman as the O'Tooles used to do, when they were kings of Munster, arrah, but it is little he knew what a devil's own hole we wor going to. Well, to make a long story short, from Quebec we were forwarded to Toronto, and then to a place called Barrie, and from there to our estate, in the township of Wasanagus; faith, it was well named, for we wore all like to die with the ague there; devil a fut of dry land was there in it, but what was under wather. What is ye'es laughing at, ye devils?" "Never mind, go on, Bob, said I. "After a while," continued Bob, "we got up a bit of a log shanty, wid a shed at the ind of it for a cow, and a tranneon of a pig, and began to feel a little comfortable like, altho' 'twas awful lonely. Be this and be that, I often think of that same cow, boys, and give her a blessing, for she was the cause of all my trouble wid the bear. There was a beaver dam, and a meadow some distance from our lot, and the little cow would often stray away there, bad cess to her, and stay until I fetched her back. One day I was after the cow, and not far from the meadow, when I heard a kind of shuffling noise behind me. When I looked round, be the mortal, but there was a big brown bear hot foot after me. Ye's have seen me run a race, boys, but ye never seen me run in airnest; bedad, I run that time, and sure it was no kind of use at all; the shuffling came nearer and nearer. Well, jist forinst me, I seen a hollow log about twelve feet long, wid a hole in it that a bit of a gossoon could crawl into; so bedad in I went; faith 'twas time, for the next minute I felt the claws of the basto tickling the soles of my feet; the brute was too big to get in. Arrah, but he was mad; I could hear him tearing and biting at the ind of the log. Presently, the other ind of the log got darkened, and the bear poked in his head, champing and foaming like a mad wild boar; musha, but it makes me shiver yet when I think how I could feel the hot breath of him in amongst me hair. Round and round the log he wint, from one ind to the other; says he, at last, 'this will never do, I must get the boy out of that.'" "What, do bears speak in America?" said the unfortunate corporal. "Shure, wasn't he thinking it, and isn't it all as one, ye omadahun ye," said Bob. "To be sure," said I, "go on Bob." "All of a suddint I felt my feet rising up in the air, till I was standing on my head, houlding on for dear life, be the

knots and rough places inside the hollow log, which the basto commenced shaking and porrameling on the ground, for all the world like a pavier bating paving stones, and when he thought he had loosened no hould, he let the log go down with a bang that fairly shuck the breath out of me, and quick as thought made a dive at the ind of the log, but I was as far from him as ever. Well, presently the head ris up, and by this and by that, the black devil took me in his arms, log and all, and began walking away wid me, till I felt him splashing in the water. Taro and ages, sis I'm kilt now ontirely; he manes to drown me, and shure enough he rolled the log in till it was under wather. Well, boys, it's well I can swim like a duck, and can bate any stone at diving. So before I was quite smothered, I took a deep breath, floated quietly out of me hiding place, and dived clanc across the pond, till I kim up amongst the rushes, on the other side, thin I took courage to raise me head and take a look. There sat me gentleman on the top of the log to keep it down, looking as knowing as you please, and when he thought he'd kept me there long enough to drown me, he rowls the log out and looked in at the ind of it. Ye'd have kilt yourself laughing, to have seen the look he put on, when he found me gone; he was fail y puzzled. But bears, mo lads, is cute things, and this one bate Banagher for cuteness; he began now to walk round the pond, and af course when he kim forinst me, I put my head under wather, and kept it there to till he wint by. Well, when he had done sniffing and looking after my dead body, thinks he, 'his body must be at the bottom of the pond,' and would ye's believe it, boys, he began tearing away the dam wid the big paws of him, to draw the water off, and soon had it running like mad through the sluice. Then he began walking round the pond again. 'Holy Virgin, shure, I am lost now,' says I. I took another dive for the sluice, and down I wint with the stream, and kim up just below a bind in the creek, where I landed and away for the bare life, towards a small Indian encampment, that I knew was on the banks of the river, not far off. Jist as I got within sight of the wigwams, as they call them, I heard the same noise again, and be all that's great, there was the bear after me again, but bedad he was too late this time; I gave a yell ye'd have heard a mile off. The Indians kim running out, and in less than half an hour they had the di'vil kilt and the skin off him. A few days after, my father, may the Heavens be his bed, sent me to Barrie, for something was wanting, and somehow I thought I'd had enough of Canada, and that me little brother Tim wid be the better of the estate, so I made my way to Quebec, and from there to the ould country, where I listed, and here I am, and," added O'Toole, reflectively, "if, as some of ye'es says, there is the laste taste of rid in my hair, by this and by that, it's that same fright I got wid the bear turned it that color." Such exclamations as "Bravo, bravo," "More power to your elbow," "That you may never die," and others of a similar nature that burst from his amused hearers, shewed with what satisfaction he had been listened to. "That is a very good story of yours, and you had a narrow escape from a watery grave, but there is an ancient proverb, that the man who is born to be hanged will never be drowned," maliciously remarked Corporal Sims. "Oh thin, you are a purty boy, corporal dear, has your mother any more like ye; but the devil a fear of your being hurt, had ye been in my places. "For what reason, Bob," said I, the whole group looking

enquiringly towards him. "Arrah, gentlemen, shure the bears of Canada don't ate carrion," was the response. The unfortunate man of two chevrons wished he had kept his ancient proverb to himself, the laugh had been so cleverly turned against him.

A LAUGHABLE SIGHT.

A correspondent of a Southern paper relates the following incident which transpired during the late war:

It was Col. ———'s orders, when his soldiers arrived at water through which they had to wade, never to take off their clothing for that purpose, as it took too much time to don it afterwards.

One memorable day we had to cross a branch of the Shenandoah River. Now, as the Confederates were badly clad, they were very careful of their rags, and as soon as the river was reached the military command was winked at, and captains, lieutenants and privates entered the water in a nude state. As soon as the bank was reached we received orders to "double quick," and off started a regiment of naked men.

"Never mind boys," said one who had been "thar." "there is another branch of the river half a mile a head, parallel to this, and we will reach it in fording style."

No time had been found to put on our "gray," when a sudden bend of the road brought us in sight of an elegant mansion, the piazza of which was filled with ladies, on the lookout for their country's brave defenders. And further on, as far as the eye could behold, numerous residences were seen, their grounds ornamented with ladies.

We paused not in our mad career—on we came. I was quite respectfully habited in a shirt, my boots and pants slung over my shoulder, but my comrade, Jack, who was a lank six-footer, rivalled the Georgia cavalry-man in his uniform, which consisted solely of his spurs. Jack wore not even the latter for modesty's sake. Watching his attenuated figure in all the grace of "double quick," for "the glory of laughter" that fell upon me I could scarcely march.

As we passed the ladies, not a glance, not a word, not a bouquet was vouchsafed us, until an old lady standing near a gate, enunciated slowly and distinctly, as her eyes roved and rested on Jack finally, "Well, of this ain't the wust sight I ever seed."

Need I say that at this criticism immediately the whole regiment was in a roar of laughter, a perfect peal up and down the lines.

LOUIS NAPOLEON'S ESCAPE FROM HAM.

M. Vermorel has just published a book about the men of 1851. It contains a very curious letter, which, though not new, will be read with interest. It was addressed to the editor of the *Progres du Pas de Calais* by the present Emperor of the French, and gives an account of his escape from the Fortress of Ham:—"My dear Monsieur De George,—My desire to see my father once more before his death has led me to embark on the boldest adventure I ever attempted: one which taxed my courage and resolution far more than Boulogne or Strasbourg, for I was determined not to subject myself to the ridicule which attaches to those who allow themselves to be captured in a costume not their own, and I could not have endured another failure. But here are the details of my escape. You know