

pile of grey stone—and all around, lovely green leaves, sunny banks, and shadowy dingles, blended in the richest luxuriance of sylvan beauty.

The lord of this fair domain (a descendant of that Sir Percy Denzil who had built the church on the moor) visited it but seldom. He was said to be a vain, extravagant man, residing chiefly in England, and endeavouring to rival in style those of thrice his income; never visiting Ireland but when retrenchment had become absolutely necessary, and then execrating for their poverty and crimes the country and people, whose character and prospects he had not in one single instance attempted to improve. His eldest son was an officer in the Guards, and a young man of fashion about town; his second had been compelled to enter the church sorely against his will; and though he was rector of the parish in which his father's estate lay, and possessed another church preferment in England, he contrived to evade the duties of both, and to spend the most of his time on the continent. There was only one daughter—much younger than her brothers—the child of a second marriage. Her mother was dead.

One autumn I had been enjoying a week's shooting among the mountains, and coming down to the little inn at the "Ford," one Saturday evening, weary with wandering through bogs and briers, I resolved to take up my quarters for the ensuing day at that pleasant haven of rest. Refreshed by a sound sleep, and a good breakfast, I began the next morning to speculate on the manner in which I was to pass the day. I had no books with me, and it was not likely that the good people of the inn could furnish me with any; my limbs were in no mood for wandering far in search of the picturesque, yet vapid idleness was always intolerable to my nature. Suddenly I recollected the lonely church on the moor. It was within an easy walk. I had passed it the preceding night in the gloaming, feeling somewhat impressed at the time with the dreary solitude of the spot, and its unrivalled attractions for ghosts and ghostseers. "Why should I not go there?" thought I. "No one can deny that it will be a suitable manner of spending Sunday morning; and then my artistic tastes may be satisfied by the sight of some mountain faces and mountain costumes as interesting as the garb and features of the land." True, I had no dress but my shooting attire, but it was well enough for a country church, and a peasant congregation. With this reflection, I rang the bell, and the landlady herself appearing in her Sunday black silk gown, and white rockspun shawl, nearly ready for church, I enquired when the service commenced. She was a kind, motherly soul, not above attending to the comfort of her guests, or gossiping with them, if they were so inclined; so after answering my question, she began to expatiate on the merits of the preacher I was to hear at Ard-cross (for so was the church on the moor called), a new curate who, it