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A TALE OF CASHEL.

BY MRS. J SADLIER.

Mes. Esmond was slow in recovering from her swoon, and even when consciousness did return, strength was sadly wanting. Mind and body were prostrated, as if by some violent shock, and when her attendants proposed to her to retire to her chamber for a little while, she passively consented, whereupon two of them supported her up the stairs. They could not induce her, however, to be down; throwing herself on her knees beside her bed she bowed her head upon it in silent prayer, and so remained till the girls fearing that she had fainted again, gently touched her arm. She looked up with a wintry smile on her pale features.

Never lear, Peggy, I'm not dead !" The words came out, as it were, with a spasmodic effort, and a dreary emphasis on the pronoun 1. Oh | girls, let us pray, let us all pray together.

And they did pray, the girls awed by the strange composure—the unnatural calmness of their mistress, at a moment when they could hardly restrain themselves from rushing out to tom the search which they felt was going on.

Half an hour might have passed thus, whea the door-bell rang. Mrs. Esmond started to her feet gasping for breath-strove to speak, but mable to utter a word pointed to the door. The guls understood her-one of them brried down starrs, but did not return. Strange sounds were heard in the hall, as if of heavy feet shutfling along, and whispering voices, and stiffed grouns and sobs. State Mrs. Esmond mored not, though the fletting color on her cheek, and the fearful intensity with which her eyes rested on the door, showed the awful struggle between fear and hope that was going on within.

Magam, dear, said the remaining servant. what can it be, at all? - will I go and see?

· Go ? The word escaped from between the firmly compressed hips, as though the speaker were scarcely conscious of its import. The girl darted off like a lap-wing, and she had hardly time to descend the states, when a piercing scream echoed through the carridor . Ha! that's Nora's voice! I knew it, said Mrs. E mond to herself; 'my God! I knew it!' and she

When she again opened her eyes on surrounding objects, all the women servants of the household were around her, engaged in various efforts for her recovery, one slapping the palms of her hands, another batting her temples, whilst a third had her almost choked, holding hurnt feathers under her nose. Her first look of wild inquiry was an-wered with a chorus of sorrowful ejiculations that confirmed her worst fears. It was but the work of a moment to spring out of bed, and dash the officious attendants to one side

Where is Harry?' cried the half crazed wife : 'where is my husband !--dead or alive, let me see him.

No one spoke, but on the instant came from the adjoining room the most sorrowful death-cry that ever thrilled inourner's heart. Guided by the sound, Mrs. Esmond flew to the door, which was closed-but paused before she attempted to open it, her face like that of a sheeted cornec. and the cold dew oczing from her pathid brow.

Ma'am, dear, don't go in,' whispered one from behind; ' for God's sake, dont."

A scornful laugh was the answer, the door was flung open, and Mrs. E-mond stood in the presence of her husband, but not as she parted from him some hou's before. Dead and cold he lay, in the clothes he had worn all day, the blood slowly tricking from a bullet wound in his temple, showing all too plainly the manner in which he had met his death. At the foot foot of the bed sat mad Mabel, chanting her song of woe, and rocking her body to and fro, in dismal accordance with the wild strain she sang so piteously. Muligan and two or three other men who were in the room drew back as the door opened; they need not have done so, for their presence was unheeded by her whose soul was that moment crushed, as by an avalanche.

Mrs. Esmand stood beside the bed, looking down on the heap of clay that was her husband, but no sigh no sound escaped her. Every faat such a moment was something wholly inexplicable to the sample hearts around, and the stony rigidity of her living features was more awful to death. People held their breath as though fear- a ghastly-smile on her parted lips said: ful of disturbing a silence that yet was terrible bed—from that her eyes wandered to the strange—hand of welcome, any more—look here; and O'Grady's voice faltered as he thus spoke; 187

began to pat her cheek with her cold hand, saying at the same time in a tone of tender

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'Cry, now-why don't you cry ? Poor thing . poor thing.

As if Mabel's voice had broken the mighty spell that kept her senses in thrall, Mrs. Esmond started into sudden life, threw up her arms wildly, and uttered a scream so piercing, so full of anguish, that it rang in the ears of those who heard it for many a long day after. Disengaging herself from Madel's encircling arm, she threw herselt on the body of her husband and wildly called upon his name, kissing his cold lips again and again as though hoping to restore their warmth. In vain, in vain. Then she laid her hand on his heart, but no - no - all was still - still as death could make it. Yet she could not, would not, helieve that death was there. How could she realize it to herself that the stark form before her was that of her young husband, who had left her but a few short hours before in all the buoyancy of youth, and health, and happiness? Harry dead! Harry Esmond dead!-no-no-no-n could not be -it must be a dream, a horrible

Turning for the first time, with her hand still on Esmond's heart, her eye ran round the room till it rested on the blank, terror-stricken face of Mulligan. In low cautious tones, as if fearing to awaken the sleeper, she said with frightful calinness:

'Mulligan !-he is not dead - he cannot be dead-go directly for Dr. O'Grady and Dr. Hen-

"They'll be here presently, ma'am,' said the poor fellow, trying hard to keep in the tears that were choking his utterance; 'there's two messengers gone for them before we-we-brought the poor master home.' Again Mrs. E-mond bent down and touched

the lips of her beloved, and laid her trembling hand on his heart-then took up the hand that hung down over the bedside and felt for a pulse -when all this was done, the last spark of hope seemed to die out in her heart-with the stiff cold hand pressed to her bosom, she turned again to Muligan, and cried in a tone of heart-piercing

Oh, Mulligan! Mulligan! who had the heart to kill him?

This was the signal for a general outburst of lamentation; the grief and pity so long restrained now broke out in tears and sobs.

'Ay, you may well cry,' said Mrs. E-mond; you have all lost a good friend. But oh, Harry, Harry - what is any one's loss to mine?' And, starting to her feet, she wrung her bands in anguish. No tear escaped her burning eye hils, and she felt as though her brain were all on fire. Mulligan,' cried she again, with a wildness that afarmed every one, . Mulligan, I asked you before whose work is this? Where did you had your waster?'

· Och, God pity me that has to tell it,' said Mulligan, 'sare we found him'-here a burst of tears interrupted the sad tale-' sure we found him lyin' on the road side about half-way between here and the Lodge. As for them that done the deed-well, God knows-God knows!

'It's little matter to me,' said Mrs. E-mond drearily, as she wiped away with her handerchief the blood that disfigured poor Harry's dead face -that face late so comely and so cheering.-A time will come for all that - now it is enough for me to know that I am a widow-and my children orphans this dismal night-that I have lost the dearest and nest of husbands-and my children the best of lathers-oh Harry, Harry, is that you that lies there so stiff and cold?-you that gave life and light to all around youoli no, no, it cannot be you,' and raising his head on her arm, she looked with piteous earnestness on his face. Alas! ves, it is Harry E-mondit is my husband, but you cannot be dead, Harry -oh no, you can ot be dead-speak to me, Harry-oh, in mercy, speak to me-or I cannot -cannot live.

'You must get her away-at once,' said Dr. O'Grady, who with Dr. Hennessy just then appeared at the door, both panting with excite- eyes on Mulligan. There was a ment, and pale with horror. Oh, Maurice, his eyes, no less than in his words. what a sight!' he whispered to his friend, ' poor, poor Harry. I fear there is little chance of our culty of her being seemed paralyzed, every limb, doing any good-but come now; be a man, and every feature, as it were, petrified. Her silence | brace yourself up, that we may at least do what

we can. The servants were all in motion in an instant. and the sound of the doctor's familiar voice their eyes even then the ghastly presence of aroused the unhappy lady. Turning round with

'Come in-come in-you'll not disturb him. to all, Looks of pity were exchanged, and ges- O Dr. O'Grady-Dr. Heunessy-look what they tures of horror, but not a word spoken. Even have done to poor Harry—he never met you help us all this night. May the Mother of Sor-Mabel had ceased her wailing and sat looking without a friendly smile, and a kind word-but rows comfort his poor wile, and protect his poor libere ! very enthestly at the motionless figure on the he'll never smile again he'll never reach the orphan.

rose solily from her seat, glided like a spirit to only an occasional drop of blood now obzed times that he said to his brother doctor: her side, and, throwing her arm round her neck, thick and dark, she fell fainting og the body of her busband.

· It is just as well,' said the elder practitioner; now take her to her own room as gently as you can, and lay her on the hed."

. It was no easy task to unwind her arms from around the body, but it was at length done, and the doctors proceeded to discharge their melaucholy duty, having first cleared the room of all except Mulligan.

A very few moments served to convince the doctors that Harry Esmond was, indeed, no

'That bullet did its work well,' said Hennessy, as the two stood beside the bed looking mournfully down on the dead. 'The Lord have mercy on your soul, Harry Esmond. I didn't think that you had an enemy on earth. Merciful Heaven, O'Grady, who could have done such a

" Mulligan,' said Dr. O'Grady, turning to that faithful servant, they tell me you found him. Wisha, then, I did, sir; ochone! ochone! I did P

" Where? and how?"

Mulligan described the place exactly, and the position in which he found the body.

"And was there no trace of the murderer?-Is there no clue to guide us-I mean the lawin bringing the wretch to justice?"

Mulugan was silent, but the next moment he said, musingly, as if to hunself- How did he come to leave the roan behind, I wondher ?'

What's that you say, Mulligan P said Hennessy vuickly; 'was it not his own horse he

"Well that's what I'm not able to tell you sir; but I know it was one of ould Mr. E-mond's horses-the steel grey-that gallopped up to our stable this night without a rider-and it was our own road mare that the masther took with

Hennessy and O'Grady looked into each other's eyes, as if each sought to read the other's

'Has Uncle Harry been sent for?' asked O'-Grady.

' No, sir.'

Send Pierce off immediately, then."

Pierce, sir ! is it Pierce?' and Mulligan began to rub his elbow.

'Yes, Pierce! you cannot go-you are wanted here, as the oldest servant of the family."

Well, but, doction dear! I cau't send Pierce, for Pierce isn't in, or hasn't been since haif-past four or five."

There was something in the tone of these words that made the gentlemen start, and look | Hurry Esmond." fixedly at the groom. Multigan's eyes sank consciously beneath their gaze. All at once, Dr. O'Grady's hand fell heavily on his shoulder.

"Mulligan! there is something on your mind that you do not care to tell. But you need not lear to tell us, for you will have to tell all in a Court of Justice, and that before long. Tell me now, had this man Pierce any grudge against Mr. Esmond ?'

'Not against my master, sir! Oh Lord no. sir, I'd take my oath he hadn't. There was no one had any grudge against him-vo, vo, how

could they ? 'And yet they shot him,' said Hennessy with stern emphasis; they have killed one of the best landfords in Tipperary -one of the best friends the poor had-after that, who can ever say a word in their behalf? My poor, poor Harry! I thought you could travel the county over by night or day, without any one touching a hair of your head-and to think that others who did oppress the poor are alive and well, and you lying there-dead-shot down like a dog in the flower of your youth-my noble, generous, wholesouled Harry-you that always stood their friend when they most needed one."

Well, gentlemen,' said Mulligan, wiping away his tears with the sleeve of his jacket, 'it does look very bad-very, very bad et this present time-and if any one done that deed a purpose -I mane if they knew who was in it-1'd disown Tipperary for ever and a day -----

Both gentleman turned at this and fixed their eyes on Multigan. There was a deep meaning

'So you think, Mulligan,' said O'Grady slowly and thoughtfulry, that there might have been a mistake - a fatal mistake, if so?'

"I'll lay my life on it, sir," said the groom with honest warmth, 'I wouldn't believe the bishop-no, nor the Pope himself if he said it, that my master was shot a purpose. No, sir; it's bad enough, God knows, but it isn't us bad as that.'

. Well, well, it makes little difference, after all how he came by his death; he is dead, Goit

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ly altered face of Mrs. Esmond-all at once she pointing to the would on the temple, from which and it was only after clearing his throat several

Of course, nothing can be done here till the inquest is over. We must send at once to notily the corone, ;' and he raised his bankerchief to his eyes. Profession lly cold and calm as O'Grady was on ordinary occasions, he was here a child.

Mulligan was accordingly dispatched with the the awful intelligence to the coroner of Mr. Esmond's murder - awful, indeed, for Dr. then coroner for that district of the county Tipperary, was himself a personal friend of the deceased gentleman.

When the doctors found themselves alone together, Hennessy laid his hand on O'Grady's arm and said :

'Now tell me, O'Grady, what is your opinion of all this?"

O'Grady lowered his voice to a whisper as he replied - My opinion is that - he did not finish the sentence, for the door opened and Uncle-Harry made his appearance. Without speaking a word, but, merely nodding to the doctors, the old man approached the bed, and looked long on the lifeless form of his nephew. No outward sign gave token of what passed within, but those who watched with intense interest the bearing of that stern man under so terribie a trial, did see what they never forgot, the mighty workings of a hard, proud heart, writing under the lash .-The face was only partially seen to them, but even that partial view was not needed for the swollen and throbbing veins on the great thick neck, and the heaving of the broad chest, sulliciently indicated the storm of passion that was raging within.

At last he turned and looked from one doctor to the other with heavy, bloodshot eyes, glaring fiercely from under his bushy orows.

'So they've killed poor Harry!' said he, in a hoarse guttural voice.

. So it appears, Mr. Esmond, sadly said

"Well, there's what it is to be "a good land-

ford !? There was a fierceness of sarcasto in these words that cannot be described. "If it was I now that by there instead of Harry, people would say, I suppose, that I deserved what I got-ab, the villains I the black-hearted, cowardly villains, its little I regard them !!

, 'Take care, Mr. Esmond-take care P said Hennessy, ' with that sight before you, how can I you speak so P

' And why not ?' said Esmond fiercely.

Because, Mr. E-mond, said Hennessy, drawing near to him, and looking him steadily in the lace, hecause that bullet may have missed its maid. No man ever meant to skoot young | hat from something he said to me just motore

The old man started as if an adder had stung him. A glastly paleness overspread his face, and a brighter glare flashed in his eyes. 'Dr. Hennessy,' he stammered out, ' what do you mean P

. I mean just what I said,' replied the doctor slowly and emphatically, that my poor friend never incurred the fearful penalty he has paid. Excuse me,' said the doctor to O Grady, 'I out with :will go und see how poor Mrs. Esmond is.?

'You are impertment, sir-you forget yourself,' hissed the old man between his teeth.

No, sir; I do not forget myself or you either,' and so saying. Hennessy left the left the room. As he passed along the corridor to the remote apartment whither Mrs. Esmond had been conveyed, he encountered more than one group of the servants with certain women of the neighborhood whom the news had already reached. Every soul of them was to tears, and their groans and lamentations attested the sincerity of their sorrow. Some had stories to tell of dreams they had dreamed about the poor dear master, or the mistress, God save her, or of great touble and confusion about the big house.' And sure they knew well there was something going to happen; others had been a sign to the doctor to get the others out of the favored with warnings of dirers other kinds, all room. of which were now interpreted in the awful death of the mister' so dearly loved by all .pernatural enlighteoment.

happen!

. Wishi, how is that, Molly dear?' and all the rest deted their eyes, and held their breath to fisten to one so well entitled to speak.

Mully then told, with sundry additions, the affair of the ring-the wedding-ring, and the clay. When Malty had enjoyed sufficiently the simple wonder of her auditors, she proceeded to cap the chinax with her own experience- But there was something more than that, said she, that nobody seen barring myself and Naucy

Afther they wor all gone to bed that night, myself an' Naucy being the last in the kitchen, we thought we'd rake the ashes smooth to see if there 'id be any feet coming or going. We waited to try the salt, too, so we put a thurbleful forneust every one in the house, standing on a plate in a cool place, and off we went to

" Well, Molly, an' what come of it ?"

"As true as I'm a hym' women this night, an" the master a dead man, Lord receive his sowl in glory-there was the mark of a foot in the ashes-a man's foot, too, an' for all the world like his, and it turned to'st the door !'

. The Lord between us an' harm !

"Au" when we went to look at the salt, beho" i tou, there was one thimbleful broken down, and melted like, and the others all standin' as straight as when we left them. Now that's as thrue as you're all standing there, and if you doubt my words there's Nancy Kenny can tell you the

Nancy grouned in corroboration, and another took up the dismal theme of the warnings. It was very remarkable, however, that in all their grief for the good master they had lost, little was said of the manner of his death, and nothing whatever of the perpetrator of the deed-wheever that might be.

When Dr. Hennessy knocked at the door of the room where Mrs. E-mond was, it was opened by Mrs. O'Grady, and he found within Mrs. E mond, senior, and Anna Windfred, all three naving come with Uncle Harry. Mary Hennessy, it appeared, was so overcome by the dreadful shock, that she was utterly unable to follow the dictates of her heart in hastening to the side of her so awfully bereaved triend.

To the doctor's inquiry of how she found herself, Mrs. Esmond replied, in low, faint accents -On! there is no fear of me-I am well enough-too well-but Dr. Hennessy!' she added with sudden ammation, raising herself from ner reclining postare in a large arm chair, Dr. Hennessy, do tell me has that man Pierce yet returned?

· I believe not-but why do you wak?-did you want him?'

· Want but? Mrs. Esmond repeated with a visible shudder; 'oh no ! no ! no ! The sight of nin would be death - death l' and mouning piteously, she fell back again in the choir.

"Why, surely, Mrs Esmond,' said the doctor. you cannot suspect him -- what motive could induce him-or, indeed, any one else, to commit so black a crime?

. I know not, doctor, I know not; but,' and the unhappy lady paused, gasping for breach, leaving the house-and after my poor-my poor Harry was gone-I lear -oh! I am almost certain that he had -at least-something to do wallit l' She could say no more.

The horror of this announcement blanched every check, and the tadies were, for once, struck dumb. It was only for a moment, however, for, long before the doctor could make up his mind as to what he should say, Aunt Winifred broke

'La me! we might have known there was something bad about the fellow; don't you remember the voice we heard on Hallow-eye night?"

Yes, and that sad affair of the ring, my dear Mrs. E-mond ?' subjoined Mrs. O'Grady; ' you know I told you that you should not have given your wedding-ring for such a purpose ! my dear. it was very thoughtless of you to do it-indeed, indeed it was. My ! my ! my ! who could have foreseen this !-though I must say that I had a sort of presentiment that night that something very bad was going to happen. Poor dear Harry ! and taking out her handkeremel, the sympathizing friend buried her face in i's snowy folds. The elder Mrs. E-mond, who sat quietly with her niece's hand clasped in hers, here made

" My dear Mrs. Esmond?' said Dr. Hennessy anxious himself to rid her, if possible, of these The cook was trying hard to make hersel intel- Job's comforters, had you and better he down highle through the sobs and tears that choked on the bed, and remain quiet a while. I see you her voice, while she set forth her claims to su- are completely exhausted-Amit Martha will stay with you, and Mrs. O Grady and Aunt · Sure, dula't I know ever since Hol'eve Winifred can go down stairs and attend to the night that something or another was going to household affairs. The people are already crowding in, and the house will be full of guests before morning."

The proposal was eagerly accepted by the two active hidies, who innuediately retired brimful of importance; it was hard, however, to nersuade Mrs. Esmond to remain where she

Oh, Doctor Hennessy !- oh, Aunt Martha ! she sobbed, how can I stay here-nid Harry so near me-dead?-oh! no, no-I cannot--cann t stay'-and she rose from her seat, not withstanding the gentle efforts of Aunt Martha he Lord save is, Molly, schree, wist was to prevent her. Now, Aunt Martia ! do not

I wast down by a company