

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PHOENIX PARK MURDERS AND AFTER

*"The blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare."*

SHAKESPEARE.

ON Parnell's release from Kilmainham he returned to me at Eltham, and on May 6, 1882, went to Weymouth to welcome Michael Davitt, who came out of Portland prison on that day. He returned to Eltham that Saturday evening, and the next morning, Sunday, I drove with him to Blackheath Station, as he had to go to London to see Davitt and others. At the station I asked him to get me a newspaper before he left, and waited for it in the carriage.

From where I sat in the carriage I could see Parnell's back as he stood just inside the station door. I was watching him, and he half turned and smiled at me as he opened the paper—the *Sunday Observer*—to glance at the news before he brought it to me. He told me afterwards that he wanted to see what was said about Michael Davitt. He had now come to the top of the steps and, as he suddenly stopped, I noticed a curious rigidity about his arms—raised in holding the newspaper open. He stood so absolutely still that I was suddenly frightened, horribly, sickeningly afraid.