

that scapegrace, or to any one else?" half shrieked Shiwawn.

"No, indeed," answered Crichawn; "I only wanted some one to be able to prove the murdering heart he had in 'im, an' that made me put Nelly on the watch. She can now prove that he wished to murder the poor old uncle."

All their eyes opened wide as they saw the prudence and forecast of Crichawn.

"You'll be taken," said Lliam.

"I know that."

"Better get out of the way for a while."

"Not for a minit. I promised Mr. Meldon to keep near ould Mr. D'Alton, and I'll never quit him if I was to die by his side."

"Does'nt that look like shooting Quirk?"

Crichawn smiled a knowing smile, and Lliam fully returned it.

"The ball that killed Quirk was found?" asked Crichawn.

"The police have it," answered Lliam. "It kem from a small bore—a very small bore—an' 'tis a rifle ball."

"Does any wan know anything o' the gun?" continued Crichawn.

"The gun," answered Lliam, was taken by force from the man that fired the shot. No wan knows who tuk it."

Crichawn gazed at the speaker with a look of admiration and affection. "Gonnies," continued Lliam, "'twas a great night for stealing guns, entirely. Quirk had a gun in his hands when he was brought down; and that gun got off some way, too"

The old woman flung down the knitting and the young woman stopped her spinning wheel.

"*Lamh Dhe!*" she exclaimed. "The hand of God!"

"You know the owner of the guns?" said the young woman, emphatically.

"They both belong to wan man," was the answer.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MYSTERY OF THE TWO "HENRY D'ALTONS"—THE ARREST OF CRICHAWN.

MR. MELDON was kept perfectly well informed of everything going on at the Crag, and everything going on at his own home, and we may surmise that his

mind was much disturbed by the facts and rumors which had recently reached him from Tipperary. Mr. Leyton Seymour shared his knowledge, and of course sympathized with his feelings; but both gentlemen determined to be strictly reticent on the subject until necessity compelled them to reveal what had happened; and hence Amy and Alice were quite ignorant of what had happened.

When events had developed themselves as we have read them in the last chapter, Mr. Meldon became for the first time really agitated, and he determined on going over to Ireland at once. It would make great complications, and go far to mar some expectations and plans; but whatever the consequences, he made up his mind he would and should exercise all his power to save Crichawn, and to comfort the old man at the Crag. Certainly he had letters constantly from Crichawn and the two clergymen, and all were of opinion that Mr. Meldon could do nothing at Slieve-na-mon equal to the injury to be inflicted, and the impetus his arrival would give to the hostility of Baring and his associates. But no arguments would have retained him if Father Power had not given him a surprise one day by a most enigmatical letter, which was as follows:—

"FETHARD, Tuesday.

"My Dear Sir,—An extraordinary man came here from Kilkenny a few days ago. He seems to have a kind of second sight, for his ability in discovering things is like magic. He says his name is McNaughton, but it is evidently assumed, and I am sure he is a detective sent to work up the case of Quirk's murder; he evidently does not trust the police. The old man at the Crag is much improved, quite out of danger now and Father Aylmer is as strong as ever. It was a great mercy that Miss D'Alton was not at home, and it is a great mercy that she remains away and in ignorance. Her father, she will find a changed man, in fact an old saint. The surroundings now would be too much for any woman. We expect Father John Hayes home in ten days, and he brings with him a namesake of Miss D'Alton regarding which namesake there is a great