

TWO

AILEY MOORE

SALES OF THE TIMES SHOWING HOW EVILS, MURDER AND SUCH-LIKE PASTIMES ARE MANAGED AND JUSTICE ADMINISTERED IN IRELAND TOGETHER WITH MANY STIRRING INCIDENTS IN OTHER LANDS

CHAPTER XXVII

SHORT, BUT IMPORTANT

Mr. Gaspard Tackle, a new acquaintance, but a most important personage, was the Governor of Prison, where Mr. Forde was confined under sentence of death, and whence Mr. Joyce Snapper had been transported, to Botney Bay. Mr. Ford had been condemned on his own confession, and Mr. Joyce Snapper had been sent over the sea upon another charge proved by other evidence. Every one in the world cause of unhappy Skerin's death, and everybody, official and non-official, who met Mr. Snapper, and who tried him—unless his own well paid counsel, told him so. But although the law could, would, and should hang Mr. Forde on his own testimony, that was no reason for hanging the ex-Justice of the Peace on the like evidence; and of the small affair of speculation and of preserving the "peace of the country," finding arms where he had himself placed them, or caused them to be placed, were the crimes for which the scene of his talents and virtues was changed to the antipodes. It must be admitted, too, that the judge, jury, and public were very well contented to find out a list of peccadilloes which would justify their vengeful feeling against Mr. Joyce Snapper. There is no knowing, in fact, how things would have been, had they not discovered a sufficient "public mind" to convict; for when the "public mind" has become determined to "vindicate the law," it will do so, whether it appears in a dock for examination.

"Well, as we have said, Mr. Gaspard Tackle was the worthy governor of Prison, and as an intelligent and well-read economist, he had his own views on the whole affair. He had parted from Mr. Joyce Snapper with great reluctance, because he declared that Mr. Snapper's face was just the one for a "condemned cell," and that Mr. Snapper's neck was "just the one for a halter." He had frequently, though cautiously, expressed his sympathy for the unfortunate Mr. Forde, and he looked upon his condemnation as "an error, and even a mistake," which was a usual emphatic mode of announcing his opinion, adopted by Mr. Governor Tackle.

Mr. Governor Tackle was one day sitting in his room, reading some papers. The room was two stories high, and looked out upon the tops of various walls, which crossed each other at various angles. The walls were enclosed at various yards, sheds, walks, and a garden. The yards contained men—some alone and some in lots. They picked oysters, rolled wheelbarrows, pumped water, worked the treadmill, &c., &c., with an industry which showed the watchfulness of Mr. Governor Tackle. The garden of which we have spoken contained a young woman who carried a child in her arms, and had two others hanging by her apron or her dress; these were the young Tackles and their servant maid.

A man with a broad forehead—but a low one, a very heavy eyebrow, and eyes like Indian bullets, entered the garden-door, and addressed the handsome young woman just mentioned. Mr. Governor Tackle was a man who saw everything, and therefore he saw this fact. He dashed up the window and popped out his fur cap, red face, and gray whiskers.

"What now, Johnson?" demanded the Governor. A policeman at the door wants to see Nancy, your honor.

"Oh!" "A sergeant, sir; he says he has particular business of her."

"His name?" "Sharkey, from Londonderry, sir. He may come in."

A little after the wardman had retired, Mr. Sergeant Sharkey from Londonderry came to Nancy, all of whose family she knew very well, and regarding whose brother in Jamaica he had some very interesting news; and besides, he presented her with a gold locket, a real gold locket of hair, from some one whose name made her blush most wonderfully. Mr. Governor Tackle came in during the locket scene, and was exceedingly amused at the perturbation of Nancy; and he asked many questions regarding "the worst Londonderry," all of which were most satisfactorily answered by Mr. Sergeant Sharkey.

The Governor of Prison said that when Sharkey went, that he would know a Londonderry man among ten thousand, they were a decidedly superior race. He was a Londonderry man himself. Mr. Sergeant Sharkey, when he left the prison-gates, walked at a leisurely and soldier-like pace through many streets, lanes and alleys. He finally stopped, and, having looked round him cautiously, as policemen are wont to do, he entered a poor-looking house in a back street, where he remained a very considerable portion of the afternoon.

ant in livery, powdered and curled wig, yellow cuffs and white stockings.

"You're the orderly for Fitzwilliam Square?" "Ye—s."

"As you pass by—prison you are to hand this to the Governor, from the Chief Secretary."

"This packet." The dragon took a letter of great dimensions, in the usual blue official paper, and bearing the usual large official seal.

"You are to see the Governor, and deliver the packet with your own hands."

"Very well." "And his honor sent you this half-crown."

"We'll! a rum 'un, ain't he?" "And so they parted."

In ten or fifteen minutes after, the noble horse of the orderly was prancing at the prison-gate. The dragon's summons to the Governor was very readily answered; and the Governor was whiskers twice as gray, and his cap twice as proudly worn, when he received the packet from the Chief Secretary's "orderly," and learned, moreover, that it was "important," and to be delivered into his own hand, only.

As the orderly rode off to Fitzwilliam Square, Mr. Governor Tackle returned to his apartments. He laid the packet on his writing desk—quite in the middle of the desk, and quite evenly, so that it looked in its place as comfortable. He then drew his chair towards the desk; sat down in the same, and very deliberately took out his spectacles (he wore spectacles), and examined the seal, just as if he had never seen such a seal before; but to tell the truth, he was all the time guessing what could be the contents of the document, for he could not bring himself immediately to break up a thousand fancies, by breaking the wax.

Perhaps it was some complaint had been made of him. Was it possible? This thought no sooner presented itself than even the idea of cutting the paper and saving the impression was abandoned. Mr. Governor tore open the letter, flung the cover into the grate and read:

"TO THE GOVERNOR OF PRISON—Sir, I am commanded by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to apprise you, confidentially, that his departure for London is delayed till to-morrow, for the express purpose of having the prisoner Forde examined on some matters regarding which he is supposed to possess valuable information. Two of the police will call at the prison to-morrow morning, at 7 o'clock, a. m., precisely, and you will deliver him into their custody. You will take care, however, to see that the officers securely iron him, and that both sit with him in the close carriage. His Excellency has been made aware of your efficient discharge of your duties.—By His Excellency's command,

"I am, &c., &c., GODFREY BALHEM."

Very few men in the Irish metropolis spent a happier night than Mr. Governor Tackle. He kissed the children very frequently without any apparent reason; he gave Nancy a shilling, he promised Mrs. Tackle a new bonnet; and Mr. Governor Tackle went into every part of the prison where a human being could be spoken to, he even went to the Infirmary to the great alarm of the old nurses, who imagined that she was going to be evicted, as she had never seen him there before, and, in fact, as we have said, he went everywhere. To many he insinuated, that is to the more respectable officials—that he hoped very shortly to be able to do them a service—and to more than one he spoke very familiarly of "his friend" the Lord Lieutenant.

Very early—very, very early next morning, Mr. Governor Tackle was up and stirring—inspecting and ordering, and every one and everything was turned upside down by the active official. He was standing at the turnkey's table a quarter before seven, and he thought the clock would never strike. Precisely as the last stroke announced the hour completed, one of those carriages called a "hack" was driven to the door of the jail. The heavy knocker smote the gate, the huge bolt answered to the knocker, and the door of the "hack" having opened, two of Her Majesty's police descended therefrom. They entered the prison, and much to the satisfaction of Mr. Governor Tackle, one of them proved to be the Mr. Sergeant Sharkey who had been to visit Nancy the day before. Mr. Sergeant Sharkey was an acquaintance, and the Governor might let out some of his exuberant joy to the good serjeant. Mr. Sergeant Sharkey was accompanied by a fine young man of four or five and twenty, of bold and soldierly bearing. In his left hand Mr. Sharkey bore the "irons" for the prisoner.

Mr. Sergeant Sharkey touched his cap and presented a paper. "All right," said the Governor. "You saw the Chief Secretary to-day?" demanded the Governor. "Aye, sir, did we," answered Mr. Sergeant Sharkey.

"He said nothing?" "Wael, nae."

The other policeman looked that kind of look, accompanied by that kind of smile which seems to say, "You forget—just a little," and Mr. Sergeant Sharkey seemed at once struck by the suggestion.

"Ah, yis," he said smiling; "ah, yis, Misses Gagner, it mun mane guds or evil, but Misser said, you'd nee be laung, jist her. Is nae that the than?" Mr. Serjeant Sharkey

demanded, turning to his companion.

"Just so." And all proceeded to the cells, where they found Forde, very much more miserable-looking than ever he had been seen to look, and that was saying much. He was crouched up in a corner, wrapped in the coverlid of his bed, and he was saying his prayers!

Forde started wildly when he saw the police and the irons; but was calmed by the assurance that he was not about to be hanged just then; and that he was to undergo another examination, and that it was more than probable, if he gave perfect satisfaction, his dead body might not be given up to the surgeons, but would be given up to Parson Salmer for Christian burial. Mr. Forde looked from under his eyelashes at Mr. Serjeant Sharkey, when he made use of this cruel language, but he said nothing whatever.

The prisoner having been placed in the "hack," Mr. Serjeant Sharkey proposed that his companion should sit outside, and that he himself should sit inside, and guard the prisoner. The Governor immediately interfered and said orders were that both officers should travel inside.

"But—" remarked Mr. Serjeant Sharkey. "But, serjeant," replied the governor, gravely, and laying his right hand on the serjeant's left shoulder impressively—"but," he said, "orders are imperative." The governor was extremely important.

"Ah, very wael," replied the serjeant. "Let's on, then."

At the end of the street there was some confusion; for three "hacks"—that is two and the Castle "hack"—met, and nearly upset one another. There was much twisting and turning, and cursing and laughing, too; but there were not very many in the street to enjoy it all—it was sharp even for December, and it rained a little. But the confusion had an end in due time, and the three "hacks" drove each in its own direction, and each had a different route.

Forde and his companions never exchanged a syllable; but the carriage went on very rapidly, and for a longer time than was necessary to go to the Castle or the Park. Forde was saying his prayers all the time; and if the truth must be told, he was saying the rosary.

Passing through a turnpike about noon, a policeman presented himself at the door of the carriage—he had seen the uniform of his tribe, and besides, the race is very inquisitive. The younger of the two officials inside gave a slight start, but immediately sat beside Forde, almost crushing him to death in a corner. Mr. Serjeant Sharkey hung a ringed hand out of the carriage window, while his head and shoulders followed in due course.

"Morrow!" said Serjeant Sharkey, quite familiarly: "all well here?" "All well; what are you about? who have you got here?"

"Why hasn't I been on good besness to Dublin?" "How?" "We've bin petition' for one an' nine pence."

"You have!" "Aye that so." "An' what did they say?" "Why, 'tis as good as sure."

"You say so!" "Aye do I." "By Jove—where do you belong?" "Danicorby."

"Why, I am just a goin' there." "You're jist in time for a lift then."

"Let's see how you're off for room?" The strange policeman was getting on the wheel to look into the carriage, when Mr. Serjeant Sharkey, in his anxiety to point out a beautiful horse in the neighboring field, accidentally knocked off the stranger's helmet, which unfortunately rolled in the puddle!

"Oh! how awkward! but no matter: get away, gie it a brush, don't keep us long tho', and mind put on your belt too."

"Ah, Your right." And the member of Her Majesty's constabulary who wanted the "lift," turned across the way towards the police barrack. He hurried fast, but before he reached the door of his quarters, he heard the carriage begin to move. The policeman turned round, and to his great chagrin, there was the deceitful Serjeant Sharkey with his head and shoulders out of the "hack," kissing him on the cheek.

"Good bye!" he said, "we'll wait for you a few miles on—good bye!" and on went the carriage. There was first an immense laugh—the companions laughed, and laughed long and loudly; then as if the minds of both the captors of Mr. Forde became filled with important thoughts, they seemed to brood very deeply.

The blood came up in the pale cheeks of Forde, and he looked broadly, and for once, boldly at Sharkey.

"Well thin ye may, sir; I'll make some penance for my sins be my death; you may, sir."

"Determined?" "I'll die wid the priest that christened me; an' if I tuk his advice I wouldn't be here."

"Very wael, then." "Well done Forde!" cried the younger of the police; "well done, Forde!"

For seven hours the travellers pursued their journey, delaying only to give the horses drink, and never appearing out of the vehicle. It was evident besides that the road was very steep, for the animals performed their task with difficulty, and the carriage bogged heavily and half perpendicularly behind. The policemen had frequently pressed Forde to eat, and fed him with their own hands. Forde, however, ate little; but he "made up for the eating in the drinking," having been a long time without tasting any grog. The horses were panting, and reeking with perspiration, when at half-past three o'clock the driver was commended to stop.

Forde's heart began to beat, and he looked with an expression of painful interrogatory at his keepers: they, however, spoke not a word. The serjeant descended from the vehicle and was followed by the constable. They pointed the driver's attention to a white house at some distance on the side of a hill, and to which the approach was by a narrow way, and the driver said "very well."

Forde was then ordered out. The coach, or "hack," was in the middle of a narrow yellow clayish road. There was a hill on the right and on the left, and hills behind them; but on the left, at a distance, not very far either, Forde could see the sea. The idea of being reserved for transportation—transportation only—crossed his mind; but he was afraid to entertain it. It was too much to hope for, and his mind was made up. Forde gave a sigh, for the sea reminded him of Kinmacarra and his misdeeds.

Mr. Serjeant Sharkey then gave orders to the jayvee to drive on—on in the same direction—and himself and his companion, and their prisoner, sat upon the roadside. The policeman watched the carriage for a considerable time until it crossed the hill; and Mr. Serjeant Sharkey to take a farewell look went to the top of a neighboring rising ground, whence he had a commanding view. He at length saw it far, far away in the distance, and still proceeding as he had done, and he was glad to see it as rapid a pace as the quadrupeds could be supposed to make. A long, long He then turned round, and both the serjeant and shoulders followed in due course.

About two miles from the spot where the vehicle had stopped, there was a "boreen," or small bridle way; and up this they directed their steps, their backs being then to the sea; and having walked for an hour slowly and laboriously, by various paths and windings, they came to a valley, in one nook of which was a poor wretched cabin. To this they approached. Forde had long given up all conjecture as to his fate; he could not be worse off than he had been, and there was a mystery around the whole thing which boded him more good than evil. They could have hanged him, and they did not; there fore he was to live, he thought—at least for some time.

The cabin was the destination of the policemen—Forde soon saw that plainly enough. But no human being came to meet them; and he proceeded as he was, Forde nevertheless remarked there was no dog in the house. Yet, thought he again, "the dogs are all gone since the famine."

On entering the cabin, Forde could observe that people had been expected. There was a stirring fire, board-bottom chairs around, a table laid for refreshment, and a bottle.

"What on airth is id all," thought the assassin. Forde's surprise was not less, nor less agreeable, when the serjeant handed him a chair, and when having been seated the serjeant further propped his key and commenced to uncrew the "irons," or "hard cuffs."

"You mun ate, ma mon, on any rate," said the serjeant—"a thing to which Mr. Forde assented.

The policemen ate heartily and drank moderately. They occasionally remarked at the door, and went into a small room of the cabin. Forde was made to give the history of himself and the confessions, and obliged to reproduce his profession of faith in a thousand ways—all, however, by adroit opposition. The young policeman said more than once, "Faith, I believe the old faith is the one to die in!"

"Ah!" said Forde, "you'll never feel that as I feel—feel it!" Forde began to have suspicions that he was not going to be hanged.

Thus were a couple of hours passed over, and the prisoner became more and more at his ease.

Just at dusk a low whistle was heard at some distance down the valley, it was very like the one which Shaun a Dherk heard on Slievenamon. The signal was answered by one from Mr. Serjeant Sharkey; and shortly after a step was heard approaching the house. The two policemen went out to meet the newcomer.

"Welcome, welcome! mille failthe!" "Mille failthe!" echoed the younger.

All right?" said a manly voice.

"Right," answered both laughing. "He's here?" "Yis—aye—in throth is he."

"Well done!—well done!" A stout well-proportioned man of middle age, and somewhat middle size, entered. He wore a gray frock coat, broad-leafed felt hat, with very deep band, and a pair of top boots. He had full dark eyes and broad brow, and lips that commanded. The stranger stood before Forde, and looked into his face. Forde trembled.

"Get the razors," said the stranger. Forde grew paler than before. "The villain!" said the stranger. Forde fell upon his knees.

"Oh, sir! Oh!—oh!—for the mercy of God!" "Hold your tongue, you murderer!" "Oh, for the sake o' the Mother o' God—oh, oh?"

"Stop that fellow's throat! Stop the apostate!" Forde was soon quiet. He was placed on the chair; his arms were pinioned; and he was told at the peril of his life he would stir hand or foot, or make the least noise. The serjeant then opened the razor, stropped it carefully, took Forde by the hair of the head—the victim having nearly lost all consciousness; and with a dexterity which would make a barber's fortune, he shaved Forde's scalp completely and entirely. He then rubbed something to the assassin's face; and finally, having stripped him of his jail clothes, clad him in frize and crowned him with a gray wig. A looking-glass was brought, and Forde stared with astonishment at his own figure—his brother would not have been able to recognize him.

"Forde," said the stranger, "you had ordered this metamorphosis, 'Forde,' said he, 'you are a villain and an apostate; but you are free! Skerin was a bad man, like you; and he had been condemned to death before you killed him. God did not intend that any one should die for slaying him. You are spared for penance. Go away! The road is straight to Wexford. Your name is to be James Tuck. A ship will sail to-morrow morning for America—the ticket—your way is clear;—and here is money for your journey."

"Oh! may—" "Hold your tongue. Go your way and do penance. You are within sixteen miles of Wexford."

And Mr. Forde was soon en route for the "land of liberty."

"Justice—real justice!" exclaimed the stranger. "Wael an' the sooth?" "Old Daddy Moran has made restitution to the Moores."

"Gred!" cried the young man, bounding on the floor with joy. "He was dying, and although the robbery came from his grandfather, he could not get absolution till he paid back."

"He never knew till you told him." "He did."

"From whom?" asked Serjeant Sharkey. "From Forde's father—and Forde himself is in the secret; as we must keep Forde alive for the same. We must do justice!"

There was a pause, during which the stranger looked pensive—almost sad. At length: "Give me your hands, boys," continued he. "Once more we have won—won the day against them all! For seven years we have fought justice against law, and we haven't ever failed—never; and we never will. But honest men have suffered. Young and old—mothers and sisters and young wives have been scattered about the world for our deeds. God help us! There are the Molonys, the Shanahans, the Murphys, the Nolas—oh! how many they have destroyed in groping after us and grasping at us vainly! But shouldn't some one suffer?" the bold outlaw asked as if reasoning with himself. "Wasn't it all for justice? And didn't we take the risk? Didn't we offer them our throats?—and did we gain a penny? Ay, curse the oppressors' curse them—curse them!" he cried, stamping his foot on the floor.

"What's nae say matter to say whether we've a mair good nae evil," said Mr. M. Cann.

Shaun a Dherk looked into his face fixedly. "Yes," he said, "his face is that the question."

The youngest merely looked at Shaun; his look was full of love and admiration, and seemed to say—"What a soul is there!"

Next week the following appeared in a Dublin journal: "There is a silly report about the escape of Forde, the convict. It is said that a package of game was sent to the Chief Secretary from Fitzwilliam-square, and that the right honorable gentleman sent a note of thanks by an orderly dragon. It is added, was met en route by a servant of the Chief Secretary, and charged with a sealed packet for the Governor of Prison. According to this document, two police were to call for Forde next morning, as His Excellency wished to examine him particularly on matters of which he was supposed to be cognizant; and two policemen were put into a hackney-coach and driven off. At the end of a street, however, it said two other hackney coaches met that which contained the prisoner and there was some confusion. One of the coaches took the direction of the park, and not one of the three men who sent the game, does not live in Fitzwilliam-square; the dragon was taken up by the supposed livery servant; the packet delivered by the dragon to the governor of the jail was a forgery; and the two policemen were a pair of clever

sohemers, who planned this dramatic escape. But of course this account is too absurd for a moment's consideration."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

Richard Grant in the Magnificat

"A malison on Papists and their ways! Aye, the bitterest curse that ever blighted human kind light upon them and sweep them from the earth!"

The speaker, a tall handsome young man, stood frowning darkly as he surveyed the wintry landscape, white as far as eye could reach, through the leaded panes of the quaintly latticed casement. Overhead the clouds were heavy and gray, the prospect forlorn. In the wide, oak-paneled room behind, his somberness accentuated rather than relieved by the dark portraits of doughy ancestors, there burned on the great hearth a log fire worthy of Yuletide and the leaping flames lent a pleasant glow. The aquiline features of long dead Sir Geoffrey appeared to relax somewhat, in his frame on the wall, in the ruddy atmosphere.

But young Master Markwood had no eyes for either Sir Geoffrey or the cheerful invitation of the fire lit room. The accented rather than relieved by the dark portraits of doughy ancestors, there burned on the great hearth a log fire worthy of Yuletide and the leaping flames lent a pleasant glow. The aquiline features of long dead Sir Geoffrey appeared to relax somewhat, in his frame on the wall, in the ruddy atmosphere.

Of his life! The very word was abhorrent now to him. What did he want more with life? There seemed only one thing left to him—to pursue the path of duty, and to bring glory and honor to his name as he had always considered it. He was wondering vaguely if it were some similar suffering which had made these men Papist-hunters. Then remembering their lust for gold, he told himself that such natures were never refined.

The room at Markwood manor was empty but for Ralph and his misery. He stood in the window embrasure, one arm resting against the cold glass, his head bowed upon it, the other hand fiercely clenched upon his dagger's chased handle. He was reviewing once more the joyous hopes and dreams of the past months.

Ralph had loved his cousin Betty; yes from the beginning. In boyhood's days no May merry-making or holiday games had been sweet unless she shared it. He had known no pleasure so great as that of bringing her his offering of meadow flowers or the village best cakes and sweetmeats. The real worth of college distinction and degree had been for her pleasure and pride in him. And now when those days were over, and manhood was upon him, life still would not be life without Betty by his side.

Another voice, too, however, had often been insistent. At particular times—often in the parish church while the minister prayed aloud and while he preached—an oddly fascinating vision of the man of God of old times, a Man of fire and ardor, of fasting and prayer—a vision far enough removed from the ideals of the new church by law established—would possess his imagination to the exclusion of the preacher's somewhat earthlier discourse. Or during lonely hours in the rolling country, with God shining on him in the sunlight, speaking to him from the purf of brooks, the mighty secrets of the winds, the gladness of the birds bending above him in an embrace like the sky's from vanishing, no self-seeking escape—it was a call he feared to hear. And he quenched that strange crying that seemed to stir so deep a response within him.

Well, at last the voice had been stilled. And his mind full of the visit he purposed to pay to Moreton grange shortly before Christmas, full of that momentous interview he intended to have in the quaint, blue-hung room—he had imagined the scene a hundred delighted times—Ralph Markwood was happy. Happy, with a glowing preoccupied happiness as he rode his gallant roan through the iron gates of Markwood manor in the sunshine of a clear December morning, and pricked cheerily upon his way along the snowy, sparkling roads.

How suddenly the sun had gone out that day! And what a black and bitter frost had succeeded those morning hours of light! He remembered every incident—had the scene not been present to him every since? He had gone, indeed, into the blue-hung room with its windows rooled trellised in summer days, above the door leading to the terrace, above the pleasant garden—her garden, as he had always thought of it. Then Miss Moreton, the chateleine, gentle and grave as ever, had come in. Preliminaries over, he had made his request for permission to pay suit to her daughter, Betty. Mistress Moreton's gravity had deepened, a great compassion had filled the motherly face—his request, though far from displeasing to herself, might not be other than refused. And Ralph's agitation had been such that the whole truth had finally to be told. Betty was already a month over seas with the daughters of St. Augustine, as one of whom her life was to be spent.

It had taken him more than a week to realize what had befallen him. The light was gone out of life. Then

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