

ble story!" exclaimed the distracted girl, who had thus unconsciously brought the guilt of murder home to her lover: "Deny it, Dorgan, and tell them they belie you." But Dorgan resolved on keeping the straight path, whatever might be the result, adhered to the acknowledgment he had made. Dreadful was the struggle that ensued in the bosom of the unhappy girl, between her affection for her lover and the conviction of his guilt; for even she could no longer doubt that Duke Dorgan was the murderer of her father. A similar sentiment, but in a yet stronger degree, pervaded the minds of the coroner, the jury, and all who were present at the inquiry; and the consequence was, that the unfortunate young man was shortly after conveyed to jail, tried, and condemned to death. The day of execution arrived, and Duke Dorgan, surrounded with all the horrid pomp of the occasion, was brought on a car to the fatal tree. The hangman prepared to do his office, and was in the act of laying his hands on the collar of his victim, when a person who had violently forced his way through the crowd, called out in a loud and hoarse voice, "Come down, Mr. Dorgan; come down off o' the car. Let him go, Mr. Sheriff, dear; for the man is here that did the deed."

It was Kinchela. The miserable man—for it need not be stated, it is presumed, in more explicit terms, that he was the murderer of Maccloughlen, nor that he had perpetrated the deed in the clothes of poor Duke Dorgan, which he had abstracted for the purpose—had been unable to bear up against the horrors of a guilty conscience, and had now come at this critical moment at once to atone for his crime, and to prevent the additional guilt of a double murder falling on his devoted head, by permitting an innocent man to die in his place. It was some time, however, after this extraordinary announcement had been made, before the sheriff could be induced to believe Kinchela's statement, or to give his consent to a delay in the execution of Dorgan. But the energy and earnestness with which the now contrite criminal persisted in asserting at once his own guilt and the innocence of Dorgan, at length prevailed. The execution was stopped; Dorgan was carried back to prison, and soon after liberated in due legal form; while the wretched Kinchela, after undergoing a formal trial, suffered the extreme punishment of the law for his atrocious crime.

The state of feeling of Pennie Maccloughlen, while this fortunate turn was given to the fate of one whom she had so much respected, may be more easily conceived than described. One day, while sitting meditating on the circumstances, a note was brought to her by the clergyman. The blood rushed forcibly to her cheek, brow and her very finger-ends, and again recoiled, so as to leave her pale as marble when she recognised the hand of Dorgan in the superscription. She quickly opened the note, and read as follows:—

"MY DEAR PENNIE (for I may once more with a free heart call you by that name), it has pleased heaven to make good the word which I spoke on that unfortunate day, when I told my judges that I felt it within me that I should not die for a deed of which, the Lord knows my heart, and which is since proved, I was wholly clear and innocent. I have got my pardon—for it seems it is a form of law, that, when an innocent man is convicted, after suffering imprisonment, and all hardship, and anxiety, instead of his judges asking *his* forgiveness, 'tis *he* that has to get pardon from them, for being so misfortunate as to be condemned and very nearly hung in the wrong. Now, Pennie, this comes by the hand of Father Mahony, to tell you, that, of all things in the world, I admire and love you for your conduct on that day, and all through this dreadful business. I know well, my dear girl, how your heart is accusing you at this moment, but give no heed to such thoughts, I beg of you, and let them be as far from your mind as they are from mine, for you did your duty nobly; and Lord Nelson, my glorious and lamented commander, who little thought I'd be brought into such trouble on account of the victory he died in obtaining, could have done no more if he was in your place. I hope, therefore, you will show your good sense, and think no more of what is past, but take this as the true feeling of his heart from him who is yours until death—DUKE DORGAN."

The heroic generosity with which her lover thus rose superior to all the petty resentments and jealousies which are incidental to the passion, even in the most vigorous and straightforward minds, sunk deeply into the heart of the young woman. Although the love which she felt for Dorgan was of that genuine and unaffected kind which is wholly a stranger to the delicate intricacies and refined difficulties which are attendant on the progress of this most capricious of affections, in the bosoms of those who boast a higher rank than hers, yet she could not but be keenly sensible that she had failed in one of its most essential qualities—an unbounded and immoveable confidence. She raised her eyes, which were overflowing with tears of mingled shame and gratitude, towards the clergyman, when a creaking noise at the door attracted her attention. It opened—and Dorgan entered. Her agitation and confusion became now extreme, nor were they diminished when her lover advanced to her side with a respectful gentleness, and said:

"Pennie, you see we meet happier and sooner than we expected. I hope you'll be said by what I mentioned to you in the letter, and give me your hand now in token that all is forgotten."

"I give you my hand freely, Dorgan," the girl replied, still blushing deeply, "and bless your good, generous heart—but all cannot be forgotten. I may be friends with you again—but I never can be friends with myself as long as ever I live. There is