

In Memoriam.

ANNIE SYMONS, AGED 19.

Oh, our hearts are sad and weary,
They are aching at our loss,
And we bowed and nearly fainting
With the heavy, crushing cross.

For we dream not of our dear one
Who so soon be called away,
Till the silver chord was loosened—
Broken from her life's short day.

Early have her footsteps lingered,
Walking in the way of life;
Early wanted she to rest,
From the tumult of the strife.

While we still are moving onwards,
Bowed with sorrow, care and pain,
And our loss, though deep and heart-felt,
Proves indeed to be her gain.

Annie lives in realms of gladness,
In a glorious heaven of love,
Walks among the shining angels,
In the golden streets above.

She has left a world of trials,
Where God's friends awhile must dwell,
To the land of rest and glory,
Would we have her bid farewell?

We too soon shall hear the summons,
Hear the angels' whisper "Come,"
Then we'll pass the pearls of portals
Of our bright eternal home.

Then we'll meet our own loved Annie,
Who has only "gone before,"
Then within our Father's mansion
We shall meet to part no more.

F. P.

LLOYD PENNANT.

A TALE OF THE WEST.

By RALPH NEVILLE, Esq.

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CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED.

Pincher's conscience was by no means tight-laced, he preferred, however, swearing only what was literally true, when truth jumped in accordance with his interests and sufficed to attain his ends.

The next day the neighboring pounds were full of cattle, and such of the tenantry on the Martin and Blake estates as had not the means of meeting their engagements, were made to feel that the expression of their true sentiments could not be indulged in with impunity.

Pincher, who had always hitherto scoffed at the pretensions of the rumored claimant for his wife's estate, became now fully aware of the precariousness of his position—he flew to the judge for counsel, by whose advice Mr. Sharp, being fully admitted into his confidence, was apprised of every new piece of information that turned up, and consulted upon every step about to be taken. Blatherwell foresaw that an active and unscrupulous agent might be required in the progress of events and none could be found more fitting for their purposes than Sharp, whose personal interests would secure his fidelity and render him zealous in the cause of his patron. He had been now for some years "Receiver" over the Dunseverick estates without having rendered any account of the large sums of money which had passed through his hands—he well knew if Colonel Blake succeeded in satisfying the mortgage that a most rigid investigation of his receipts and expenditure would be the consequence—this, he believed, could only be effected by the aid of Pennant—and his defeat would, he felt convinced, ultimately throw the Dunseverick property into Pincher's hands, who, content with his acquisition, would not object to the final passing of his own account in any form which he might please present it. The scandalous robberies then perpetrated by officers of the Court of Chancery have since extorted a partial reform in their proceedings—they are now bound to pass an annual account and, doubtless, the losses sustained by their defalcations are neither so numerous nor so heavy as they were formerly. It was no part of Pincher's policy to look closely after the receiver's management—for intending to become the purchaser himself should the estate be brought to sale, it favored his purpose to allow the interest on his mortgage to accumulate, so that there might be the less chance of redemption by the owner. Pennant's proceedings were of such a nature as to fortify the hope of compromise, and they were all the more alarming, because although his opponents knew that the documentary evidence against them had been destroyed, they were fully aware that more than one living witness could be found who would be able, and might be willing to damage their cause. The enmity of those dreaded persons had been raised by the steps which Pincher had taken to rid himself of their importunities—it became absolutely necessary to conciliate them now, if that were practicable; and the delicate commission of disarming the hostility of Leonard and Brown was committed to Mr. Sharp. The first step to be taken was to deprive Pennant of the benefit of their testimony—this might be accomplished by buying them off and sending them out of the country—but experience had taught Pincher the folly of relying on the professions or promises of such men; and he dreaded, that if left free agents, they might refuse to emigrate, or return again, after having pocketed his money, and then go over to the enemy. Their abduction before the assizes seemed the only method by which they could be effectually secured—and it was determined to have recourse to this measure—Sharp undertaking the execution of so hazardous an expedition. Before having recourse to physical force, the shrewd pursuer determined, to sound Leonard, and ascertain whether it might not be possible to accomplish his object in so far as it regarded him, by fair means. Brown could easily be disposed of—a person in the receiver's confidence would pay the debt for which he was imprisoned—and after his liberation, invite him to dinner, when, doled with whiskey until he became insensible, there could be no difficulty in conveying him to a place of security, and rendering his captivity agreeable by a copious supply of his favorite beverage. But Leonard was by far a more dangerous person to deal with—he was a determined and desperate character—he was the well-known leader of the secret society in the district—his sudden disappearance would excite unusual alarm—and his whereabouts would be sought after by those whose lives lay at his mercy, should he betray them, with all the energy inspired by personal danger, backed by the almost certain means of discovery which the ramifications of their confederacy, so amply afforded—Sharp therefore considered it advisable to have a personal interview with him—and try his hand at persuasion, which could be easily accomplished.

Leonard still retained possession of the house of his former habitation, and a negotiation, with the agent for their surrender might

be entered into, without affording any reasonable grounds for suspecting ulterior intentions. The unfortunate man's position would have been now desperate but for Rory Mahon's privately administered bounty, of which none but the recipient, Leonard's wife, was at all aware. From the threats held out against those who should harbor, assist or employ him, the tenantry avoided all open communication with him, and he dragged out a miserable existence, in apparently the most abject poverty. Some nocturnal depredations on the poultry of the neighboring farmers, supposed to have been committed by him, incensed them, and they would have been but too happy to see him removed by a course of law, so that they were not called upon to prosecute a person who had it in his power to consign many amongst them to transportation, were he minded to better his own position by "selling the pass."

When they were alone in his office, Sharp commenced proceedings by expressing his surprise that Leonard had not as yet applied for the money promised to take himself and family to America—his manner was conciliating and friendly, and he went the length of expressing regret that such summary measures had been taken against him. Leonard at once frankly admitted that he had not claimed the money, because he had not as yet made up his mind to go, the fact being, that he knew something, as Mr. Pincher Martin was well aware, that might damage that gentleman and serve his opponent at the approaching trial, if he only came forward to state it—and that having a helpless family to support, he was determined to make the most of his secret, and act as his own interests dictated; of the two, he would rather, as Mrs. Martin's account, be on her side, but he might have anything he liked from the others, as Mr. Mahon had been already with him trying to ferret out what he knew, and made him the fairest promises if he would only tell his tale [which he declined to do] and take part with Captain Pennant; he stated what he should expect if he kept out of the way at the assizes, candidly admitted that he would be at the service of the highest bidder—and declared that a pound, one half or the other, would decide him.

At the conclusion of the interview, during which Sharp had succeeded in accomplishing his object with more facility than he anticipated, it was arranged that Leonard should have an answer to his proposition in a few days; that meantime he was to give every encouragement to Pennant's agents, and keep them on hands, by leading them to suppose that to secure him they had only to come up to his place, until matters were finally arranged between himself and Mr. Pincher Martin, when he should apprise him (Sharp) of the nature of the proposals made, and inform him regularly of all the movements and plans of the adversaries. "We are richer," he remarked, on parting, "than they are, and willing to pay liberally for the services rendered us."

Mr. Pepper was in ecstasies with the case laid before him. The written evidence to Squire Ullick's profession of the Roman Catholic faith, and the certificate of Pennant's mother's marriage, which was, under such circumstances, perfectly valid, were in Father Stephen O'Mahony's hands, who was on the spot to prove the two events—which he could now safely do, in consequence of the altered state of the penal laws—while Rory Mahon would identify Lloyd as the child that he had carried to his sister to nurse, by means of the peculiar formation of his foot. So far the case was clear. There could be no doubt of Pennant's legitimacy, and no difficulty in establishing it. Then the question arose as to the mode of proceeding. Could the child of a man sentenced and executed as a felon succeed to the inheritance without first establishing the innocence of his father? This was the grand question which might admit of protracted litigation, were it not for the discovery made by the letters. If the facts contained in them could only be substantiated, a much more expeditious and conclusive course might be adopted.

There was a barrister of great legal acquirements, though, of moderate practice, an intimate friend of Mr. Pepper's, who, conceiving that such important matters could be best investigated on the spot, requested this gentleman to come to the country immediately, on a half-professional, half-friendly visit. The various consultations held, and enquiries made, resulted in a determination to abandon all claims arising from Pennant's direct descent, and to sue for possession of the property of Castlemore, by simple ejectment, as next heir-at-law, to the father of Mrs. Pincher Martin. This would be by far the most easy and expeditious method of proceeding, and the men of law conceived that they had documentary evidence sufficient to establish their case, when backed, as it would be, by the testimony of living witnesses.

The sensation which Pennant's appearance created in the country may easily be imagined. Mrs. O'Mahony drove from house to house, extolling his character and announcing (where she was really ignorant of) that the most strange disclosures would be made at the approaching trial. Meantime, Pincher Martin was not inactive—when the first surprise had passed away, he instantly wrote to the Chief Secretary at Dublin Castle, informing him that Mr. Pennant, who had fled to France, and been dismissed the navy for treasonable correspondence with Lord Edward Fitzgerald, had again returned to the country, and demanding authority to arrest him; for, although quite ready to act on his own responsibility, he was restrained from taking so decided a step by the advice of Judge Blatherwell, who recommended caution and patience, as any violence on his part towards a person who was an avowed claimant for his wife's estate would have a vindictive appearance, and might seriously prejudice him hereafter in a court of justice—and thus Pennant was left at liberty to look after his own affairs, to make himself fully acquainted with all the steps Rory Mahon had taken in his behalf, and with the nature and extent of the evidence he had collected to substantiate his claims. Exaggerated accounts of what he had accomplished, in the way of flouting witnesses, who could benefit his cause, hourly reached Pincher; at one time it was Brown who had gone over, at another it was Leonard who had given important information. Rory Mahon was known to be in communication with both, and Pincher well knew that the testimony of either would be damaging to him; he therefore became seriously alarmed, and determined to proceed to Dublin himself, in the hope of forcing the government into action, and thus, at least for the moment, retarding the proceedings of his adversary, by having him committed to prison, on a charge which, if proved, would not only disqualify him from establishing his civil rights, but even consign him to the death of a traitor. On his arrival at the Castle, he obtained an interview with the Private Secretary of the Viceroy, and learned to his dismay, that it was useless to take any further proceedings against persons who had been concerned in the insurrection, as an amnesty was actually signed, and would be in a few days published. Dispirited and crestfallen, he returned home, and occupied himself, with the aid of his uncle, in preparing for the trial

which now became unavoidable. Although Pennant, conscious of his own innocence, felt no uneasiness as to the result of the pending enquiry, relative to his asserted connection with the United Irishmen, he, from the spirit which he saw prevailing amongst the loyal party, entertained serious doubts of being able to save Mike—when he was cheered by the proclamation granting a general and unconditional pardon to all persons who had been implicated in the rebellion. It is possible that Mike would have been excluded from the act of grace, as the first who had taken up arms, were he known to be in existence—but a report of his death was so universally circulated, and so generally believed—that the government considered it unnecessary to make any exception in their measure of mercy. Pennant immediately wrote to him, under an address that had been agreed upon between them, apprising him of the happy turn things had taken, and assuring him that he was then a free man, and might wander where he wished, without the least fear of consequences.

Mike's first impulse, after reading the letter, was immediately to quit the dirty attic, in which he had so long lain concealed—snatching up his hat, he sallied forth, and striking into St. James's Park, he proceeded up Constitution Hill, and passing through Hyde Park, on his way to Kensington Gardens, when, he reached the end of the drive along the Serpentine, his attention was attracted by a loud shriek. Looking in the direction from whence it came, he saw a carriage dashing furiously down the hill—the driving seat given way, and fallen forward on the horses' backs, who were plunging and kicking against the weight which pressed upon them—the next moment they cast the seat off, and came galloping at full speed towards him. Mike sprang into the centre of the road, and quickly taking off his coat, wound it round his head, in the hope of arresting their flight. He fortunately struck the horse next him on the nose, who, frightened by the blow, threw himself against the other and knocked him down—in an instant Mike had the bridle of the standing horse in his hand, and his foot upon the head of the fallen one, to prevent his rising. It was early in the day, and there was no person about to render him assistance, so that he could not quit his position to attend to the occupant of the carriage. Just as the servants who, were fortunately unhurt, came up, a friend, who happened to drive by, offered the lady, who was alone, a seat, and carried her off, before she was sufficiently recovered from her fright to notice or thank her deliverer.

The servants, however, were loud in their expressions of gratitude, and the conciliator, when taking away the vehicle and horses, apologized for his mistress's apparent neglect, and assured Mike that her ladyship would be greatly displeased if he returned home without the address of the gentleman who had so seasonably come to her rescue. Not wishing to let his humble residence be known, Mike said that it was probable that he should leave town that evening, upon which the man informed him that his mistress was Lady Clifton, of Curzon street, who, he had no doubt, would be happy to receive and thank him, if he could but make it his convenience to call. Mike, when left alone, spent some minutes in dusting his coat and arranging his dress; on recrossing the road to continue his walk, some distance in advance of where the horses had been stopped, he picked up a valuable bracelet, which he doubted not, must have fallen from Lady Clifton's arm, in her endeavor to open the carriage-door. He could serve him with a good excuse to call, and he determined to deliver it on his return into town. He was so delighted with his liberty, and so exhilarated by the pure air and exercise, that he struck into the country and went so far that he only reached Curzon street by night-fall. The porter was in the act of lighting the hall lamp, when he knocked at Lady Clifton's door—and the person who opened it immediately rushed off, and in his flight overturned the ladder on which the porter stood, who, falling, extinguished the candle which he held in his hand. As the man lay groaning from pain, and Mike stood in the dark, he heard a great disturbance above stairs, and supposing that he had committed an indiscretion in calling at such an hour, he immediately retired. Tim, for he it was who had admitted him, rushed into the drawing-room, where the family and some friends were assembled before dinner, crying out as he entered: "There he is again—go and see him how you yourself—the Lord defend us!" as he fell on his knees behind his master's chair, "will none of ye stir?—in nomine Patris. It's no joke—for the love of God, bount the door—Holy Mary protect us—I tell you, master, he's in the hall—oh, Father Barney, it's badly ye behaved to me if the pound note reached you—but maybe the post-mistress, had luck to her! kept it!" The Colonel at once proceeded down stairs, but there was no person below, for the porter had been removed by the servants. It was far in the night when Mike got to bed, for he had indulged in a good dinner, and afterwards went to amuse himself at the theatre—he slept so soundly, his mind being now comparatively free from care, that it was late next morning when he awoke. Having determined at once to follow Colonel Blake into Kent, and ascertain the truth, as regarded Kate's intended marriage, he was occupied during the remainder of the day in purchasing an outfit, and preparing for the journey, so that it was only after dinner that he bethought him of the bracelet. Unwilling to hazard another visit to Curzon street, and not, indeed, having time to call there, as the coach by which he intended to travel left town at six next morning—he considered that the best thing he could do was to leave it with the head waiter of the hotel at which Pennant put up, and thus, without giving his name, write a note to Lady Clifton, stating, "that the gentleman who had the good fortune to stop her horses in the park begged to inform her that he had found a bracelet close by where the carriage passed, which he presumed must be hers, and that she could have it by sending to the—hotel, in Bond street." Having posted the note, he proceeded to leave the bracelet. The shops were all shut, and he was so absorbed by his own thoughts, that he noticed little what passed around him; he could not, however, help remarking, as he turned from Clifton street into Bond street, that a person stepped out of his way, in a manner calculated to attract his attention—but the door of the hotel was the first beside him, so he went in, and passed through the hall to the sanctum of the head waiter, as he had seen Pennant do on other occasions.

Never having been present when Lady Clifton's name was mentioned, during his short stay at Deal, Mike was ignorant of his relative being on a visit at her house—but as he knew that the Colonel was staying somewhere in that neighborhood, he could easily ascertain his whereabouts, from the waiter at the hotel, who had given him the account of Kate's intended marriage. To Deal, therefore, he went, on the morning after his arrival at Dover. There he learned that Colonel Blake and his niece had been on a visit to Lady Clifton—the very person whose life he had most probably saved in Hyde Park; and that both families were then in London; he lost no time in returning, and calling in Cur-

zon street; his relatives were not there—but Lady Clifton was at home—and on entering her drawing-room, Mike was astonished to meet a person whose face he at once recognized, notwithstanding the many years that had elapsed since they met—while Lady Clifton was no less surprised to see before her the man to whom she had been warmly attached in her girlhood, and who, in common with his friends, she believed to have been for some years dead—she was not afraid of a ghost, however, as it was full daylight, and she set about unravelling the mystery by asking a series of questions, which led Mike to a full explanation of all that had befallen himself—after which he learned, to his no small delight, that his former flame was then free, that her recollection of past times seemed still vivid, and her whole manner led him to the conclusion, that her feelings in his regard were as favorable as he could desire.

They laughed heartily over Tim's assertion that he had twice seen his ghost—but Lady Clifton advised him, by all means, to make a preparatory communication—of which she undertook to be the bearer—before he ventured to call upon the Colonel, as otherwise his unexpected appearance might cause his cousin a shock—for even he seemed latterly to give credit to Tim's reiterated declarations, from the fact of his having, as he firmly believed himself, met Mike in Bond street, where he instantly and most unaccountably disappeared. Ordering the carriage, and taking Mike with her, she set him down at the corner of a neighboring street, after giving him the Colonel's address, and telling him to follow her to the house in twenty minutes. Those twenty minutes were occupied in appraising her friends of the happy discovery of Mike's existence—and just as she concluded her recital, his knock was heard at the door. Tim, speechless with delight, burst into tears as he admitted him, and warmly shook his hand—and Kate flung herself into his arms before he had half traversed the hall. The poor Colonel was deeply affected at again embracing him—and happiness attended in his wake. Instantly, and before making any other enquiries, he demanded of Kate if she was still constant in her affection—"still devoted to her first love?" On being answered in the affirmative, he again took her in his arms, and then praised her for her honorable fidelity, which he could never bring himself fully to doubt, however many appearances were against her. He then detailed his own and Pennant's adventures and escapes—told how they had seen her riding with Mr. Charlton at Deal, and heard of her certain and approaching marriage with that gentleman—how Pennant, in despair, had set out for Ireland to regain his father's inheritance and right his fair fame—while he himself, deterred by his position, did not dare to seek any communication with them, for fear of implicating them in his misfortune, until the royal clemency had set him free. He assured Kate of the unaltered love of Pennant, and depicted the misery he endured on learning that she was about to become the wife of another. Without a moment's delay, he wrote to Pennant, apprising him of all that had occurred, and of the groundlessness of the reports regarding Kate's intentions, which they had heard through the officers and waiters at the Deal hotel—and pledging himself for her truth and loyalty to her promise.

CHAPTER XXV.

The return of post brought Mike a reply, covering one letter to Kate and another for her uncle, on whom a subpoena was subsequently served, to enforce his attendance at the forthcoming trial as a witness—and thus secure his personal safety should any attempt be made to arrest him under the attachment obtained in the chancery suit. In Pennant's letter to Kate he explained the reasons which had actuated his hitherto inexplicable conduct—"while the brand of felony remained imprinted on his father's memory he did not dare approach her, personally or by written communication—nor would his love have permitted him to make her the partner of an inherited disgrace—but now that the innocence of his unfortunate parent was certain, and about to be established in the face of day—he waited not the legal decision regarding his property before he demanded the fulfilment of her solemn promise to become his wife." It was inconsistent with Kate's character for candor and honesty to trifle with such sentiments; she frankly but most modestly avowed her continued and unaltered affection—and the only difficulty she raised was one which, as a matter of course, had not the least influence on her lover. She detailed to him the sad change in her worldly prospects—informed him that she was now absolutely penniless—and that her only doubt was, if she should be justified in incurring him with a dowless wife, and thus, perhaps, ruin his professional advancement, in the event of a legal decision, hostile to his interests, being the result of the approaching trial. She therefore set him free of his engagement, if his inclination led him to wish or his interests required it—"but she begged him to believe that, whatever his determination might be, hers was irrevocable—never to marry another." The response may easily be surmised. Pennant assured her that, independent of all contingent expectations, the fortune already in his possession was more than ample to enable him to maintain her position in society—that to enjoy her love was the motive of all his exertions, and that he looked to it as the crowning reward of all his sufferings, and as the only thing now wanting to complete his worldly happiness. To the Colonel he expressed his gratitude "for the unceasing exertions which he had made to restore him to his rights; he assured him that any resentment he might have felt regarding his conduct in the prosecution of his unfortunate father—(against whom he admitted the circumstantial evidence to have been strong)—was obliterated by his open endeavors to atone for an unintentional wrong—and he fondly trusted that all prejudices arising from the supposed criminality of his father being removed—principally by his own instrumentality—that now he would sanction the union which he had before, when laboring under erroneous impressions, so solemnly forbidden." In a few days after this correspondence Colonel Blake set out for Ireland to attend the Assizes—Mike remaining with Kate. From mutual explanations he soon learned that the four hundred and fifty pounds, the price of his acquity, which he had remitted before his escape to France, had never reached its destination—but having, fortunately, kept an account of the notes, and the dates of their transmission, he had no difficulty in recovering them at the dead-letter office. This recovery was a great consolation to him—for it not only put him in possession of funds—but clearly proved the sincerity of his desire to minister to the wants of his relatives, even by the sacrifice of the small pecuniary means still left at his disposal; his way now as well as Kate's, now passed gaily away, in the amusement of London and the genial society of Lady Clifton—children as they were by the prospect of a prompt and happy termination to their doubts and anxieties.

While both sides were making preparations for the approaching trial, Mrs. O'Mahony was informed by the postmistress that Pincher Martin had received a dirty and ill-directed

letter—evidently from some poor person in the neighborhood, who did not wish to be known, as it was thrown into the box during the night. The Dunseverick postboy having come at an earlier hour than usual—being, in fact, at the window when the mail arrived, she had no time to form an opinion as to its contents; but she suggested that it was most probable, written by some witness who wanted to change sides and "sell the pass," if well paid for so doing. Mrs. Lalor, with laudable prudence, studied to conciliate what was likely to prove the winning side. Mrs. O'Mahony immediately communicated those suspicions to Mahon, who, although pretty sure of his men, at once took measures to have the office strictly watched by a person on whom he could rely. When Pincher Martin read the letter to which Mrs. Lalor alluded, he was overwhelmed with astonishment and fright—it came from Johnson, the escaped convict, who informed him that his ship having been wrecked on the coast of Donegal, he alone of all the crew was saved, and that being utterly destitute, he came for aid to enable him again to quit the country—that he would either meet Pincher at a certain place named, during the night following that date or go to Dunseverick, if that was preferred—and he requested that an answer might be left for him in the hollow of a decayed tree, of which he described the locality—naming the hour and place at which it would be received. He concluded by stating that he heard of Captain Pennant's being in the neighborhood, and promised to suggest something which might be of great importance at the forthcoming trial. The interview could not be refused—but Pincher determined that it should take place under circumstances which would secure him against any act of violence on the part of his visitor. He left his answer where directed, appointed ten o'clock that night for the meeting, at a summer-house in a lonely part of the demesne—and immediately afterwards he set out to concert measures with the county jailer, on whose devotion he could depend. It was arranged that the latter should come privately to Dunseverick, so as to be in time for the interview—that he should tap at the parlour window, when Pincher would come out to join him—and that them both, well armed, should proceed to the place of rendezvous—the jailer to remain in ambush close by, ready to rush forward to Pincher's assistance on hearing the discharge of his pistol. They set out before the appointed hour, so as to anticipate Johnson; and Pincher having carefully concealed his companion advanced alone—he locked the door of the summer-house behind him and opened one of the windows, which stood some feet above the level of the ground, and there he remained, occasionally coughing to attract attention. After a short delay he saw the sailor coming towards him, and when he was near enough to hear distinctly, Pincher spoke—

"Look, now—you can't have your will of me as you had the last time we met—I'm well armed—and if you attempt to come one step nearer to me than you are now I'll shoot you dead—you know I can't be punished for it—you're a convicted felon—and any one may kill you as they would a dog."

"I didn't come to harm you, sir," Johnson replied very submissively, for he was evidently disconcerted by Pincher's manner, and the preparations made for his reception. "I didn't come to harm you—I was cast away in the *Anna Maria*—you may have seen an account of the shipwreck in the papers—(as indeed he had)—and that but one of the crew was saved—I am that man; and what could I do, for your sake as well as my own, but make my way to you for money to take me off? If I asked help elsewhere or begged, I might be known and arrested, and that would be equally bad for both on us—I'd lose my life and your wife's estate."

Up to that moment Pincher's plan of action had been undecided upon. The jailer was brought with him that, in care he dealt summarily with Johnson, and that circumstances made it necessary afterwards to publish an account of death, it might be said that that official had attempted to arrest an escaped convict, and meeting with resistance had shot him. But then explanations might be asked as to how and why the parties had met in such a place and at such an hour?—and this consideration hitherto deterred him from taking justice into his own hands; but the speech and manner of Johnson now provoked him to immediate action. The hammer of his pistol was noiselessly drawn back to full cock, and he prepared to fire—when the sailor, who had passed for a moment as if waiting a reply, again commenced to speak—"I've thought on a business which might save us both—and I could do it before leaving. Come, now, what will you give me if I shoot the Captain and stop yer lawshoot?" The unexpected proposition turned the current of Pincher's thoughts into another channel—the hammer of the pistol was brought down to half cock, while he rapidly considered the pros and cons for and against its acceptance—if the attempt to murder Pennant failed, the immediate destruction of Johnson, in a personal struggle, would most probably be the result; if it succeeded, there would be an end of the claims he so much dreaded, and his tormentor would probably never return—the means of extorting money being moved by his own hands; should the assassin prove unsuccessful and be taken, why then his former sentence would be immediately carried into execution, and the revelations of such a man under such circumstances, when unsupported by Brady's declaration, which Pincher believed to have been burned at Castlemore, could do him little damage; he therefore determined to hazard the chance, and tacitly agree to the proposal.

"Come, now," cried Johnson, impatient at his delay in answering, "be quick, and tell me what yer inclined to do—I won't be hard on ye—fifty guineas to take me off, and the double of it to rid me of the Captain."

"Nonsense," replied Pincher, "if you got the money, you would remain until you spent it, and then come and ask for more—you wouldn't shoot the man, I believe, if you could, and you couldn't if you would, for you have no arms and no means of getting them."

"As to the shooting of him, I'd willingly do it on my own account, ye see, 'cause I owes him a bad turn; but, natural-like, I wishes to gain a summat at the same time. As to the arms, I've got them, and good ones, too. I took them from the wreck, thinking I might have need on them—they belonged to the captain, and what speaking he drew a pistol from each pocket—'d'ye think I'd be such a blowed fool as to come here without being prepared for a bout with ye, if it had seemed out. But look ye, let's be kindly together; I haven't been doing nothing for the few days I've been in the country—I know how and where to do it, and if you hat give me the money I'll settle counts with the Captain to-morrow."

"Well," said Pincher, "I'll give you all you ask this time, but let me see your face again—you will know the danger you run by remaining hereabouts, where all concerning you is so well known; therefore whatever happens, be off—here—here's the hundred guineas," and he threw a bag which contained them on the ground. "You see I deal on

honor with you—take them and return as you came."

"'Avast there!" replied Johnson, "I'll not touch them till the port-hole's closed—d'ye think I'll give ye a chance of delivering your broadside—shut the window."

Pincher did as he was directed, and waited in the summer-house until he heard Johnson take the money. He allowed him time enough to beat a safe distance, and then re-joined the jailer, to whom, however, he did not communicate the entire result of the meeting. Pennant walked about daily, from Mrs. O'Mahony's to Pepper's to note the progress of his legal preparations, and on his way passed one-of those ancient castles, so common in Ireland, whose ruins form lasting monuments of Cromwell's ruthless barbarity, or of the desolation spread over the long-suffering land by some preceding spoiler—its outer walls, which formed a square, with flanking towers, where ivy-covered and lofty—and the public road running along two sides of them, formed at the turning point a sharp angle—from the narrow windows and occasional breaches, caused by the besieging cannon, or the ravages of time, a person concealed within could safely, and without the possibility of detection, watch the approach of any one coming on either side—and from thence (the grassy floor being many feet higher than the road below) an assassin might fire upon his victim in almost perfect security—for, before the assailed person (were he fortunate enough to escape unhurt) could reach the only door which gave admission to the interior, his assailant would have ample time to shelter himself from pursuit in a wood close by—and here, since dawn of day, Johnson lay in ambush, to murder his former shipmate. At length Pennant appeared in view, advancing towards him—as he drew nearer and nearer, the murderer's nervousness increased—he felt the handle of a Spanish knife, which he carried in his breast, ready for close quarters, and carefully examined the pistol in his hand—to see that the hammer was at full cock, and the pan well filled with priming. To calm his agitation, and steady his aim when the moment for action approached, he took a deep pull from a bottle of whiskey, which he hung upon the ground, as he stepped to a breach in the walls and fired. Pennant, roused from a reverie by the shot, sprang forward and turned the corner; here, the assassin, having only to cross the narrow angle, was again before him; but, just as he drew the trigger of the second pistol, he was pinioned from behind, and his hand being thrown up, the ball passed high over his intended victim's head, who thus escaped unhurt, the first bullet having merely traversed the breast of his great coat. As Johnson struggled to free himself from the grasp of the person who held him, a large pea-jacket, in which he was muffled, burst open, and his hat fell off; so that Pennant had no difficulty in recognizing a face already well known to him. Hearing the struggle still continuing between his preserver and the man who had attempted his life, he ran round the ruin in search of the entrance—when he discovered it, the assassin had fled, leaving his pistols behind him—whilst the idiot, lay upon the ground, bleeding profusely from a deep gash in his neck. Pennant's first care was to staunch the wound in the best manner he could, and then he set out to seek assistance. Meeting Mahon, who also was on his way to Pepper's, he sent him on for aid, and returned himself to watch by the wounded "natural." Seeing the bottle and having ascertained the nature of his contents, he poured the little of the whiskey left into the poor fellow's mouth, who soon exhibited signs of recovery from a fit of weakness. When he opened his eyes, he smiled and pointed towards the door, uttering disconnected words, the meaning of which Pennant could not understand. When Pepper arrived, followed by Rory and a servant, and learned the particulars of the attempt made on his client's life, he cautioned him in the strongest manner against mentioning the matter to any other persons, and for greater security ordered the wounded idiot to be carried to his own house.

Mahon at once remarked, "Then, Johnson is the writer of the letters Mrs. Lalor gave us notice of, and we must try to have him." He lost no time in going to Mrs. O'Mahony, and prevailing on her, without assigning his reasons, to aid him in the measures he intended to adopt, for the purpose of securing possession of any similar letters addressed to Pincher that night for the future be dropped during the night-time in the post-box. It was necessary for his purpose, that any such letter should be immediately delivered to the Dunseverick post-boy, lest delay might excite suspicion, and it was equally necessary that he should learn its contents before it reached its destination. He therefore arranged that Mrs. O'Mahony should arrive in the village late at night—ask for a bed at Mrs. Lalor's, as she had done often before—and on the pretext of wishing to get early possession of letters which she expected to be sent to her privately, by the sub-sheriff, on the Captain's affairs, that she should obtain possession of the key of the office; for himself, he selected a room on the ground floor of a pot-house, where his spy could arouse him by tapping at the window immediately, if he noticed any one throw a letter into the receiving-box, and from whence he could easily reach the street, and awaken Mrs. O'Mahony by a concerted signal. Everything went well. Mrs. O'Mahony dismissed her carriage on the eve of the night, and, in the morning, she left the town, and walking in, reached Mrs. Lalor's without being noticed. If the letter did not come on that night, she determined to keep her room, and lie concealed until it did; and as she was accustomed to make such visits, when her husband was in mysterious trouble, her hostess (always well rewarded for her fidelity) were sure to conceal her presence.

The good natured lady had not long retired to rest before she was roused from her sleep by some sound thrown against the window, and saw Mahon standing in the street below. Throwing on a dressing-gown, she opened the hall-door, and then striking a light, they proceeded to the office, where they found the expected letter. In a few minutes the water yielded to the influence of steam in her room, boiling water having been kept in her room in readiness for the operation, and she read the note, the meaning of which she could not understand, as it was anonymous, and referred to the attempt on Pennant's life, of which she was kept in ignorance. It morally stated, "that the writer had missed—and lost the bag—and could not go—that he expected Pincher to leave what was needed for him, where he had left his last letter; or, if preferred, that he would meet him at a place which he named, on the night but one following; and he desired that an answer should be left next day in the hollow tree, saying which alternative." Pincher, preferred. Mahon's first object now was to discover the mysterious tree. The youth who had so carefully watched the post-office, was the son of the keeper at Dunseverick, an old family servant of the Martin's, who, when Castlemore was burned, removed with them to their new residence. The father was, firmly attached to the old stock, considered Pincher and his wife as more interlopers, and his boy, bred up in similar sentiments, could be fully relied