

and stock and all will make a pretty penny for a braw little lassie as Missy is."

"You are right, Hugh, you are right; of course she'll have all—and I think that his lordship will make over the fee-simple of this house and land on me shortly for a handsome consideration."

Lizzy looked up from her book and smiled at her papa. Hugh knit his dark brows, and a frown clouded his face, and he muttered to himself, "she will na have all if I can prevent her."

"You must give notice to the Ballybruff tenants to come over in a few days, say Wednesday next," said Mr. Ellis.

"I dinna ken the use, sir," said Hugh, submissively; "ain't they noticed?"

"They are, they are," said Mr. Ellis; "but when they come over, they will think it is to get a settlement, so they will bring what money they can; and as there is a year's running gale, which answers a year's rent, we can put them out afterwards."

Hugh smiled the smile of a demon.

"Let us soak them as dry as a sponge before we throw them away."

"What of the Ballybrack tenants?" said Hugh.

"They are safe just now, safe just now; they have leases, but they will be up in a few years, and then let them look to themselves; you may be living in that cosy nest of the O'Donnells's yet, Hugh."

Hugh gave a grim smile of satisfaction, and Lizzy raised her heavy eyes from the book and said:—

"Papa, isn't it wrong to turn people out of their houses; now, the O'Donnells are good, kind people; isn't it a pity to turn them out?"

"No, child; the people are lazy and indolent, and it is better for them to be earning their day's hire, or to go to some foreign country, where they can live better than here, than be spoiling the land. Look at the difference of my farm here, that was all waste when I got it, full of furze, gardens, and useless fences, that the wretched tenants had made. It was then as bad as any of the places you see around; look at it now, pet."

"I see, papa; it is a beautiful place, indeed; but sure the O'Donnells have a nice place, and you need not turn them out; besides, papa, it must be a terrible thing to be turned out of one's house."

"It must, child, for persons having a comfortable house like ours," and he looked about the warm, tasteful room; "but for those poor cabins, I'm sure it's a blessing to knock them down."

It is hard to say from what motive Lizzy's advocacy of the O'Donnells proceeded, as she seldom interfered in her father's business. She had been lately reading some romantic novels; and as she was walking through one of the fields, a few weeks previous, she became very much alarmed at the appearance of

a young bull that bellowed at a good distance from her. She screamed, and might have fainted, had not Frank O'Donnell jumped over the fence, with his gun on his shoulder, and escorted her home.

He was courteous and gentlemanly, and as it generally is in some way of this sort romantic ladies meet with their lovers, there is no telling what notions crossed her precious little head.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN IRISH AGENT AND HIS VICTIMS.

The rent day is a very important day to Irish tenants in general. Those who have the rent must wear a look of grateful complacency, and those who have not, of abject dependence. They know that their fate lies in the hands of the great man, whose bad report to the landlord is as sure destruction to them as the ukase of the Emperor of Russia to his serfs; therefore the Irish serfs must study the humor of their lord and master, and adapt their line of policy accordingly. It is a nice point of dispute who will go in first, but the decree generally falls upon some one able to meet his rent in full. As soon as he comes out, he has to answer a regular fire of questions in Irish, such as:—

"What humor is his honor in, Bill?" says a poor fellow who, perhaps, is back a few pounds.

"Will he allow half the poor rates, Bill?" says another, who has scraped his up to that point.

"I don't know will he take my cow at a valuation; it is better to be without the sup of milk itself than the cabin, God help us?" says another poor fellow.

Even their appearances must be adapted to their circumstances, or rather to the circumstances in which they would wish to appear.

The poor man that wants time, until he sells his cow, or his slip of a pig, generally borrows a good coat from a neighbour to let the agent see that he is well dressed; and that a little time with him is only a matter of convenience; while the comparatively rich man, with his rent in his pocket, appears in his every-day garb, lest his wealth would draw down upon him the cupidity of the agent.

It must be recollected that I am painting the dark side of the picture. It is true that there are many such men as Mr. Ellis in Ireland; but it is equally true, on the other hand, that there are landlords who would be ashamed to acknowledge such a man as their agent—men of honorable and Christian feelings, who treat their tenants with kindness and consideration—who take a pride in their welfare.

It is said, in defence of slavery, that slave masters were generally kind to their slaves; but there are some masters who use the power of life and death, with