

LLOYD PENNANT.

A TALE OF THE WEST.

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CHAPTER XXII.—CONTINUED.

It was dusk when they reached the inn at Canterbury, and Pennant enquired if they could have dinner at once.

"Why, the house is very full, sir—very full, indeed," said the waiter.

"The officers of the Dragoons marched in to-day, sir—and they dine here, sir, as the barracks won't be ready for them until to-morrow.

"There's the very officer as cut down the rebel, General Blake, with his own hand, after they fought as good as half an hour, as his servant tells me."

"Mike wouldn't look round for the world. 'Saved the school right,' rejoined the landlord, 'I should like to have the hanging of every d—n rebel amongst them.'

"Poor Mike's neck felt queerish. 'Thank you,' replied Pennant, seeing the confusion of Mike, and also fully appreciating the danger of recognition.

"They were shown in there—the landlord setting them down either as impostors who assumed military rank, to which they were not entitled, or as negro minstrels without spirit enough to support the dignity of their profession.

"Mike got into the darkest corner of one of the most secluded boxes, where, notwithstanding his fright, he did ample justice to the round of cold beef and foaming ale placed before them.

"Well, sir," said one of them, addressing him—"that's all gammon you told us just now, about that young officer being the man who killed the rebel—what's his name?"

"Blake," responded the other.

"Aye, Blake; why, this gentleman says Blake's not dead at all, but that he's hunted about at this moment, and can't escape being taken much longer."

"Well, sir," answered Ben, "I'm sure I can't say for certain of my own knowledge, I only told you as I heard myself from the officer's servant."

"Well, I can tell you it's all nonsense," said the second gentleman, "Blake's not dead at all, and it's perfectly ascertained that he's known; but for the cowardice of a fellow, who came suddenly on him, a few nights since he might be in Newgrange now, but he'll soon be—I could give a smart guess myself as to his whereabouts, and he let the box as he concluded."

"Mike first expected a direct attack, and he held the carving-knife ready for defence—the man passed on."

"He must be going to call the soldiers to assist him." He stopped, however, at the fire, deliberately raised his coat-skirts, and whilst enjoying the warmth of the position, directed his eyes (as Mike supposed) thickly towards himself.

"Ask if the mail will soon be in?" whispered the poor rebel to Pennant, "I'm afraid to speak on account of my accent."

"The sound of the guard's horn rendered the enquiry unnecessary. They tossed off the ale, paid the bill, and jumped into the coach, which delayed, in Mike's opinion, much longer than was necessary."

"His friend, the traveler, came to the door, during the hurried interval of suspense—a sergeant of dragoons joined him, they conversed for a moment—the traveler pointed towards the coach. The sergeant approached it, then stopped, as if in doubt—(Mike was in an agony)—and whispered something to the guard, who shouted, 'All right!' and away they went, as fast as horseflesh could take them."

"The mail was full—six inside. Mike sat next the window, his opposite neighbor behaved very politely, as far as regarded the adjustment of legs, and seemed much disposed to enter into conversation. With the cold beef and ale, and his almost miraculous escape, Mike felt rather disposed to be communicative himself, the remainder of the journey would be performed before daylight, and once in London, Pennant assured him there could be little danger of detection."

"Any objection to have the window opened?" said his *ris-a-vis*.

"Not at all," responded Mike.

"The wind is south, I think?"

"Yes, sir, the wind is due south; how the scent would lie to-day? southerly wind and cloudy sky, you know, bespeak a hunting morn."

"Yes, the scent would lie rank. Never had a smarter run in my life than on just such another day last season. Seven miles, in thirty minutes, without a check."

"Smart work that," replied Mike, "but I've done as much."

"Aye, aye, sir, in your open grass country—Irish, I rather think, from your accent—excuse me."

"Yes, sir, Irish."

"I know your country well, sir, often hunted there, when a young man. Some capital fellows and first rate horses, prime fences, sir, nothing comes amiss to them—but, sir, your covers are farther asunder than ours, and when pug's banged out of one, why d—n it, he must make for another. Little opportunity for dodging about, it's touch and go with him. May I ask what part you generally hunt in?"

"The west," answered Mike (the ground was getting thickish).

"How blessed me, the west—aye, to be sure, I know it well, as well as my own demesne, sir. What county may I take the liberty?"

"Every one in Connaght."

"Aye, Connaght, yes, to be sure. No better hunting than in some of those counties. I have a perfect and pleasing recollection of

all the happy days I passed, and all the pleasant fellows I met there. Ah, yes, there was one, a most particular friend of mine, who, I'm sorry to hear, has made a bad haul of it—and strange enough, your figure and face by the light of the lamp as you came in recalled him to my recollection. You may possibly have heard of the Blakes of Dun-severick. I protest, sir, even your voice reminds me of poor Maurice."

"Yes, sir," said Mike, "I have heard of him."

"I knew him; I never met a better fellow, nor keener sportsman in my life."

"There were few who understood fox-hunting better, or threw his heart into it more thoroughly in early life," said Mike.

"And a capital pack he had," continued the stranger, "and well hunted too. Maguire, I think, was the huntsman's name—good hands and sent his—had a correct idea of what he was about—didn't overrun his dogs or bully them too much. There was a young rascal, a whip—let me see, I forgot the fellow's name."

"Jemmy Maguire," said Mike, warning to the subject; "as plucky a chap as ever cracked whip at the tail of a pack."

"Aye, to be sure—Jemmy Maguire—they were high bred though myrther small dogs—were those of Blake's."

"Large enough for any earthly purpose," replied Mike; "it was with them I had the fastest and best runs—and then we weren't crushed and crowded by a set of fellows who only come out that they may be seen sporting a red coat, and haven't the least idea in life either of riding or hunting. Your fields are too large in England, sir—it's frightful—positively frightful, to have over a hundred fellows powdering after you at the first burst—and sure to powder over you, too, if your horse makes a mistake, and gives them an opportunity—ten or twelve jolly hearts, who know how to do the thing—and will do it—arc quite enough—plenty of room—no haste—no tailing while the hounds are going—nor riding on them when they're hating slow—all well up—and every good bit duly appreciated."

"Right, sir—perfectly right, sir," cried his *ris-a-vis*.

"Talking of good runs," continued Mike, "the quickest and best I ever had was one of seven Irish miles in five and thirty minutes, without a check, with Blake's hounds. They may talk of runs this length and that length, but I maintain, sir, that no fox will and fairly hunted, ever ran further, before a good pack, always supposing that he can't dodge, and that the scent lies."

"Agreed, sir—agreed to the letter."

"Well, sir," said Mike, "but about this seven miles run—I'll just tell you how it happened. You see, we killed our first fox in a large, thirty acre grain field—close to a sheep cove, which nearly stood in the middle of it. There were but eight of us altogether, as well as I remember, and while walking our horses about—you know, to recover their wind—that very same little devil of a boy that you asked after—Jemmy Maguire—jumped over the stone wall that surrounded it at the hay cove—when, what should break from the sewer that ran under it but as fine a dog-fox as ever you looked on. The hounds went off at an *allop*; and, as assured, there's where the clipping was. He made with the wind straight for Ballenowny, and reached the cover without a check."

"Unless," interrupted his companion, "that might be called one when he attempted to traverse at the Cross-roads, and the old white and tanned dog, 'Jostler,' I think they called him, bit it off so cleverly."

"Aye," continued Mike, utterly astonished, but afraid to stop too long, "it could not be called a check—poor 'Pug' was run into at the earth's mouth—we had some stiff fences—that there's no doubt about—it was no joke I can tell you, sir, to clear the deer-park wall full six feet, at the end of so many miles—done at such a pace—and, can assure you, four of us took it at the same moment, almost knee to knee."

"It was as pretty a thing as ever I saw done in all my experience, sir," said the stranger. "I was one of the four myself."

"Indeed?" enquired Mike, with amazement.

"Indeed I was; and, you may remember, that little black and white bitch, with the tanned muzzle, 'Frantic,' that buckled the fox first, and got so sore a nip for her trouble that she faints."

"Well, it's odd—very odd," said Mike, "how people will meet accidentally."

"Very odd, indeed," reiterated the stranger; "by the way, there was a hell-raky sort of devil out that day, that you must have known something about—he was the very first in the deer-park, if I remember right—a cousin of poor Blake's, who was very kind to him—a regular scamp. I thought to ask him to the mess, but our fellows wouldn't stand it—too quarrelsome—always in rows with the attorneys—made a rum fish—became a regular bad'un—told the scoundrel seized Blake's estate when the rebellion broke out, and held the house till driven out by my main force—then he migrated that, to attempt to rob his benefactor—killed I hear afterwards in a scaraminge—pity he wasn't hanged—no excuse for ingratitude and treachery."

"Mike groaned and was silent. On arriving at the stage, where time was allowed for supper, he declined leaving the coach with the other passengers. When they returned he was asleep, and slept, or pretended to do so, until they reached their destination. After delivering the mail the coach proceeded to the 'Golden Cross,' Charing-cross, then an inn of great celebrity. Not wishing to expose Mike to the scrutiny of the crowd, who usually awaited its arrival, Pennant got out in the Strand—near to Northumberland court—where he intended putting up, at a sort of boarding-house, much frequented by naval men, and with which he had become acquainted when a 'Middy.'"

Daylight had fairly broken as they quitted the coach, and the fox-hunter, awakened by the sudden stop, shook Mike heartily by the hand, and begged him to dine with him at the 'Humbugs.' "Good port there, sir, and we'll have another chat about poor Blake and old Dunseverick."

A few minutes after, they were comfortably installed at Mrs. Benbow's. Mike was stowed away in an attic, to remove him from observation to be circumspet; "his friend was" (Pennant privately informed her) "cautiously out at elbows and disinclined to see strange visitors."

"Captain Pennant," said Mike, solemnly, as they sat at breakfast. "I don't wonder you should regret the wife of America, for, little as I know about them, I wish to be there myself. I wouldn't undergo all I have suffered for the last forty-eight hours again for my whole estate, if it was to be given back to me as it came from my father—to be damned as a rebel is had enough, but to be obliged to listen quietly, while one's family is made little of, and one's self accused of ingratitude and treachery, is beyond bearing—you can't imagine what I endured. If I was free to take the fellow by the throat, and call him out afterwards, I wouldn't care—to be obliged to let the lie circulate more widely, without daring to contradict it, is worse—far worse—

than all the trials of Job. Why, sir, there swears a human being in that coach [probably yourself included] who didn't believe that I attempted to rob my cousin, while, in fact, I risked my life to preserve his property, and am an exile to-day, all from gratitude for the very kindnesses the world thinks I so basely requited. I suppose Maurice thinks so, too. Heaven-help me, that has no way of explaining matters to him, and them that—I do wish I was in America, where one would meet neither attorneys nor liars. And if you go

"I'll take you with me; but my time for the present will be so occupied, that you must excuse me if I cannot see you so much as I could wish—meanwhile, don't be uneasy—and on the other hand, don't be incantations until I call upon my friends, and see what can be done."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Pennant first proceeded to his agent's office; it was transformed into a boarding-house, and the slipshod lady, who dashed down stairs to meet him in the hall, fancying he was a lodger, came to fill the vacancy announced in a morning paper, only knew that the old gentleman was dead," without being able to furnish him with the address of the widow. To go directly to the Admiralty would be waste of time, for the Board had been changed, and the permanent secretary had also retired since he left England, and most probably he would now find no person there who could recognize him. Looking over the Directory, he ascertained that the residence of the First Lord, who had given him his promotion, was in Parklane, and thither he at once proceeded. His reception by Lord Rufford was extremely cold. "After all that has happened," said his lordship, "I scarcely expected to have seen you again in this country—and cannot help expressing my surprise that you should honor me with a visit, and place me in the unpleasant position of either violating my duty to my sovereign, or of arresting, as a traitor, a man of whom I once entertained so high an opinion."

"My lord," replied Pennant, proudly, "you will neither be required to violate your duty, nor to bring me to justice. I have broken my parole, and escaped from France, to confront my enemies—and demand enquiry into my conduct—and I have, in the first instance, because I am personally unknown to your successor in office, and can, with less difficulty, state to you the real circumstances which caused me to leave the country so abruptly as I did. As regards the crime of treason, I have but one answer to give—that I never so much as saw Lord Edward Fitzgerald—and that no communication, written or verbal, has ever, directly or indirectly, passed between us—and although my acts should protect me from suspicion, and my past services be taken as a proof of my loyalty, still, I am come to seek the most rigid investigation into every charge which may be brought against me. Spare me a few moments, my lord, and I hope to convince you of the truth of my assertions."

Lord Rufford listened with deep interest to the story of Pennant's family misfortunes, and to a detail of the motives which induced him to abandon at once his profession and his country.

"Then, I presume," he said, "Captain Pennant, that your first wish is to have a court of enquiry—that your innocence being established, you may be reinstated in your professional rank?"

"Precisely, my lord."

"It is unnecessary to tell you that I have no interest with the people at present in power. The First Lord, however, is a just and kind-hearted man—we were schoolfellows—and I shall drive down to the Admiralty, at his reception hour, and lay your case before him; he is so good as to meet me there."

Lord Rufford was punctual to his promise, and the result of his interference proved to be, as he anticipated, that Pennant was promised the investigation he sought for, and permitted to go at large on Lord Rufford's guarantee that he should appear before the court when the authorities were prepared for the prosecution. He had no further occasion to prolong his stay in town; Colonel Blake was not there, and even if he were, nothing could be gained by seeing him under existing circumstances.

Pennant had written to Mrs. O'Mahony from Deal, apprising her of his arrival in England, and expressing his determination to avail himself of her kind invitation, and proffered assistance, as speedily as possible—and he now wrote, announcing his intention of at once proceeding to Ireland. Again urging the necessity of caution, he placed £100 at Mike's disposal, should circumstances compel him to a change of quarters—at the same time arranging with Mrs. Benbow that the bills should be placed to his account, so long as his friend thought proper to remain.

"Oh! what would I not give to accompany you," Mike exclaimed, as they were about to part—"you'll see Dunseverick, and Castlemore, and the mountains, and the lake, and the neighbors, while I'm cooped up here in a garret, every moment expecting to be drawn from my hole like a badger—but, to be sure, you had worse turns of fortune even than that—and who knows yet?"

Since the conversation in the post-chaise, Pennant had never uttered a word regarding Miss Bingham's conduct; his future line of proceeding, whatever it might be, seemed already determined upon—and being of a temper which disdained compassion, and chafed at all control, he not only avoided giving Mike an opportunity of alluding to the subject, but led him by his manner distinctly to understand that any interference in the matter would be unpalatable to him. Arrived in Dublin, he wrote to his kind friend, to say that she might expect him at—town, by the coach which would leave next morning. "The stage," at that period, took two days to perform a journey since accomplished by its better-appointed successor in less than half the time, so that Mrs. O'Mahony had ample notice before the arrival of her expected guest.

The welcome tidings reached "the Mistress" just at the close of a bitter contest for the surgery of the county hospital, in which her "protégé" was defeated, through the Blatherwell and Pincher Martin influence. As the situation was always heretofore regarded as almost within her gift, this slight check, which would have been a serious one, which roused the slumbering members of her race, and converted an underhand opposition into open and undigested hostility. Here, then, was a glorious opportunity of at once welcoming a friend and worrying an enemy, which the good lady, in her present frame of mind, was by no means disposed to let slip. Accordingly, orders were despatched to every tenant on her own and the Martin estates, to muster at a given point, for the purpose of celebrating the arrival of the real heir of Castlemore. Tar barrels were procured, and placed upon the summits of the mountains—while hogheads of ale and casks of whiskey dotted the lawn in front of the house, so that the assembled thousands might toast Pennant's health, and wish success to his undertaking. At an early hour the carriage was at the door, and "the Mistress" ac-

companied by Rory Mahon and a strange gentleman, drove off in great state for—town. The servants paraded in full dress liveries—but Jack, the coachman, who could never resist a good drop, was a source of grievous apprehension; he looked very "seedy" for, in the hope of securing steadiness on so important an occasion, his mistress had not only kept him in a constant state of inebriety since the receipt of Pennant's letter, but she had furthermore promised that, if he would only behave well on that day, the next fortnight should be at his disposal, to get drunk as often as he pleased with impunity. Mrs. O'Mahony had taken care to spread the intelligence of Pennant's expected arrival through—town, as soon as she had received itself—and she took effectual means to secure the co-operation of the mob, with whom she was at all times a special favorite. Rory, too, spared no expense in treating the leaders, so that by the time the coach was due, public feeling had risen to the highest pitch of excitement. Pennant was astonished to find himself warmly greeted at a small pot-house on the road by a knot of people, who furnished the coachman with laurel branches to decorate his horses, and hosted a blind piper on the roof of the coach. As they proceeded, he remarked that the inmates of every cabin they passed were assembled outside the door, cheering and waving their hats—but, as the salutations seemed to be directed to the driver of the vehicle, he did not care to enquire into the cause of such an extraordinary display.

When, however, they entered the town, the applause became tumultuous. "Women waved their handkerchiefs—men shouted—the piper struck up, and his horrid drone increased the din." At length the crowd became so dense that the horses could only proceed at a walk—and when they reached the inn, there stood Mrs. O'Mahony, Rory, and the stranger, ready to receive him.

"Ulick, my dearest Ulick!" shrieked Mrs. O'Mahony, tears of joy streaming down her cheeks, as she precipitated herself on Pennant, the moment he emerged from the coach, and clasped him firmly in her embrace, amidst the cheers of the bystanders.

"Thank heaven! I lived to see this day, and to carry you home in triumph—God bless you, again and again!" and she imparted a kiss at every interval on her astonished victim.

"Mr. Smith," cried Pennant, stretching out his hand to the stranger, as soon as he could extricate himself, "What an unexpected pleasure to see you here!"

"Father Stephen O'Malley, my dear, the gentleman, that married your parents and christened yourself," interrupted Mrs. O'Mahony. "And here's Rory Mahon—the true, true friend of your poor murdered father!" (there was another burst of applause, when Pennant shook the faithful fosterer warmly by both hands.)

"You must make a speech, my dear," whispered Mrs. O'Mahony, as he was to seek refuge in the house. "Captain Jack couldn't come in to make one for you, so you must do it yourself."

Pennant, being utterly unprepared for such a manifestation, and quite unable to deliver an address, for he really was "unaccustomed to public speaking," knew not what to do; however, when informed that his silence would be construed into ingratitude or contempt, he expressed his feelings in a few sentences, which, coming straight from the heart, made [as such speeches always do make] a suitable impression on his hearers.

When they entered the parlor of the inn, Rory Mahon asked permission to say a few words in presence of the landlord and three or four respectable inhabitants of the town, who were requested to remain.

"Sir," he said, addressing Pennant, "I don't know that I ever laid my eyes upon you until this moment, nor have I ever had the slightest communication with you; before I go any further, I think it necessary to ascertain your identity with the infant son of my poor and murdered father, the child of Squire Ulick Martin and Lady Florence O'Donnell, the two middle toes of your left foot are joined."

"And so they are," said Pennant, as taking off his boot and stocking, he submitted his foot to the inspection of those around him, who, at Rory's suggestion, made a written statement of the fact.

After a short delay, during which the party took some slight refreshment, more, as Mrs. O'Mahony remarked, "For the benefit of the house, than for the gratification of their own appetites," the carriage was ordered to the door, and a sort of procession (at the head of which were the piper and a couple of fiddlers) formed in front, to conduct them with all due honor from the town.

As Jack came forth to "tool the coach," Mrs. O'Mahony cast an enquiring glance (on such occasions his condition was always a source of the deepest inquietude)—his deportment, however, inspired confidence, for he walked exceedingly erect, and with much dignity. The extraordinary care he took in inspecting every particular strap and buckle created some alarm, for "the Mistress" well knew, from sad experience, what such care generally portended.

But when, having the reins in one hand, and the whip in the other, he took off his hat and exclaimed, as he prepared to mount the box: "Here goes, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," Mrs. O'Mahony felt it was all up; but she confined the expression of her feelings to an audible groan—and muttering in an under-breath, as she threw herself back in the carriage.

"Bad luck to you, Jack," she quietly resigned herself to fate—and then they moved forward, and then the shouting and the clapping—and the rude wit and the still ruder music recommenced, to Pennant's undisguised astonishment, who, never having seen anything of the sort before, wondered how so many people, of whom he knew nothing whatever, should take so deep an interest in his welfare. He would have enquired of his companions how this came to pass, but it was impossible, for the uproar precluded all hope of holding conversation; and besides, his time which was occupied in slaking the hands which were thrust in to him through the windows. At length, one continuous and prolonged cheer, longer and longer than any which preceded it, rent the air, and the cavalcade came to a sudden stop.

"The Captain, I'll bet a guinea," cried Mrs. O'Mahony, "the devil ventured in, though there's two Dublin bailiffs watching him; but he's such a warm-hearted creature." She popped out her head, but instantly drew it in again, laughing.

"It's only Pincher's gate-keeper they got hold of, my dear. Take care! boys," addressing those about the door, "for the love of heaven, don't let them beat him too much. I know myself the creature doesn't like a bone in his master's skin."

By this time a vagabond-looking old fellow, riding a mule, was led to the carriage door.

"Well, if I must, I must, boys, so here goes—you may hold the sticks over my head, you know, but don't strike." Then taking off his hat, "Long life to yer honor, Squire Martin, and long may you reign. Now, boys, let me go, for I did your bidding, and by gorry," he continued, when he was released, "I'd do it

again if I never opened a gate—for he's the born image of his father."

Again the procession got under way. When they reached a particular spot, the townspeople took leave, and the carriage proceeded at a more rapid rate towards the mustered place of the tenants, where the grand ceremony was appointed to commence. At the end of about a mile, the butler (who had directions to meet his mistress on the road, with information as to how matters were proceeding at the "Rendezvous") made a signal to Jack to stop.

After an introduction to Pennant, and a mysterious sort of conversation with his mistress, which seemed to gratify her much, he mounted the box and sat beside the coachman.

An observant eye might have detected some slight peculiarities in Mr. Moore's manner, but his mistress seemed agreeably surprised that matters were not worse, for she whispered to Rory Mahon:

"Thank heaven! Moore's behaving himself any way, and he'll be well able to attend at dinner."

They advanced for some time longer, very agreeably and rather rapidly towards the destination, but from their animated gestures, Mrs. O'Mahony, who kept a sharp eye ahead apprehended a diversity of opinion between the occupants of the coach-box, and she intimated as much to Rory Mahon, her *ris-a-vis*. At length, the carriage drew suddenly up, and both men simultaneously tapped the window at Father Stephen's back, who instantly let it down.

"Beg your reverence's pardon," said Jack, turning round and stooping forward towards the window—Moore, assuming a similar position—"I just want to say a word to the mistress."

"Drive on, you devil," shouted Mrs. O'Mahony. "You may talk as much as you like to me, when we get home—but it's growing late, and the dinner will be spoiled."

"Fair and easy," replied Jack, now exhibiting indistinguishable symptoms of drunkenness. "Fair and easy goes far in the day—and the devil an inch I'll stir, until I get an answer."

"It's only a short question, ma'am, your honor," interposed Moore.

"It's just to know," said Jack, "whether Squire Martin's grandmother (I don't mean Tom Pincher, by course, but the real gentleman that's sitting beside you), I want to know whether his grandmother was a MacCarthy or an O'Connor."

"MacCarthy," shouted the "Mistress," "drive on." "That's enough for you now, I suppose," cried Moore, in triumph, "a real old MacCarthy—a MacCarthy More she was!"

"It's a d—n lie!" responded Jack, in a fury—"she was an O'Connor, and great-granddaughter to Black Roddy, of Ballintubber—wasn't my grandfather's coachman—oughtn't I to know as well as any one in the world who she was?"

"I tell you again, she was better blood," cried Moore, "and sure I ought to know how it was, and my grandmother her ladyship's waiting-maid."

"D'ye mean to tell me," roared Jack, "that the MacCarthys are better brought home than the old O'Connors of Ballintubber?"

"I do!" shouted Moore.

"Then, by the mortal man!" said Jack, placing the whip and reins under his foot, and proceeding to pull off his coat, an operation as quickly performed by his companion—"by the mortal man! I'll not leave a whole bone in your skin, you lick-plate, that couldn't drive a wheel-barrow!"

The two men deliberately tucked up their shirt sleeves, preparatory to commencing hostilities; and Mrs. O'Mahony had her head out of the window, shouting to the footman, who was dead drunk, and fast asleep in the rumble, begging him for the love of heaven to separate them—when, in assuming an attitude of attack, Jack shifted his foot, the whip and reins fell upon the horses' backs, and away they went at a thundering gallop—the combatants were obliged to suspend operations, and hold on by the box. Mrs. O'Mahony shrieked; but Jack seemed very indignant at the uneasiness and alarm of the persons in the carriage.

"Stay quiet, I tell you," he cried, addressing them through the open window. "stay quiet, I tell you again—it's all right—it's all right—they'll stop at the ford to take a drink."

Rory at the "Mistress" instigation, endeavored to get out; but he no sooner attempted to open the door, than Jack, thrusting his arm through the open window, colored him from behind.

"Tear-an-ounds, can't ye be quiet, Mr. Mahon; when the likes iv ye gets into a carriage with the real sort ye ought to learn to behave yourselves and stay there as long as ye can."

The horses dashed on—and every group of people they passed, instead of endeavoring to arrest their progress, added to their speed by waving their hats, and shouting: "Hurrah for Jack! he's the boy who can make them go—hurrah!" and "hurrah!" shouted Moore and Jack from the coach-box, in return, while they stamped their feet, and used every effort to increase the rapidity of the pace; they seemed now not only to forget their anger, but to enjoy their perilsous position. At length they reached the ford, where a brideless stream flowed across a hollow in the road, when the horses plunged their noses into the water, and commenced drinking. The occupants of the carriage could not get out, for the river was fully three feet deep—and Mrs. O'Mahony, afraid to make any noise, was impatiently expecting relief, while Jack and Moore held an amicable conversation on the box.

"Well," cried the former, looking down with an eye of delight and affection, on the near-side horse, "Well, Dandy, I'm blessed if there's such a bit of flesh in the county, anyhow."

"By gorry," added Moore, "he is great entirely."

"I'll bet a gallon," continued Jack, "that I'll drive him over Ben Creagh, the darkest night that ever shone, without tipping a stone, if they war as big as beehives."

"Pon my own soul, I don't doubt it," responded Moore.

All this time the "Mistress" had her head out of the window, in the hope of spying assistance; at last, seeing some boys at hand, she commenced crying out for their aid.

"Tear-an-ounds! ma'am," said Jack, "can't ye hold yer tongue, and stay quiet—Dandy's nearly done, and if he's any way disturbed he'll be off again."

Fortunately, the horses being blown, took longer than they otherwise would have done to slake their thirst, and a couple of bare-legged gossoons, who paddled through the water like wild ducks, waded in to secure the reins.

"Easy, Dandy," cried Jack; "easy, shaggy—come quietly up till ye get hold iv Dandy—Dandy's as cute as a rat-catcher's dog; and if he smells what yer after, by Robus' he'll be off again, an' it'll be dangerous makin' the short into the stable-yard, for he'll go like blazes. That's right, Barney, ye were always a handy gossoon"—(as the boy handed up the reins)—"I'll give ye a good lap'orth of apples for this, the next fair day."

When the carriage was clear of the water, Jack and Moore, now on terms of perfect

amity, alit to make good defects—and the "Mistress" and her friends got out. The moment she felt herself on "terra firma," her paint-up rage broke forth.

"Oh, you ungrateful monster," addressing Jack, "after all I ever did for you to behave in this sort of way!"

"By gorry," replied Jack, deliberately knotting the broken reins, "by gorry, one id think it was the first time the like iver happened to your honor—don't ye know well enough that from the minute Dandy gets on the top of iv Knockroory hill, the devil out of hell couldn't hold him, until he finds his nose in the water—it's a purty thing to be makin' such a fuss about—I'm ashamed iv ye, ma'am—upon my soul, I am, before these strange gentlemen."

"I'll discharge you the moment I get home—that I will—if I never was to enter a carriage again," said Mrs. O'Mahony.

Jack paused—he was adjusting the thong of the broken whip, which "gaffer" had picked up and carried after him—then advancing near to where his mistress sat upon a bank, and touching the handle of his whip, he said, solemnly, "By this blessed stick, if ye do, I'll never forgive ye, if ye were to cry for a week, so mind what ye're about, now, that's all."

The spoilt servant knew the poor lady's weak point—he had driven her all her life—and though she had often suffered from his errors of judgment and misconduct, nothing could induce her, for some years past, to enter any carriage but her own, or suffer herself to be driven by any other person than "Jack, the coachman"—the consequence was that, no sooner did she disengage that she set about scolding him to return again to her service; and it not infrequently took many days of waiting to prevail on him to do so, although his character for drunkenness was so generally known, that he could find a place nowhere else.