

air of a man whom the topic disgusted; and then burst out with :

"Cooke, I tell you what, they may call you and me what bad names they please, but, if Posterity has an ounce of brains in its head, it will say that we did better for Ireland than ever she did for herself."

The Under-Secretary smiled, as if the opinion of Posterity were not any great trouble to him.

"There are only two classes of logical politicians in Ireland," proceeded his lordship, "the rebels and ourselves. The rebels want to cut our throats—naturally enough, I admit—and we want to muzzle the rebels. Who's to step between us? Is it the high and mighty bedlam called the Irish Parliament? One section sells itself to England at so much per principle: the rest—Grattan would call them "maudlin profligates," if they were on the treasury benches—they drink, gamble, rave, squander, fight duels, do every blessed thing but legislate. Of course, their old parliament is sacred, venerable, and all that; so is their whiskey, and one has about the same influence as the other in ruling Ireland. If they want to have a skull-cracking nation of their own, let them go out with the rebels and try issues decently with the Sassenagh. Else let the country thank its stars it has you and me to change its mummery of government into a substantial one."

"Egad, my lord, you should have made that speech in the House," laughed the Under-Secretary. "I'm beginning to think we should take rank with Tell and Hofer, and fellows of that description."

"The world will do us justice yet," said Lord Castlereagh, "when they know the prices we've had to give for principle. Walpole is right—every man has his price, at least in Ireland."

"You forget O'Dwyer Gary—I wish we knew his price."

"Egad, you're right—there are a few fellows like him in Ireland that makes me half in awe of their infernal Parliament. He is the very proudest man I ever met."

"He's an ass," ejaculated Mr. Cooke, sententiously."

"So he is, considering that a trifling vote would save him from beggary, and that he won't give it. Still I can't help cursing our necessity and pitying him—'tis such an odd inversion of the order of nature to see our coal-heaving friend—what d'ye call him?—dubbed

Baronet, and O'Dwyer Gary set a-picking up his crumbs like a beggar."

"But you overlook this manifest contrast of their merits—the baronet might have been a beggar only for his good sense; the beggar may be a baronet if he isn't an idiot."

"Right as ever Cooke—as pleasant and ingenious a truth as that a black man is whiter than snow. But if baronetcies are flying about in this helter-skelter fashion—what on earth are they going to reserve for us, I wonder? Dukedoms at the least."

"Say rather *whitewash*—if that sune. There are better prizes than those of diplomacy."

"What do you mean?"

"We haven't the good fortune to be *patriots* my lord," said Cooke, with a bitter sneer.

"Well, well, I was once a patriot." Lord Castlereagh was thoughtful! "and perhaps—nay, true as God! they were my better days—But nonsense! that fine lunatic from Tipperary has made a fool of me. The necessities of Empire summon us—bah! to fill our glasses! Now, then!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### GOING TO PARLIAMENT.

Month chased month through the College cloisters and found Gerald O'Dwyer plunging deeper and deeper into the dark avenues of thought, at whose deep extremity lay fortune—that Fortune which was to restore tottering traditions, and save a noble heart from breaking. The law, at that time the most seductive of the professions, carried him enthusiastically to its study; and, though he fretted and stumbled through many of its intricacies, he went on and on, with a strong heart, towards the purpose that shone like a star long beyond the year-mountains, stretching away into his future. Fields of pleasure there were by the way, but he passed them by; siren voices came to his ear, but he minded them not; doubt and discouragements crossed him like unholy spirits, and turned him not; he pressed on as a Crusader, with success for his Jerusalem.

Will he ever be in time to save the house that is tottering every day nearer to its fall?

Alas! the process of destruction is quicker than the approach of rescue! Extravagance still runs riot in Kilsheelan. O'Dwyer Gary must be a broken-hearted pauper, or he must be what his fathers were before him; such pride as his left no middle course. So the revels go on, and the rents are unpaid, and the *regime* of recklessness holds sway, and nobody suspects