

His broad, honest face, which was more indicative of good-nature than anything else. This was Tirlagh O'Neill, brother of the famous Sir Phelim, and as true a clansman as ever trod Tyrone heather. On the opposite side of the table were two other gentlemen, both in the prime of life, one of whom it was easy to distinguish as O'Reilly of Cavan, for his was the tall, thin, yet sinewy frame, the fair and rather delicate features, and the calm dignity of men which ever characterized that far-descended line of chieftains. The other gentleman was a promising scion of the noble house of McMahon of Monaghan, and he, too, carried about him the most prominent marks of his race—their frank sincerity, their earnestness of purpose, and a shrewdness which eminently fitted them for elbowing their way through life.

The distinctive peculiarities of each were more or less subdued on the present occasion, and the wine appeared to circulate more slowly than might be expected, notwithstanding the frequent challenges of the host.

"Why, gentlemen," said O'Moore at length with sudden vivacity, "I marvel much at your disregard of wine which I have taken some pains to provide of such quality as I thought likely to make you merry at heart. How is it?—are ye thinking to conform to Puritan ways of godliness?"

"Nay, my very good friend," made answer Lord Maguire, "if it be with others of your guests as it is with me, their thoughts are too high for much speech."

O'Moore's assumed vivacity suddenly vanished, but a glow of satisfaction overspread his features. "You have been thinking, then, friends and noble gentlemen, of the matter concerning which I spoke to you severally as occasion offered heretofore. I trust I see you all in the same mind, resolved to lend what power in you lies to the relief and comfort of our suffering country."

The guests exchanged glances, and a certain embarrassment was visible amongst them. Maguire was the first to break silence. He assured O'Moore that no one felt more keenly than himself the galling yoke of the oppressor, "hut," said he, "it would be worse than useless for us to make any show of resistance at the present time, seeing that we have neither arms,