

believe, was easy to be heard for miles, and would bring the inmates of the neighboring police barrack to our aid in the time, too vague, but still brief, which is called both in England and its sister-land "a jiffey." This barrack was in my eyes, the one bright spot in the prospect (when there *was* a prospect, and it didn't rain), for I knew that it contained no less than twenty stout soldiers, loyal to the core, in addition to the ordinary police force, itself a most trustworthy and gallant body. The military had been stationed there but lately by the admirable provision of the government (though not a day before they were wanted) and Lieutenant Moriarty, their commander, was a frequent guest at my host's table. He privately assured me, no matter at what hour he heard that bell, that he would be in Castletower in ten minutes, for although that was not possible as the crow flies, he would come upon the wings of love.

It was upon the broad expanse of the roof of Castletower that I took my principal exercise, upon pretence of the excellent view it afforded, but in reality because it seemed a good deal safer than going out of doors. There was a mountain called Galtymore (or some such name), about the size of Helvellyn, upon which I could distinctly see masses of Fenians drilling (especially on moonlight nights), and yet such was the infatuation of the family that they could see nothing but trees or patches of gorse. In addition to these external foes, there was treachery in the very heart of the garrison. If the butler was not a Fenian, I was prepared to give up my reputation as a judge of character. He had only been a short time in Dr. Dillon's service, and although he had had the most excellent testimonials from his last place, it is my belief, having seen him wait at table (and keep others waiting), that he was not a butler at all. Of course, dear Eleanor only laughed, and assured me that it was not the national practice to be sagacious at one's own calling, that if Patrick and the coachman were to change places, there would not, on the one hand, be so many accidents with the carriage; but my suspicions of Patrick remained the same, and I kept my eye upon him, nevertheless, and my hand near the great bell-rope.

Nobody knows what I suffered at Castletower from nocturnal apprehensions of insurrection. I occupied, at my own request, a room on the top story, immediately under the belfry, and the first thing I did, upon retiring to it every night, was to open my window, and stepping out upon a stone balcony on which it gave, to look out for signal-fires. Her Majesty's government had no such vidette as I in all Tipperary. In vain dear Eleanor, as she left me after our nightly chats over my fire, besought me to forget my foolish fears.

"Forget them!" answered I, parodying with hysterical grief a favorite bard:

"Forget them—if to dream by night,
And think on them by day,
If all the attention deep and close
A coward's heart can pay—
If that be to forget them, then indeed are they
forgot!"

And no sooner had her thoughtless step quitted my room, than I was on duty. Twice I roused the house with the most important news from Galtymore; but nothing came of it on either occasion, except that I grew more discredited than ever, and had the misery of reflecting that having cried "Wolf!" so unnecessarily, my usefulness as a sentinel was much impaired. I so harried the garrison, indeed, with alarms and excursions—the latter to the chamber-door of the Rev. Theophilus, whom I always compelled to search the house in garments very unsuit-

able to the inclement weather then prevailing—that when my father wrote in answer to a statement of our position, and the terrors it caused me, that since I was such a little fool, I had better come home, I am afraid, I say, that my host, at all events, was not displeased. Nothing, however, could be kinder than his behavior, and that of his family: they professed to regret my departure, and a warm hope to see me in more quiet times, and above all, (bless them!) they did not strive to keep me in the Golden Valley against my will. The worst of it was that I could not start that very day. The post, under escort though it was, was always much delayed, and we only got our letters at a time when, in more civilized communities, we send them away; one night of horror consequently still remained to be passed, and, as ill-fortune would have it, it was one of these said to have been fixed upon for "the rising."

Every one with nerves is aware how a peril magnifies itself when we seem to be upon the point—but not on the other side of the point—of escaping it. It is during the last few strokes which the failing swimmer makes, and when close to shore, that he most fears to drown, and recognizes most clearly the great probability that he will do so; and thus when I retired to my room—but not to rest—upon the last evening I was to pass in Castletower, it seemed more likely than ever that morn would find it a blackened ruin, and its reckless inhabitants butchered, or, at best, carried into the fastness of Galtymore against their will. When that dreadful Patrick handed me my cup of coffee after dinner, there had been an expression of fiendish glee upon his countenance, which seemed to say, "You think you will escape the universal massacre, my confiding young friend, and so you would, if you had gone yesterday; but your plan has been laid just twenty-four hours too late. Ha, ha!"

If I could have got all the party to sit up that night, revolvers in hand, and with Patrick safe locked in the cellar, I should have felt comparatively comfortable; but I knew that such a proposition would only be received with ridicule. There would be a Fenian attack, I felt convinced, before morning, but there was nothing for it, since I had not fortitude, but resignation. Going to bed as usual was out of the question; so I lay down outside of it with my clothes on, and my bonnet and outdoor apparel on the chair by my side, ready (so far) for the emergency whenever it should take place. It was not my intention to go to sleep at all; but, in spite of all my efforts, my eyelids began to droop, and my senses to grow heavy, as I listened and listened, and yet heard nothing but the March wind moaning about the sleeping mansion in a discontented and Fenian sort of way.

Suddenly I was awakened from what must have been a sound sleep, by I know not what, but with the sense that there was somebody in my room. If it had been broad daylight, and I had seen the man there, knife in hand, I could not have been more convinced that the Fenian butler was within a few yards of me, about to cut the rope that hung from the alarm-bell. It was easy to guess why he had come to my room of all rooms; it was, as I have mentioned, next the roof, and therefore the only apartment where all communication with the bell could be cut off from the house, except through a certain trap-door, of which this traitor (such was the credulous folly of his master) kept the key. Yes, he was standing upon a chair, in the centre of the floor. A rattle and a fall, and I could hear the now useless rope

sliding down, floor after floor, to the very bottom of the house. I listened, counting my own heart-beats, but no other noise succeeded. If any one had now been in the room, I should certainly have heard him breathe; but the wretch had evidently taken advantage of the whir and rustle of the rope to conceal his own departure. His stocking feet had already fled down stairs to open the front-door to his confederates without. He had doubtless drugged the whisky-punch that evening, whereof the Rev. Theophilus and sons used to partake so regularly; and Eleanor and the female servants were, most likely, paralyzed with terror. At all events, no one seemed to be disturbed. In a few minutes, I should hear the stealthy unfastening of the great chain that secured the hall-door; and then the Fenians would rush into the carnage. A sudden thought flashed upon me. There was the window, with its little balcony; could I not get out, and crouching beneath the woodwork, evade the observation of those who, bent on pillage and devastation, might enter my room? The fact of my bed not having been occupied, would favor the idea that I had escaped. I could not save dearest Eleanor and the rest, although, if they had only listened to me (I could not help saying *that*, even at this awful moment), such treachery would have been made impossible—but perhaps I could save myself, and, the sole survivor of that doomed household, be able, at least, to supply the authorities with every information. I was out of the window in a moment, and had closed it softly behind me. My room had been almost pitch-dark, but here there was a little murky light now and then, as the flying clouds left bare the young moon. Down below upon the lawn, I could see masses of men crouching down, as though to elude observation: one man, evidently their leader, stood a little in front, as though scorning concealment; I could even see the green plume waving on his cap. With this trifling exception, all were motionless, and as quiet as that grave, which was yawning for their unsuspected victims. Hush! was that the grating of the door-chain? No; it was only the chained mastiff dog moving uneasily in his kennel, but, like his masters, doubtless rendered harmless by some soporific. A shadow, hitherto unobserved, though it crossed my very feet as I leaned over the low balustrade, here sent a thrill to my heart. Had some rebel gained the roof, and was he watching my movements from above, secretly smiling to himself at my poor device for concealment, and its impotency? No: it was only the shadow of the pent-house that covered the great bell. Directly I recognized its form, the embers of hope began to revive within me. What if I—poor I, whom these half-civilized, though hospitable people had set down as an artificial and Cockney personage—should turn out to be the means of their persevation? If I could only climb up yonder coping, I could gain the roof and—if the villain had left merope enough—set that vast tocsin ringing! Steep places always give me vertigo; I never cross a plank without feeling a morbid desire to meet the worst by jumping off it; but now, the necessity of the case, the imminence and immensity of the peril that threatened dearest Eleanor and her kindred, seemed to nerve me for a feat, which a Blondin or a Leotard might well have shrunk from—at least in petticoats and crinoline. There was no crowd below to applaud me—but rather the reverse; no rope to cling to, except that which was to be the reward of my efforts. But I knew that to hesitate was to be lost; it was—to compare great things with small—like taking a black draught. The more