

dazzling as the lamp of life goes down. But the two friends! A young and strongly framed man sat on the grass weaving a crown of wild flowers. He was clad in the home-spun, comfortable cloth of pure native manufacture, for which his tailor had done but little in the matter of style. A long-waisted coat with skirts of absurd shortness, was fastened round his waist by a leathern strap, confined in a plated silver buckle of formidable dimensions: a pair of loose pantaloons covered his nether proportions, and substantial *brogues* completed this portion of his attire. He wore a cap of faded velvet, in which was fantastically stuck the pinion feather of a raven's wing. At first one might mistake this personage for a squireens lackey, since many of the gentry having the proverb in mind that, they can do what they choose with their own, are very unscrupulous, nay, evidently delight, in mutilating the clothes of their menials. But this last appendage, of the black feather, as well as a certain unsettled look in his otherwise handsome face bespoke him as one of a numerous and favoured class—the idiots, or *naturals* of Irish life. He was weaving a crown of wild flowers, and all the time looking in the face of his companion, a young girl of singular beauty and softness of feature, who sat at a little distance, regarding him with an air of mingled pity and tenderness. Meelian More was such a maiden as one seldom meets, but in the south of Ireland. Her fair flaxen hair fell over a cheek and neck rounded to the perfection of statuary, and the glance of her deep hazel eye was the very essence of candour, spiced but not deteriorated, by an arch recognition of admiration. And her heart was as full of pity, and her little head of wisdom, as was her eye of mirthfulness. She was of the middle size, neither pos-

sessing what is called a commanding stature, (a very questionable qualification,) nor so small as to wear a look of dependance or helplessness.

The natural held up his half finished coronet, and exclaimed, "Well, as sure as my name is Corny, that's a beauty; they say Miss Meelian the Queen wears a crown, but not half so nice a one as this."

"She can't find a workman like you, Corny."

"No, no, by the Powers she can't, that's true," said the simpleton, "and then where's the materials like these to be found there? What's their goold and silver, to this primrose, and this lily? ah, ah! and then the Saxon hasn't half so fair a head to wear it as you have, Meelian."

The artless girl blushed at the compliment of the idiot, who busily continued his work, humming all the time a wild wayward ditty, born of sorrow and nature's inspiration in the mind of some unknown rustic bard. The sympathetic feelings and tastes of our nature are easily awakened and put in motion; Meelian More began to hum too, gradually her voice grew strong and clear, and in the full deep tones of melody, words like these might be heard—

"My Country! my country, oh, bright
are thy fields

And the streams that gush down from thy
hills,

That fling back the sunbeams like battles
broad shields

When thy voice war's dread clarion fills.

But alas, that the star of the Desmond has
set,

That false friends done the work of his
foes,

And the graves of the valiant we ne'er can
forget,

Are moist with the tears of our woes."

"Go on, Meelian, I love to hear you sing. They say I am a fool, but I know what's music for all that."