

less he was accustomed to hear strange reports about her, ever since he remembered to hear any thing, and was taught to regard her as a woman above the common, and one whose anger was to be propitiated at every sacrifice. Hence, if Lanty had his doubts of Else, they were doubts rather of the woman than of her acts, of her capacity to work mischief rather than of her actual guilt. In a word, he never heard or saw aught of her but what was right and proper, and yet somehow he always fancied she was 'uncanny' and could be dangerous if she pleased. Perhaps the sharp thin features and large gray eyes of the tall shriveled old creature, as she gazed steadily into Lanty's face, helped at that moment to aggravate his suspicious. But be that as it may, he lost no time in trying to conciliate her, and his experience had already taught him, that his usual rollicking familiarity of manner, would accomplish that end more effectually than any formal apology he could offer.

The house or cabin to which Lanty and his companion now directed their steps, (Nannie still following her mistress at a respectful distance) was built on the southern side of a little green hill, called the 'Cairn,' named after a pile of stones upon its summit, which tradition says were thrown there to mark the spot where a priest had been murdered in the troublous times of Cromwell or Elizabeth.

From the top of this hill which rises only a few rods above the roof of the cabin, a full view is had of the Light House, and Lough Ely from its eastern to its western extremity. The lake in fact, at one of its bends, touches the base of the hill, and thence stretches to the light house, a distance of little more than half a mile.

"And now Else, avourneen," began Lanty, taking his seat on a flag outside the cabin door, for the evening was warm, "now that we settled that little difference, how is Batt, himself, and how does the world use him?"

"Well, indeed then, we can't complain much as times go," responded Else, drawing her stocking from her pocket, and beginning to knit in her usual slow, quiet way, for she was old, and her hands trembled as she plied the needles. "As for Batt, poor ould man, he's idle the most of his time, and barrin that he goes down to the shore there of an evenin to ketch a trout or so for the supper, it's little else he has to trouble him."

"Still he gets an odd call now and then, I'll warrant," observed Lanty, knocking the ashes from his pipe, and preparing to replenish it with fresh tobacco. "A man like Batt Curly can't want a job long if there's any goin."

"Oh! he gets his share to be sure, but where's the benefit o' that, Lanty, when there's nothing to be made by it."

"Well, he makes a trifle over the price o' the tibakky and the dram any way, and what more does he want. Fiddlin's now not what it us'd to be in ould times, Else."

"Inddeed, thin, you may well say that," she replied, "when half a crown a weddin's the highest he made this twelve-month.—The Lord look down on us, I don'na how poor people can stand it at that rate."

"It's mighty hard," assented Lanty, handing the old woman the pipe, after wiping it on the breast of his jacket. "I mind the time myself when we cudn't shake a fut at a weddin, short of a shillin a piece to the fiddler. But sure the people's hearts is broke out and out, Else,—why, they hav'n't the courage to dance, even if they had the mains."

"It's not that, Lanty, acushla! it's not that, but their hearts is gone out in thin altogether. They're not the same people they used to be at all. Nothin shutes thin now sure but Waltzin and Polkin, and sailin over the flure like so many childer playin cutche-cutchoo, and with no more sperit in thin than so many puppies at a show."

"Bedad it's no wondher you say it, Else,—it's disgraceful so it is."