

now!' He settled himself at ease on the top of the carriage. 'I'll tell you all about ut. Av coorse I will name no names, for there's wan that's an orf'cer's lady now, that was in ut, and no more will I name places, for a man is thracked by a place.'

'Eyah!' said Ortheris lazily, 'but this is a mixed story wot's comin'.'

'Wanst upon a time, as the childer-books say, I was a recruity.'

'Was you though?' said Ortheris; 'now that's extry-ordinary!'

'Orth'ris,' said Mulvaney, 'av you opin thim lips av yours again, I will, savin' your presince, Sorr, take you by the slack av your trousers an' heave you.'

'I'm mum,' said Ortheris. 'Wot 'appened when you was a recruity?'

'I was a betther recruity than you iver was or will be, but that's neither here nor there. Thin I became a man, an' the divil of a man I was fifteen years ago. They called me Buck Mulvaney in thim days, an', begad, I tuk a woman's eye. I did that! Ortheris, ye scrub, fwhat are ye sniggerin' at? Do you misdoubt me?'

'Devil a doubt!' said Ortheris; 'but I've 'eard summat like that before!'

Mulvaney dismissed the impertinence with a lofty wave of his hand and continued —

'An' the orf'cers av the rig'mint I was in in thim days *was* orf'cers — gran' men, wid a manner on 'em, an' a way wid 'em such as is ~~not~~ made these days — all but wan — wan o' the capt'ns. A bad dhrill, a wake voice, an' a limp leg — thim three things are the signs av a bad man. You bear that in your mind, Orth'ris, me son.