

vous "Will o' the Wisp," bad luck to him! He could hear "ould Nero" barking, and the pigs grunting, and yet could not find his way home; or he had laid down by a fairy hill, or been crossed on the road by an evil spirit. All these assertions he maintained by a hastily constructed fortification and redoubt, of certain facts of time and place, which gave a colour of truth to his statements. He had on one occasion thrown Knockbeg House into dismay, by announcing that all the pits of Arateagh Collingum had suddenly filled with water; several lives, he declared, had been lost!—reverently adding "rest to the sows of the faithful departed!"—widows and orphans, he asserted, were as thick as blackberries. On another occasion he told them of the moving bog—the Bog of Allen—that had walked away with itself the week before, without saying so much as "by your lave," and settled snug and *sans thought* in the Black North, where the people were in sore want of firing. What should be done for coals or turf? Mrs. Moriarty was alarmed, and seizing the tongs, hurled off a quantity of fuel from the fire, and opened a volley on the housemaid for her waste and extravagance.

A small circle of country cousins, gossips, and followers of the family, sat one stormy night round the ample hearth of Widow Moriarty's kitchen, where a cheerful turf fire threw its flashing brightness on the faces of youth and age. The mistress herself sat there too in an old fashioned high back chair, for she loved to talk and listen to the hangers on of that mirthful region; and we read that even queens have been accustomed to visit such localities, for the song says—While

"The King was in his parlor, counting all his money,
The Queen was in the kitchen, eating bread and honey."

Some girls were spinning or carding, or employed in other domestic concerns, and the lambent flame brought into view now and then the dark figures of some half dozen farm servants, stretched on benches or piles of turf about; while Master Brian's deep voice and merry laugh, and woman's musical tone from the parlor, told that the afore-said young sprig was amusing his sisters, as in duty bound.

"Lucy, bolt the door at ten," said Mrs. Moriarty; "that limping cur shall not come into my house at all hours; but it doesn't matter," she added, "he'll get in somewhere."

"Let him alone," said a crony, "I think he'll come through the door yet."

"Surely he's not a ghost," answered the mistress of the mansion. "He can't pop through the keyhole."

"I've often heard that love laughs at locksmiths," the other responded. "Isn't Lucy there his sweetheart? Do you think she'd send him away like the wandering Jew?"

The girl blushed deeply. What a tell-tale is a blush on a young cheek! It ought to be ashamed of itself.

"Lucy," said Mrs. Moriarty, "has too much sense to mind the palaver of such an idle, little-good-for spalpeen as Con, unless he should find this crock of gold he's so sure of; and he fills the foolish girl's head with notions of wealth and coaches and castles, enough to turn her brain."

"Maybe he'll give her a love philter. If he does she'll go to the world's end after him."

"He'll want some magical assistance then—philter, or charm,—for he's not very charming himself either in face or figure; but Lucy'll give him the slip yet, or I'm mistaken, for he's every body's body, with a heart like a cullender, riddled with holes by this time. Any handsome girl—there was Kitty Malone, and Ellen Tracy, and Moya—; but here he comes!"

And his "save all here!" footsteps were heard approaching with a hop-and-go-constant motion. The dogs raised their rough noses from between their paws, growled and then wagged their tails; the latch was raised.

"God be good and merciful to your sows, I pray! But it was the poor sight!" said a weak sweet voice, coming in at the door.

"Oh! you *Slveen!* What *raumaush* is now on the tip of your tongue?" said the widow, in high displeasure.

"Lord brake any one's hard cross! it's thrue as as you're there, ma'am," said the little ugly lame man, with a sigh, advancing; and having knocked a bag off a stool, he coolly sat down in the corner, without removing his kersey outside coat or cat-skin cap. The Crowner—

"Do you think to put your finger in my eye again, you night-walking, idle—?"

"I was goin' to tell how I was at the Crowner's Inquest, and I'm not the same since. The pity-fullest sight that—"

"Hold your tongue, you drunken, lying,—Oh wait till the priest comes; he'll make an example of you. You think the heart doesn't feel! what the eye doesn't see; but I *know* my substance is going to the shebeen to pay your scores; they say the stones of the street are rising against the widow and the orphan,—God help us!"

"Faix! you may believe me this time; between me and death, if—"

"Whose Inquest, Con, agraph?"

"One Tim Delany—rest his sowl! I can't say that I was one of the twelve men that