

which they were packing under his nose. At last, however, after soaping down his straggling hair on his forehead, and tying a bonnet upon his head to shade his face as much as possible, the disguise was completed, and the next move was to put Oonah in a place of safety.

"Get up on the hurdle in the corner, under the thatch," said Nance.

"Oh, I'd be afraid o' my life to stay in the house at all."

"You'd be safe enough, I tell you," said Nance; "for once they see that fine young woman here," pointing to Andy, and laughing, "they'll be satisfied with the lob we've made for them."

Oonah still expressed her fear of remaining in the cabin.

"Then hide in the pratce thrench, behind the house."

"That's better," said Oonah."

"And now I must be going," said Nance; "for they must not see me when they come."

"Oh, don't leave me, Nance, dear," cried Oonah, "for I'm sure I'll faint with the fright when I hear them coming, if some one is not with me."

Nance yielded to Oonah's fears and entreaties; and with many a blessing and boundless thanks for the beggar-woman's kindness, Oonah led the way to the little potato garden at the back of the house, and there the women squatted themselves in one of the trenches, and awaited the impending event.

It was not long in arriving. The tramp of approaching horses at a sharp pace rang through the stillness of the night, and the women, crouching flat beneath the overspreading branches of the potato tops, lay breathless in the bottom of the trench, as the riders came up to the widow's cottage, and entered. There they found the widow and her pseudo niece sitting at the fire; and three drunken vagabonds, for the fourth was holding the horses outside, cut some fantastic capers round the cabin, and making a mock obeisance to the widow, the spokesman addressed her with,—

"Your sarvant, ma'am?"

"Who are yiz at all, gintlemin, that comes to my place at this time o' night and what's your business?"

"We want the loan o' that young woman there, ma'am," said the ruffian.

Andy and his mother both uttered small squalls.

"And as for who we are, ma'am, we are the blessed society of Saint Joseph, ma'am,—our coat of arms is two heads upon one pillow, and our motto, 'Who's afraid?—hurroo!'" shouted the savage, and he twirled his stick, and cut another caper. Then coming up to Andy, he addressed him as "young woman," and said there was a fine strapping fellow, whose heart was breaking till he "rowled her in his arms."

Andy and the mother both acted their parts very well. He rushed to the arms of the old woman for protection, and screeched small, while the widow shouted "*millia murther!*" at the top of her voice, and did not give up her hold of the make-believe young woman until her cap was torn half off, and her hair streamed about her face. She called on all the saints in the calendar, as she knelt in the middle of the floor, and rocked to and fro, with her clasped hands raised to heaven, calling down curses on the "villians and robbers," that were tearing her child from her, while they threatened to stop her breath altogether if she did not make less noise; and in the midst of the uproar dragged off Andy, whose struggles and despair might have excited the suspicion of sober men. They lifted him up on a stout horse, in front of the most powerful man of the party, who gripped Andy hard round the middle, and pushed his horse to a hard gallop, followed by the rest of the party. The proximity of Andy to his *cavaliero* made the latter sensible of the bad odor of the pig's bed, which formed Andy's luxurious bust and bustle; but he attributed the unsavory scent to a bad breath on the lady's part and would sometimes address his charge thus:—

"Young woman, if you plaze, would you turn your face th' other way;" (soliloquy).—"By Jaker, I wonder at Jack's taste—she's a fine lump of a girl, but her breath is murther intirely—pew!—young woman, turn away your face, or by this and that I'll fall off the horse. I've heerd of a bad breath that might knock a man down, but I never met it till now.—Oh, murdher! 'tis worse it's growin'—I suppose 'tis the bumpin' she's gettin' that shakes the breath out of