

and shillelaghs, and up to everything from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter. You won't frighten us with your stick as you did them Dublin chaps yonder. We all know it well, don't we, boys?"

"Of course we do," said another Kildare boy; "we've known it since we was knee-high to a goose. Sit down, Matty; sit down on this stone. See what an elegant cushion of moss is on the top of it. Sit down on it, and make yourself at home. Wisha! a seat on the rock is all we can offer you, for divil the bit or sup have we got to give you."

"Faix, I'm glad to see you all," said Matty, taking the seat so politely offered to him; "and sure if you're hungry, you're hearty. Bedad, you're all as merry as a lot of magpies."

"It's just the thoughts of the fighting we're going to have keeps up our spirits, Matty. That'll be meat, drink and divar-sion all in one for us."

"Indeed, and I believe there's them that finds it so," said Matty; "but it wouldn't be me, for I never was much of a fighter."

"We'll fight for you, Matty, and you'll sing for us. You always were good at a song."

"Give us one now, Matty—give us one now," cried several of the boys.

"Is it a tune on my stick you want?" asked Matty, laughing.

"No, no, keep that for the Dublin boys. We want a song, a real song. You've lots of fine songs, I know. Hasn't he, Terry?"

"True for you, Miles, he has. Sing us a song, Matty, and we'll drink your health in cold water, since that's all the drink we're allowed nowadays. And mighty cold it is too," added Terry with a comical grimace.

"Troth and you might have worse," said Matty. "Water's a good wholesome drink, and never breeds mischief."

"Och, well, it's little of it goes far with me," said Terry; "but I keep up my spirits thinking of the fine times we'll have when Ireland's our own. And in the meantime, Matty, let us have your song."

"It's making game of me you are," said Matty. "Sure I'm too old to sing."

"Not a bit of it. You're as young as ever you were. Come now—we're all waiting on you."

"Troth I'm an old fool to listen to you," said Matty; "but sure you must have your way. And what song will I sing? Will you have the 'Shan Van Vocht'?"

"Och, we've sung the 'Shan Van Vocht' till we're hoarse. Give us something else."

"Will you have 'The Croppy Boy'?"

"No, faix, that 'ud never do; that 'u make us down-hearted entirely. Sure I never hear the last verse without feeling ready to cry. How's this it goes?"

And Terry crooned over the last words of the mournful ballad which possesses so strong a fascination for the Irish people:

"At Geneva barrack that young man died,  
And at Passage they have his body laid;  
Good people, who live in peace and joy,  
Give a prayer and a tear to the Croppy Boy."

"Troth, it's a sorrowful ballad," said Matty; "I wonder what put it into my head; but I'm afeard I've forgot all the funny songs I used to sing."

"Give us the 'Rakes of Mallow,' said one of the boys. "That's a fine song, and lots of divilment in it."

"Aye is it," said Matty, "but I'm not able to sing it now; the divilment's all gone out of me; but the days that I *could* sing it—oh, them was the days!"

"Oh, bedad, you'll have better days than ever you had, when Ireland's our own again, and we get back the lands our fathers were robbed of. We're the swallows that show the spring is coming; so keep up your heart, old boy, and sing us that song."

"Well, boys, I'll sing you an old ditty I learned from an old blind piper when I was a boy. He used to play his pipes in all the houses of the gentry, and he had a power of elegant songs. It's many a long day since, but what we learn when we're young we