

although they kept at a tidy distance, yet they let me look at them, which I did with great peace of mind all the time I was eating my supper. The day had been too busy till now to stop for any feeding; but now there would be twenty minutes or so ere the bass came into Pool Tavan, for these like a depth of water.

So, after consuming my bread and may-bird, and having a good drink from the spring, I happened to look at my great flag-basket, now ready to burst with congers and lobsters and mullet, and spider-crabs for Bunney (who could manage any quantity), also with other good saleable fish; and I could not help saying to myself, "Come, after all now, Davy Llewellyn, you are not gone so far as to want a low Scotchman to show you the place where the fish live." And with that I lit a pipe.

What with the hard work, and the heat, and the gentle splash of wavelets, and the calmness of the sunset, and the power of red onions, what did I do but fall asleep as snugly as if I had been on watch in one of his Majesty's ships of the line after a heavy gale of wind? And when I woke up again, behold, the shadows of the rocks were over me, and the sea was saluting the calves of my legs, which up to that mark were naked; and but for my instinct in putting my basket on a rock behind me, all my noble catch of fish must have gone to the locker of Davy Jones.

At this my conscience smote me hard, as if I were getting old too soon; and with one or two of the short strong words which I had learned in the navy, where the chaplain himself used to stir us up with them, up I roused and rigged my pole for a good bout at the bass. At the butt of the ash was a bar of square oak, figged in with a screw-bolt, and roven

round this was my line of good hemp, twisted evenly, so that if any fish came who could master me off the rocks almost, I could indulge him with some slack by unreeling a fathom of line. At the end of the pole was a strong loop-knot, through which ran the line, bearing two large hooks, with the eyes of their shanks lashed tightly with cobbler's ends upon whipcord. The points of the hooks were fetched up with a file, and the barbs well blackened, and the whole dressed over with whale oil. Then upon one hook I fixed a soft crab, and on the other a cuttle-fish. There were lug-worms also in my pot, but they would do better after dark, when a tumbling cod might be on the feed.

Good-luck and bad-luck has been my lot ever since I can remember; sometimes a long spell of one, wing and wing, as you might say, and then a long leg of the other. But never in all my born days did I have such a spell of luck in the fishing way, as on that blessed 10th of July 1782.

What to do with it all now became a puzzle, for I could not carry it home all at once; and as to leaving a bit behind, or refusing to catch a single fish that wanted to be caught, neither of these was a possible thing to a true-born fisherman.

At last things came to such a pitch that it was difficult not to believe that all must be the crowd and motion of a very pleasant dream. Here was the magic ring of the pool, shaped by a dance of sea-fairies, and the fading light shed doubtfully upon the haze of the quivering sea, and the silver water lifting like a mirror on a hinge, while the black rocks seemed to nod to it; and here was I pulling out big fishes almost faster than I cast in.

CHAPTER IV.—HE LANDS AN UNEXPECTED FISH.

Now, as the rising sea came sliding over the coronet of rocks, as well as through the main entrance—for even the brim of the pool is covered at high water—I beheld a glorious sight, stored in my remembrance of the southern regions, but not often seen at home. The day

had been very hot and brilliant, with a light air from the south; and at sunset a haze arose, and hung as if it were an awning over the tranquil sea. First, a gauze of golden color, as the western light came through, and then a tissue shot with red, and now a veil of silvery