

astonished by a burst of flame and a roar of momentary thunder. One man, in dashing up to a window to escape suffocation, gashed open an artery in his arm, fell back, and bled to death. A companion was taken prisoner by the police, who instantly rushed in. Luckily, however, for Emmet, Major Sirr and the Dublin police, over-secure, were pacified by lies and misrepresentations, and the government took no alarm. The levees at the Castle went on as usual, though there were still rumors of a "rising" that made the Lord-Lieutenant order the patrols of certain stations to be doubled.

In the mean time, Robert Emmet was racked with fears and anxieties, and with sorrow for the recent loss of life (strange contradiction in a man who was about to send thousands to death). He dreaded detection just as the great enterprise was about to bear fruit. He moved now for the third time, hiding in the depot at Mass lane. There, with feverish restlessness, he spent all day, urging on the blacksmiths and bullet-makers, and at night slept for an hour at a time, when exhausted, between the forge and the rocket-makers' table.

There were not yet more than eighty or a hundred conspirators actively engaged with Emmet, Dowdall, and Quigley; but these men firmly believed all Dublin—nay, all Ireland—would rise when once they emerged from the depot, and their young Hannibal had shouted in the streets the first "Erin go bragh!" There was too much of Hamlet about Emmet for such an enterprise as this; he had not the experience of men or the power of command requisite to conduct such a revolt. He was too sanguine, too credulous, too mild and tender-hearted, too trustful, too easily deceived by promises and pretences. He did not know how the nation had suffered in '98, and how humbled it was since the defeats of that year. He was not one of those Cæsar-like beings who over-rule other men's wills, and magnetize all with whom they come into contact. Some of his associates, fearing discovery, proposed at once flying to arms; others thought action still premature. Seven days were spent in these debates; at last it was agreed to surprise the arsenals near the city, and take the Castle by a *coup*

*de main*. As in '98, the mail-coaches were also to be stopped on the same day, as a signal for the country to rise.

Imagine the feelings of this man,—to-day a fugitive skulking from Major Sirr and his armed agents; to-morrow, as he thought to be, the patriot chief who was to restore liberty to Ireland! To-morrow the lover of Sarah Curran would clasp his beloved to his breast, and be greeted by her father as a conqueror and a victor. To-morrow England, France, Europe, the world, would know his name,—the good and free to bless, the weak and wicked to curse and execrate it. In such a fever of conflicting passions, Emmet drew up an impetuous manifesto from "The Provisional Government to the People of Ireland." It concluded thus:

"Countrymen of all descriptions! let us act with union and concert; all sects—Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian—are equally and indiscriminately embraced in the benevolence of our object; repress, prevent, and discourage excesses, pillage, and intoxication; let each man do his duty, and remember that, during public agitation, inaction becomes a crime; be no other competition known than that of doing good; remember against whom you fight,—your oppressors for six hundred years; remember their massacres, their tortures; remember your murdered friends, your burned houses, your violated females; keep in mind your country, to whom we are now giving her high rank among nations; and in the honest terror of feeling, let us all exclaim, that as, in the hour of her trial, we serve this country, so may God serve us in that which will be last of all!"

Towards dusk on the 23rd of July, Emmet prepared for action. He put on a general's uniform, green, laced with gold on the sleeves and skirts, and with gold epaulettes, white waistcoat and pantaloons, new boots, a cocked-hat with a white feather, a sash, a sword, and a case of pistols. About fifty men had assembled outside the depot; to these men Emmet distributed pikes and ammunition. In a moment, as if by enchantment, all the streets and alleys leading to Mass lane and Thomas street swarm with ruffians clamoring for arms, filling cartouch-boxes, pouches, bags, and pockets, loading muskets, shaking links and torches, and way-