

"Tim, a bouchal, win d' ye march for the Bay o',—what's this they call it? Those d—d French lingoos stick 'til yer mouth like a pratie skin, an not half as swate."

This was addressed to an individual who presented an appearance the very reverse of the former. His face was pale and emaciated, the ghastliness of which, was rendered more apparent from the black curling hair by which it was surmounted, terminating in a queue of regimental proportions behind. The two might have afforded a good example of the effects of dissipation upon different temperaments. The one lusty, warm, and sanguine, unnatural stimulation appearing only to create more energy in the man; the other shrunken, cold, and colourless, his hand tremulous the while, with the influence of nervous reaction upon the debilitated system, and looking as though you could not find one drop of blood in his placid, lifeless veins.

"The Bay of Vertc, perhaps you mean, Dennis?" was the reply to the foregoing question, "we have orders to start in an hour's time, and the Colonel you know is not the man to lag when there's work to be done."

Appearing satisfied with this information, the Irishman approached the other, and, in a hoarse whisper, said—"Comrid, have yis a dhrap left in the canteen? the air is raw an pearcin the morning, and the stomach widin me is a grownin wid the could I tuck in the trenches."

"Not a lap, not a squeeze!" exclaimed the first, petulantly, "you sucked it like a leach the last time I gave you the can, and did'nt leave what would wet the lips of a baby, leave alone, enough to give one an appetite for his breakfast before a long march."

Here the speaker cast an indignant look at the applicant, which, with the reproof was equally disregarded, as he shouted:—

"St. Patrick presarve us! I must have a dhrink, or maybe I'll drive mad wid the impression and the hunger that's a tearing inside o' me, och! och!" And here he forced a fit of coughing, to excite the compassion of his auditors. "Och! och! see that now, its fairly fetching the breath out o' me, it is."

"Dennis?" asked one, "who gave you the mark under the left eye, my boy, was it the enemy?"

"No, Jack, wan o' thim black ducks we skivered in the blockhouse beyont. By the crass—though I say it 'bat should'nt, Dennis Sherron was a haporth too much for the likes of he, anny way, and so I tould the devil, as I shoved my fark intil his mate basket."

"But the cut, Dennis?" resumed his questioner, what'll Biddy say when we go back with such a slash upon your handsome mug?"

"Ey St. George! you'r right there," struck in Tim, "depend upon it man, she'll give him a far unkindler cut than the knife of an Ingen, and more severer and inhealible."

A burst of merriment succeeded to this sally, but Dennis looked around disdainfully without vouchsafing any direct reply, quietly remarking, in allusion to the original subject of his discourse, namely—the movement of the troops.

"Twelve miles, is it, through the woods?—And an aisy an a pleasant walk yees'll all have, wid the mosquitoes, an the shkamin salvages a stringin an scalpin of yees.

"Be me shoul! its sorry I am that I cant kape yer company barring the hate an the drought. Why Tim!" and here he put his hand on the curly pate of the person addressed, "I say, Tim! The imps ud! make a for-tin with that poll o' yourn, its the very moral of a Frenchman's wig, so it is."

"Hands off!" exclaimed the other, no way relishing the joke, and letting the butt of his firelock fall heavily upon the toe of his tormentor—"Take your paws off, you black-guard! and thank the Lord that your own is safe, for I'll wager, there's not a thievish finger among the Aborigines, would meddle with thy carroty top, for fear of being singed."

"Bravo!" "fire away, Tim!" "can you answer that, Dennis?" shouted several voices, while the old barrack room roared with laughter. But the ire of the Irishman was roused by the retort and its painful accompaniment, which sent him hopping about the floor, and deepened the hue of his cheeks, as he replied quickly and with emphasis:—

"Then be the piper that played afore Moses, an the holy saints to the fore! It's yourself ud be sorrifui for that same, you spalpeen; an faith, wor yer hair the shade o' mine, what wid the dhrink ye tuck an the imptness that's within, ye'd blaze up like a sky rocket, and lave hus, may be, yer two outlandish legs for a parable of muzzy Tim Patterson."

How far the rising cholera of the parties would have proceeded, it is impossible to say, for at that moment the first bugle sounded, and an orderly enquired at the door, if Mr. Molesworth's servant was within, as he had been asking for him below. Upon which, the dispute terminated, as Dennis, acting in that capacity, hurried away to obey the summons of his master.