

voices. The stillness which reigned in the apartment, broken only by the sound of the dripping fountains, and which were gradually lessened, so affected the brain of the poor patient, that though a man of very strong constitution, he fainted and died and without having lost a drop of blood.

NED RUSHEEN ;

OR,

Who Fired The First Shot?

BY SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE,

Author of the "Illustrated Life of St. Patrick," "Illustrated History of Ireland," "History of the Kingdom of Kerry," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

MR. FORENSIC wished to cross-examine the witness. He did so, but he did not succeed in damaging her evidence. He pressed Ellie hard—very hard—which was allowable—and coarsely—which did not add to his professional reputation—to admit that Rusheen was her lover. But she was firm and consistent in her replies. She had known him since she was a child; he had been a great deal with the young Lord a few years ago; she did not know why they were not on the same terms now; she did not know if it was on her account—but, being pressed, said, perhaps it might be. She believed Rusheen had every right to be on the castle grounds at night; he was under keeper—the head keeper was very old; he could have seen the light in the dining-room window half-a-mile off. It was not usual to have lights there so late at night; there had been a light there once or twice, perhaps, in the last year, after a dinner party, when they were clearing up. It was her business to attend to the fires—her aunt desired her; her aunt was housekeeper. She supposed Mr. Elmsdale knew she would be up to look after them. She had never seen him since; she went out early next morning, and never returned to the castle.

"Never returned? Will you inform the jury where you went?"

"To Wicklow, sir."

"A strange affair, certainly. And pray who induced you to go to Wicklow?"

"The priest, sir."

Mr. Justice Cantankerous drew himself up. When a priest came into a case, he made a point of expressing his displeasure with the case, with the prisoner, with the jury, with the counsel on both sides, both in general and in particular. He suffered, in fact from a species of priestophobia; his tendency to this disease was very well known, and all infection, as far as possible, averted—but the priest was brought in now, and there was no help for it.

Mr. Forensic was a Protestant, but he regretted it quite as much as Mr. O'Sullivan, who was a Catholic. The counsel looked at each other with an air of confidential resignation, which, to outsiders, who supposed them to be at enmity, because they held briefs on opposite sides, and were consequently bound to brow-beat and aggravate each others' witnesses, was simply incomprehensible.

"The priest!" observed Mr. Justice Cantankerous, "and, pray, what has the priest to do with this affair?"

"He advised me, my Lord."

"And why could not your friends advise you?"

"He is my friend, my Lord."

The answer was unanswerable, from the exceeding simplicity and confidence with which it was given. Mr. Justice Cantankerous might pity Ellie for considering that the priest was her friend, but it was clearly impossible for him to blame her in public.

"Why did the priest advise you to go to Wicklow?" Mr. Forensic continued.

"Because—I suppose——"

"Was he afraid you would yield to Mr. Elmsdale's solicitations?"

"Yes."

"Then he advised you to fly from what he believed to be danger?"

"Yes, sir."

"Would he have objected to your marrying the prisoner?"

"I—I—think not, sir."

"Have you ever seen the present Lord Elmsdale since the night of the 14th December?"

"Ellie hesitated, and looked very uncomfortable."

The question was pressed.

"Once, sir."