that purpose. Alas for the uncertainty of all human hopes! No sooner has balmy sleep enshrouded us in her blessed mantle, than we are awoke by a distant cry which sounds to our ears like "Fie, Fie, Fie,"—as though an avenging spirit from the city were reproving us for neglect in the matter of our taxes aforesaid, or for some other great moral delinquency.

Ere our tenor has had time to subside, another voice—and yet another—is heard, each announcing with increasing nearness and distinctness the fact now clearly apprehended that there is a fire somewhere. Presently, a tintinabulary apparatus with a most dismal sound is heard coming from the centre of the city, and anon all the bells of all the engine houses, churches, chapels, cathedrals (wooden or otherwise) and other edifices of like sort join in the alarm and make night hideous with their clangor.

Inspired with some diabolical zeal, the perpetrators of these awful alarms continue them without flagging for a space of time which to our distracted minds generally appears about twelve hours on each occasion; it may be less, but we give the results of frequent calculations made in the periods of wakeful misery during which duly organized "alarms" were being accomplished. On the derangement of our domestic economy, occasioned by this dreadful practice we need not dwell. Our eldest son, Tom,—a highly promising youth of twelve, who evidently imagines a fire to be a scene of great festivity, invariably distracts the household by his announcements (shouted down the stairs) that the whole town will be burnt and that, in his judgment, our wharf and counting house are being at that very moment consumed. The more youthful members of the household are crying with the utmost vigor, and we are reduced almost to a state of utter mental distraction

But to treat the matter more seriously:—is it not evident to any who will reflect for a moment, that this barbarous custom of disturbing the whole community whenever a fire occurs, not only occasions an absolutely unnecessary annoyance to thousands of citizens, but is, in cases of illness, calculated to produce the most serious results: indeed we cannot doubt that on many occasions the dying moments of some of our fellow citizens have been disturbed by the hideous shouts of men and the horrid discord of bells almost innumerable.

Why, in the name of common sense, should every man, woman, and child in the community, be disturbed, in order that two or three hundred men enrolled for the very object, should be informed that their services are required? So far from a promiscuous mob of spectators being of any service at a fire, they are simply a nuisance (great in proportion to their numbers) which the real working men would gladly dispense with. There can be no real difficulty in devising such a mode of announcing the occurrence of a fire, as should clearly indicate the district, or street, in which it has broken out, and which shall cease when repeated a few times, so that every one really interested in the fact be made aware of it. It is done in other cities; it can be done in Halifax: Let us hope that ere long a custom which in the hour of midnight is almost as terrifying as the war-whoop of the Indian once was to his foes, (and which is now about equally well entitled to retain its place among the usages of a civilzed community) will be banished to the same limbo of oblivion.

LAWYER KELLY.

Conclusion.

With a roar of exultation the wild beasts closed round their prey. Before I had time to think what could be done, I heard, close at my ear, a blasphemy so awful that it made me start even at that critical moment; it was Ralph's voice, but I hardly knew it—hoarse and guttural, and indistinct with passion. Without hesitating an instant, he swung himself over the balustrade and lighted on his feet in the midst of the crowd. They were half-drunk with whiskey, and maddened by the smell of blood; but—so great was the terror of Mohun's name—all recoiled when they saw him thus face to face, his sword bare and his eyes blazing. That momentary panic saved Clontarf. In a second, Ralph had thrown him under the arch of a deep doorway, and placed himself between the senseless body and its assailants. Two or three shots were fired at him without effect; it was difficult to take aim in such a tossing chaos; then one man, Delaney, sprang out at him with a clubbed musket. 'At last!' we heard Mohun say, laughing low and savagely in his beard, as he stepped one pace forward to meet his enemy. A blow that looked as if it might have felled Behemoth was warded dexterously by the sabre, and, by a quick turn of the wrist its edge laid the rapparee's face open in a bright scarlet gash extending from eyebrow to chin.

His comrades rushed over his body, furious, though somewhat disheartened at seeing their champion come to grief; but they had to deal with a blade that had kept half-a-dozen Hungarian swordsmen at bay; and with point or edge, it met them everywhere, magically. They were drawing back, when Delaney, recovering from the first effects of his fearful wound, crawled forward, gasping out curses that seemed floating on the torrent of his rushing blood, and tried to grasp Mohun by the knees and drag him down.

Pah! it was a sight to haunt one's dreams.—(You might have filled my glass, some of you, when you saw it empty.)

Ralph looked down on him, and laughed again; his sabre whirled once, and cleared a wide circle; then, trampling down the wounded man by main force, he drove the point through his throat, and pinned him to the floor. I tell you I heard the steel plainly as it grated on the stone There was an awful convulsion of all the limbs, and then the huge mass lay quite still.

Then came a lull for several moments. The Irish cowered back to the door, like penned sheep; their ammunition was exhausted, and and none dared to cross the hideous barrier that now was between them and the terrible cuirassier.

All this took about half the time to act that it does to tell. I was hesitating whether to descend, or to stay where my duty clearly called me, near my wife. Fritz knelt behind me, silent and motionless; he had got his orders to stay by me to the last; but the sturdy keeper rose to his feet.

'Faix!' he said, 'I'm but a poor hand at the swoording, but I must help the masther, anyhow;' and he began to climb over the breastwork, The Colonel's quick glance caught the movement, and his brief imperious tones rang out over the hubbub of voices, loud and clear.

'Don't stir, Connell; stay where you are. I can finish with these hounds alone.'

As he spoke, he dashed in upon them with lowered head and uplifted sword.

I don't wonder they all recoiled; his whole face and form were fearfully transfigured; every hair in his bushy beard was bristling with rage; and the incarnate devil of murder was gleaming redly in his eyes.

Just then there was a wild cry from without, answered by a shriek from my wife, who had been quite silent till now. At first I thought that some fellows had scaled the window; but I soon distinguished the accents of a great joy. My poor Kate! She had roughed it in barracks too long not to know the rattle of the steel scabbards.

When the dragoons came up at a hard gallop, there was nothing left in the court-yard but the dead and dying. Mohun had followed the flyers to get a last stroke or two at the hindmost. We clambered down into the hall, and, just as we reached the door, we saw a miserable crippled being clinging round his knees, crying for quarter. Poor wretch! he might as well have asked it from a famished jungle-tiger. The arm that had fallen so often that night, and never in vain, came down once more; the piteous appeal ended in a death-yell and, as we reached him, Mohun was wiping coolly his dripping sabre—it had no more work to do.

I could not help shuddering as I took his offered hand, and I saw Connell tremble for the first time, as he made the sign of the cross.

The dragoons were returning from the pursuit; they had only made two prisoners; the darkness and broken ground prevented their doing more. Ralph went up to the officer in command.

'How very good of you to come yourself, Harding, when I only asked you for a troop. Come in; you shall have some supper in half-an-hour, and Fritz will take care of your men. Throw all that carrion out,' he went on, as we entered the hall, strewn with corpses. 'We'll give them a trench to take up their dead.'

Clontarf came to meet us; he had only been stunned and bruised by the fall. His pale face flushed up, as he said, 'I shall never forget that I have to thank you for my life.'

'It's not worth mentioning,' Mohun replied carelessly 'I hope you are not much the worse for the tumble. Gad! it was a near thing, though. The quarryman's arms were a rough necklace.

At that moment they were carrying by the disfigured remains of the dead colossus. His slayer stopped them, and bent over the hideous face with a grim satisfaction.

"My good friend, Delaney,' he muttered, 'you will own that I have kept my word. If ever we meet again, I think I shall know you. *Au revoir*,' and he passed on.

I need not go through the congratulatory scene, nor describe how Kate blushed as they complimented her on her nerve. Fortunately for her, she had seen nothing, though she had heard all. Just as we were sitting down to supper, which Fritz prepared with his usual stolid coolness, and when Kate was about to leave us, for she needed rest, we remarked the attorney hovering about us, with an exultation on his face yet more servile and repulsive than its late abject terror.

'Mrs. Carew,' said Mohun, 'if you have quite done with your *protege*, I think we'll send him down stairs. Give him something to eat, Fritz, not with the soldiers, though—and let some one take him home as soon as it's light. If you say one word, sir I'll have you turned out, *now!*

Mr. Kelly crept out of the room, almost as frightened as he had been two hours before.

The supper was more cheerful than the dinner, though there was a certain constraint on the party, who were not all so seasoned as their host. *He* was in unusual spirits; so much so, that Clontarf confided to a corner, his particular friend, that 'it was a pity the Colonel could not have such a bearfight once a fortnight, it put him into such a charming humour.'

We had nearly finished when, from the road outside, there came a prolonged ear-piercing wail, that made the window-panes tremble. I have never heard any earthly sound at once so expressive of utter despair, and appealing to heaven or hell for vengeance.

We all started, and set down our glasses; but Mohun finished his slowly, savouring like a connoisseur the rich Burgundy.

'It is the wild Irish women, keening over their dead,' he remarked, with perfect unconcern. 'They'll have more to howl for before I have done with them. I shall go round with the police to-morrow and pick up the stragglers. Your men are too good for such work, Harding. There are several too hard hit to go far; and my hand-writing used to be pretty legible.'

The stout soldier to whom he spoke bent his head in assent but with rather a queer expression on his honest face.

'Gad!' he said, 'you do your work clearly, Mohun.,

'It is the best way, and the shortest in the end,' was the reply; and so the matter dropped.

The dragoons left us before daybreak; their protection was not needed; we were as safe as in the Tower of London. The next morning, while I was sleeping heavily, Ralph was in the saddle, scouring the country, with what success the next assizes could tell.

I go there again this winter for the cock-shooting, but I don't much think Kate will accompany me.

Now, who says 'a rubber'? Don't all speak at once.'