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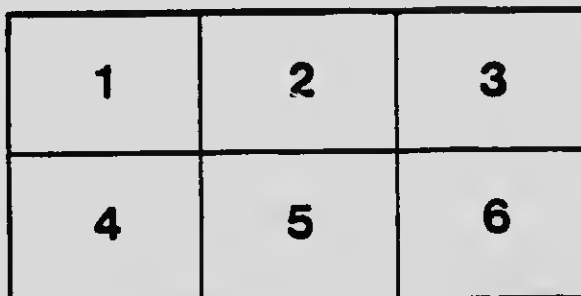
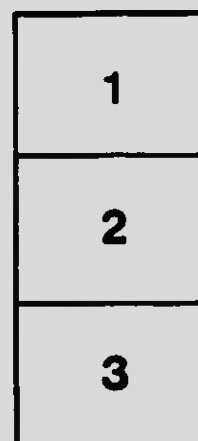
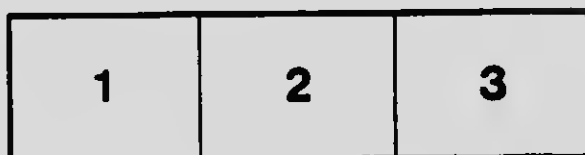
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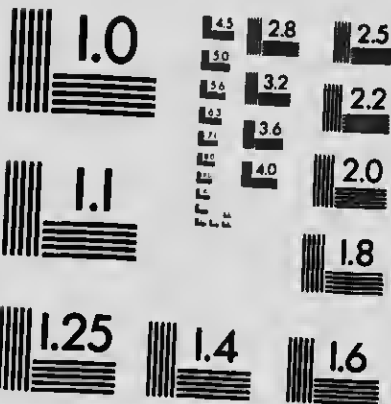
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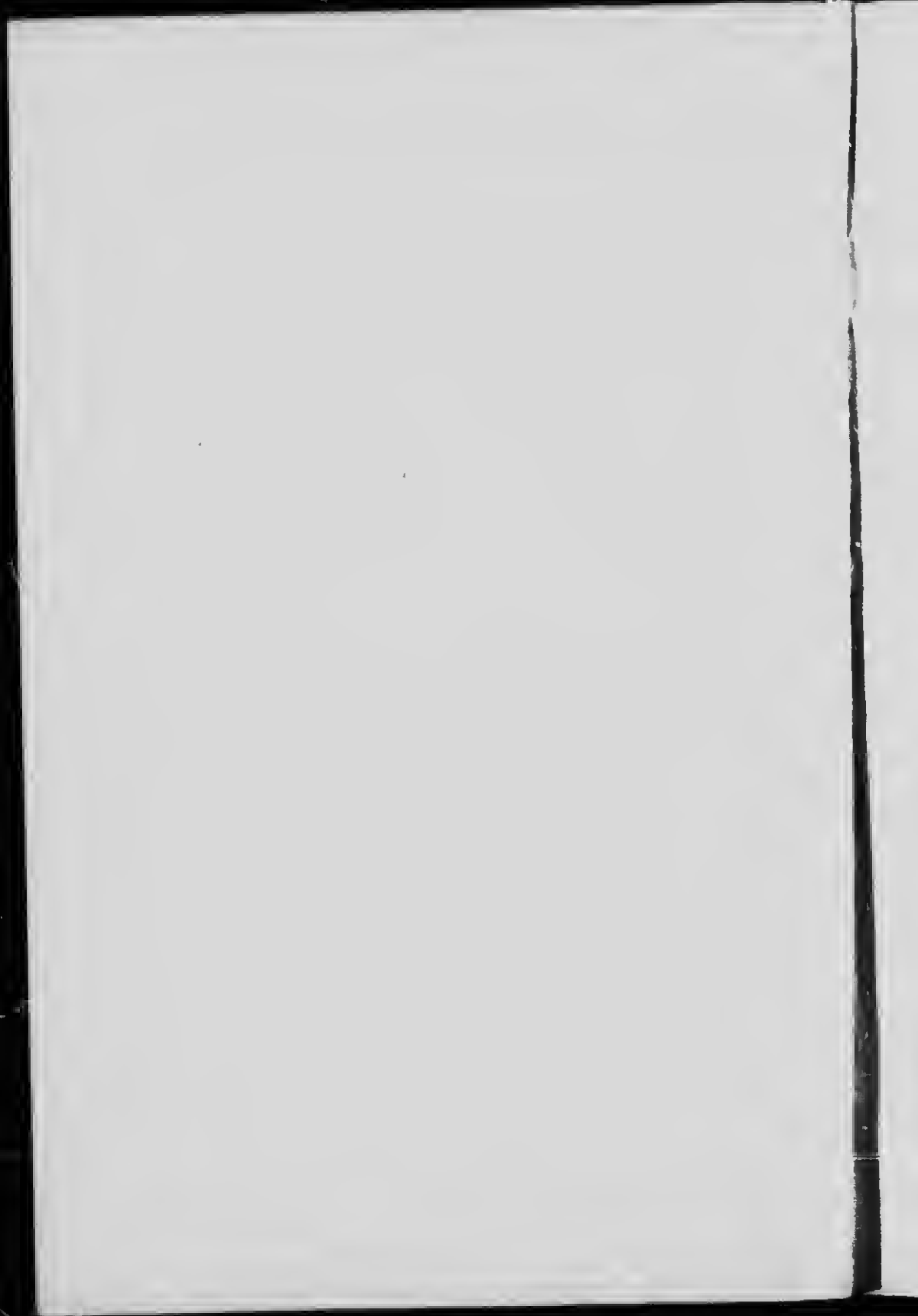
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THE FOSTER-BROTHERS  
OF DOON









"THIS BULLET IS MED OUT O' THAT SEVEN-SHILLIN' PIECE."

[page 116.]

THE  
FOSTER-BROTHERS  
OF DOON

A TALE OF THE IRISH REBELLION OF 1798

BY

E. H. WALSHE

AUTHOR OF

'UNDER THE INQUISITION' 'CEDAR CREEK'  
'THE MANUSCRIPT MAN' ETC.

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## PREFACE

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THOUGH the following pages are in the form of fiction, no pains have been spared to preserve minute accuracy in all that concerns the history of that terrible outbreak known as the Irish Rebellion of 1798. The various volumes written on both sides of the question have been carefully studied, and innumerable contemporary documents—pamphlets, newspapers, broadsheets, and ballads—have been collected and examined. The sole desire of the writer has been to discover and present the truth.

Let no reader of this tale imagine that the pictures of that disastrous period are overdrawn. Any person who has carefully studied the history of the time will know that the writer has erred rather in an understatement of the facts than in an excess of vivid incident. Were the narrations of certain historical scenes as complete and full in all their details as they might have been, they could only cause pain to the reader. The horrors of the bridge at Wexford, and the slaughter at Vinegar Hill, have therefore been but briefly sketched:—a score of kindred tragedies are only glanced at. The wonderful Irish genius for wit and humour has been used to lighten any sombreness in the narrative, as it must be in every faithful transcript

of the character of the people. It may be added that all verses of hallads, and passages from pamphlets, speeches, etc., introduced into the narrative, are veritable extracts from effusions of the period.

It is the strong conviction of the writer, produced by long and intimate acquaintance with the Irish people and their history, that the superstition and priestcraft of Roman Catholicism form the chief cause of the troubles of that most beautiful yet most unhappy island. But these evils are to be eradicated, not by the nominal and lifeless profession of a purer faith, but by a living, loving trust in the Divine Saviour. Too often has Irish Protestantism, in past times, assumed the form of a political creed, or been but the watchword of a party. In the deeper piety, the devouter fervour, and the fuller exercise of that 'love, which is the fulfilling of the law,' displayed by the Protestant churches of the sister island, we have the best and surest augury that the darkness of Ireland's 'night is past, and the true light now shineth.' May 'the Lord hasten it in His time!'

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# THE FOSTER-BROTHERS OF DOON

## CHAPTER I.

### FURLONG'S FORGE.

A WILD March wind was abroad on the roads, skurrying the dust in clouds, whirling it on high towards the skies. Sharp and shrill from the north-east blew the breeze; the sheep in the pastures huddled their tender lambs together under the lee of bare brown hedgerows and spiny furze-bushes, covering the young things with blankets of living fleece—mother-like, bearing the brunt of hard weather themselves; as would other mothers housed in the cabins which dotted this fertile county of Wexford far and wide—mothers who left their spinning-wheels, set in the red firelight, to tuck still warmer the rosy children packed three or four into a crib in a corner, and comforted with the summer garments of the aforesaid sheep.

Thus lay little Una Furlong, nestled in an osier cradle of her father's weaving, and no more conscious of the gale that whistled about the crazy thatch of the forge than if she were reposing in Fairyland.

'I'm thinkin' the frost is broke up for good, Myles,' said the widow Furlong to her son, after some attentive listening to the sounds without.

'May be so,' was the laconic reply.

'An' then you'll be havin' the neighbours' ploughs to settlo,' continued the old woman, chafing her hands over the blazing bogwood contentedly.

The smith vouchsafed no response whatever.

He was working at his anvil, carefully fashioning some long, two-edged weapon, heating and hammering the steel with great assiduity, and apparently in entire abstraction to his employment. The face that bent over the glowing metal was not prepossessing. Brows black as ink, and particularly shaggy, almost divided his countenance, like a dark bar pressed over his smouldering eyes. This was the notable characteristic to a stranger. His figure was short and thick-set, evidently of prodigious strength; the muscles on his arms stood through the swarthy skin like ropes when he wielded his hammer. Sometimes a soft whistle was shaped by his large lips, and broken abruptly when a thought about the handiwork came across the tune, which was the popular ditty of 'Cruiskeen Lawn.'

'The ploughs would bring you in more tennennies than the pikes,' quoth the old woman, lighting the stump of a black pipe.

'Who knows? who knows?' he uttered, somewhat dreamily; and, concluding within himself on some alteration of shape, or improvement of temper, he blew the bellows again.

'Where's Freney the night?' he demanded abruptly. 'Doesn't he know that I want him in the forge?'

'An' sure I tould ye he was gone to Barney Brallaghan's wake, wid the fiddle, to raise a bit of divarshin,' was the reply. 'Ye wouldn't be keepin' the poor boy at home always?'

Her son uttered a sort of growl as he laid by the pike-head; and, taking a brick or two from the back of his forge chimney, he drew forth other pikes, whence he selected one, and proceeded to whet its edge on a grindstone.

'I hopes every one of thim isn't drivin' a nail in yer coffin,' was the old woman's cheering observation.

FURLONG'S FORGE.

11

'I wish yo'd hold yer croak,' he responded roughly.

'But I won't,' she said pertinaciously, laying her pipe in a recess of the wall. 'I'm not goin' to have Una, the craythur, left an orphan before my very eyes, with nobody hut my ould hones to look to for a bite or a sup in the whole world. It's all very well for them that has nayther chick nor child to be going about, rightifyin' the Government, and turnin' out the English'—

'Old Jug,' said he, interrupting her, with a suppressed voice, 'I'm not such a fool as all that comes to. You'll think different when you sees me sittin' up in the Big House at Doon, back in my own rights again.'

A derisive, crackling laugh was her commentary on this speech. His dark face slowly flushed till it was the hue of his own molten metal, and the smouldering eyes flashed dangerously.

'What!' he exclaimed; 'do you mane to deny that the Furlongs was owners of the whole counthry-side, an' not so long ago nayther? Don't you know that if everybody had his own this minit, it's myself that would be masher of the Doon estates, which Orango William wrung from my father's grandfather? An' that black-hearted colonel—don't I remimber the day he said he'd sthrap me up to his triangle—me, his son's foster-brother!'

'An' that's the rason you should keep away from them pikes, Myles dear, an' give no one an occasion to say a word agin you,' rejoined the widow.

'Women are always afeard,' observed Mr. Furlong, whetting his pike carefully, after which uncomplimentary remark upon the sex he whistled a good deal more of 'Cruiskeen Lawn;' and his mother smoked.

'Whist!' she said suddenly, raising her head. 'Stop that grinding—there's feet on the road.'

The smith instantly suspended operations, and listened intently.

The sharp trotting of hoofs on the stones was heard between the gusts. 'The horse wants a shoe, whoever

he is,' said Myles, gathering up his pikes and stowing them away in their hiding-place with great celerity. When he had inserted the loose bricks, he sprinkled the interstices with dust from the earthen floor. 'Spies are so plenty,' muttered Myles. 'An' if he's an Orangeman, won't I put on a sweet shoe for him! I'm certain sure the haste won't fall dead-lame on the other side of Slieve-Bui, not a hit of it!'

Into a deep sleep sank Mylos thereafter, resting his head against the chimney corner, with a half-smoked pipe loosely in his fingers; while the sounds that issued from his nose were quite sufficient to account for his indifference to the ugentle knocking of the stranger, which was apparently made with the loaded end of a riding-whip.

'Is there any one there?' called out Mrs. Furlong in a voice of the utmost innocence and helplessness, as if it had suddenly occurred to her that perhaps the knocks might be attributed to some such cause.

'Why, then, if ye wor the Seven Sleepers himself, ye ought to be woke by this time,' exclaimed the stranger; 'an' it wouldn't take much more delay to coax me to spin the door off its hinges.'

'An' what is it ye want, if a hody might be afther axin'?'

The only answer was a sound as if the outsider were about to fulfil his threat, and had flung himself against the door furiously.

'Arrah, can't ye be aisy a minit,' whined the old woman, 'till I rubs the sleep out of my eycs? An' have some consideration for the sick child in the corner'—

But her objurgations were lost in the thundering knocks at the door, in the midst of which it dashed open, owing to the withdrawal of the bolts; and the stranger struck more blows than one on empty air, as he plunged within, and before he could stop himself.

'I think I've left my mark,' said he, with evident satisfaction.

'Betune us an' all harm,' said the woman, 'what's that follyin' ye in?'

She had crossed herself with great devoutness before she realized that it was only the traveller's horse, who, like a sagacious beast, preferring the inner glow of warmth to the outer storm, took immediate steps to carry out that preference. His master laughed, and backed him into the segment of the cabin at the other side of the forge, bidding the old woman bolt the door and shut out the blast.

'Poor Sans-culotto!' patting the beast, and speaking in an accent more refined than his first brogue. 'He wants a shoe, Mrs. Furlong; wako up your son, whom I congratulate on his sound sleeping.'

'An' why shouldn't he, the poor boy, after his hard day's work, small blame to him?' said the widow, suppressing her astonishment at hearing her name. 'Troth, I never laid eyes on the man before,' she added to herself. Her furtive glance was intercepted by a keen one from the stranger, who had relieved his horse of the bit, and loosened the girths.

'You said nothing about the *night's* work, Old Jug,' he observed, with a meaning smile, as he laid his hand on the forge. 'The fire's not out here so long.'

His dark, close-shaven face looked detestable to her: she began to fear him.

'And this is the sick child, I suppose?' glancing at little Una.

'Deed an' troth she is sick,' asserted the old woman, roused by the irony of his tone; 'an' only she is, what would keep mo from Barney Brallaghan's wake, when there's tobakky and snuff for the takin'?'

Myles thought it high time for him to awake, which he did slowly, and with difficulty, under repeated pulls from his mother's fingers.

'My friend,' cried the stranger, disregarding all his demonstrations of drowsiness, and pointing to the grindstone, 'anything but hatchets sharpened here?'

'A thrifle o' knives an' coulters, sir,' answered Myles cautiously.

'But if anything straight came the way?' began the stranger, with slight emphasis on the adjective.

'I suppose 'twould sharpen as well as the crooked,' was the reply.

'Come, tell me,' said the stranger, bending so as to look eye to eye. 'I should think you're a tolerably straight chap yourself?'

'I hope I'm as straight as a rush anyhow,' replied the smith, drawing his hand down one side of his face. The traveller repeated the action as he added,—

'I rather think that's the rush that sprang in America.'

'An' budded in Franco—success to them!'

'And we'll plant it in the crown of Great Britain—hurrah!' exclaimed the traveller, finishing his political catchwords. 'I've heard of you before, Myles Furlong, and that you're good for the good cause; and, if you want to further it this night, get my horse a shoo without delay.'

And while the smith wrought, the traveller told various bits of news, as was expected from every traveller in the stirring days of 1793.

'From Dublin only this morning,' said he. 'The Catholic Relief Bill passed last night, in spite of Doctor Duigenan and the swaddlers; we may be all voters and grand jurors now.'

'I hope the boys aren't goin' to be satisfied with that much,' said Myles, looking up. 'I hope they'll never stop till the ould religion an' the ould families is up in the world again.'

'Ah, our free and glorious Hibernian Republic will settle all that,' observed the stranger.

'Which may it be the day after to-morrow, if not sooner. Amin!' ejaculated the smith, with fervour.

'Ay, ay! nothing will go right till the Saxon is turned out, and the green flag floats over the Castle. But it's sweet to know that fear wrung this concession out of

Westmereland and his satellites—pura and unmitigated fear. Wa aren't such geese as to think it was *love*, I supposa. I tell you, the Lord-Lieutenant shakes in his shoes within tha double guard's of the Castle. What frightened them ontirely was tha dread of the rising.'

'The rising!' repeated Myles eagerly.

'You can hammer while I talk,' hinted tha other.

'Tha signal was to have been tha pulling down of Orange William's statua in College Green, and they set patrols of horse to guard it—ha! ha! Just as if we couldn't pull it piecemeal to tha Liffey, if we'd a mind, in spite of all tha fencibles in Leinster.'

'Thru for you, sir!' Myles's teeth, bared with his smile, were tremendous fangs. 'I'd only like to be in it, sir.'

The stranger ruminated for a moment, rubbing his hand to his smooth dark chin. 'Do you know any friends or neighbours that would like to hear the best farrier in Ireland discourse on the prevailing murrain, to-morrow night, in Byrne's barn, under tha Slieve-Bui?' It seemed a sudden leap from the political to the agricultural.

'Our little cow died of it, more by token,' wailed the old woman from her corner,—'tha cow that gey the drop of milk to Ura. Bad seran to it for a murrain!'

'I'll tell the neighbours, sir,' said Myles, after a prolonged look at the alert eyes, which told no more than if they were bare sword-points.

'Yes. Tell 'em all, far and near. Every man wants to keep off the murrain; and this farrier has the finest receipt ever invented for driving it clear and clean out of ould Ireland.'

He drew forth a silver tenpenny to pay for the work; but Myles would have none of it. The blacksmith laid that horseshoe, metaphorically, on the altar of the cause, and stood at the forge-door thereafter in the windy dark, bareheaded, listening to the rapid hoofs, and wondering who had been his visitor. When he had inquired, the

stranger had bidden him to wait—he was not done with him yet. ‘May he never come back!’ quoth Mrs. Furlong sincerely.



## CHAPTER II.

### UNDER SLIEVE-BUI.

IT was named thus, ‘the Yellow Mountain,’ from the streaks and patches of golden gorse which stained its waste summit profusely in summer-time, and outlined the solitary road which crossed the height. The neighbourhood was scarce of mountains, or such dignity would not be attributed to a humble hill; never would Slieve-Bui intercept higher cloud than an earth-born fog; yet from the valley immediately underneath it looked imposing enough. It seemed to frown over Byrne’s barn in the dun evening shadows.

People came into that valley, somehow—few of them by the legitimate lonely road across the hill; for that was open to observation. The first comers found half-a-dozen tallow candles stuck on spikes from the walls, lighting and guttering in the draught, without apparent hand to kindle them; and the nearest house was full a mile away. In fact, the barn was half-ruinous, and legends of ghosts had begun to crust about it, as sea-tangle and mussels about a wreck. Everybody knew that three or four ‘Whiteboys’ had been hanged from some trees not far off, upon the slope of Slieve-Bui, twelve years ago now; and the neighbourhood had since been uncanny. Nobody came alone to the present tryst; and the place was about the last likely to be suspected of a political gathering.

Mylcs had done his best in beating up recruits for it.



The forge had been open all day, but the master absent, and inadequately represented by Freney, whose utmost professed ability at the anvil was to strike off indifferent nails. 'I believe you could work if you liked,' his brother would say, 'only you wants to be ever an' always at that fiddle.' To which Freney would respond with a meaning grin, and in nowise deny the imputation.

The smith never thought of inviting his brother to the rendezvous at Byrne's barn. Freney's character was of too light a nature for anything so serious as conspiracy. By common consent he was called 'the boy,' though so old as twenty-six, and was essential at all merrymakings in the barony, wherein he participated with a will.

There were no merrymakings this night. Wake or wedding, dance or christening, was alike suspended; the men had all business abroad, to hear the great farrier who should descant on the murrain troubling Ireland, in Byrne's barn.

It was well filled when he entered—a man with reddish beard and green glasses; which last were not visible till he removed a broad-brimmed hat from his head. He clambered on the table, which had been pushed to the end wall.

'Help me up,' said he to the nearest man, who happened to be Myles Furlong; 'I'm not so young as I used to be, more by token.'

Myles was so disappointed to see that the farrier was not his acquaintance of the preceding night, as he had fully expected, that he scarce paid heed to the request. A couple of pairs of stalwart arms, however, extended from the throng, gave the stranger his required 'lift;' and he bowed to his audience.

'Ladies an' gentlemen,' quoth he. 'Arrah, what am I sayin'?' He scratched his red head in amusing embarrassment. 'I'm forgettin' that the faymale sect don't illuminate us this evenin' wid their charmin' an' most consolatorious presence; which is daylight, an' moon-

light, an' candlelight all in one, to say nothin' of the rainbow.'

A hum of applause rose at the brilliancy of this exordium, and the compliment to the absent fair.

'But since we haven't 'em,' philosophically added the orator, 'we must only be strivin' to do without 'em, the darling craythurs. An' maybe, as they aren't here, 'twould be as well for every man to hould his tongue to his wife about what he hears an' sees in this place to-night; for there isn't any sort of good in makin' 'em unaisy without rhyme or rason.'

Another hum proclaimed the acquiescence of the assembled husbands in this argument.

'Likewise I manes sweethearts, when I talks of wives;' and his quick eyes glanced over the lines of faces for the beardless ones. 'Ye all know that a sweet-heart would coax a rabbit out of a hole, let alone a sayeret out of a lover's heart. So ye'll all hould yer tongues, boys, an' bring nothin' home from this but the resate against the murrain only.'

After a few minutes on this ostensible subject, he continued; and at once the smirk and half-bantering air changed to an expression of earnest gravity.

'Boys, there's a worse murrain in the counthry than what kills the cattle—a murrain that's meltin' away the strength of Ireland, an' won't lave the poor ould counthry able to rise her hand by and by. She's staggering on her limbs already, ready to fall prostrate before her deadly foe; and England waits to set foot upon her throat for over, as soon as she's safely down.'

A short address in this strain, garnished with the coarse, strong imagery which suited the hearers, and their hearts were all throbbing, their eyes all glowing to his gaze. He depicted the oppressions under which Ireland laboured; he exaggerated the harshness of the ruling powers; he told some stories of peasants put to death, and homesteads desolated, of which, indeed, he had pick and choice during the existing state of things.

'Haven't you the truth of what I say outside there? It's not a quarter of a mile to Gallows Hill on the side of Slieve-Bui; an' there's men among you who remember the poor harmless boys strung up on them trees like so many onions.'

He did not care to specify that the 'harmless' sufferers had previously been of a party who piked a Protestant in his bed. Dozens among the crowd said 'Ay, ay;' they remembered the scene well.

'An' don't ye all know that for gatherin' here this night, to listen to a poor farrier discoursesin' on the murrain, an' thryin' to cure yer handful of cows, ye're every one of ye wid yer necks in the halter this munit?'

The hum became a deep growl of defiance; and he struck while the iron was hot.

'Boys, there's a way of curin' the murrain. There's a way of takin' care of yourselves, in spite of all the fencibles in Ireland. They're banded in regiments, an' why shouldn't ye? Union is strength. "In truth, in trust, in unity, and in liberty," let ye link hand in hand. Irishmen have been divided too long, and the enemy has got an advantage over us by the manes of our differenees. If we were all banded together, who would dare shake his fist at us? An' 'specially,' he added in a lower tone, with uplified forefinger, 'when the greatest an' the freest nation in the world is not so far across the water as that we couldn't be helped in our hour of need. Boys, raising his voice again, 'are ye satisfied to be slaves for ever? to be flogged, shot, hung, and burnt, at the will of yer oppressors?'

'No, sure,' was the universal response.

'All of yez lift up yer hands that's willing for the Oath of the United Irishmen.'

A forest of brawny, hardworking fists was in the air immediately.

'Then I'll administer it to ye, boys, all such of yez as haven't taken it afore; for I sees some round me that I know to be stauneh brothers.' His eyes rested

for an instant on Myles Furlong's upturned face. 'An' every brother has a right to be spreadin' his principles; and an oath took to him is as good as to Lord Edward himself. Yo ought all to know onc another, an' to meet reg'lar, to back up the good cause. An' then, when there's a network of the Union all over the land, when every village is joined to every town, an' the friends of Ireland know each other everywhere, an' stand shoulder to shoulder, what government will dare to trifle with four millions of United Irishmen?'

He put his hand in his bosom for the book that was to swear them. Myles, nearest him, noticed on the disengaged hand the odd phenomenon of black hairs, which scarce suited the red tufts of his beard.

'Here's the book,' began the orator in a loud tone; 'the book that'll bind you to—to half a gallon of tar-water wid tansy in it. I tould you before, Martin Dempsey; but ye're very stupid intirely, an' I'm afeard ye'll play the mischief wid the cattle among ye.'

His tone was totally changed; his shoulders had got a set in his ears. They looked at him in amazement; but those nearest the door were conscious of a pressure as from an incoming crowd. The gleam of red-coats filled the entrance.

'Make way, boys, make way for the throops,' said the orator urbanely. 'Maybe they'd like a cure for the murrain as well as anybody; sure it attacks Protestant cows as well as Catholic, which is mighty unmannerly, considherin' it's no matther at all how the "croppies" lives, while the others— Was you wantin' to spake, sir?' to a gentleman in uniform, and with a drawn sword wielded in the air, who had come as far as he could into the building.

'I arrest you, Putman M'Cabe, in the name of the king and the law.'

'Oeh, thin, sir, ye never wero in the wrong box till ye took a poor farrier for M'Cabe. Lights out, boys!'

His broad-brim went down over the nearest candle;

before the soldiers could make the slightest movement to prevent it, the barn was in utter darkness, with only a prevalent smell of molten tallow to attest that there had been light. At the same moment Colonel Butler's sword was snatched from his grasp.

'Shut the door,' he roared, backing to the entrance; 'don't let a mother's son of them out, on your peril.'

But shutting the door was not so easily done: it was a frail concern, uncertain on its hinges, and none of the soldiers cared to be enclosed with the peasantry.

'I demand the surrender of that fellow,' said Colonel Butler loudly. 'Those who aid or abet him render themselves liable to the same punishment.'

'Well,' observed the farrier composedly, 'it's come to a pretty pass in Ireland when a poor man can't go about the counthry sellin' simples an' cures agin witchcraft an' the like, but he must be arrested, an' stuck into jail, an' maybe hung, when he never did anybody a haporth of harm!'

'Come,' said the colonel, 'you know there's no escape; you may as well give yourself up peaceably; and if you are what you represent yourself, you shall be let go free.'

'If!' repeated the farrier; 'if!—d'yo hear him, boys? But sure I suppose I may as well give myself over first as last; an' if I never go back to the poor wifo an' little childer'—here his voice failed—'ye'll know what became of me, boys.' He stepped heavily down from the table.

'Ah, that's a sensible man,' said the colonel complacently. 'I promise you all the protection consistent with my duty to the Crown.' Here he was interrupted by a yeoman's voice at his elbow, asking whether he might go outside for his gun, which he had left leaning against the wall.

'To be sure,' was the reply. 'Sergeant, let this man pass; but nobody else, on your peril. I'm glad to find this little business will end more pleasantly than I

thought at first; I feared opposition to the behests of the law. Couldn't some of you fellows strike a light?'

Before the clumsy flint and steel could be brought to bear, the farrier's voice was heard again; but this time from the outside. He had overheard and taken advantage of the colonel's orders, and slipped out.

'Boys! let yez remember what I tould ye. We'll finish the job of to-night somewhere else; an' meanwhile be firm an' faithful.'

'Fire on the scoundrel,' cried the exasperated colonel.

'Fire!'

A few dropping shots; but nothing more was heard or seen of the fugitive.<sup>1</sup>

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE TRIANGLE.

The breakfast at Doon Castle was late next morning. Colonel Butler had spent so many hours of the night in hunting for the prey which had slipped through his fingers, that his heavy sleep trenched far towards noon of the succeeding day.

'Why, then, more of that same to him,' quoth the old butler, who had been sounding the 'own man' on the subject; 'for he'll be beyond everything for crossness whenever he's down, after the bad night's work he made of it. Troth, my sides pain me when I think of it yet;' and both men indulged in a hearty fit of laughter. 'The notion of the colonel himself givin' him

<sup>1</sup> The narrative of M'Case's escape is strictly true.

lave to go out, wid the utmost politeness, an' he the very man he'd give one of his fingers to catch.'

Their merriment was checked by the appearance of a young lady on the broad staircase leading from the hall to the upper rooms.

'The top of the mornin' to ye, Miss Evelyn asthore,' said the butler, advancing to open the door of the breakfast parlour, and lingering a moment after she had passed in, to hear what words would follow her sweet smile.

'I fear that salutation is a little late, Connor; but the master will be down presently, and you may tell Mary to send up breakfast.'

'There's more than mo that'll be glad of his comin' down, Miss Evelyn,' observed the butler, who was a privileged old servant. 'He'll settle 'em off, I suppose?'

'Who do you mean?' asked the young lady.

'The poor fellows that's locked up in that hole all night, with the fencibles guarding 'em,' was the reply, clinking the door-handle as he looked furtively at his mistress.

'I supposo papa had good reason for making them prisoners,' the young lady said, with a sort of formality in her voice. 'I am sure he does not intend to do anything unjust. You had better bring up breakfast, Connor.'

Still he lingered. 'More by token, them craythurs haven't had a single pin's-worth to ate, Miss Evelyn; and the cook says to me, she says, "Connor, do you think would Miss Evie be mad if I gave 'em the end of the pot of praties that's left ather our own breakfast, an' the remains of the noggins of milk that we couldn't finish?" says she; an' I ups and I says, "Take care o' what yer doin', for who knows but it's high thrason?" says I; "but at all events don't do it by no manner o' manes till I axes her," I says; an' now, Miss Evie, sure maybe it wouldn't be high thrason at all?'

'No, Connor,' said Miss Butler, suppressing a smile; 'you may give them whatever's left, poor men.'

'Blessin's on yer kind heart, Miss Evie asthore. But tho sergeant won't let us near 'em, widout ye give the ordhers yer own self.'

So Evclyn passed across the hall into the kitchen section of the house, and thence to the wide court-yard, whose gates were lined with sheet-iron. A sentry was walking up and down beforo a grated door, through which she could see two or three grimy faces; at sight of her these faces pressed closer to the barrier, and called out in hope of gaining her attention.

'They are to have somo breakfast,' she said to the sergeant; 'you will allow it, kindly?'

'Well, ma'am, you see that it's out of rule—quite out of rule; and the colonel has given no orders.'

'Oh, if that is all, you may be easy; I will take the blame on myself should my father hear of it. Poor men!' and one of her pitying glances travelled again towards the prison vault as she was turning away. But she stopped short.

'Is it possible that I see Myles Furlong among them—the captain's foster-brother?'

The smith slunk back, but the sergeant answered for him. 'Yes indced, my lady; caught at a grand rendyvoo of rebels at Byrnc's barn last night.'

'It wasn't a rebelly place; I tell ye it wasn't, or nono of us would ha' been there,' shouted a man in the vault, seizing the door and shaking it as impotently as a monkey rattles the door of his cage in a menagerie. 'An' I'm a peaceable poor weaver from Ballinlough, an' came over for nothin' but to hear the resate agin the murrain, because me little cow was sick; an' now, maybe, to be shot on th' account of that much.'

The sergeant took no notico of him; he was accustomed to similar ebullitions. Myles Furlong, from within, despised him heartily, and expressed his contempt in no measured terms, but below his breath.

'Poor man!' said Evelyn, going over to the grating



with an impulse she could not repress; 'nobody will be shot here. Papa—Colonel Butler—is not so dreadful as you think. If you are innocent, nothing can be done to you. Trust in God, poor man.' And she went away to the house, unheeding the sergeant's assurance that she had run great risk in approaching so close to a gang of such desperate 'croppies.' She waited in the kitchen until assured that the potatoes and milk were duly administered to the prisoners; for which she received many a fervent benediction from the servants. Evelyn was the darling of the household.

She found her father seated in the breakfast-room, with 'Saunders' News-letter' spread open, reading the debates; and as he drew her to him fondly for a moment, and kissed her brow, she wondered in her simple heart how other people could find him so terrible. Still, even she did not care to speak to him of the prisoners she had just seen; for the unapproachable part of his character was loyalty. Touch upon this, and the man became transmuted into steel—from core to surface, steel.

'Any news to-day, papa?' she said brightly.

'I think the Catholics had relief enough before,' was his remark. 'The bill passed last session would have been sufficient for any reasonable people; but see what agitation will do.'

'And have they had another bill passed in their favour?' asked Evelyn, more from a desire to keep up conversation with her father than from any great interest in the subject.

'Yes, child: I told you of it yesterday. They're almost our equals now; a papist may bear arms like any gentleman in the land, and his sons may get commissions in the army and navy; he may be a grand juror, and our elections are to be overborne with popish voters. If King George's crown doesn't rock on his head after that, my name is not Gerald Butler.'

He folded the 'News-letter' with great exactitude—how small and yellow it was, in comparison with our

papers seventy years after!—and laid it beside his plate, while he addressed himself, in the stately and formal manner natural to him, to the duty of eating his breakfast.

‘But, papa, they couldn’t have got much last year,’ observed his daughter, perhaps a little mischievously, ‘when there was so much left to be given them this year.’

He wiped his lips with the napkin, and laid his knife and fork in a just parallel, ere he replied.

‘They had quite enough last session, as I before intimated—quite enough. One of the learned professions was open to them—that in which their principles of double-dealing and tergiversation rendered them best qualified to succeed: I mean the bar.’

‘Oh, papa! such a sweeping cut at Uncle Heck, and all the rest of the big-wigs!’

Be it remarked that Colonel Butler’s estates had suffered severely from some adverse lawsuits, since which time he had considered barristers and attorneys as the most unprincipled of mankind.

‘Further,’ continued the colonel, with a majestic little wave of his hand, intended to silence all remarks till his own were ended, ‘further, the bill passed in the session of 1792 permitted the Catholics to have schools of their own persuasion, and to educate their children how they pleased; which many men of mark considered a dangerous innovation. Also, liberty was given them to follow any trade or craft whatever.’ And he was going on smoothly, laying down with his finger each item of the Relief Bill, when a slight exclamation was uttered by Evelyn, who had her face towards the window.

‘Papa! papa! there’s that horrid thing again—the triangle.’

‘Yes, my daughter;’ and he placidly took up his fork anew. ‘I ordered it to be set up on the grass plot, for it may be necessary to make an Example of some of these fellows immediately. We must not always con-

sider our own feelings when dealing with His Majesty's Enemies, my dear Evelyn.'

Colonel Butler had a manner of pronouncing certain of the nouns of his sentences as if they were endowed with capital letters for initials. Rebels had always a huge and far-resounding R. The peculiarity gave great effect to his speech as a public man, and told remarkably well at grand juries, sessions of magistrates, and other such gatherings. But more than all was it impressive when addressed from the bench to a dockful of 'Defenders,' and embodying their sentence. It suited his stately appearance, and the stiff, iron-grey side curls, and the queue—grey with nature's autumn tints as much as with powder—which hung over his coffee-brown French frock. His attire was a part of his stateliness. Colonel Butler of Doon could be imagined in nothing else than his militia uniform or the before-mentioned French frock-coat, devoid of skirt pockets, the waistcoat bordered with handsome lace, the velvet knee-breeches and silk stockings, the ornamented *cousteau de chasse*, which he wore habitually. These habiliments were part and parcel of the man.

Evelyn looked from him to the triangle. Not ugly in itself was the latter: three halberds, lashed together at top, and the staves set firmly into holes in the grass. It was an extemporized triangle, not a professional one. But oh, how ugly in its associations! She closed her eyes to shut out the sight.

'Colonel,' whispered a voice at the window-sill, which was only a few feet from the ground, and the sash was open,—'colonel, I've been having a "cat" in pickle; wouldn't this be a good opportunity to break them into the use of it?'

'No, no,' was the immediate answer, with a glance at Evelyn, whose eyes were fixed on the face that appeared above the sill—a face which she particularly disliked. There was a twist in the vision, combined with an ugly leer; and the mouth was a clean lipless cut above the chin, which assumed an expression of

deep subservience as he suddenly became aware of Miss Butler's presence, and pulled his forelock—a red tuft—over a villanously low brow.

'Certainly not, Bodkin,' said his master, pouring out a fresh magnum of claret. 'I never authorized the use of such means for augmenting punishment.'

The face withdrew, wearing an expression of regret.

'Papa, why do you retain that odious man in your service? The idea of such a proposition! such cruelty!'

'It has been done elsewhere,' replied her father coldly; 'but I consider it illegal. And as to retaining Bodkin in the position of my bailiff, I believe him to be very valuable both in a public and private view; though perhaps his zeal carries him a little too far against disturbers of the peace at times.'

'Such men will make the gentry detested,' said Evelyn, pushing from her the almost untasted cup of bohea.

'We must fulfil our duty in spite of detestation, my dear,' said the colonel loftily—'our duty to the crown of Great Britain and the laws of this realm.'

'Papa, will you let me say what I think? Will you let me say that there is a higher duty than that to King George—a higher law than what Parliament passes? Papa, there is our duty to God; and a red streak grew upon Evelyn's fair cheek. 'There is our duty to each other—kindness, forbearance, long-suffering, forgiveness, even as Christ has forgiven us, papa.'

She was kneeling beside him, looking up in his face with tearful eyes, more eloquent than words.

'I think we ought to have compassion on these poor ignorant people, papa. Half of them are misled by bad men—agitators, Gerald tells me, who keep behind the scenes themselves, and leave these wretched creatures to suffer; men who want to repeat the awful tragedies of Paris, and use these blind tools.'

'My daughter,' said the colonel, stroking back her fair curls, 'you have just expressed the tremendous danger which we would ward off, if possible. The

massacres of France are in preparation for Ireland, as we believe. It is no time to falter in the execution of justice, when the country is alive with conspiracies. These men for whom you plead would bury their pikes in my heart, were I alone among them. They would not understand gentleness: they would ascribe it to weakaess. We must show them that the law is strong, and must be obeyed.'

He had withdrawn his caressing hand, and stiffened again into the colonel of militia, the active magistrate.

'Retire to your drawing-rooms now, Evelyn; for I must see these people.'

But after she went he remained a few minutes in deep reflection. 'She has the gentlest heart,' he muttered; 'like her poor mother. She isn't fit for this life; I must take her to spend next season in Dublin.'

He rose, and looked out of the window. Bodkin was leaning against the side-wall of the house, contemplating the triangle affectionately with the eye that was under his command, and whistling 'Croppies, lie down.'

'Loyal fellow!' thought his master. Then aloud—  
'Bodkin, tell the sergeant he may bring round his prisoners.'

'An' tho cat, sir, tho eat in pickle?' asked the man insinuatingly. 'Just for th' example's sake, colonel, now that the young lady's gone away, sir,' peering over the sill again into the breakfast-room. 'Just for example, sir?'

'I gave you your answer, sirrah!' exclaimed his master irately. 'Never let me hear a word about it again.' The bailiff sneaked away like a whipt hound.

## CHAPTER IV.

## JUSTICE ON THE GRASS PLOT.

HALF-A-DOZEN unshorn, grimy peasants, with hands tied behind their backs—slouching, sullen men, casting ominous looks at the well-known triangle, and the long whip beside it—stood together near the window where sat Colonel Butler in his arm-chair of judgment. Behind the prisoners were gathered the guard of fencibles, fully equipped, their bright firelocks and bayonets glittering in the sun. The colonel was a martinet as to the condition of any corps with which he had to do; now his soldierly eye glanced over their ranks first, and was satisfied. Afterwards he slowly inspected the prisoners, his face deepening in sternness as he recognised one and another among them.

'Myles Furlong! I should have thought that your connection with my family might have kept you out of an affair like this.'

'I've yet to be tould, yer honour,' said the smith doggedly, 'what harm there was in goin' to get a bit knowledgeable from the cleverest farrier in the counthry side; it's often people do be comin' to me wid their little bastes, whin they're ailin', an' thinks I ought to know of a cure, yer honour.'

'Come, sir! you know that the farrier was all a pretence. William Putman M'Cabe was addressing you, and stimulating you to rebellion; it was an illegal gathering within the meaning of the Act, presided over by a notorious demagogue, who has unfortunately escaped our hands.'

A gleam of satisfaction passed over Myles's face. 'More of that to him,' he muttered.

'What do you say, sirrah?' interrogated the colonel, who had been fixedly regarding him.

'Them that didn't hear me, won't hear me,' was the sulky answer. Bodkin lifted up his hands in horror. 'I expect to be let away, sir,' he added, drawing himself up, 'if that's all you have against me.'

The reply of the colonel was indirect. 'Bodkin, I'll take your deposition against this man.'

Drawing to him a small table bearing pen and ink—for he always officiated as his own clerk—he began to write down the circumstances to which Bodkin was willing to swear. In reality, the bailiff had overheard a considerable portion of the *ci-derant* farrier's address—quite enough to fix the character of the assembly as illegal; and Myles, standing by the table in the barn, was too prominent not to be easily identified.

'The case is proven,' said Colonel Butler, writing three words on the opposite sheet of his magistrate's book; which words were, 'Five hundred lashes.' He dotted the *i* carefully, and dried the entry with sand.

'Let the prisoner stand aside till the others are examined,' ordered the colonel. And so the identification of the rest went on, with the smith as spectator.

The weaver from Ballinlough was clamorous. He had been deceived, he said; he had really believed that the assembly in Byrne's barn had been with the professed object. He whined and wept as tokens of contrition. He would never set foot over his own threshold again between sunset and sunrise, if he were allowed to escape this time.

'He'll only commit thrason an' rebellion in daylight, yer honour,' observed Bodkin, with a malignant grin, and hinging round his swivel eye to mark how his master received the joke. But Colonel Butler was in no mood for pleasantry. The weaver's appeal had reminded him of Evelyn's.

'Be silent till you're spoken to, Mister Bodkin,' was his rejoinder. Then, turning to the prisoner: 'There's no proof of this but your own word, my man.'

'Oh, bless yer honour, an' b'lieve it. Sure it's nothin' but the thrue thruth entirely. An' sure every word

that honourable gintleman there'—with a eringe of his body toward the bailiff—'every word he swore is as thruo as throe, only I didn't know no more than a fool that I was goin' to a rebelly place, or I'd ha' cut off my two feet first, yer honour's honour, indced I would.'

An idea appeared to strike the colonel. 'Then you can have no objection to join Bodkin in this deposition?' he said.

'If yer honour lets me go home to the wifo an' ehilder,' he answered eagerly.

'You may as well swear to the very beginnin' of it all,' insinuated Bodkin.

But no persuasion or threat could wring from him the name of the neighbour who had told him of the farrier's assemblage in the barn; the fact being that that informant, the source of all his woes, had been Myles Furlong.

The blacksmith listened with an anxiety he could scarcely conceal to the cross-examination intended to elucidate this point. If the weaver were not stanneh, there were some ehances of a transportation beyond sea for Myles; perhaps of worse, if his antecedents were rigorously searched out. He gazed fixedly at the triangle, and had some trouble to keep his face properly discharged of expression.

'Answer me, sir, straightforwardly and to the point. Had you ever seen the man before who brought you this intelligenee?'

'Maybe I didn't, and maybe I did, yer honour,' was the reply. 'He might ha' passed me in a crowd at a fair, or at mass, or the like; for there was a look in his face not all out strange to me.'

'This is mere equivocation,' said the colonel, pausing, pen in hand. 'Do you know who the man was?'

'Jist the question I axed the wifo afther he was gone out, yer honour; for I had it on me mind that maybe he was Bartle Flanagan of Forth, who owes me seventeen an' sevenpence ha'penny for a web o' cloth these three year next Michaelmas. An' I'm a near-sighted



man meself, yer honour; I wouldn't know a bat from a butterfly five yards off.'

'My good fellow, I require to know this man's name, for the ends of justice. You expressed your willingness to join Mr. Bodkin in his deposition, and here you fail in the most essential point, which might give a clue to all. Again, and for the last time, I require to know his name?'

'Is it his name, sir?' as if the idea had never occurred to him before.

'Yes, yes; his name.'

'Well, sir, let me think a minit; for me wits, the little I ever had, is fairly bothered;' and the weaver looked down at the gravel walk, rubbing his grizzly hand against his lank jaws, as in sore perplexity. 'Sure, last night knocked the memory out o' me intirely, intirely.'

The colonel mended his quill in the pause. Myles hoped that his own heart was not heard beating.

'Let me see: is it Spellisy was the name? or O'Brien? or MacMahon?' A reflective silence; whence he looked up with a sudden brightness. 'Arrah, sure it's whatever name Misther Bodkin says it is in that paper, an' nothin' else, an' that I'll stand to.'

The deposition had to be read to him, to convince him that no name was therein.

'An' I'll swear to every word o' that,' he exclaimed energetically, as soon as he found that it denounced no person in particual. "Let me see the man who'll deny it. They're the very sintinees o' the thievin' farrier.'

'You are either a very great knave,' quoth the colonel, 'or a very great fool. I am inclined to think the former.'

The weaver hung his head. 'Sure, I've got no call to be anythin' else, plase yer honour,' was his humble rejoinder; and truly he was quite indifferent as to which category he was classed under, so as he got safely out of the present serape.

He was setting his mark to the deposition, when a

young man sauntered up, attended by a couple of dogs, and a bare-legged gossoon carrying his gun.

'Ho! a brisk morning's work here, sir!' as he touched his cap to his father. Way was made for him into the vacant space immediately before the window where the justice sat. 'Myles! is it possible that I see you a prisoner?'

'An' if you was afther hearin', Masther Gerald, his impident speech to the colonel, thinkin' as he was your foster-brother, I snppose, 'twas all right wid him, you'd punish him yerself, captin dear,' put in Bodkin, with a roll of his eyes.

'I don't want any favour; I want justice,' rejoined the blacksmith, though with a sinking heart. Bodkin had cut his last ground from under him. 'But, sure, so long as there's a venomous sarpint whisperin' at the ear of the colonel, we'll get nayther truth nor justice; that's the whole fact of it.'

'Take care how you impute such motives to a magistrate, sirrah,' said Captain Butler sternly; 'and as to private regards or connections, they are a dead letter with my father in the performauce of public duty.'

'Gerald, a word with you;' and the young man vaulted lightly into the sitting-room. The colonel strode out of hearing of the groups round the window. Returning in a few minutes, he cleared his throat to speak.

'It has been proved by clear evidence of eye and ear-witnesses, one of them a member of the rebel band itself, that these prisoners here present'—then followed the seven names—'were assembled last evening, the ninth of March, 1793, in a Seditious and Unlawful manner, to receive instruction in the principles of a rebel association, and to take an oath for the furtherance of Objects subversive to the Government of His Most Gracious Majesty King George the Third. Now, the punishment recorded for such offence, and for every repetition of the same, is five hundred lashes, at the discretion of the magistrate.'

A shudder ran through the seven men, whose eyes were piteously or sullenly turned towards him; a suppressed wail broke from their lips.

'I am not willing to enforce the penalty,' the colonel went on. 'The captain agrees with me in considering that the ends of justice would be answered by a more lenient course; and we have concluded that only one of the prisoners shall suffer, as an example to the rest.'

A quick-drawn breath of relief; but then, which of them was to be the example?

'I also commute his penalty to one hundred lashes, being willing to believe that it was a first offence; although his contumacious demeanour scarcely entitles him to such indulgence. Sergeant, you will administer a hundred lashes to Myles Furlong.'

'What!' shouted the blacksmith, springing forward—'your own son's foster-brother! You wouldn't do it, colonel; you wouldn't bring the disgrace on the family! Colonel, you daren't do it!'

The magistrate's face seemed more iron than ever. 'Such fancied bonds of family connection shall never prevent the fulfilment of my duty,' he said; 'nay, they may be an argument for greater severity.'

'Masther Gerald, spake for me! I'm in a manner of yer own blood, sir. Wo lay in the same bosom, sir, when we wor babies; an' it's a disgrace to yourself, captin, as well as to me, that I should be flogged like a baste.'

'I can't quite see it in that light,' remarked the young man: 'the connection is merely visionary, a relic of barbarous times. However, suppose you commute it to fifty lashes, sir?'

'And do ye disown the fosterage? Is that what ye mane, Masther Gerald?' He paused for an instant, as if half choked. 'Why, then, if ye forget it an' disown it, another can play the same game; an' from this minit I cast ye off, Captin Butler, an' ye're less to me than any beggar-boy in the whole counthry.'

How impotent the implied threat! Gerald pitied

him, had a compassion for his powerless rage, as he stood in that window, prosperous and powerful himself, and saw Furlong, hound unresistingly to the triangle, endure to the last of the fifty lashes without a moan.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE STRIPES.

COWERING with fright, or sullen with suppressed rage, the other prisoners were compelled to look on at Myles Furlong's punishment. The little weaver from Baliinlough was in the former condition—not altogether from a lively sense of what he had escaped, but from a dawning suspicion of other consequences possibly resulting from his deposition. Certain vengeful glances and growls from his fellows in bonds had aroused this disquieting idea.

'But, sure, I haven't mintoned a name in the world, an' what I swore can't hurt anybody,' he reasoned within himself. 'Sure the boys can't be angry wid me whin I didn't say the name of a mortal sowl among 'em, big or little; an' whin I thought I'd get the double cat, or maybe the rope's end round my neck, if I didn't do something to plase the colouel. Och, and amn't I an unfortunat miserable poor fool, not to stay at home an' mind my loom, instead of goin' philanderin' afther farriers, an' gettin' meself dhrowned in the thrubles?'

During the soliloquy 'the double cat' aforesaid was descending with regular swing on the shoulders of Myles. Beyond a shudder from head to foot at each stroke, he gave no token of feeling. Yet, in the after-

noon, when Miss Butler was sauntering about her pleasure-grounds, she paused at a red damp stain which had not quite soaked into the grass, and close to which were the holes for the footing of the extemporized triangle.

'Come, come, Bodkin; fifty lashes were all,' interposed the captain from his window. 'I stayed here to watch lest you exceeded, you rascal! And you've given fifty-two before I could stop you. Ubind the prisoner at once; he has borne it like a hero, I must say. Myles, you'd be the very stuff for a soldier; why not 'list, man?'

The livid face of the blacksmith turned towards his foster-brother mutely. His speech seemed frozen by the indignity he had suffered. It is a fact that the peasants of the period would prefer even death to the disgrace of being flogged.

'Nonsense, Myles! don't take it so much to heart; you won't be a bit the worse in a week,' added the captain. 'Old Jug is a capital nurse-tender, and knows some herbs, I'll be bound, that'll set you all to rights. Besides, you know you might have expected this; the colonel says that he threatened you with the triangle on a former occasion, and a gentleman mustn't break his word.'

'Sir,' exclaimed Myles hoarsely, 'I wonder you *dare* to speak to me.'

Without another word he strode off the ground, hearing the bailiff's commentary as he went: 'Oh, but he's a precious rebel, plase your honour!'

'Poor fellow!' observed the captain, striking the ashes of his cigar against the outer sill; 'he was naturally annoyed that I did not interfere. But the example was all the more efficacious for the connection known to exist: not one of the chaps taken with arms or on suspicion can expect favour where my foster-brother met with none.'

'Thru for your honour,' quoth Bodkin. 'An' what are *you* hangin' about for, croppy?'

This to the weaver, who seemed unwilling to take his departure, though the other prisoners had vanished, and the soldiers were removing the triangle.

'Ye're so fond of it, ye likes to see the last of it, maybe,' added Bodkin, with a horse-laugh.

'Come, Bodkin, let the man speak,' said Captain Butler.

The weaver shrugged his shoulders, and edged nearer to the window. 'Plase your honour's honour, I'm in dhread to go home.'

'Afraid! why?' asked the gentleman; while the bailiff grinned.

'I'm thinkin' the boys 'll be blamin' me for joinin' that honourable gentleman in the paper he swore,' replied the weaver, with another wriggle. 'An' sure, whin I didn't swear agin any name in particular, I couldn't be called an informer, yer honour?'

'Certainly not,' said the captain, with a short laugh. 'Come to me if anybody attempts to molest you.' Whereat Bodkin's risibility was much increased.

'Ah, sir,' responded the poor weaver, with rueful gravity, 'the boys don't give one a chance of lookin' for any purtection, once they takes the dislike. 'Twould be all over wid me in half an hour, or less, yer honour.'

'Well, well, stay in the kitchen here for a day or two, if you're really afraid: your enemies will have forgotten your offence by that time, probably.' And Captain Butler rose to depart, whistling to his dogs.

'Is it to forget, sir? But the boys *never* forget; and, wrapt in disinal meditation as to their good memories, and in fears for himself and his family, the weaver took his way to the back premises of the mansion.

Where was Myles Furlong? He had gone no farther than the first dense plautation, in an unfrequented part of the park. Here he had flung himself down on the ground, among the fir-cones and decayed leaves. He groaned in the bitterness of his soul. It was not the pain, though almost every stroke had rent a furrow in

his flesh; it was the degradation that burned into his heart. A few scorching salt tears dropped from his eyes. He, the representative of the old Furlongs of Doon, whose had been these broad acres, whose had been the ruined castle which he could see standing half a mile off—to be lashed like a dog. His father and grandfather, the whole family, though poor hard-working people, had always prided themselves on keeping their respectability without a stain. And now, here was a stain, in Myles's mind, of the blackest dye—a disgraceful public flogging, as if he were the meanest squatter on the estate, and not own foster-brother of the heir.

'An' my darlin' little Una, that ever she should come to the knowledge that her father was trated so—she that ought to be reared like Miss Evelyn, by right. She'll despise me when she's old enough to undherstand it. They'll all despise me. The gossoons on the road will point at me for a whipped croppy.'

He kept rousing himself into a fury with such thoughts as these. He rolled upon the ground and groaned in his insensate rage. The furious passions of his nature were let loose without restraint. Myles was a most ignorant man. His knowledge of right and of truth was utterly warped and darkened by the superstition which the people of his class deemed religion. It needed knowledge of and faith in Jesus, the great Consoler, to bring peace and light to his dark and troubled mind. In all our griefs the crucified One can sympathize. He was no stranger even to the cruel scourge. 'The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.'

A dog came sniffing about him as he lay—one of the captain's dogs. At a little distance through the under-wood passed their master, fowling-piece on shoulder. The young man was handsome, well-dressed, and looked moderately happy. He had no particular care on his mind, to prevent his feeling comfortable and contented: how to pass the time till dinner was his aim, perchance.

As Myles had contemplated the social gulf between himself and his foster-brother, he knew that he hated the captain.

'Ay, there he goes, that never did an hour's work in all his life that 'nd soil his white hands,' muttered the blacksmith as his figure receded among the trees. 'There he goes, caring not one thraneen' for all I've suffered this day, no more than if I was a weasel his dog routed from a hole—I, that ought to be in his own place. But the time will come—the time will come. I'll just wait,' added Myles, between his wrathful gasps; 'an' I'll never rest, never, never, till I've paid back them lashes wid interest.'

He sat down in the wood until it should be dark; for he would not turn homewards while there was any chance of his being recognised on the way. Sympathy would have been ever more galling to him than ridicule, and it was impossible to conceal what had happened from any casual passer-by; his shoulders were too raw to bear his coat, and his shirt was crimsoned. So he thought, and thought over all sorts of vengeful plans; for, if a man set himself to devise evil, it is wonderful what help he will get from powers unseen, and how smoothly suggestions of crime glide into his imagination. Then at set of sun, when arrows of amber glanced into the sombre fir-woods, tinting with gold the brown boles of the trees, a blackbird came to the branch right above him, and whistled forth its piercing sweet evening song. Another in the distance caught up the strain, and replied; the smaller-birds had no good-nights till these chief masters of music had ceased. The turbulent and tormented man listened; over him, like an anodyne, came the soft influences of nature. Old childish days returned upon him, when he and his hated Master Gerald had been playmates in these very woods—reared together, fostered together. He covered his face with his hands. When he again looked up, the glory was gone; over the land crept the dark; the

<sup>1</sup> Little straw.



ruined castle stood out against a crimson belt low in the sky. He rose stiffly from the earth, and began to make his way homewards.

The widow Furlong had been spying about in the neighbourhood of the castle, and had learned the punishment inflicted on her son. She had kept her own counsel, neither wept nor made an outcry, but, fastening her red cloak over her head, went back to Freney.

'Yer brother won't be home till night,' she said, guessing at his conduct; 'an' I'm going out to gather herbs an' charms for a cure: so mind the forge an' the child, an' don't burn the house till I come back, if ye can help it.'

Freney promised carefulness, and continued his amusement of teaching Una to scrape the old violin, until the same amber arrows of sunset shot level into the forge, and reminded him of supper. But he was so long picking and washing the potatoes—for the child would meddle in everything—that his mother's foot was on the threshold ere they were ready for cooking. And then, where was the fire? Run down so low, buried in such a heap of ashes, that its ultimate recovery was very doubtful.

'You omadhaun of all the idiots that ever was born,' politely inquired the old lady, 'what's become o' my fire?'

'Troth, an' sure I never thought of it since,' frankly confessed Freney, after a bewildered stare at the hearth, where it ought to be. 'I suppose it's out.'

'Mighty aisy you take it, then,' rejoined his mother, rooting up the mound of turf ashes for any nucleus of heat that possibly remained. 'An' me wid this cure to make into a poultice as quick as I can, an' not a seed o' fire as much as would blind yer eye. Don't stand there lookin' like a motherless foal in a field, but bring me in some seds from the stack this minit, you enshuch.'

'Sure,' says Freney, slowly moving to the door on his errand, 'but you tould me not burn the house; an' I

<sup>1</sup> Incurrigible simpucton.

thought I had better have nothin' to say to the fire at all, at all, not knowin' what mightn't happen.'

'If you've any regard for yerself, don't stand aggravatin' me,' quoth his parent, seizing the tongs in a manner so significant that Freney decamped instantly, and observed a most meek and dejected demeanour thenceforth, sitting at a safe distance on a bench by the door, and venturing to serapo only the dismallest ditties on his fiddle, even when the blazo of the revived fire was leaping up, and the potatoes bubbling in conceit.

He was in the midst of that suitably sad reverie named 'The Bird Alone,' and had his head laid on one shoulder and his eyes winking, like a mournful specimen of the songster in question, when the latch was noiselessly raised, and as quietly closed behind his brother.

Little Una, who had been lying in her grandmother's lap half-dreamily, sprang up with a joyous exclamation to meet her father. He kissed the child, but put her aside coldly.

'I've been gatherin' herbs, an' have a coolin' poultice an' wash here for ye, Myles alanna,' said his mother in a low voice, and without looking at him.

'Ye may spill it behind the fire, thin,' was his answer, 'for never a taste of it shall touch me if it were to save my life.'

'The Bird Alone' ceased its sad twitterings on Freney's fiddle, scared by the tone.

'That's what the captain said,' observed the blacksmith, with a laugh in which there was no mirth, 'to comfort me, I suppose. What matter how such a common chap as I suffered? Sure, I couldn't feel it deeper than the skin.'

'He said what, Myles dear?' asked the old woman timidly after a pause.

'That Old Jug would have poultices an' cures, to heal my back in no time. What did *he* care? A dog forgets its floggin' in a few days, an' so ought I, an' come back to lick his feet till he plased to give it more of the lash.'

'Look here, mother,' and he turned to her with sudden

fierceness. 'If you dare ever again to handle a penny of their money, good or bad, big or little, I'll turn you out of the house, an' have done with you as I've done wid them. Do you hear me?'

'Troth an' 'twould be hard not,' was her reply, 'and you roarin' enough to frighten the child into fits.' The allusion affected the diversion she desired. 'An' she not well, nayther.'

'Come here, Una,' as if he suddenly thought of something. He caught the child on his knee. 'Look at this; remember this.' Bending his head in the fire-light, there was visible on his cheek a long blue wound nearly cut through. She uttered a little cry of fear, but he held her fast.

'That's the work of the Butlers of Doon,' he pronounced slowly. 'The gentlemen who live up at the Big House did that wid their whips. Now, don't you forget, Una, for the length of your life, that yer father was cut in to the bone by their whips. An' if you don't hate the Butlers like vengeance'—

'The craythur can't undherstand you for the pure fright,' interposed her grandmother, drawing away the weeping child. 'Oh, Myles alanna, can't ye compose yer mind, an' not be so wicked intirely in yer . . .'

He added nothing: the red fire was reflected back in his sullen eye.

'The potatoes are done,' said the old woman, after a pause. 'Freney, take an' strain 'em off.' She made a subterfuge of attending to their supper, and a considerable disturbance about it, in hopes of diverting the smith's attention. Some rashers were cut from the flitch of bacon hung in the chimney, and presently hissed and spluttered on the primitive gridiron of the tongs. Before the meal was quite ready, however, Myles rose up.

'An' where are ye goin' from yer supper?' she asked, when his hand was on the latch. 'Won't you ate yer supper?'

'Is it to ate anythin'? I'd choke,' was the brief answer.

'But, Myles darlin', you shouldn't go out in the frost wid your back all that way; the frost will stiffen it cruel sharp.'

'That's one rason I'm goin',' he replied. 'I'd want to have them marks well stamped into me, 'fear I'd ever forget 'em.' And he shut the door.

'The Bird Alone' warbled no more for that evening.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE WRONG MAN.

TEMPTATION always draws nigh when we are readiest for its reception. Explain the fact as we will, it remains a fact, that when a man has nursed in himself some evil feeling—rage or revenge, or other of the Protean forms of sin which can be evoked from the hidden corners of the soul—he is seldom long without an incitement to overt acts bearing the same image; as if some unseen spiritual watcher fomented the rising wrath or wickedness, and quickly presented the opportunity for those irrevocable deeds which enchain the perpetrator beyond remedy.

The idea is awful, yet inconsistent neither with reason nor with revelation. Scripture teaches that an artful enemy watches our unguarded moments of passion, to apply evil suggestions and urge temptations which yielded to may destroy both body and soul. Well may it speak of him as 'a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.' To how many besides Peter may the Saviour's words apply: 'Satan hath desired to

have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.'

Myles Furlong believed with sufficient fervency in ghosts, and would not pass near a graveyard after nightfall for a week's earnings: yet, of the arch-fiend who was stimulating the revenge in his heart, he had then no thought. He had given himself up to intemperate anger; everything in his life seemed distorted; malice and hate, and a legion of subordinate evil ones, entered in and dwelt in the turbulent deeps of his soul. Had he known and felt the awful peril in which he stood, he would have cried, in an agony of earnestness, 'Lord, save; or I perish.'

He hardly knew how far or how long he had been wandering through the moonless March night, when he found himself on the very summit of the Yellow Mountain. He saw, gleaming off there on the dusk lowlands, lights which he knew to burn in Doon Castle; he sat down by the bank which edged the road, and gazed malevolently towards them. The stripes on his shoulders ached keenly, and he did not wish their pain less. 'The whole earth can never make me forget this night,' he said to himself, with a sort of grim satisfaction.

Presently, through the still air, which was forming hoar-frost on everything, he heard a horse's step on the road, slowly pacing up the steep, as if the reins were on his neck to do as he list. 'Wouldn't it be queer if it was the same man back again?' Myles thought. Before the dark looming shadows were narrowed into recognisable shape, he noted the sparks struck from the stones in the path. 'Tis him,' said the smith, identifying the white off-leg which he had shod. So he rose and came out into the highway.

'Holloa!' exclaimed the rider, reining in his horse and pulling out a pistol. 'Who are you?'

'Nobody you need shoot,' was the answer. 'It is one of the farrier's friends—Myles Furlong of Doon forge.'

'Ay, ay!' interjected the stranger, dismounting immediately, and passing his arm through the bridle as he walked along. 'I heard of your landlord's and your foster-brother's kind attentions to you this day. 'Twas most condescending of him to remit fifty lashes, eh?'

'I'd rather have had the whole hundred,' said Myles between his teeth. 'I wouldn't be beholden to him for the saving of one single lash, if I could help it.'

'Ah, but you're to reflect, you ignorant man, that he has a regard for his foster-brother, and couldn't bear to see you in pain. Don't you make any allowance for his good, kind heart?'

"Good, kind heart!" reiterated Myles in a fury. 'I b'lieve he don't think we're the same flesh an' blood; I b'lieve he thinks we don't feel it no more than a stick or a stone; we ought to be proud of the flogging—proud they takes so much notice of us as to lash us itself.'

'No, no, Myles,' soothingly observed his companion. 'They're good, kind gentlemen, and merely flog you now to keep you from being hanged by and by. You see, it's for your ultimate good; but the worst of it is, you won't be grateful for it. That's your ignorance. But I've no time to talk now. You're a sworn Defender?'

'Yes, sir,' in some surprise at the question from one who knew him.

'Well, my horse will carry double; so, if you get up behind me, I'll take you quicker than your own legs to a meeting of the Friends of the Cause.'

The smith hesitated. His companion had mounted already. 'Well?' said he.

'I'm in such a figure,' were Myles's words.

'Ashamed of your scars, eh? They are the most honourable distinction you could boast. We've all suffered in our own way. Nobody's a real brother, qualified for the higher grades, till he shows himself of the true sort by something like that. Why, you're not aware of your dignity, man. Como, jump up.'

This would have been impossible; but he stiffly scrambled behind the saddle somehow. They started away at a round pace, which admitted of no further conversation, and travelled some distance by the most unfrequented paths. At last the horse began to pick his way through a wooded glen, towards a solitary twinkling light among the trees. His rider uttered a low and peculiar whistle; and, a minute afterwards, an owl's hoot sounded dismally from the thickest of the wood.

'We may go on,' quoth the stranger, interpreting the signal. Thenceforward he talked freely, and laughed abundantly at the trick which Fin the farrier had played on the colonel.

'Troth, an', sir, I have a groat thought you was the farrier yerself,' said Myles.

'Me, my man! Why, Fin is as red as a carrot, and I was born a white-headed boy, as fair as flax.'

'Sir,' exclaimed the smith in consternation, 'you was as black as a sloe the night you was at the forge!'

'My friend, you are dreaming. I at your forgo! I as black as a sloe! Ha, ha! that's a good one. Don't you see my fair whiskers? Many a day I wished them black, when I discovered that the ladies mostly like that hue the best. Wait till we come to the light. Well, that's a good joko.'

It seemed to tickle his fancy greatly; for he laughed loud and long, and poked Myles with his elbow, as in familiar fun.

'Musha, then, I'd swear bell, book, and candlelight, this was the horse with the white off-leg,' asserted Myles doggedly. 'Sir, you're only makin' fun of me, an' to say you're the wrong man ather all.'

The smith was growing somewhat afraid of his companion. He crossed himself several times furtively.

'And I think you must be a little mad, my friend. I hope I haven't picked up a lunatic, instead of a Defender, on the roadside. But here we are.'

They had reached the wretched hut with the twinkling light; and when the crazy door was opened the interior seemed to be doing duty as a stable. Myles looked anxiously at his companion, who took up the candle and held it beside his face, as if defying the closest scrutiny.

'Why, then, suro enough ye're white,' was the smith's remark, when he could find words. 'White hair, white eyebrows, white whiskers, white hair on yer lip. Sure enough ye're the wrong man intirely, intirely, an' it bates all ever I see.'

'I hope you aro satisfied,' said the other carelessly, tying down his hat again. 'If your friend of the forge was black, I'm not he, at all events.'

'Bu I'd swear to the off-leg,' persisted Myles, falling back on the certainty of this point.

'Well, I won't quarrel with you about it,' said the other, laughing, as he began to attend to his horse.

The dissimilarity, and yet similarity—for there was something familiar in the movements of the man; while a certain thickness of articulation, which Myles had observed even in his first sentences on the road, was not identical with the speech he remembered, yet the tones were not unlike—these items of difference, yet resemblance, puzzled him. While still narrowly regarding the other, out went the candle with a flicker, to the surpris of Myles, who had not noticed its decline.

'We'll have to grope our way for the rest,' observed his companion.

'Very well,' said the smith; 'but it's awkward for a person that never was here before. Spake to me to guide me.'

No respons; no sound, except Myles's own groping, and the horse's munching of his fodder. 'Where are you at all, at all?' says Myles; 'sure 'twould only be civility to spake to a body.' He stopped short, and narrowly escaped a severe kick from the horse, which lashed out viciously towards the unknown person who was fidgeting near him in the dark.

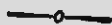


'On the face of the earth, what's become of you?' He might have spared his adjurations; neither this nor any other form of speech extracted an answer.

'Why, then, ye're tratin' me very badly,' said he, 'an' me a sworn Defender out-an'-out. Let me find the door, an' ye'll not see much more o' me.' He had his desire, and raised the latch: it was fastened on the outside.

'Oh, murther!' thought Myles, as an unpleasant idea flashed across him. 'What'll I do at all, if this is an Orange trap? Troth, if it is, I'm done for; there's nothin' comes up to the wikedness of them lads. I'd betther not spake another word. An' sure he was the wrong man intirely.'

Raising his head accidentally, after a few minutes' rumination, he felt a little puff of the cold night air on his face, and saw that it descended through a break in the thatch, close by the main wall. The next moment he was feeling for crevices among the stone-work by which to climb.



## CHAPTER VII.

### A NIGHT'S WORK.

WHEN Myles reached the rent in the thatch, and had a grasp of the rafter alongside, ready to push himself through, a strong hand was laid on his head, and his arm was wrestled with by somebody invisible, till he dropped on the ground again.

'Troth, I'm glad there's anybody anywhere,' was his remark, even in the midst of his discomfiture. 'I was beginnin' to think there was nobody but meself an' the

horse within a couple o' miles; an' as for the man that came here along wid me, he's melted away, or swallowed up, or somethin' has happened him, for the smallest taste in life of him isn't here.

As there was no answer, he looked up again; and the break in the thatch was clear, open to the sky: no sign of any person.

'D'ye hear, out there?' shouted Myles. 'Can't you tell me why they've looked mo up in this eabin? Can't you tell me whether ye're a frind or an inimy?'

The outsider was obstinately taciturn.

'Betune us an' all harm, maybe it's haunted the house is. Maybe 'twas a sperit pushed me down; an' sure 't isn't any wonder I had no stren'th agin' a sperit, to say nothin' of me bein' wake from fastin' and loss of blood.'

This set his ideas in their former echannel of abhorrence to the Butlers. 'An' sure 't isn't one night I'd wait in the dark, but fifty—an' that's the number of lashes they gave me—if 'twould help me any nearer to pay them off,' he muttered.

He had been sitting quietly on the ground for perhaps a quarter of an hour, when a voice addressed him from the orifice above.

'Is it there you are, Myles Furlong?'

'Arrah, sure you wouldn't let me be anywhere else,' was the response. 'So ye aren't a ghost afther all. I hope I'm goin' to be let out.'

'Yis, the council's a'most finished; ye may come up if ye can.'

This time the hand which had pushed him down was extended to help him through. He perceived by the indistinct starlight, which seemed to him more powerful than it really was, on account of his transition from total darkness, that the eabin was built against the side of some eminence clothed with trees and underwood.

'Well, this is a change from the inside, anyhow,' quoth Myles; 'but, barrin' ye're the council yer own self'—

'Oh, there's a han'ful more of us,' answered the fellow, grinning. 'This is the back-door, in a manner, if ye're good at climbin'.'

They crept along the edge of the house wall towards the bushes at the back. Pushing aside the branches of one, and various sprays of the giant ivy that hung over, a black opening appeared. 'I'm not a rabbit all out yet,' said Myles, regarding the orifice doubtfully.

'Twas big enough for yer betters,' retorted the sentry, going back to his post on the roof-top.

Myles had nothing for it but to try; and he found that the opening only was thus contracted: almost immediately the passago became large enough for a stooping man. After a few yards in darkness, a glimmer appeared in advance, as if the source were round some corner, and also as if it were immediately on the floor. The latter phenomenon he found to be produced by the fact that the passago contracted again into an opening barely high enough to pull his body through.

When this feat was accomplished he found himself in a cave, with a great boulder sticking out to the left of him, as if to make a recess.

'Come forward, Myles Furlong,' said the voice of his fellow-traveller, who was seated at the head of an old door turned down on two barrels as a table, whereon the furniture was a candle set in the neck of a bottle, and another fixed in a cleft stick, with an inkstand forming a device of a man's head, the gaping jaws of which held the fluid, and the eye-holes the pens. Whiter than over looked the president of the council: well might he laugh at the idea of being 'black as aloe;' yet in all his unlikeness there was a lurking likeness, which came upon Myles at unaware moments.

'Well, sir, we didn't send for you that you might stare at me. Tell your story,' was the brief order.

Myles's heart was all a-fire with his wrongs in five

minutes' relating of them. There was a whispered consultation.

'Furlong, I have to announce to you that the council here assembled have constituted you secretary of the society now forming in your district of Doon; it will be your duty to promote the interests of the cause in every way. We consider that you have fairly earned this honour by your sufferings and devotedness to the principles of liberty; and we believe that you will do your duty.'

'Never fear, sir,' replied the smith, a proud flush rising to his sallow cheek. That the honour likewise promoted him to a certainty of the gibbet, should he be caught administering unlawful oaths, he did not even remember.

'It will be necessary for you to swear afresh,' said the president, after looking at him for a few moments. 'By the way, where did you learn to be a "Defender"?''

'I was for a little start in Meath, yer honour, the county o' Meath; an' I met some of the boys there.'

'I see. Well, rehearse this oath after me, word for word;' and he began to recite the celebrated engagement which bound the federation of United Irishmen; and which, strangely enough, sounds as harmless and vague as any fanciful vow of a fanciful association of dilettanti politicians. Who could have guessed at the fearful realities of hate and of blood shrouded under the following gentle words?—

'I, Myles Furlong, do pledge myself to my country, and in the awful presence of God, that I will use all my abilities and influence for the attainment of an adequate and impartial representation of the Irish nation in Parliament.'

'In Parliament!' echoed a voice at the president's elbow, with a mocking laugh. 'You're forgetting our new compact, counsellor; them two words are rather unnecessary, eh?'

'Well, we can consider them struck out,' was the rejoinder. "The adequate and impartial representation of the Irish nation" need not be in Parliament, if you please, my friend; in fact, it would suit us better to be in some other shape.'

'Suppose a national assembly or convention,' said the person who had interrupted.

'Yes, sir,' answered Myles, not in the least comprehending that this omission of two words from the original oath was the introduction of the thin edge of the republican wedge, which now began to split into parties the body whose very name was 'United.'

'And, as a means of absolute necessity for the attainment of this chief good of Ireland, I will endeavour, as much as lies in my power, to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a community of rights, and a union of power among Irishmen; without which every reform must be partial, not national, but inadequate to the wants, delusive to the wishes, and insufficient for the freedom and happiness of this country.'

Myles, devoutly swearing all these words, did not comprehend the half of them, nor, indeed, pronounce them aright. But that was of little consequence, so long as he believed himself bound by the most solemn oath to the obedience of a secret junta. Never did softest words so veil the dagger of murder. That 'the brotherhood of affection' should signify fire and sword, that 'a community of rights' should signify extermination to Protestants, that reform in the representation should signify a republic under French protection, were meanings scarcely to be guessed at, but which the future developed.

A supplement to the oath was as follows:—

'I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards, nor punishments, shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly, to inform of, or give evidence against, any member or members of this or similar societies, for any act or expression of theirs, done or made collectively or

individually, in or out of this society, in pursuance of this obligation.'

'One wud think the little weaver of Ballinlough had swore all that,' said Myles, laying down the book which he had kissed.

A look passed between the members of the council. 'The weaver of Ballinlough! the fellow who joined Bum' Bodkin in his depositions against Fin the farrier?' asked the president.

'Ay; I'd ha' beon somewhero else to-night, only for littlo Jim Dillon's misremembering who axed him to Byrne's barn,' said Myles. 'An' if the colonel was at him from that to this, I b'lieve he'd ha' had jist as bad a memory.'

'Come, that's a new featur in the case,' said the president, turning over some papers before him; 'we have a report hero of Dillon's joining in an affidavit against the cause, and the boys were thinking of refreshing his loyalty by a domiciliary visit—ch, Fitzpatrick?'—to the person at his elbow. 'If this is true he ought to get some indulgence.'

Myles stated the examination he had undergone, and the sturdiness with which Dillon had avoided criminating any person by name. Those present listened attentively.

'Then he's only to get a fright, Fitzpatrick, remember: don't let the boys' zeal carry 'em too far, Fitz;' to which the subordinate nodded, with a queer smile.

'That means the doors aren't to be fastened outside?' he said in a low tone.

'I know nothing about it,' answered the other quickly; 'you are the manager of secret service. Take him away.'

Myles was led into a sort of outer eave, where several rough fellows were lounging about a small turf fire, some smoking, some examining weapons.

'A recruit for yez, boys; give him a drop, and make yerselves comfortable against the work that's before yez.'

<sup>1</sup> Familiar and contemptuous for bailiff.

The smith knew one or two of them, but he had never been so far inducted into their brotherhood as to-night: loose, roving characters—men in no good repute for brains or for morality—men without settled occupation or regular homes; just the raw material for conspirators.

One of the gang washed his wounds, 'to take the stiffness out of 'em,' because he was expected to shoulder a blunderbuss. 'I'm thinkin' 'tisin't warm water all out that'll wash the mark off yer cheek,' observed the fellow; 'the cut's deep enough for life.'

'Ye're spakin' truth,' returned Myles. 'That's a cut never'll heal the longest day I draw breath.'

'An' are ye goin' without the sod o' turf?' asked the leader when all were ready, remembering suddenly the key-note of their expedition. 'Sure it's an Orange pie we're to cook to-night, boys.'

The general chorus of laughter was redoubled when Myles, to whom the aforesaid expression was incomprehensible, asked what they wanted of the turf.

'Arrah, to light our pipes, to be sure,' answered the ruffian who had spoken. 'What an omadhaun ye are entirely, moryah!'<sup>1</sup>

'It's a house-warming, then, I suppose,' returned Myles. 'An' I'd rather be out of it, if it was all the same to the gintlemin within.'

'Remember, sir, you're under orders,' growled Fitz, who was well aware of the importance of binding down the new secretary or sergeant (for the grades were equal and co-existent) by the brotherhood of desperate deeds. 'March on, boys!'

That horrible lighted turf went first as a beacon, gliding, like a red, vengeful eye, through the low, damp caverns along the course of a little stream, which brooklet had, perhaps, carved those caverns originally from the heart of a hill.

Occasionally the red eye glared and shot forth sparks; and then a burnished copper face appeared to be blowing

<sup>1</sup> What a fool you pretend to be.

upon it—the face of the carrier. Fitzpatrick kept close to Miles, in the very rear of the party. 'I didn't think you'd so soon ha' forgotten what you owe to them that marked you yestorday morning,' he whispered, when they emerged into the open air. 'Now I've it in charge to tell you yer duties in yer now promotion,' he added, satisfied with the growl which his remiuder had called forth, and perhaps wishing to engago the recruit's attention.

'Tell away,' said Myles, tramping along.

'There's twelve men in yer society—the Doon Society, d'yo understand?'

'I dunno. I never counted the boys,' was the answer.

'Well, this is the schemo that's devised by the Dublin Committec, an' to be carried out over the whole counthry, far an' wido; societies of twelve men each, with a secretary or chief, who's to be one of the lower baronial committee of five, elected by five societies.'

'It's mighty inthricate, Mister Fitz, an' ye plase,' said Myles, feeling slightly bewildered, 'I'm to give the oath to as many boys as I can get as'll be faithful an' throe, an' I'm to oboy ordhers; that's what I undherstand.'

'You couldn't say it righter if you was the priest or the schoolmasther,' returned the other, suddenly restraining himself from a friendly thump on the back by a recollection that it would be the reverse of agreeable to his companion's sensations. 'An' you'll always get ordhers through me; I'm the delegate over you in the lower baronial committec; an' whin the time comes for revenge,' with an impressive finger heavily on Myles's arm, 'I'll be yer captain against the gentry an' the Orangemen.'

'All right,' said the smith.

'Then, ye're to collect money every month from yer twelve mimbers, an' give it to me, to go to the central fund in Dublin. The man that brought you here is a Dublin man, an' has all the sacrets at his fingers' ends,



an' he says the cause is growing bigger an' bigger every day. But you see Wexford doesn't know much about it yet; an' it's to us—to you an' me, Myles—the Directory looks to spread the Union.'

It was judicious flattery; and if he made himself so useful now, would not Doon Castle be his reward by and by? The smith's head was somewhat turned. Here he was honoured and made much of; there he had been despised and ill-treated as the scum of the earth.

'Sure they never heard tell o' me in Dublin?' he exclaimed, with ill-concealed gratification.

'Oh, but didn't they? I'll venture to say that Lord Edward himself'll know all about you before yo're much older,' answered Fitzpatrick cunningly. 'An' them aristocrats that hate an' ill-use us—we'll teach 'em a lesson of which the primer'll be a pike, eh, Myles?'

He continued to inflame every angry feeling, and puff up every absurd vanity, in the dupo to whom he talked, till the main body stopped short.

'Go on with yer business,' he said to the leader. 'This gentleman an' meself are havin' an important conversation; so we'll just sit down here behind the ditch, an' light our pipes till ye're ready.'

Myles looked round. The place seemed very lonely—a hollow, with a few fir trees, cutting off the view to the left. No house was in sight. 'The boys are goin' to manoeuvre a little,' said Fitzpatrick. 'Bring hither the coal, Terry, an' let's have a blast to warm us before it goes.'

They were yet in conference behind the fence, which was an embankment of earth thrown up from a sort of dry fosse, when Miles became aware of a gradually increasing reddish light in the atmosphere. He started up. 'I see that it has caught at last,' was the cool remark of his companion. 'I hope they didn't forget to leave the doors unfastened.'

'What!' exclaimed Myles, the significance of the

lighted turf and Fitzpatrick's former words in the eave flashing on his memory in connection with the little weaver. 'It's Jim Dillon's house.'

Ho seized his blunderbuss and rushed away. Past the screen of the trees, he saw, about two hundred yards off, the thatch of a cabin blazing, and some dark forms moving towards him, as if in retreat. He came up with them in an instant.

'Ye left the doors unfastened, ye villains, did ye?'

'To be sure; let 'em get out if they can,' grinned Terry, who had carried the turf.

A piercing shriek from the cabin rang through the night air. Myles felt his arms seized, but he flung off the grasp, despite his wounds, as if it had been a child's. He sprang towards the burning house. Wild screams and cries for mercy, in women's and children's voices, rent his senses. Seizing the barrel of his weapon, he brought down the stoek, like a sledge-hammer, on the door, with the fullest strength of his brawny arms, and split it asunder.

Whether they had not been able to undo the bolts of the interior in their bewilderment, or whether the door had been fastened outside by the savages who fired the thatch, was never accurately known—perhaps the latter was the case: it was by no means an uncommon incident at the period, and the sharpest raucour of the peasantry and their secret societies was directed towards any one suspected of being an informer; no punishment was too dreadful for the man that would betray the cause, or in anywise play into the hands of Government and the gentry.

'The loom! the loom!' cried Myles; 'save the loom before the roof falls in.'

Poor Jim Dillon stood as if paralyzed. Only two hours previously had he stoleu to his cabin under cover of the darkness, and forgotteu his fears in sleep till this awful awakening.

'Didn't I tell the captain that the boys would nayther forgive nor forget? Nayther forgive nor for-

get, ever! An' here's me little cabin burnt over the childher's heads!

He seemed incapable of revolving any thought save these twain, and beheld Myles's superhuman efforts to save the loom, the bread-winner of his family, without assisting him in any way, but as if it belonged to somebody in whom he had no interest. And the bleak March morning dawned on the smoking ruins of his humble home, with some shivering figures under the fir-trees gazing towards the wreck.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE RECTOR OF DOON.

THE old family coach stood before the principal entrance of Doon Castle—a ponderous equipage, looking as if it fully needed the four black geldings attached to it to draw the stately mass of paunching and gilding with any speed. Each pair had a postillion in blue and silver-laced liveries; two stout footmen, similarly arrayed, were also in attendance, and a mounted outrider curveted at a little distance; so that Colonel Butler was going forth on his business, or his pleasure, as the case might be, attended by a considerable retinue.

'Pleasure!' the idea was antithetic to that solemnly grand vehicle. Anything so light-footed was incongruous with its lumbering splendour; perhaps also with the staid elegance of its owner, who stood now on the steps of his house, in the irreproachable suit of coffee-brown, with a cartouche cloak—scarlet at one side, blue at the other—on his arm, and a gold snuff-box filled with

Landy Foot's best rappec iu his hand, talking with his bailiff, Bum Bodkin.

'The matter must be investigated,' quoth the colonel. 'It is not to be endured that those who have assisted to the best of their small ability—I say, assisted in the maintenance of law and order, whether by giving information or otherwise, should be molested in this manner. His house has been burnt, you say?'

'Yes, colonel, yer honour,' said the satellite, whose half-crouching body and bare head expressed but feebly his subservience of spirit; 'has been molested'—Bodkin was fond of adopting his patron's words—'to the extint of puttiu' a coal in the thatch last ight, an' the cabin was in a blaze in fivo minits, an' he's lost every hsporth but the wife and childer, every single haporth, yer honour.'

'Ay, I daresay the echildren were all right,' said the colonel, intending some slight jocosity; for one of his reigning principles was, that too many babies were born in Ireland. 'Nothing ever happens to them. However, I shall drive round that way,' he added in a royal tone; as if that operation alone must be productive of the greatest benefit to the weaver and his houseless family, notwithstanding he had had the misfortune to lose none of his numerous offspring on the previous night.

'He, he, he l' laughed Bodkin, putting up his hat to hide his meek mirth. 'Yer honour is always so funny. Sure it's throe enough: the childher flourishes, whatsoever else goes to the dogs. But a word in private wid yer honour, colonel. Who should I meet comin' home in the grey of the mornin', an' I dhrivin' out the cow to the field, but that murderin' rebel, Myles Furlong; an' he as black as a beetle from snoise—he couldn't ha' been blaeker av he was hung in a chimbley for a week, yer honour; and I'll swear he was in the arson, if any one was.'

'Myles Furlong—the son of Old Jug, the captain's nurse—I remember,' said the colonel, tapping his box.

'He received fifty lashes here a few days since, if I don't mistake.'

'Yesterday, yer honour; an' little good it seems to ha' done tho same man—the presumin' vilyan of the world. Thiukin' he's all right because he's Mither Gerald's foster-brother, indeed.'

'I should think that transaction must have both surprised and undeceived him, then,' was the colonel's remark. 'Why, Bodkin, you're very bitter against him.'

'Because, yer honour, I think him as dangerous a croppy as there's in the whole counthry side; an' if he was safe over the say there'd be no more about him,' replied the bailiff, who had been made uneasy by Furlong's malevolent looks, and bore him a jealousy because of his connection with the heir of the Big House.

'Tut, man, your loyalty makes you nervous,' said his master. 'I can't imprison a man without accusation, or send him up for trial without witnesses.'

'Papa!' cried Evelyn's voice behind him. The colonel turned instantly, with a courteous how, to conduct his daughter to the carriage, which was ordered to drive to the rectory for a call on Doctor Kavanagh.

Doctor Kavanagh, who was in his garden tending some choice roses, came to the gate to meet them. He had that morning received a letter from his son Fergus, the postscript of which he at once read to his visitors.

'Yes—here it is: "Present my kindest regards to the colonel and Miss Butler, when next you see them." He never forgets old friends—poor Fergus! I'm afraid the fellow is losing none of his liberal notions,' added he, shaking his head as he looked down the page: 'he professes deep interest in the struggle the Catholics are making for extended liberties, and so forth. He's nearly half a republican, that fellow;' and he shook his silver head more than ever, shovel hat and all.

'Oh, Doctor Kavanagh, how can you say it?' exclaimed Evelyn, 'A republican, like those odious French-

men who beheaded the poor king the other day. I don't believe it.'

'No, Miss Evelyn: I think he fell in love with the model republics of Greece and Rome when a boy, and has some Utopian desire to see tribunes or archons at work again. That's what I mean: nothing treasonable, colonel;' for that gentleman was listening to the explanation with portentous gravity.

'I should hope not,' was the answer; 'but how any man brought up in the Protestant faith can look with complacency upon the agitation of the papists'—

'Excuse me, colonel; I am a Protestant divine, and I look upon the whole operation of the penal laws'—

'Come, now,' said Evelyn, interposing, 'you two are not to break a lance about the penal laws.'

'Well, well,' said the colonel, 'let us settle that another time; but meanwhile, doctor, we want you to come with us to see about this bad business of last night.'

Majestically through the village rolled the coach-and-four, dwarfing the little street and the little houses, as if suddenly both had shrunk smaller in presence of that aristocratic equipage. It was a grand public sight in Doon, with which no frequency could familiarize the inhabitants. Women with infants clustered to the doors, children ran into groups, dogs barked furiously; the colonel bowed royally from his window, and so went past. The hamlet recovered its natural size when he was gone, and the great incident of the aimless day was over for its cottagers.

'They are so poor,' remarked the rector softly; 'so helpless in their very nature, so formed to be the sport of feeling, that I pity them—I pity them. One should deal with them as with children—wayward, impulsive children'— He paused.

'Just what I think, doctor: precisely what I think,' said Evelyn.

'And pray, sir,'—the colonel's brow was clouded as he looked round,—'in the excess of your philanthropy

would you permit them to run riot, and break His Majesty's Laws every half-hour, as I verily believe would be their inclination, could they do so with impunity?'

'Certainly not, my dear colonel; but it is a bad state of things where the laws are such that the great mass of the people are in open or concealed antagonism to them.'

'And whose fault is that, sir? not the fault of the Legislature, I should hope?' The colonel had got terribly stiff all in a moment: his very fingers seemed to harden, and tap the box with almost a metallic sound; but the rector was not a bit afraid of him.

'Pardon me, colonel, when I say that the time has come for the Legislature to remove such real grievances as are made the pretence for agitation.'

'Sir, do you read the papers? do you ever see a public journal? can you be ignorant of the horrid state of affairs in the north?' asked the colonel, hastily drawing from the pockets of the coach a bundle of printed sheets. 'At this moment to make concessions! when the Defenders are armed in Meath and Cavan, rifling Protestant houses, committing all sorts of outrages! when the secret committee of the Lords have reported that—that'— The colonel had some searching for the passage he required, as a rather failing vision obliged him to hold the paper at a certain length of focus. 'Ay, here it is. Listen to what the secret committee of the House of Peers has reported, Doctor Kavanagh.' And the colonel kept his finger under the lines, to guide the return of his eye when he should have launched a withering glance at his friend, who, on his part, kept his gaze upon the brilliancy of his own shoe-buckles.

The colonel read, after a majestic pause:—'Bodies of men have been collected in different parts of the north, armed and disciplined under officers chosen by themselves, and composed chiefly of the lower classes of the people. These bodies are daily increasing in

numbers and force: they have exerted their endeavours to procure military men of experience to act as their officers, some of them having Expressly Stated"—mark that!' said the colonel, with another quenching glance at his friend, who was now engaged in rubbing down his shovel-hat—"some of them having expressly stated that there were men enough to be had, but officers were what they wanted." I hope you would have my son go and offer his services, Doctor Kavanagh?' added the colonel, with scathing irony.

'No one can deprecate the disturbances more than I do,' observed the doctor meekly, when he had a chance of putting in a word.

'But that is not all, sir. Listen further to the report, and you will acknowledge that the state of things it discloses is truly alarming. "Stands of arms and gunpowder to a very large quantity, much above the common consumption, have been sent within these few months to Belfast and Newry, and orders given for much more, which could only be wanted for military operations. At Belfast, bodies of men in arms are drilled and exercised almost every night for several hours by candlelight; and attempts have been made to seduce the soldiery, which, much to the honour of the king's forces, have proved ineffectual. The declared object of these military bodies is to procure a reform of Parliament; but the obvious intention appears to be to overcome the Parliament and the Government, and to dictate to both."

'Just France over again, sir,' said the colonel, folding up his newspaper. 'And what think you of that audacious attempt to summon a national convention, with regularly elected delegates from the Catholics all through the land? What think you of the organizing of a regular National Guard—see it here in black and white, sir;' and he plucked open the paper again. 'Their uniform *green* and white, sir; gilt buttons with a harp—no crown, of course, the treasonable villains! but a cap of liberty on a pike, as a pleasant suggestion.







THE COLONEL AND DOCTOR KAVANAGH VISIT JIM DILLON'S BURNT CABIN.

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Copying the French in everything! What have you to say to that, sir? I only hope we'll not import the fashion of the guillotine, and see it at work in Collego Green.'

'Papa,' said Evelyn in a trembling voice, 'I had no idea the country was in such a dreadful state. Let us go to Dublin, papa—it would be safer.'

'And these are the sweet amiable peasantry for which Doctor Kavanagh feels compassion!' said the colonel irately.

'Ah, there is another side to the picture!' ventured the doctor. 'Power has been used intemperately; wrong has been met with wrong, violence with violence; the tyranny of private persons has been suffered to pollute the operation of public justice'—

'There's another specimen of it,' exclaimed the colonel, putting his head out of the window. The coach stopped, and its owner wrapt his cartouche cloak about him, to descend and investigate the burnt hovel of James Dillon the weaver. Doctor Kavanagh looked forth, irresolute for a moment, and then followed.

A shed of sticks, roofed with a scorched blanket, had been set up against the gable end of the cabin, and a light blue smoke ascended from a small fire, to feed which the little weaver was breaking up one of his own blackened rafters. Much more smoke was issuing from the *débris* of the dwelling, which was a crushed heap of stones and joists filling what had been the sole room. At sight of the unwonted splendour of the coach on their naked bog-road, the half-dozen children, who had been amusing themselves by building miniature cabins of sods of turf in the ditch, suspended their occupation to stare with all their might; likewise their father, no more equal to the emergency than they, stared equally, until the equipage stopped.

'Betune us an' all harm! it's the colonel himself! Oh, wirrasthru! maybe it's comin' to take me up for a croppy he is, afther the boys burnin' me little cabin. Murther in Irish, but I'll be kilt aither ways! an' what

wid the boys by night an' the fincibles by day, it's hard to keep the life in onc, at all, at all.'

This was his soliloquy while rising to his feet and shambling a few steps to meet the stately gentleman in the cartouche cloak, the scarlet of which garment struck with unqualified admiration the six children in the ditch, and the mother holding the seventh in her ragged arms.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CAPITAL FELONY.

'You see, sir,' the colonel was saying to the rector, whose short limbs could not quite keep up with his friend's military stride,—'you see here a specimen of the tender compassion of the men whose cause you advocate so warmly, Doctor Kavanagh. Behold the wife and little ones deprived of their sole shelter—and for what reason? Because this good man'—pointing to the cowering weaver—'had moral courage enough to join Bodkin in a deposition before me yesterday.'

Jim Dillon, hearing himself described as a 'good man,' plucked up heart of grace, and held his head a little less abjectly, while pulling his forelock in obeisance.

'Deed and indeed, yer honour, 'twas the boys did it in the dead o' the night, an' I never knew a pin's-worth about it till the thatch was lightin' over mo head; an' that's the very sartin thrue truth, yer honour.'

'We don't doubt it, my good fellow, we don't doubt it,' replied the colonel urbanely. 'Our exertions must now be addressed to the discovery and exemplary punishment of the scoundrels who have burnt your

house; for the sooner all the peasantry are aware that arson is a capital felony'—

The weaver's countenance had gradually assumed an expression of the extremest fright, which even the undiscerning colonel could not but notice. He paused.

'Oh, for the love o' goodness, colonel dear, don't thry to find 'em out,' Dillon petitioned, with clasped hands and crouching gesture. 'It's to make a bonfire of ourselves they will, the next time. Sure I dunno nothin' at all about who did it, no more than the babo unborn. I didn't see a mortal sowl anywhere—how could I, an' meself an' the childher an' the wife shut up in the cabin fast asleep? Oh no, colonel darlin', don't let us say another word about it at all; but sure'— lowering his voice to a wheedling whisper—'sure I'll build up the little cabin again wid the help of the neighbours, an' yer honour 'll tell the Buur—I beg pardon humbly, I mane Mistor Bodkin—not to be hard on me this time for the thrifle o' rint, an' nobody need be a bit the wiser that it was burnt.'

'Nobody' meant here the authorities. Colonel Butler looked upon the speaker with a disdain he cared not to qualify. 'Such a total absence of public spirit,' quoth the well-protected colonel, 'I do not remember to have witnessed before.' So far by way of soliloquy; and then he levelled the pertinent inquiry, designed to be a elencher—'But the interests of justice, sirrah?'

The poor little weaver was quite incompetent to say anything about them. He only knew that if he laid an information about the burning of the cabin, the vengeance of 'the boys' was sure and swift. Cold drops of fear stood on his forehead even while talking to the colonel, lest the interview should be misconstrued by the invisible power he so much dreaded.

'The fact is, my dear sir, we're frightening him,' said the rector, who was leaning back on his gold-headed cane. 'I imagiuo there's no good purpose to be served by entering into particualars.' But the colonel was bent on it.

Few particulars, however, could he extract from James Dillon. A sudden and dense stupidity clung to every faculty. Never had there been so sound a sleeper, never so bewildered an awaking.

'Come,' said his interrogator, recalling what Bodkin had seen: 'was Myles Furlong the blacksmith among the gang who fired your house last night?'

The weaver could not suppress a startled movement of his eyelids. 'Come, sir, no prevarication,' thundered the colonel. 'I demand a straightforward answer.'

'Why, then, I'd swear bell, book, and candlelight that he had nayther hand, act, nor part in it,' returned Dillon boldly. 'Is it Myles Furlong, an' his mother my own unelo's wife's second cousin?'

Colonel Butler did not appear to consider this very dim degree of relationship any guarantee for the blacksmith's character. 'The fact is,' he said, 'that Furlong was seen coming from this direction after daybreak, all smirched and blackened, which is strong presumptive evidence.'

The weaver's eyes wandered everywhere but to his questioner's face. 'He's one of the best friends I have in the world,' he said, rubbing his poor stubbly chin. 'I'd as soon believe that Moyna there'—pointing to a fair-haired little girl who stood somewhat in advance of the others, clinging to her mother's petticoats, and with one finger immovably set in her cherry lips—'I'd as soon think 'twas Moyna there did it.'

The colonel put up the tablets in which he had intended to note the heads of the information. 'You must take the consequences of thus stubbornly refusing to aid the efforts of justice,' he said loftily. Dillon's lightened aspect showed that he was perfectly ready to take them that moment, whatever they were. 'I shall concern myself no further about the matter.' At which declaration the weaver's face became positively joyous: although it fell somewhat on hearing the sharp finale—'But I shall have my eye upon you, sirrah: and any man brought before me on a proven charge of

wilfully thwarting the ends of justice, shall be visited with the condign severity of the law.'

Dillon pulled his forelock many times very humbly, but wholly without notice, in the background. The wife curtsayed; the children forgot any obeisance, for which dereliction their heads were subsequently knocked together by their father, with the view of 'takin' 'em manners.' As the rector passed little Moyra, he put out his hand behind him with some coins in the palm—a couple of fivepennies—which, when the child only stared at them (for verily the cowries of Africa would have been nigh as familiar to her gaze), he dropped gently on the turf; and was followed by a chorus of blessings from the parents.

'But there's Freney Furlong on the road,' said the weaver, stopping short in his share of the benedictions, 'an' he's a sort of a natural<sup>1</sup> that might let all out on poor Myles av he isn't warned.' Dillon crept up behind swiftly and silently, reaching the edge of the bog just as the gentlemen paused to let the wayfarer come up.

'This fellow may throw some light on the business,' said the colonel, recognising the shambling figure of the fiddler. 'It would be a point gained in the investigation if we could ascertain from independent evidence that the smith was really out all night, and returned as Bodkin described—not that I have the least doubt of Bodkin's intrinsic truth, my dear sir;' for the employer was rather jealous on the score of his steward's character, which the rector rated so low.

'I'll speak first, not to alarm him,' said the latter. 'The top of the morning to you, Freney; and where are you going this fine day?'

'Why, thin, to Barney Brallaghan's weddin', yer honour's reverence, meself an' the little fiddle; sure, the couples couldn't foot a step widout me.'

'To Barney Brallaghan's I why, it isn't a week since there was a wake in that house.'

<sup>1</sup> Half simpleton.

'No, sure, sir, but that was old Barney, an' this is young, an' they med up the match that very wake night, bless the mark; an' she's a girl of the Malowneys, an' has a pig, an' a pot, an' a thrille of poulthry to her fortin, an' he has a cabin to put over her head; an' what for would they be waitin', gettin a heart-scald, maybe, wid forgettin' one another?'

'The frightful improvidence of such marriages!' groaned the colonel. 'These unhappy people never think of the future. But that is wide of the mark in the present instance. My good fellow,' and the gentleman leaned his head aside with an air of portentous astuteness, 'of course your brother Myles cannot be at the wedding, since he lost his night's rest?'

Freney had opened his lips to answer, when he caught sight of the weaver's face under Colonel Butler's elbow, expressing a complication of feelings by a complication of grimaces, uttering only less plainly than in words, 'Take care what you're about.' The rector saw it also, and connived at it, unworthy justice of the peace that he was to yield to one imploring supplementary glance.

'Sure an' he won't, yer honour,' answered Freney slowly; 'for I defy any man livin' to sleep a wink afther the cuttin' yer honour ordered him yistherday, an' me mother was bilin' herbs all night to mollify the pain, yer honour, an' that's the way of it; but suro he desarved it all, yer honour, an' the likes of us mustn't grumble at anythin' we gets from the quality, yer honour.'

Colonel Butler stepped into his carriage before this obsequious speech, punctuated with low bows of Freney's s iock head, was ended, and asked no more questions. Leaning from the window as it began to move, he merely said, 'Tell your brother from me, that arson—burning houses—is a capital felony.'

Freney's face assumed the most utter blankness of expression as he looked in the direction of the colonel's finger at the smoking ruin of Dillon's hut; and then, gradually removing his eyes to the weaver's countenance,



which was just raised above the level of the road as he was scrambling back to the lower surface of surrounding bog, a curious grin broke upon each set of features.



CHAPTER X.

IN A CERTAIN COURT-HOUSE.

THE tide was far out on an oozy shore, and a sloop or two were lying aground in the mud at an alarming slope. There was a crescent of irregular houses round part of the semicircular bay, and at one side, under a green height, a greater agglomeration of the same in narrow streets. Where these streets struck off from the curved shore, rose the most pretentious building in the little town, a court-house; a smiling, spotlessly white court-house, well railed about, and with a scarlet sentry parading inside the said rails. Hard by, having the relation of cause and effect, was a huge black door, studded with bosses of iron; and above this, upon the wall, were set some strong and sharp spikes, at distances—perhaps to enhance the difficulty of getting in or getting out, perhaps for another purpose.

Inside walked the sentry, shouldering his bright firelock; and outside the rails clustered a large proportion of the unemployed population of the place, clothed in every variety of rags, as suits the unemployed, and grinning with a pertinacity of good-humour only to be found in Irish *canaille*. Their aim, at present, appeared to be the irritation of the sentry.

'Arrah, sure he hadn't as much clothes on him as would lift a griddle off the fire this time twel'month,' said one fellow, whose scantiness of attire might almost

rival his own description. 'An' now look at the iligant coat au' breeches he has! Who wouldn't be a feucible, boys? It's the best thrado goin' these times.'

'An' whinever ho wants to warm his hands, suro he's nothin' to do but run 'em through his hair,' said a small boy, in allusion to the flame-colour of the sentry's head. 'I s'pose he biles the praties wid it at home—'twould save him a lot o' firin'.'

'Hould yer tongue, you varmint of a gossoon, an' don't be affrontin' the gintleman. Sure, maybe he might take it into his head to shoot us,' observed the first speaker, with a grin. 'Sure we're all afraid of our lives of him, an' daren't'—

'Whisht! here's the major,' ran through the little crowd, and all eyes were turned towards the advancing trot of a fine chestnut thoroughbred, whereon sat a handsome middle-aged man, attired in leathers and tops.

'Bless yer honour! an' give me the houldin' of yer fine baste,' said the gossoon, springing forward almost under his fore-feet.

'Get out o' that, ye uncivilized spalpeen,' interjected the other man who had been bantering the sentry. 'Is it the likes o' ye to lay finger on the major's iligant mare? No, major darlint, but me that's able to handle a baste dacently'—

'Keep back, keep back,' said the gentleman, cracking his long-lashed whip. 'My groom takes the mare;' which that personage did, while his master went up the steps of the court-house.

'It's grudgiu' us the tuppence he was,' proclaimed the gossoon; 'bnt sure we'd hould it for nothin', for the sake of the family, and relics of ould daceucy.'

The major, who prided himself on his pedigree and his wealth, glanced round from the topmost step, but the shrill speaker had dived among the crowd, and only rows of grinning faces met his view. He passed in.

'Ah, but here's the counsellor,' cried the farthest of the small mob. 'His honour won't throuble anybody

to hould his baste, for 'tis only what we have in our own stables, boys—shank's marc.'

'More's the pity, lads, for I'm of a figure that requires elevation,' rejoined the counsellor laughingly. His height might be five feet four inches.

'Three cheers for Bagenal Harvey, the poor man's counsellor!' shouted the increasing assemblage, pleased with his good humour. And the thin, small figure bowed his acknowledgments from the steps—acknowledgments for an instalment of that popular favour which was to prove so fatal to him.

'He'd be a darlin' man av his shin-bones warn't like two rainbows,' observed one of his admirers. 'But here's black Butler of Doon, in his red cloak; who's ever hard on the boys to-day, 'twill be him. Not so the parson; cheer him, lads!' For Doctor Kavanagh lived as a follower of Christ should live. He imitated Him who went about doing good; and hence, even amidst the infuriated passions of that angry time, he won the love and respect of all.

For this was the appointed day for a meeting of magistrates and other influential persons of the district, to take into consideration the state of public affairs—the alarming posture of the country,' as the requisition had it. A considerable number assembled; and, after talking apart in knots, concerning weather, and spring prospects, and the latest outrages, and the newest parliamentary intelligence, they resolved themselves into a single gathering, and placed the dullest and most dignified unit of the assembly in the chair; who stumbled through a few introductory sentences,—he could have spoken flowingly, if not deeply, in his own dining-room, yet here became the veriest nineompoop, for want of words,—and the gentleman who held the first resolution rose.

Of course he said that the present time was a crisis, the like whereof had never occurred before, nor might ever occur again. He insinuated that the eyes of Ireland were on the county of Wexford, and more particularly upon the baronies of which the gentlemen

around him were representatives, in wealth, position, and intelligence. It was a time for all loyal men to fly to the banner of the constitution, and uphold that banner unflinchingly, with purse and person, if necessary; for the spirit of disaffection was abroad, rampant, and ready to make a dire assault upon that banner. Should they tamely stand by to see it pulled down? Never—with a tremendous flourish of his right hand. Perish the unworthy thought! Much more of equally florid language and gesture followed; until, wishing to refer to the prose of his resolution, the speaker found that he had unwittingly twisted and torn it into small pieces, which rather brought his Pegasus to common earth with a broken wing.

Up jumped the seconder, a wiry little magistrate, who didn't know what a trope or a metaphor meant. But martial law was the cure for disturbed districts. Nothing but the sharpest severity for these fellows, sir! They laughed at you if you didn't govern them with whip and gun. They didn't understand humane treatment. Flog every man found out of his cabin after dark—that was *his* advice. The number would be peculiarly small after a few weeks of such discipline. Finally, he fully concurred in the resolution; which, seeing that it asserted only the existence of disturbance, was not straining his convictions very far.

Colonel Butler had been arranging his bundle of papers, and testifying other symptoms of an oration of some length, rather to the uneasiness of the mercenary among his audience. 'He'll begin with the English conquest of the country, and the landing of Strongbow,' whispered one apprehensive gentleman. 'I heard a speech of his that went back to the battle of Clontarf, where Brian Boru defeated the Danes; and that's rather too much of a good thing, you know. If I was near the door'—but he was not, and had to sit it out with what grace he could.

Much that was sound and sensible did the colonel declare, though somewhat verbosely, as was his manner.

The public prints, the debates in Parliament, gave an alarming picture of the state of the country. In the north, the Peep-o'-day Boys, then fast merging into Orangemen, had divers collisions with the Roman Catholic Defenders. However, these petty strifes were safety itself to the nation, compared with the attempt which was being made to fuse all parties of malcontents into one great body of United Irishmen, obeying leaders whose objects could now be no longer doubtful. Their admiration for the policy of France was undisguised. Had not Lord Edward Fitzgerald spent some months of last year in Paris, abandoning his title for the indiscriminate 'citizen,' and living in the closest intercourse with the democratic tyrants who desolated that unhappy land? Colonel Butler could only be astonished that, after such a renunciation of his allegiance, that misguided young nobleman was permitted to resume his place in an Irish Parliament. Would the gentlemen present believe that one of the toasts drunk on occasion of a banquet where Lord Edward filled a principal part, was as follows: 'The armies of France; may the example of its citizen soldiers be followed by all enslaved countries, till tyrants and tyranny be extinct!'

Counsellor Bagenal Harvey rose, with a merry twinkle in his quick, small eyes. He begged pardon for the interruption, but really, unless the gallant officer believed Ireland an 'enslaved country,' governed by 'tyrants,' he did not see how Lord Edward's toast was applicable.

Colonel Butler had thought that no person of average information in these days could be ignorant of the interpretation put upon such expressions by the republicans of France and their admirers on this side the Channel. The regular operation of the laws was slavery, and monarchical government was tyranny, in their new vocabulary. He was not afraid that the mass of the Irish people would become leavened with republican doctrines; but he *was* afraid of a blind obedience being rendered by large bodies of the peasantry to men having

these ulterior objects in view, and who would make use of the oath of secrecy universally exacted, to lead their dupes to the most desperate enterprises. He thought the very least step that could be taken in the present emergency would be, to proclaim the county: he did not altogether disapprove the suggestion of martial law.

Doctor Kavanagh said the few softening words for which he had come there that day, reminding his brother magistrates that with justice should mercy be combined; to which they listened as to a matter of course, and which it was the bounden duty of his cloth to propound: but, in the irritated state of public feeling, such oil made the blaze burn higher. As to the advance of public business effected by the meeting, there seemed little result beyond the airing of each man's opinions, and the following advertisement:—

'One Hundred Guineas Reward will be paid by Colonel Gerald Butler, Treasurer to the Subscribers for maintaining the Peace in the Baronies of —, and County of Wexford, to any person or persons who shall give such information to any member of the Select Committee' [here followed a list of names] 'of any intended attack upon any house, so as that there shall be sufficient time to prepare against such attack. Such Reward to be paid the day after such attack shall have taken place; and the Committee pledge themselves most solemnly, upon their honours, to keep such person's name, as shall give such information, secret.'

CHAPTER XI.

WHO LIVED IN THE PICTURE-GALLERY.

ONE side of Doon Castle was a long curtain of wall, pierced with windows in the upper part, in order to light a handsome chamber called the picture-gallery; though wherefore so named it would be hard to say, for the rarest things in the room were pictures; whereas there was an abundance of ancient furniture, and Irish curiosities in glass cases of the clumsy fashion of the age, and weapons hung in brackets upon the oak-panelled walls—weapons of all sorts, from the antique skene of the primeval Celt to the matchlock of his descendant the galloglass, and to the musket and cutlass in present use. Huge turf fires burned in two large hearths at equal distances down one side of the apartment; although, on the opposite side, the sunlight streamed in through the many-paned sashes, and printed diagonal impressions of them in radiance on the polished floor, within a yard of the metal dogs which guarded the fuel.

Other dogs, besides those made of metal, crouched before the wide, warm hearth. Captain Gerald was walking up and down the long chamber, and his canine favourites had disposed themselves to rest in the meantime, perchance wondering at their master's superfluous exertion. There was Vengeance, a tremendous wolf-hound, shaggy as a bear, stretching his tawny length along almost an entire hearth to himself, having very ungallantly displaced Floss, Miss Butler's silky French poodle, who cowered in shelter of one of the andirons thenceforth, and glanced feminine resentment over at her vast neighbour; there was Riot, a white lurcher, who looked as if he was always thinking of rabbits, and

who snapped at them even in his hours of sleep; there was Koo-p, the ugliest, and greatest favourite of all, who had crooked legs and twinkling eyes, and was as knowing as a human being, barring only speech, according to the servants.

Captain Gerald's exertion in walking was of the slightest possible amount. It was a lounge *à la militaire*: if he has never been partaker of the Bond Street lounge, invented by the most worthless prince in Europe, yet he practises it by nature. An easy nature, determined not to take too much trouble about ought till its passions were roused—considering itself immeasurably above the common cares of the common herd over which it was born to rule—an aristocratic nature to the backbone, embodying in itself the exaggerated prejudices of its class and period, therefore largely illiberal, while utterly unconscious of the illiberality. Verily, it did not believe, as would have been apparent had the question been put, in the same flesh and blood as appertaining to itself and to lower men—peasants, for instance. They were a subordinate species, to be regarded and treated somewhat as his dogs—petted or lashed as whim or conduct required. The feeling would last as long as the smart, the resentment be as deep as the injured skin of this inferior race. Yet Captain Butler was a good-natured man in the main; safe in his superiority, he was blind to the smouldering going on in the lower classes of society: he thought his father unnecessarily severe—not from any principles of justice or kindness on his part, but simply because he was, as aforesaid, an easy-going man, and would fain take no trouble about anything. But at bottom he was, to the full, as prejudiced as the colonel, and as imbued with class-feeling.

Sauntering, whistling, his ears were attracted by sounds under the windows. There were the horses, sleek and highly groomed, walking before the little side entrance on the gravel, led by a lad almost in rags, the 'gossoon' of the establishment, on whom all odds



and ends of work, and whatever seemed nobody's business, descended. Captain Gerald threw up the window, and became aware of Bodkin also loitering below.

'Holloa, Mike!' The boy turned up one eye, the other being closed for excess of sunlight, and made a respectful duck, the only obeisance in his power, as he durst not let go the two bridles.

'Walk them in the shade, d'ye hear? They'll have enough of heating by and by. Take them round to the front entrance.'

After another duck of subservience, Miko obeyed. Captain Gerald watched them till they passed out of sight round the angle of a buttress, with the criticizing eye of ownership, and then stayed a minute gazing at the sheen of the little river that lapsed by close to the terrace, from the other side of which canal-like ribbon-river spread the greenest expanse possible, with a few mottled cows enjoying it, and some dusk shadows of a darker green under scattered trees. In the distance of the demesne rose the grey ruin which named the place, all its outlines softened by a clasping ivy.

'A beautiful April day,' quoth he, glancing upwards for the cause of a shadow which began to move across the lands, though he of course knew that it was a cloud on the blue sky. Many an ignorant peasant on his estates would have added to any remark upon such weather an utterance of devout thanks to God; but Captain Gerald never thought of these things out of church or Sunday. Sure the 'praise God' of the Irish peasant, though it often be a mere phrase of use and wont conveying no deep feeling, is better than the practical atheism which leaves God out of account altogether.

He resumed his sauntering and soft whistling, thinking to himself that Evelyn was a long while donning her riding-gear, and switching his top-boots with the silver-handled whip in his fingers; when presently a

sharp snapping bark and rattling of a chain, followed by a chattering which sounded like wicked laughter, made him turn round. The monkey on the pedestal in the end bay-window was showing all its teeth, and snarling from a safe height at Esop, who had been lying peaceably asleep on the hearth near by, when it stole down and slyly pinched his tail beyond endurance. The injured member now wagged fiercely, responsive to the furious growls of its owner, who, at his master's voice, ran to him and whined a complaint.

'Ha, Spitfire, so you've been at your old tricks!' The monkey chattered and grinned, and twitched its alert little pink-edged eyes. 'Yes, look penitent and abject now that you see my riding-whip;' and he snapped it over the beast, without, however, touching it. 'You must keep out of her way, Esop, old fellow!'

This was, in truth, the only remedy against Spitfire's tricks; for chastisement had no effect whatever. The elfish propensity to do evil, to annoy and torment at any cost, was too strong in the creature's brain for even fear to subdue. The captain drew a little box from his deep waistcoat pocket.

'Please, sir, the Bum—I beg pardin, sir. Mистер Bodkin—wants to spake to yer honour,' said old Connor, coming up behind.

'Bid him walk in here,' ordered Captain Butler, not leaving the neighbourhood of the pedestal, where he was offering the open snuff-box to Spitfire's nostrils. The monkey dodged about at the length of her silver chain, straining it to its farthest, from the hoop round her waist, and chattering and snorting abundantly. Esop sat licking his injured tail, and looking up now and then at the revenge, with a pleased bark.

The cringing figure of the bailiff came in, hat in hand, so softly that the gentleman did not hear till the voice was at his elbow.

'Good mornin', yer honour, eaptin; an' I came about a little matther o' bisness.'

'Come round here, my good fellow; I can't see you,

and I have a partiality for looking at the man to whom I am speaking,' said the captain, still continuing to administer the snuff-box judicially.

Bodkin, if the truth must be told, did not very much care to be looking persons straight in the face; in fact, the very conformation of his eyes was a protest against it. But he complied with his young master's desire, though his eye glanced nervously at the restless monkey, of which he had a mortal dread, while his lips murmured the modest laugh,—

'He, he, ho! I beg pardin, sir, but yo're so very funny, captin!'

'Funny, Spitfire, am I? Do you hear that, old lady?' and by a dexterous manipulation of the box he drove the monkey to make a sudden spring for refuge on the crouching shoulders of the bailiff, hiding behind his big head, and glancing round it, while she grasped his hair.

'Oh—h—h!' roared Bodkin, with a violent start, dropping his hat and raising both hands to deliver his hair. But Spitfire only elung the faster, and chattered, and wriggled, and showed her double row of glittering incisors.

'Take care, tako care!' warned the captain; 'she bites like a fury. You'd better let her take her own time to come down, Bodkin; why, she has teeth that would nip the top off your finger in a moment.'

Bodkin's hands had descended as precipitately as they had risen.

'Oh, to be sure, to be sure, yer honour—I was only jokin', with the lips that spoko turned to ashen whiteness, and the muscles that attempted a ghastly smile quivering. 'To be sure, yer honour: she's quiet enough if she isn't provoked, as I've heard.' His hand nearly shot up again at a desperate pull of his hair and a muzzling in his neck which made him shudder. 'An' sure, who'd provoke a pet of your honour's?'

'I'm afraid you have heard wrongly, then,' replied the captain, leaning his arm carelessly upon Spitfire's



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pedestal, so that the box was held in a position to deter her from leaving her present perch. 'She's quite as vicious—indeed, of the two perhaps more so—to those who let her alone as to those who annoy her. For, you see, she has some respect for the latter. But now, what is the business, Bodkin?'

'I wouldn't throuble yer honour—only for the threats I'm daily meetin' wid from that thief Myles Furlong, ever since the colonel ordhered him to be flogged; an' sure I was only doin' mo duty, an' nothin' else—an' there's an offer for the forge now, from a man that's able to pay rint; an' Myles never pays none—an' the masther tould mo to come to you whinever himself was out—an' I'm thinkin'— Oh—h—h!' was wrung from the luckless man, by a scratch on his neck, administered from one of the monkey's hind hands.

'She's very playful,' observed the captain, with a slight wave of his box towards Spitfire. 'A most amusing creature!'

'Yis, yer honour, yis;' and Bodkin's restless eye seemed to be making frantic efforts to see the back of his own head, where his tormentor squatted; while Spitfire seemed thoroughly to understand that she had her master's permission to play what pranks she pleased with her present prey, and indulged herself accordingly.

'So Myles threatens you? I'll ride over to the forge myself this very day. A faithful servant like yourself must not be intimidated from his duty. Ah, Evelyn, you're come at last!'

Her forerunner had been a frightfully alert Italian greyhound, who spent his winter in a flannel waistcoat, and had his costume only lately lightened into a cotton coverlet of Turkey red; and in his eestatic dancing he stopped short, like a suddenly rooted statue of a hound, opposite the spectacle of the enthroned monkey.

'I could not avoid the delay, dear Gerald,' answered his sister, scarce able to control her amusement at the absurd position of Mr. Bodkin, and his pitiful attempt at obeisance; 'but I am quite ready now.'

'Well, Bodkin, we must defer the rest of our business till some other time, as I cannot keep Miss Butler waiting with her habit on. I don't know exactly how you'll get rid of Spitfire,' added the captain, backing to the door with an open laugh, 'unless she gets down of her own accord; for it would be as much as all your hair is worth to take her off by force. I'll send somebody to your assistance.' But no sooner was he out of the doorway than Bodkin seized the animal by the body, and with a ferocious jerk flung her off, parting with two clutches-full of his hair in the deliverance.

'You wretch of a beast!'—the infuriated bailiff shook his fist at the animal,—'I could skin you alive, so I could!' He put up his hand to his throat, all scratched with her sharp black nails, as if she had meditated the same operation on him, and had moreover commenced the experiment.

'Ha! so you've got rid of her?' said the captain, looking back through the door. Bodkin's scowl instantly changed into a sickly smile, and his growl into a cajoling whimper. 'Surely I did not hear you scolding the poor sensitive pet?' And he came forward with well simulated anxiety.

'Is it me, sir? Me to scold any baste yer honour is plased to favour? Ye don't know Pat Bodkin, that his father was bailiff for forty years on dher yer honour's honourable grandfather, or you wouldn't ask, captin. But I was only thinkin', sir,—as I was a-coaxin' of her to make friends,—wouldn't it be handier if her nails wor cut, sir?' rubbing his throat with a rueful air. 'Beggin' pardin for saying the likes, sir.'

'Certainly not,' said the captain, with emphasis. 'I see you cannot be trusted alone with the poor animal, so come along;' a reproach which sank deep into Bodkin's nerves, according to the intention of its administrator. Nevertheless, he contrived to give another covert and most venomous shake of his hand towards the monkey's pedestal, as he followed his master from the gallery.

'But listen, captin ashore!' as he crept down the broad stairs close to the balustrades. 'Myles, the rebelly rascal, will be afther tellin' yer honour he didn't ever go for to threaten me. Don't b'lieve him. Vitriol warn't worse than his looks whenever I come across him'—

'I scarcely wonder,' said the gentleman.

'There's another thing, captin: the boys that have been diggin' in th' ould castle ha' found a great big hole, like a room, that wasn't ever found out before; an' they're expectin' there's goold hid in it,' added the bailiff, 'an' they won't leave two stones together, scarcely, wid searchin' an' scourin' out, if yer honour doesn't go over.' Now, Bodkin had a desire to turn the captain's steps anywhere but to th' forge and his foster-brother.

'Evelyn, shall we ride towards the treasure trove?' said he.

'Bless yer honour, an' do,' put in Bodkin.

'To the castle first, and to the forge afterwards,' observed Captain Gerald, mounting. 'It's my duty to investigate those thrcats;' and the rider moved away.

'He's one of the best haters I kuow,' said the captain. 'How *consistently* and *persistently* he has hated and tried to damage those Furlongs—I suppose from motives of jealousy engrafted on a naturally malignant disposition; though I believe him a faithful fellow in the main to the interests of our family, which are of course diametrically opposed to the interests of everybody else on the estates.'

'I don't know why it should be so,' said the gentle Evelyn, whom the problem of class-antagonism had often puzzled. 'But here comes one who will agree with you.'



## CHAPTER XII.

## AT THE FORGE.

UNDER the avenue of elms and beeches they had ridden some short way, through the balmy April weather, which was breezeless and almost too hot to-day, when they perceived a gentleman entering the vista at the other end, and spurring to meet them—a youngish man, furnished with a face which would have been handsome but for the purplish hue of claret which overspread it, and out of which stood two bold black eyes; he was dressed in full riding costume of leathers and tops. He veiled his hunting-cap to the lady, and brought up his beast with a prance and a curvet, after the flourishing manner of accomplished horsemen of his day.

‘Have I the felicity and the honour of seeing Miss Butler in good health?’ he asked in a loud, jolly voice bowing to his saddle.

‘I am quite well, thank you, Mr. Waddell,’ answered Evelyn. ‘I hope your sisters are quite—;’ and the usual inquiries followed and were exchanged, ensued by some remarks from Captain Gerald on the animal bestriden by the new-comer, which was a late arrival in his stables.

‘As the colonel is not at home,’ observed Mr. Waddell, ‘my business at the castle ceases; unless, indeed, I could have had the pleasure and honour of paying my compliments to Miss Butler, which is, likewise, as I perceive, impossible; and consequently’—He turned round his steed upon the other side of Evelyn’s, for conclusion of his sentence.

‘I hope I shall not intrude by accompanying you a little way?’

Evelyn made no reply; but her brother answered, 'We were just going to examine into a discovery made at the castle, where my father has excavations going on—a discovery of subterranean chambers, and rocks of gold, for aught we know.'

'Anywhere in the present company,' responded Mr. Waddell gallantly, and forthwith began to make himself agreeable, according to his ideas of the duty and its fulfilment. Talking in a very loud, cheery voice (his larynx seemed to be constructed solely for the open air of the hunting-field), he paid Miss Butler one or two broad compliments on her appearance, which called up a blush that he mistook for gratification. But her brother came to the rescue, and started other subjects—some political.

Among them was the law lately passed, called the Convention Bill, which declared that all assemblies, committees, or other bodies of persons elected, or otherwise appointed, with a view to preparing petitions to the King, or addresses to the Houses of Parliament, were illegal assemblies, and that all persons taking part therein were guilty of high misdemeanour.

'It cuts at the root of the United Irishmen,' said Captain Butler.

'Hang 'em all, sir!' was Mr. Waddell's gentle remedy for the disturbed commonalty. 'Shoot 'em down, every man! These are my principles, sir. Short and sharp, captain. Don't be horrified, miss,' to the lady; 'but these detestable croppies don't deserve the least consideration! Desperate examples!—that's the way to manage 'em.'

'Poor creatures!' said Evelyn, turning her large grey eyes upon him. 'Could you not look down from the height of your superior mind and education, Mr. Waddell, and afford to be merciful while just?'

'Now that's the way the women will puzzle one,' said that gentleman, with an appealing look to Captain Gerald. 'I'm sure Araminta and Dolly think me a

perfect monster because of my stringent measures to keep the peace. I'm sure I wish they'd all remain quiet, I do;' referring 'herein to the populace, not to the ladies. 'But, as they will not, I vew if I don't think shooting 'em the best plan.'

Mr. Waddell had the reputation of being a bully and a duellist, as well as a 'jolly good fellow' of the species yeleft three-bottle men; none of which morsels of fame had served him much in Miss Butler's estimation.

The riders were now obliged to advance in single file over a narrow parapeted bridge, which had a marvellously high backbone and scant roadway, as if the builder had successfully worked out the problem of how it could be made as useless as possible. Perchance a wheelbarrow could be driven over it with care, but no loftier vehicle. Two persons might pass each other, if amicable; and the workmanship was solid enough for a thousand years. Silently sweeping under the single ivied arch flowed the little stream of Narrow-water, which had washed by the castle gardens shortly before, and by the lips of many a soft primrose in the fields.

'Ha! so the colonel has got wind of the discovery before us,' said his son. 'There's my father's favourite cob resting on his oars;' by which extraordinary mixture of metaphor and fact he signified that the animal was without a rider at the present moment, and was tethered to a jutting stone. It was a sturdy brown beast, set on short legs, and of unlovely proportions altogether; very wide between the ears, and broad in the chest.

'If I grow much stouter,' said Mr. Waddell, who had a tendency to that defect, and was disposed to be melancholy over it, 'I'll have to take to something like *him*.' And he touched up his own handsome bay, with black points, till the animal caracoled again, but not a whit to Miss Butler's admiration, who sat well back on her thorough-bred, in the firm and easy

attitude of a good horsewoman, and looked out for her father.

The colonel was afoot among his labourers, investigating the orifice, which proved to be the entrance to a sort of vaulted dungeon. With his lofty courtesy, he came at once to where his daughter was standing, to learn her wishes.

'Has there been anything found, papa? Any delightful old rusty bits of metal, or coins, or any other curiosity for the picture-gallery?'

'Nothing but some bones as yet, dear, and links of a chain, which have rather frightened the labourers; I expect this ruin will be haunted henceforth. The bones are rather interesting.'

'As if bones could ever be interesting!' pertly remarked Miss Evelyn, with all a young lady's ignorance of the marvels of physiology. 'Don't tell me anything about them. I hope you will keep Mr. Waddell here with you, papa, and don't let him come to ride with Gerald and me,' she added, with her hand on his shoulder, and her eyes on the figure of the obnoxious gentleman, who was walking with her brother to investigate the secret chamber. 'Do, dear papa.' The veteran promised—what could he do else?

'Capital place to hide in,' observed Captain Gerald, as they returned to remount. 'Eh, Waddell? High treason, or petty treason, or rebellion, or any other ill to which Irish flesh is heir, might take shelter in that dungeon.'

'Only cowards go to hide like rabbits,' asserted Mr. Waddell roundly. At this juncture the colonel laid a gentle detainer on him. 'I am informed that you went to look for me at the castle, sir?'

And he was compelled to remain behind, and admire from a distance the figure of Evelyn, riding so easily and firmly in a rapid canter over the turf, which was almost a gallop, yet never swerving an inch in her saddle, never losing breath, never jerking her reins; evidently keeping up an animated conversation the whole time with her

brother. 'She's a splendid horsewoman,' he said, drawing his breath hard.

'Who, sir?' and the colonel's brow contracted.

'I—I beg your pardon,' said Mr. Waddell, without explanation, and looking sheepish.

They had ridden half an hour, at various paces, when they reached the forge. Here was Freney, imperturbably manufacturing nails; and his old mother, who had darted into the inner chamber to draw a clean hood over her elf-locks, darted out again in two minutes.

'Masther Gerald, asthore!' She seized his hand, and pressed it again and again to her withered lips; she gazed at him with the most genuine affection. 'My own fosther-son you are, an' you won't ever deny it! Aeushla machree, an' it's proud I am to seo you this day! An' how is every bit of you, entirely, darlint?'

Ho laughed, and suffered her caresses of his hand, and returned to her pleasant answers, as he well knew how to do.

'What a beautiful child little Una has grown!' he said. 'Nurse, I believe you have not seen Miss Eva?'

Old Jug dropped a deep curtsey. 'I beg your honour's pa'din for overlookin' yer ladyship,' she said; 'an' 'twas far from my intention to be disrespectable,' continued the poor woman. Evelyn had alighted, and was speaking to the fair child, who played in front of the forge, building an edifice with bits of dark delf-ware.

'Why don't you come to see us, nurse?' said the young lady, having accepted her apology with a smile.

'Yes, Old Mother Jug, why don't you come up to the castle?' repeated the captain in his careless, good-humoured way. 'I have not seen you there time out of mind.'

'Sure, Masther Gerald mavourneen, I do have to be keepin' house for Myles, the poor boy, since he lost his wife—the heavens be her bed this day!' The old woman's eyes never wandered from the handsome features which she loved so well, even when she crossed

herself. 'Only for that, sure I'd never ha' stopped bein' yer own ould nurse at the castle, captin !'

'About Myles,' began her foster-child, his brow darkening; 'I came over to speak to him, but, as he is absent, I may as well leave the warning for him. Though he is my foster-brother, I cannot protect him against the consequences of his own deeds; and if he is not more circumspect (that means careful, nurse) he may get a rope round his neck before he thinks. He is watched, and his every action reported.'

The old woman began to look nervously about her. Myles was absent; but Myles might return at any moment, and certainly in no mood to receive admonition from his foster-brother, who he believed had treated him unjustly. But the captain loitered, even when his warning was discharged, and he had read a long lecture to Old Jug on the danger of secret societies, and the necessity of keeping her sons at home.

'I hope you know nothing about Defenders, and Whiteboys, and such fry?' said he to Frenay, who stood by idle, the hammer dropping from his hand.

'Only to hear tell of 'em, yer honour,' was the reply, with a blinking of his white-lashed eyes.

'I suppose you'd sooner be at a wedding or a wake, any night. Come, take down the fiddle and give us the "Boy with the Brown Hair." What's this it is in Irish, nurse?'

'Arrah, see how he recollects ould times! Oh, thin, how iligant you used to rowl the Irish words off yer tongue at three year ould, Masther Gerald! An' you had the darlin'est head o' hair, all weeshy curls that war like goold and silver meltin' up together.'

He laughed. 'Then I suppose you hardly think powder an improvement? Those curls have been translated from mine to Una's head now, nurse. Why, she's lovely as a picture, Eva: what a dazliung complexion!'

He raised her on the stone bench by the doorway, to have a better view of her downcast, shy face. 'Come,

'I'll give you a prett' plaything to coax a look. Did you ever see a seven-shilling piece, little one?' He held it on high to attract the blue eyes' upward glance. 'Take it, and keep it, to remind you of Captain Butler, Una.'

The child instantly raised her head, and looked at him fully, with a sort of grave sternness which was singular in one so young.

'You cut my father's face,' she said slowly. 'Go away—I don't like you.'

'Cut your father's face, child? What does she mean?' Nevertheless the captain's own grew red, as if he understood the allusion.

'Una, Una, ye're a bold child,' said her grandmother, lifting her off the bench. 'Yer little tongue has too much liberty entirely. Go into the house, myvourneen. Never mind her, Masther Gerald dear; sure she's a silly little crathur.'

'Let us come away,' said Evelyn, who was getting uncomfortable. Her brother placed his hands for her foot, and lifted her into the saddle with a displeased countenance. The old woman's protestations were numerous. She really loved this foster-son with a prouder and deeper love than her own.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## A MESSAGE—WITH SPEED.

It was nothing new that Ireland should be disturbed; the novelty and the marvel would rather have been her quiescence. Since James II. fled from the field of the Boyne, the Irish people, who had espoused his cause, had given no peace to the successors of his conqueror. Religious antagonism intensified national antipathy. James III. was upheld by the Romish bishops and priests of Ireland, mainly because the Protestant and the Saxon upheld George II. When Jacobitism died out, through the incapability of its head, another rebel spirit, sounding in name so like it, yet so different—Jacobinism,—crept in. France was the land of desire for multitudes of Irish Roman Catholics; the orient whence their sun of liberty was to rise. In short, a chain of insurgencies ran through Irish history during all centuries since 1172; of which the Defenders, who rioted at present, formed the latest link.

They were particularly turbulent during this summer of 1793. Colonel Butler, who remembered the outburst of the Whiteboys in 1759, and all sorts of minor rebellions every two or three years since, could not recall a time of equal disturbance. The province of Connaught seethed in a perpetual ferment. Unquiet lives must those Protestants have had who dwelt therein; the houses of such, in the country parts, were never safe from outrage. Burglary for the sake of fire-arms occurred most nights, notwithstanding the awful penalty of death hanging over the heads of all to whom the crime should be brought home. But it is singular proof of the inefficacy of such Draconian laws to check



offences, that, while the statute-book of Britain was full of the severest punishments, the crimes sought to be repressed by them were considerably more rife than since a milder legislation has prevailed.

The northern counties were also agitated. Indeed, it was there this particular form of disturbance had originated, and in no matter more important than a personal fight. Presbyterians and Romanists took opposite sides; and soon, from an individual grudge, sprang the factions of the 'Peepers'-day Boys' and 'Defenders.' The former were so called because they visited the houses of the latter at daybreak to disarm them.

All parties were wrong: all parties committed outrages. The intemperance of political feeling at the period can scarcely be exaggerated. The Irish House of Commons was an arena for personalities such as would hardly be permitted in a third-rate debating club of our day; and the insults of the evening were avenged or atoned on the duelling-ground next morning. From the vice-regal court at the Castle down to the knot of peasants in the whisky-shop, party feeling split the nation into animosities the most violent.

Even social gatherings took a political complexion. Colonel Butler's dinner-parties became assemblies of partisans, of magistrates, more than meetings of friends. Never had these entertainments been what too often such degenerated into elsewhere—baechnalian orgies. For it was a period when hard drinking was considered a part of the education of a gentleman; and to give his guests the means of intoxication, nay, to urge them to it, was one of the duties of a hospitable host. But the master of Doon Castle had too much innate refinement for this.

'No,' said the colonel, pushing back his ruby wine-glass; 'I don't remember any time like it. North, south, west, Ireland is in a flame.'

'Shoot 'em all,' broke in Mr. Waddell, somewhat

irrelevantly, while he refilled his tumbler with claret. 'Shoot 'em all. Bring in martial law. That's the only cure, in my opinion.'

'Our county has been pretty quiet as yet,' observed a long thin gentleman opposite, who was sipping punch. 'Wexford has not had any open disturbance; I believe there are fewer troops here.'

'If not yet, sir, depend upon it, the disturbance is to come,' rejoined a small ruddy magistrate, who engrafted on a cheery demeanour the inconsistency of Cassandra's prophetic propensities. 'Depend upon it, sir. I am certain they are marching about our fields and roads every night. What was brought to me this very day? A Defender, sir; a fellow who hardly took the trouble of denying the charge; and what should be found in his pocket, sir? Nothing less than the oath.'

He rummaged in his own pockets, and drew forth a blotted and soiled piece of paper, written over in the roundest of round hands, with words which were occasionally ill-spelled, and utterly without punctuation.

'The oath, sir, in all its malignity and treason.' He rose to the occasion by getting upon his feet in order to read it aloud, with explanatory interpolations of his own.

'The beginning is harmless enough,' quoth he: 'any of you gentlemen might bind yourselves thereby, in perfect good faith and loyalty:—"I do swear of my good will and consent to be true to His Majesty King George III." Now, just observe the artfulness of that commencement. I would wager my best hunter to a tenpenny nail that it has drawn in many a loyal fellow who would shrink from open treason. But after it comes the paragraph with the sting: "I will be true while under the same Government!"'

The reader paused and glanced round. Several of his hearers endeavoured to extract the sedition from this apparently harmless sentence, and failed. Mr. Waddell was one of these; nevertheless he said aloud, 'Atrocious!' with his eye on the colonel.

'I do not quite perceive'—began that gentleman blandly.

'Not perceive the villainous ambiguity, sir? I don't speak without book, sir, without competent authority. The meaning is, that if the Government of His Most Gracious Majesty were subverted to-morrow morning, they would be no longer under it, of course, and no longer bound to support it. Hence it is clear that these Defenders propose first to compass the overthrow of the Government of His Most Gracious Majesty, and as soon as that is done they are discharged from this insidious oath. Gentlemen, could treason go further?'

A murmur passed among the listeners.

'Would you oblige me with a sight of that document?' asked Colonel Butler, when the reader folded it up, and sat himself down. The following words additional were in it:—

'I swear to be true, aiding and abetting, to every true brother; and in every form and article, from the first foundation in 1790, and every amendment hitherto. I will be obedient to my committees, superior commanders and officers, in all lawful proceedings.'

The reference to 1790 meant the political reconstruction of the secret society by those who were seeking to amalgamate it with the United Irishmen and work both for treasonable purposes. This was the oath of which Myles Furlong had been made a dispenser in the district of Doon, and to which he had proved most faithful.

'Shoot 'em all,' said Mr. Waddell. 'We won't be safe in our beds shortly. We must have martial law.' Whether he imagined that would effect his desired preventive measure of a universal fusillade, he did not declare.

'It seems to me,' began Captain Gerald in his slow, easy tones, 'that too much stress is laid on all this. The peasantry must be plotting and scheming: it seems a necessity of their very existence—an outlet for Celtic

energies, if you find no better work for them. Possibly they may be the tools of men in higher places.'

'Possibly?' repeated the ruddy magistrato. 'It is demonstrated.'

'Very well,' rejoined Captain Gerald. 'The State is too strong for them. The Government can afford to smile at the riotous acts of a few wretched outlaws, who go about burning and robbing houses. Efficient police ought to put a stop to it.'

'I should think,' said his father—who was never more easily offended than by an intimation that he over-rated the popular disturbance—'when these few wretched outlaws, as you call them, proceed to such lengths as the utter destruction of Mr. Tenison's splendid mansion, Coalville, in spite of the military, it is time that they should be honoured with some notice.'

'Six thousand Defenders present there!' remarked the ruddy magistrate. 'A small army!'

'And they hold regular reviews, midnight parades, and drills, in the county Derry,' rejoined the colonel; 'wearing green cockades as a military badge.'

The captain, who had been for some time in a real regiment of the line, before taking his present commission in the militia, shrugged his shoulders with all a soldier's contempt for undisciplined mobs. The evidence of their numbers and their violence was unquestionable: but he despised them none the less.

Some stir was heard at the door of the dining-room.

'Yous can't come in,' said the suppressed voice of old Connor. 'For what would I let you be afther disturbin' the gentlemin over their wine?'

'But I was charged to give this into the colonel's own hand; an' I daren't but do it,' said the envoy. 'An' it's news that won't wait, moreover, an' they mightn't be fit for it in another hour;' and he made a significant gesture.

Without more ado, he pushed aside old Connor, and entered, splashed almost from head to foot, as one who had ridden far and long through miry roads. Making the

military salute, he handed a packet to the master of the house. Then glancing round, and perceiving the ruddy little magistrate, he produced a similar packet for him; glancing still further, and perceiving Mr. Waddell, he paid him the same attention.

'If you want any more magistrates,' observed Captain Gerald, smiling, 'you will find Doctor Kavanagh in the garden, I believe.'

The orderly bowed his acknowledgment for the information, and withdrew in great gravity. The rector had been sauntering by the Narrow-water with Evelyn, and helping her to tend her flowers.

'Poor disturbed Ireland!' she said, in answer to something spoken by her friend; 'how comes it that, of all corners of the earth, there never can be peace here?'

'Dear Miss Evelyn,' was his reply, 'I have my own thought about that: I believe it to be the religion, or rather the superstition of the people. They own an earthly allegiance higher than that to the king—to the pope; and as he orders, through all the ramifications of the Romish hierarchy, they must obey. The true, the only effectual remedy for the evils of Ireland I believe to be a living, loving faith in Christ as the only mediator. This will sweep away both the priestcraft of Romanism and the cold hard spirit which, alas! our Protestantism too often displays. With one Saviour to trust in and love and serve, we should, for the first time in our history, become one people. Whenever a rebellion breaks out in Ireland—I mean a professed rebellion—you will find Romish priests largely implicated.'

'A rebellion like 1641! Oh, Doctor Kavanagh, don't speak of anything so awful!' Evelyn grew pale.

'My dear, my not speaking of it does not lessen its possibility,' argued the rector; 'but I am sorry to have alarmed you.' A step on the gravel made him turn round, and the envoy handed him his missive.

The Defenders had risen in the country. A few

miles away, they were assembled in large numbers near Enniscorthy, threatening to march upon Wexford itself. All accessible magistrates were summoned to help in the maintenance of law and order.

'I am a man of peace,' observed Doctor Kavanagh, folding up his paper, 'and my place is among my flock. So I shall remain with you, Miss Evelyn, whoever goes; but I must speak with Colonel Butler.' He left the garden.

Evelyn was surprised at her own calmness. When we are in the midst of a crisis, and involved in great issues, there is often an unwonted firmness or bluntness of feeling. She herself marvelled that she had so little fear, and so little anxiousness. Yet there was no conscious relying upon Divine care, such as had sometimes sustained her when the danger was more distant. Evelyn's faith was never very strong: she had it more as a doctrine than an experience; as a knowledge of the head rather than a confidence of the heart. Little comfort attends it in such a degree.

She had often thought that whenever an outbreak did really occur among the hitherto peaceful and prosperous population of their county, she would be greatly terrified, frightened beyond bearing. And now that it had actually come, her womanly nervousness had disappeared. She helped in all her father's arrangements, listened to his injunctions, received his parting blessing, and saw him and Gerald ride away without even a tear in her eyes.

'Musha, but it's fairly unnatural,' said old Connor, who had been watching her with affectionate solicitude. 'Only why should I doubt the spirit of the Butlers? Sure there was kings an' queens as thick as blackberries among 'em long ago, as I've heered tell; an' she has a thrife of their pluck, in eourse. Miss Evelyn asthore,' he added aloud, breaking in on her reverie, 'it's ourselves that'll take care o' ye while the masher's away; an' don't be afeared for half a minit.'

'Thank you, Connor,' she answered, turning round to

the aged retainer, with a slight tremble on her lip. She could not trust herself to speak more just then; but, as she passed into the house, heard him assuring her that 'byne-bye all the tinents would be up, horse an' fut, to take care of their darlin' young lady, an' a dale betther they'd do it than thim half-dozen fencibles the masther had left in charge; for hearts were sthronger nor swords, any day.' To which last assertion Evelyn could fully subscribe.

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CHAPTER XIV.

'ROARING PEG,' AND THE BANSHEE.

WHEN the rector returned from his house, whither he had gone to make some arrangements for his absence, he found Evelyn sitting in her peculiar nook of the picture-gallery, a bay window which looked over the Narrow-water and the fair demesne beyond, now clouded with the shades of gathering night—so far as night ever deepens in our northern midsummer. A pale golden radiance yet suffused the edge of the heavens over the distant woods, bearing afloat, as a silver shallop, the young crescent moon. At this beautiful object Evelyn was gazing. Before her, on a small inlaid table, a Bible was open, the page lit by a massive pair of silver candlesticks, supporting heavy wax-lights.

'Well, dear Miss Eva,' after the first greetings, 'and have you found anything here?' laying his hand on the open book.

'Nothing that I did not know before,' was the somewhat pettish answer. 'I hear of people getting strength and comfort from the Bible; I don't find any, though I

have tried with my whole heart; all the verses fall so flat, they are too familiar to impress me.'

The old clergyman looked at her with sadness in his face. 'I am sorry to hear it,' he said; 'for one of the surest signs of conversion to God is a keen relish for His word. May the Holy Spirit lead you to Him of whom this book speaks! Know Him as your Saviour, and the Bible will at once become to you the most delightful, the most consoling, the most strengthening of all books in the world. Yet I will find you a verse, which seems to me to convey what you want just now.' He turned to the book of Psalms, and read: 'Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid.'

Evelyn's eyes glistened gratefully. 'You have succeeded in finding words that are indeed seasonable,' she said, 'some that are like balm. I wonder whether people nowadays can have that fixedness of heart, that trust in the Lord; for, oh, dear Doctor Kavanagh, I am sorely afraid of evil tidings.'

The conversation that followed, in which Doctor Kavauagh spoke freely to her of Christ and His salvation, was often looked back upon by Evelyn as a sort of era in her life. Nothing like trouble for preparing the soul to feel its need of the Almighty Friend!

While they talked in that recess of the long gallery, a general barricading and fortifying went on about the castle, according to orders left by the colonel, and executed by Bodkin his bailiff. All the lower windows were barred strongly, all the doors secured, as for a siege, with the exception of the back entrance, which had double guards. A sentry paced by the Narrow-water, and another on the gravel drive in front. An ancient piece of ordnance mounted on the roof of a turret, where its power to do hurt—except to those who should have the temerity to discharge it—was trifling, had its old carriage furbished up, and its old body filled



with powder and a rusty ball, and its mouth was thrust out beyond an embrasure in the parapet, just in a position to cover accurately and blow to bits a fine ash tree near the edge of the gravel. 'Roaring Peg' was a famous personage in certain old annals of the castle.

'Trot, an' I've a mind to frighten the croppies wid a blaze of her tongue,' quoth Bodkin, looking affectionately at the weather-beaten article.

'Do, sir, do, sir, to be sure; why shouldn't yer honour do it, or anything else your honour likes?' said one of his followers. For this parasite was no exception to the laws of nature, but owned his minor parasites likewise.

But Mr. Bodkin had his doubts as to the safety of venturing on such a liberty with 'Roaring Peg,' and yet he wished to test her powers.

'Fire her yerself, Martin Dempsey,' was his reply. 'I'll light the match for ye, an' ye'll put it to the touch-hole.'

'What wud the masther say to wastin' so much powdher? Musha thin, but I'd fairly confess I'd be in dhread of the masther,' said Martin, stuffing his hands into the ragged pockets of his small-clothes, and not willing to own to his far greater fear of the decrepit cannon.

'Look here, Martin,' said Bodkin in a suppressed voice: 'I know you were in the barn that night; didn't I hear the farrier mintion yer name? An' if you have a grain o' sinse in the wide world, ye won't anger me widout knowin' for what.'

Adjured by this significant hint, Mr. Dempsey consented to draw one hand out of his pocket, and essay the touch-hole with the match, lingeringly and hesitatingly, and finally with a sudden thrust of the dangerous thing he held in his fingers, and the valiant Martin flung himself on the ground, while Mr. Bodkin's head disappeared below the little trap-door out of which it had been looking. A second, two seconds, three

seconds, but no explosion. Martin and the bailiff raised themselves cautiously.

'I'd take my 'davit I did it all right, anyhow,' said Martin. 'Aud sure maybe it fired 'athout our kuowiu' it, Mистер Bodkin!'

'You onadhaun! 'twould make a noise fit to split your head off,' was the courteous rejoinder. 'No; there's something or other wrong,' and Bodkin gathered up his limbs to step upon the roof. The remaining followers crowded after him.

Suffice it to say, that Martin tried once more in a rather bolder manner; and the bailiff himself, encouraged by failure, tried; but 'Roaring Peg' remained unmoved by all their blandishments, and held her peace pertinaciously.

'She won't fire on anythin' but the croppies,' said Bodkin; 'that's it. She won't waste her brea'th unless she knows for why, and she thinks we're a-makin' game of her now, th'ould lady.' Thus would he maintain the prestige of 'Roaring Peg.'

Nevertheless, her dumbness remained perfectly inexplicable to him; till some days subsequently, that he brought Captain Gerald on the battery (as the turret-top was magniloquently termed) to investigate the cause.

'Draw the charge,' briefly commanded that gentleman; and thereupon it was seen that the rusty ball had been put in first, and the powder subsequently.

When the bailiff came that night to blockado the picture-gallery, he was, as usual, most obsequious. 'I humbly erave yer pardin, Miss Butler,' with a bow almost to the ground; 'but I'ur obleeged to intrude, owin' to the obaydience of yer honourablo father, the colonel, who tould me, an' left it in striet charge, that I was to bar every window of the Big House when the sun begins to dhrop, every whole evenin' till his honour come back.—Save us an' be about us, but what's that?'

He had been interrupted by a prolonged wail outside

the house, under the windows; whereupon he and all his followers crossed themselves, with muttered ejaculations of fright and suspicion.

'It's the banshee—it's nothing else but the Butlers' banshee! Oh, vo, vo! but somethin' 'll happen the masher, or the captain, or some of the family! Saint Joseph, an' Saint Bridget, and Saint Fin Bar, be about us this night!'

Evelyn was startled. She well knew the legend of the banshee fairy, supposed to be attached to the family, and supposed to predict every important event in it, particularly every misfortune. But she had never lent such stories the least credence since she was a child; yet now, with her nerves all unstrung by previous alarms, she was conscious of a disagreeable tingling and shrinking through her frame, very like fear.

'Some trick, some trick,' said Doctor Kavanagh, setting back his chair with his unoccupied hand, for Evelyn clung to the other. 'My dear young lady, don't be terrified; this is some'—he was very near uttering the unclerical word 'rascally'—'this is some cowardly trick.'

'An' it's a-callin' the young mistress—listen!' The crossing with their thumbs on brow and breast proceeded with redoubled vigour. 'Oh, Miss Eva asthore, don't go to the window,' cried out old Connor; 'the banshee never appears but to them as is doomed to die.'

But Evelyn recognised the voice, and raised the heavy sash in a trice. 'Nurse, nurse, is it you?' On hearing which, Mr. Bodkin slipped from the apartment, and crossed himself no more.

'To be sure it is, my lady; and they wouldn't let me in to see you—meself and little Una—until I thought if yer own self knew I was here, you wouldn't shut out Ould Jug.'

'Admit her,' said Miss Butler, turning round. 'This is some more of Bodkin's work, I suppose. But that cry *did* frighten me.'

She lay for some minutes in an arm-chair with her hand pressed on her beating heart, trying to quiet it and her hurried breathing. The rector, the image of concern, stood by with a huge goblet of water, which he had got from some attendant.

'I'm a silly child,' Evelyn said, fetching a long sigh at last. 'I will try just to think of that blessed verse—  
"Ho shall not be afraid of evil tidings; for"—

"His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord,"' added the rector, when she hesitated. 'Now stay quiet, dear Miss Evelyn; I will see this woman, and learn what she wants.'

'Oh, please'—her hand was on his arm as he turned—'I would like to see Old Jug also. You know she is Gerald's nurse. Let us have her into this room. May I not?'

After some demur the rector acquiesced; and the woman was sent for. She came in at the far entrance of the gallery, through the dimness that hangs about the distances of an ill-lighted room; very softly, because she had taken off her shoes, or 'brogues,' as the poor always do at the door of a grand house; and carrying little Una in her arms. With many courtseys she approached.

'Oh, nurse, you gave me such a fright! my heart is throbbing still. Why, they all thought you were the banshee.'

'Well, Miss Eva, though I do make a very purty cry, an' am the best keener in the barony,' answered the old dame, evidently flattered at the misconception; 'still I'm not so good all out as the Butlers' banshee. I heard it once whin yer mamma—the heavens bo her bed!—was in her last siekness.'

'Come, come,' said the rector, who had no indulgence for legendary superstitions; 'we will take all that for granted, Mrs. Furlong. The thing now is, what do you want with Miss Butler?'

'Why, thin, I'll take lave to tell herself that, and nobody else; not manin' no offence to yer reverence,'

was the reply. 'Miss Eva knows me since she was born about the house like an old spaniel dog; an' proud I'd be to be that to Misther Gerald if I could; an' it's to do the family good and not harm I'm come this night. Miss Evie, will you keep little Una for two or three days, or maybe longer, while I go a journey?'

The fair child clung with both arms round her grandmother's neck when she heard the proposition.

'A journey, nurse! Where's her father?' asked Evelyn.

'Well, mavourneen, he isn't at home, an' I don't know rightly where he is, and that's the thrue thruth for you; an' that onshue of a Freney isn't fit to have the care of a cat. An' what's more, Miss Evie,—droppin' her voice,—'I hear ye've great barrin' and barricadin' of the house this night; an' I've to say that little Una will be more to yo nor a hundher of fencibles and militia, if yo just give the child in charge to yer own maid, an' keeps her somewhere near yerself for only a few days, Miss Evie. An' I could be watchin', watchin' for yo outside.'

The extraordinary earnestness of the old woman, working upon Evelyn's natural love to children, won her almost immediate assent. Now Spitfire was rattling the silver chain and hoop in the background with incessant restlessness. Una's attention was presently riveted by the monkey's gambols, and Old Jug stole away.

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## CHAPTER XV.

## AMATEUR DENTISTRY.

WHETHER Old Jug Furlong followed the Defenders in the bootless raid against the authorities of the country, nobody in Doon district could discover. If Freney knew, he held his tongue with unexpected wisdom. Contemporaneously with the disappearance of his mother and his brother, he seemed to have put on a more sensible self than ever before. He kept the forge open as usual, and betrayed that he possessed quite a serviceable knowledge of the chief branches of smiths' handicraft. He could weld iron, and fix horse-shoes, and settle the wheels and ploughs that were out of order nearly as well as Myles himself. It was a public fact in the townland that Freney had become a sadder and a soberer man, by the force of circumstances and responsibility.

The neighbours rarely spoke of those who had vanished from their midst. Able-bodied men and aspiring youths were mysteriously absent from many a farmstead and labourer's cabin,—'gone with the boys,' their relatives would inform any 'safe' inquirer, whispering the words behind a hand, as if the very winds might bear the truth abroad, and blab disagreeable secrets. There must have been dire suspense in many a breast; but the stranger and the superior never might see it. The unveiling of emotion was kept for the turf fireside of evenings, or the dark midnights. Doctor Kavanagh could testify that his parishioners seemed unconcerned; for he walked among them at all hours of daylight, regardless of Bodkin's cautions and vaticinations; he ministered to the sick and aged as usual, though they professed an adverse creed. Through the

kindness to their bodies, he hoped to do some little good to their souls; never directly combating a prejudice or attacking a superstition, but telling of the Lord Jesus, and of His everlasting love, in the warm words of one who felt it to his heart's core; and he had seen, more than once, the quick tear start, and the hands clasp, and the pallid lips smile, as some sense of that divine love reached the poor heart through all its mists of ignorance and false beliefs. For this reward Doctor Kavanagh was content to labour, considering all these Roman Catholic souls in his charge as well as the Protestant; and he dared not consider his duty as suspended, even by the disturbance in the country.

'They'll not hurt me, my dear Miss Evelyn,' he said in answer to her remonstrance, when he would sally forth a day or two after the barricading of the castle,—'They'll not hurt me. Do you forget that the ser-vants of our Master are immortal until their work is done?'

'Still—but yet'—began Evelyn.

"*But yet* is as a gaoler to bring forth some monstrous malefactor," quoted the rector, with a smile. 'I shall return in the evening, my dear young lady. You are not without company;' and he glanced towards the little Uua, who was sitting on the floor, twisting her hands in the shaggy hair of the huge wolf-hound Vengeance. She had nestled close to the great dog, no whit afraid, and was much amused to hide her white fingers in his tawny curls. 'A fair child she is, in good sooth,' added the rector meditatively; 'she is not yet old enough to understand me.'

'And has never seen a mirror in her life,' observed Evelyn. 'She is the gentlest little being. She was crying sorely after her grandmother only this morning; but Vengeance turned her thoughts another way. He has evidently struck up a friendship for her, and follows her about like a guardian.'

The huge hound lifted his head at the sound of his own name, and gazed at his mistress from the depth of

his most faithful eyes. 'Poor fellow!' said Evelyn; whereupon he wagged his tail slightly as answer, and laid down the large muzzle again on his outstretched paws.

'Have you ever read the *Fairie Queene*, Miss Evelyn?' asked the rector, drawing on his gloves, and still regarding the group before the fireplace.

'It always seemed so eumbrous, and of unending length,' began Evelyn.

'The partiality of youth for whipt-cream and pastry, in preference to solids,' gravely remarked Doctor Kavanagh. 'Because there is a "faire Una" and a guardian lion in it, that's all.' He bowed and departed.

Taking a short cut across the park, undeterred by the representations of Bodkin that the woods harboured lurking 'croppies,' he came upon the first cabin which he wished to visit; an abode chiefly built of mud and turf, roofed with branches and grass sods,—technically 'seraws,'—trees closing all about it, so that you might have passed a little to the right hand or to the left without perceiving the habitation. The floor was sunk some inches below the surrounding soil, so that the rain naturally distilled thereinto, leaving a perennial dampness; it was little wonder that the old man dwelling here should suffer occasional agonies, and continual crippling, from rheumatism. Approaching, the rector perceived that the smoke of the turf fire had made a 'natural selection' of the doorway for egress, instead of the chimney, which, indeed, was generally its whim; he watched for the lull after a puff, and made entrance with eyes all but closed.

'Save yer reverence kindly, an' the top of the mornin' to yer reverence,' replied to his greeting the only inmate, sitting up with difficulty upon the straw bed in the corner. 'The ould woman is gone to have her tooth drawn by Freney Furlong, av he isu't afeared to thry, for it's an awful grinder; but she's had the toothache cruel entirely, the crathur, an' couldn't stand it no longer, an' the fire wint out a'most whin I was takin' a



little start of a sleep, an' the fresh turf has med that murtherin' smoke, yer honour's reverenec.'

Doctor Kavanagh's eyes were filled with involuntary smarting tears, and his mouth with coughing, from the same cause; so he was not immediately in a condition to reply.

'Decd an' I'm always intindin' to have that chimbley settled, so as it'll dhraw the smoke; an' often I'd spako to Pat about it, but the poor boy used to say, "Time enough, father, an' sure there's no hurry;" an' that's the way 'twas never done up to now, an' troth I'm wishin' it far enough for a chimbley, to be chokin' yer rivrenco that way—bad manners to it!'

'I often warned you against "time enough," my friend,' said the rector, when he grew more accustomed to the atmosphere. 'It's what helps to keep poor Ireland so behind-hand, that habit of saying to every improvement, "time enough." I don't think you'd have the rheumatism so bad, only for the same words: how often did I tell you this damp low floor would certainly bring illness?'

'Thrne for yer reverence, an' you did so,' replied the old man, rising to his feet with the help of a stout stick. 'I hear the pig at the door; an' sure it's right sho should be let into what's her own house in a manner, for she pays the rint regular, the crathur.' He hobbled to the half-door, which the rector had latched on entrance, by way of rendering the draught less absorbent for the smoke, and over which he had seen during the last minute a belligerent snout elevated, emitting grunts. The instant the latch was undone, the animal pushed open the door, almost knocking down its owner, and, followed by a brood of eight or ten young ones, proceeded to ensconce itself in the straw littered at the other side of the cabin. While thus rooting out a place of repose, the old man stood affectionately admiring the outline and proportions of this principal among his live stock; the high-arched bristly back, long flabby ears frequently dangling into its small red eyes, and cover-

ing about the half of an enormous mouth, furnished with projecting tusks, above which hung an iron ring from the nostrils—altogether, such a beast as would affright the magnates of any existing agricultural show, and cause the invention of a new order of swine to suit its remarkable characteristics; for this variety of Hibernian pig is at present happily extinct.

'Oh, but she's a beauty; and as knowing as a Christian,' exclaimed the owner; 'an' 'll come up to the fire when the praties is bilin'—troth, I think only for burning her nose she'd lift the pot-lid an' help herself. She ates 'em off the table like one of the family, only we thry to coax her out of the house awhile before, an' shuts the two doors, afeard she'd smeil the dinner; but she's gettin' so knowin' entirely now, that it's no use to be attimpin' to chate her. I think that baste would wink sometimes, av she had the eyelids.'

This was not exactly the style of conversation for which the rector had paid his visit: his object was to do some temporal or spiritual good if possible. But, old Pat's rheumatism being better on this day, he was less accessible to advice or exhortation than usual. His dull acquiescence in everything the clergyman said was as fatiguing mentally as a walk over soft yielding sand would be bodily. 'Yes, to be sure, yer honour,' 'Thru for your reverence,' and such like, were his rejoinders.

But there was an expression about his eyes which the rector did not understand, when now and then he caught old Patrick staring steadily at him, with a gaze which shnffled off directly it was noticed. The phenomenon was explained when Doctor Kavanagh rose up to leave. The old man hobbled after him to the door.

'Yer reverence—yer honour's reverence, did ye hear any news this mornin'?'

'No, Pat, not yet.'

'They're sayin' there has been murther entirely at Wexford, sir;' and he dropped his voice to a whisper, beckoning the rector to the interior of the doorway

again. 'They're sayin' the sojers was beat first, an' then the boys was beat, an' they're all kilt an' slaughtered by one another.'

'Who brought you this news?' asked the clergyman sharply.

'A labourin' boy that was passin' the doore, sir,' answered old Pat demurely.

'I suspect it was your own son,' said Doctor Kavanagh, looking keenly at him; 'and, if so, I'd advise you to keep him safe at home for the future, and not let him mix himself up with these rebellious doings, which may cost him his neck some day.'

Whereupon the old man burst into lamentations; in the midst of which the rector walked away. He hated duplicity above all things; and he knew, despite the parents' protestations, that their hopeful son was a sworn Defender.

He had some doubt now whether he should go back to the castle and wait for confirmation of the news, which he felt sure would be sent by courier from Evelyn's father at the earliest possible period; or whether he should accomplish the pastoral visits he had marked out for himself, one of which was of special urgency. A poor Protestant girl was dying of consumption, and in that fatal stage when an hour may make the difference of death. He resolved, therefore, to speak to her once more of Him who conquered death, brought life and immortality to light; and trudged away.

His road lay past the forge where Frer laboured: whence, before he had reached it, he heard a roar issued of no trifling volume. 'Halloa, what's this?' quoth the rector to himself, mending his pace considerably.

'Oh, Frenney, ochone, but every bone in me head is broke in bits. Oh, sure, ochone, but that was the powerful pull. I was a'most fairly lifted off the ground,' said a woman's voice.

'Feel is it any looser, wid yer finger,' said the dentist, standing over her, pincers in hand. 'Troth, I'd bend the cowld horseshoe wid the same strin'th I put into it

—'tis mighty obstinate entirely, so it is,' observed Freney.

'Arrah, what's that to meself,' interposed another woman present, 'that was dragged round the forge three times by your brother Myles, owin' to the stubborn set of a tooth, beforo it come out? You were here yerself that day, Freney, an' couldn't hould me.'

'Well, 'tisn't to be expected as I'd be all out so elever at dhrawing a tooth as Myles, my first tiune o' tryin',' remarked Freney, considering his failure in pulling his patient round the forge as a matter requiring apology. 'But if you let me eatch hold of it again, Mrs. Spellisy, I'll do my best, an' sure.'

Here they observed the rector, standing quietly without. One or two women on their feet curtsayed; the patient on the floor endeavoured to rise, and Freney bobbed his shoek head.

'So you've taken up Myles's business in all its branches,' said the minister, with a slight smile. 'Foolish fellow that he was, to give up a good trade for political agitation—in other words, rebellion. Where is your mother?'

Freney answered truly that he did not know; but answered it with all the appearance of a shuffling falsehood. Looking no man in the face was one of his peculiarities.

'I came by your eabin, Mrs. Spellisy, and gathered from your husband's talk that your son has come baek.' ('Oh, thin, won't I give it to Pat for bein' such a born fool as to let it out!' was the lady's reflection.) 'And I would impress on you, in the strongest manner, that if he follows such courses as he has lately been doing, it can only end in misery for himself, and you his parents. I have reason to believe,' added the worthy rector, looking round the forge, 'that this very workshop of Myles Furlong has been a centre of treasonable activity; and, Freney, my lad, if there's a pike-head found about the place, I don't think there will be many more questions asked.'

'Sorra taste of a screed of a piko,' protested Freney, again with truth: for all the smith's storo had been pressed into service during the late raid of the Defenders.

'Now, my good women, to you above all others should I speak on this subject. The three of you have husbands and sons. What on earth do they think they will gain by taking this illegal Defenders' oath, or United Irishmen's oath, or whatever else they call it? If they rise in rebellion, as they did the other day, the Government will send strong regiments of soldiers, able assuredly to put them down, and, after killing some, to take the rest to gaol; and you know what will become of them afterwards. And you, poor wives and mothers, and the weo children growing up, will be the worst sufferers after all.'

The women cried. Mrs. Spellisy's toothache was so effectually cured that she would not submit herself again to Freney's pincers, but went away homo with her blue cloak over her head. Many a wayside sermon of like character had the rector preached in his walks for the last six months; but ho feared the avail was small. He could only continue to pray fervently, 'Send peace in our time, O God.'

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE SILVER BULLET.

IN the pleasant prolonged twilight of that July evening, Freney set up the usual shutter against the orifice which served his forge for window, latched the door, and went away a few yards with his dearly-loved violin in his hand. It was only to the corner of a field, whence the land sloped away westward, where he sat down with his back to the 'ditch,' or earthen fence, and began to tune his violin.

Freney himself was somewhat out of tune. Living so utterly alone was foreign to his social nature; and he foreboded all sorts of evil for Myles. Flying rumours had come during the afternoon, of some great disaster that had befallen the Defenders. He knew, though he never had been told, that Myles was among them. But when once he had the music fairly working out at his fingers' ends, his uneasy feelings quieted down, like stormy waters subdued with oil. He began with that dolorous and most plaintive monotone, entitled in Gaelic, 'Weeping and wailing and rocking the cradle;' it suited his state of mind to a note. Thence he passed into the minor of the 'Blackbird,' and subsequently undertook the intricacies of 'Ormiston's March,' a war-piece which proves that the design of the Battle of Prague was not original; but in the Celtic representation of battle there is something wild and weird, which is totally wanting in the tame German composition. After the joyous marching of the hosts to confront each other, and the clash of combat, and the cries of the wounded, comes the wailing of friends above the dead chief Ormiston. Each relationship has a different cry, or 'keen,' proportioned in intensity to the nearness of

blood; yet perhaps the nurse or foster-mother has the bitterest wail next to that of the parents. And last of all comes the wail of the wife, which gradually becomes less and less sorrowful, till it merges into placidity, and afterwards into a species of merriment, expressing, quoth the bard, her happy marriage with another.

Freney had just arrived at this point in his musical progress, when some person creeping along the ditch towards him trod on a dried twig, which snapped loudly enough for the fiddler to hear. He laid down his bow.

'Arrah, Myles, is that yerself, an' nobody else?'

'Well, I supposo you may believe your eyesight,' retorted the smith. 'Come into the house; I want to spake to ye.'

But he would not follow Freney in scaling the fence till he was assured that there was nobody in sight, up or down the road, not a human being.

'Do you go into the forge,' he said, after some hesitation, 'an' I'll follow any way I can: but I won't cross the road just here. They'll be on the look-out for me, here of all places, when 'tis known.'

Freney did as he was bid, and had been nigh a quarter of an hour in the forge before Myles darted in and shut the door, he having made a tour about the fields, skulking under ditches and hedges at sight of a distant rider, and then come up to the house from the opposite side, cautiously.

'Where's me mother an' the child?'

'Why, didn't you see 'em?' replied Freney in true Irish fashion.

'You grinning idiot, answer mo!' exclaimed Myles angrily. 'What's become of Una?'

'My mother took her up to the Big House, an' left her in care to Miss Evelyn. Never you fear but she's safe an' sound enough,' answered Freney, with an offended air. 'An' as to me mother, I thought it was with yerself she was this time back.'

'I never laid eyes on her,' replied the smith. 'Do you mane to say she isn't at home at all at all?'

'Troth an' I do; and I thought yerself and herself had gone off together; an' I didn't know whin ye'd come back; an' I was very lonesome entirely'—

'I might be caught in this place like a weasel in a trap,' observed Myles, who had been looking round furtively, his thoughts evidently engaged about his own safety. 'Open the door, an' tell me d'ye see any one comin'?'

'Not a livin' sowl.'

'Stand there, then, an' watch, an' listen as well, while I gather up a few things, for I'm going away for awhile; an' indeed I wouldn't ha' showed my nose here at all, only thinkin' to see me mother an' the child.' He suddenly stamped his foot, and his eyes flashed from under their huge brows. 'What did the ould woman mane by givin' her into the keepin' of our enemies! She'll grow up among 'em an' like 'em, au' larn to hate her own father an' her own flesh an' blood! My little Una should never ha' tasted the bread of the Butlers the longest day I lived'—

'Troth, thin,' observed Freney, 'she's more chance of bread there than here, these times; an' why didn't ye stay at home yerself an' take care of her, if ye're so mighty partickler?'

'Look,' said the smith, drawing a pistol from his pocket: 'my foster-brother gev her a little plaything awhile since—a piece o' silver.' He continued talking as he drew the charge from the weapon, and wiped the bullet carefully. 'See: it was a seven-shilling piece he gev her, for being so purty, an' to remember him by. He didn't know how her father wud remember him too! And now Myles's hand kept rubbing to and fro upon the scar left by 'the eat' on his cheek. 'This bullet is med out o' that seven-shillin' piece; an' I had the tool loaded all day, an' I had him covered once or twice; but somethin' came over me,—some way I thought of us little boys together,—an' I couldn't fire, but kept thinkin' I'd do it the next time.'

'Why, thin, God forgive you, Myles!' said Freney



fervently. 'But you've the black heart to think o' dhrivin' a bullet through that fine young gentleman!'

'An' why shouldn't ho be killed as well as Major Vallaton, that was only a sojer, an' hadn't ever done any of us any harm? I didn't see the pikes and the seythes sparing him.'

'So ye've been at the real murther since,' said Freney, his eyes dilating as his quick imagination supplied the scene. 'No wondher for ye to be in a hurry away: an' how far will ye go beforo ye'll forget it, Myles ahagur?'

'Never you mind,' was the sharp answer. 'I'll not come to you for absolution, never fear.'

'I hope you'll get it, wherever you go,' returned his brother. 'Was there many of the boys killed?'

'Hundreds an' hundreds,' said Myles, with some exaggeration. 'The red-coats had it all their own way. 'Twas a wondher I came out of it alive at all; an' that's nothin' to the hangin' there'll be afterwards. Whist!—don't I hear somebody on the road?'

Dusk had gathered so deeply now, that objects could only be discerned very dimly at a few yards ahead; but Myles's fear-sharpened hearing had told him aright. Freney could with an effort distinguish some person walking a long way off, which discovery added wings to Myles's movements. He was off in two minutes, without an attempt at leave-taking.

'An' where will I ever hear of ye, Myles?' asked his brother.

'Maybe any day, maybe no day,' was the hurried rejoinder. 'Mind the forge, at all events, an' hould yer tongue.' With that last admonition he closed the back-door, and was gone.

Had Freney been conversant with a certain inspired volume of proverbs, he would have remembered that saying: 'The wicked flee when no man pursueth;' for the passenger on the road happened to be a very harmless old peasant, trudging home from market

with his brogues in his hand, and in mortal fear himself of meeting some of the Defenders or their pursuers.

A courier had been despatched by Colonel Butler to reassure his daughter concerning the safety of himself and her brother. But they did not return in person for some days. The sad work of hunting down and securing the misguided rebels had to be gone through; from which, indeed, Captain Gerald stood openly aloof, declaring that his business was to fight the king's enemies in arms, not to ferret them out of their cabins in detail. He advocated a policy of gentleness, which met with no response, which would perhaps scarce have been comprehended by the Defenders themselves. Peradventure it was rather the gentleness of contempt than of humanity; he, a soldier and a Gerald Butler, despised the *canaille* all the world over.

Others, among them his father, were for severe examples. The peasants must be taught the fearful consequences of a servile war to themselves; the certain destruction it brought down. What though they alleged grievances, like naughty children, this outbreak must be made the occasion rather of withdrawing from them that which they have than of granting any new privileges. And so were the Defenders of the county Wexford in evil case this autumn of 1793.

Through the kingdom they were in evil case. A species of semi-rebellion had been tried in most counties and failed. There was talk at the gentry's dinner-tables that season of how the Defenders had risen in Limerick, and had two desperate conflicts with the military; the same took place in Roscommon. Likewise how they had risen in Kerry, dispersed the militia,—headed by the Deputy-Lieutenants of the county,—and taken possession of Dingle, with a garrison of four thousand peasants.

'And what was their intention in that place, sir,

upon their own sworn testimony?' asked the colonel, talking it over with Mr. Waddell in the course of a morning's shooting over the autumn stubbles. 'Why, they swore that their intention was to have killed all the Protestant gentry and confiscated their estates. And it was proved that this diabolical plot was general all over Kerry, and extended into county Limerick; for, if Mullins's gallant defence had failed, there was a regular system of—of couriers, shall I say? messengers, or what you will, to convey intelligence of the rebels' success, that the whole country might rise, with one accord, against His Majesty's Government.'

'But I don't think,' said Mr. Waddell in his bluff voice, 'Mullins did such great things at all as the papers make out. Other county gentlemen, I'm sure'—

'Didn't do such great things!' reiterated the colonel, turning his face full on his companion. 'Why, sir, he saved the country, that's all!' Colonel Butler stopped short in his tramp over the stubble. 'He deserves a peerage, sir, for his pluck.' Who but he would have dared to oppose thousands with the poor guard of seventy soldiers—thousands armed with every conceivable weapon—and give them notice beforehand? It reads like a piece of old chivalry, sir!

The illiterate Mr. Waddell, whose education had been among horses, dogs, and guns, not understanding this allusion in the least, merely echoed, 'It does indeed.'

'Two hours he left them in possession of the town of Dingle, and, to spare bloodshed, leashed up his troops in barrack till all hope of persuasion had passed away. Then, when the insurgents began to commit violence on the peaceable inhabitants, he led forth his brave seventy, but did not fire till the Defenders fired first. Every one knows how he broke them, and how

<sup>1</sup> Which peerage he obtained, by the title of Baron Ventry, in 1800, for this and other gallant deeds; and the ancestral name is now styled more euphoniously De Moleyns.

the thousands fled before the seventy for miles. Kerry will be quiet after that, sir !'

Partridges got up, and for the present diverted the colonel's attention, somewhat to Mr. Waddell's relief, who did not appreciate such point-blank discharges of information as he had been favoured with. He had his own reasons for wishing to be on the very best footing with the colonel, and would fain have agreed with him in every thing—a desire which did not always prosper. Then he was afraid, at any slight diversity of opinion, that the colonel would cast him off for ever, and forswear his friendship—a result which Mr. Waddell could not contemplate without a shudder, as shattering the dearest dream of his existence.

'Brave fellow, Mullins ! I would positively ride fifty miles on *Fly-away*' (his best hunter) 'just to have a shake-hands with him,' observed the colonel, when the covey had flown or been otherwise disposed of.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### A HEDGE SCHOOL.

YET it happened that a hedge did not exist anywhere near the school in question ; for hedges are rather civilized growths, and imply a regular planting at some foregone epoch, and a carefulness at all epochs, which are not probable in a remote Irish district of date 1793. Likewise they imply gates, instead of gaps filled with a cart or a harrow tilted on end. Here the fields were divided and subdivided into the usual minute segments of cottier ownership by fences of loose stones and sods : in some places a mere boundary ;

In other places, where roguish cattle necessitated the thing, elevated into a soft-looking, herbage-grown bank some feet high; at odd intervals and corners of which certain scrubby furze bushes had rooted themselves, and got burned every summer when the children of the neighbourhood wished to extemporize a bonfire in honour of St. John's, or May-day. Consequently, among their green, half-gilded, spiny masses were brown blazed patches, which would nevertheless be verdant next spring as heretofore.

A sort of continuation and concentration of four such fences was the obscure temple of learning to which we would introduce our readers. It was roofed by a thatch so venerable as to be a marvel of house-leek and stonecrops; notwithstanding which additional covering from the energies of nature, various rifts between the rafters afforded exhilarating glimpses of the heavens to aspiring (though idle) youth within—and also afforded admittance to the rain. By consequence there was a fair-weather and a foul-weather side to the establishment, and the stone seats with their cushions of green sods were moveable accordingly.

On this fine October morning the fair-weather region was fully occupied by a jostling set of boys of all sizes, who were arranging their 'scraws' or turf cushions in some sort of semicircle, for greater convenience of teaching and being taught. A single rush-bottomed chair, half of whose back had been rent away in some social convulsion, stood as the master's throne; but desk was there none in all the place; nor, indeed, was there need. An unframed slate on his knee answered the purpose, and his ink-bottle hung to a top button of his frieze coat by a leather strap.

Not yet had the pedagogue made his appearance, however; consequently, a species of saturnalia was going on, as in schools of higher pretensions during such licensed times. In the angle of road immediately outside a noisy gang of boys and girls were busy at 'thread-the-needle' and 'high-gates;' a ring was formed

round a pair of renowned 'jackstoue' players, applauding with unsparing shouts every dexterous manipulation of the five bits of quartz; another group had chalked certain geometric-looking lines—triangles and squares—on the ground, and were hopping about among them apparently with great satisfaction, jerking a bit of slate at each movement. 'Fox-and-geese' was a resource within doors; and one or two of the most studious were reading aloud to themselves, finger under lines, in a laborious manner; the volumes being such as *The Nine Worthies: being Histories of Three Jews, Three Heathens, and Three Christians; The Adventures of James Freney, the Robber*; or that truly startling production, *Irish Rogues and Rapparees*.

All which amusements received a sudden check by the appearance of the master at the turn of the road, marching along in his own customary majestic manner, and accompanied, a step or two behind, by the boys of the farmhouse where he was at present residing. Under his arm was the dreaded symbol of his office, which, indeed, never left that position, except when needed to administer correction; for, behold Mr. Bryan O'Doherty at any waking moment, and the cane projected before and behind from beneath his shoulder. It was the badge of his order; he would not have been so proud of a marshal's baton.

'I think I'll put ye shortly up out of "Vosther" into "Hawney's Mensuration," Mike, if ye continues to improve the way ye've been doin'. There's nothing like the sciences for a lad. What are the seven sciences, me boy?'

Mike rubbed his shock head, as he trotted along to keep pace with the master's wide stride.

'Arithmetic, asthronomy, miusuration, geomethry'—and he stopped short, slinking farther away from his puestioner, with a sense of what was due to his failing memory.

'Michael Mahony,' said the master solemnly, facing round towards him on the road, 'if ye forget the seven

sciences that way, I won't answer for what'll become of ye yet. I'm hammerin' that piece of knowledge into ye ever since I came to the place, an' ye're none the wiser. An' all I've to say is, that I'm sorry for ye Mike Mahony; an' if ye weren't yer father's son I'd belt yer this minit.'

Forward marched Mr. O'Doherty again, in a very dignified and dejected manner; while the culprit took good care not to diminish the distance between himself and the cane, but slunk round the corner of the doorway into an obscure corner, after the master had entered, and feigned to be busy with his 'Universal Spellin'-Book,' open at its closing treatise, Dodsley's *Economy of Human Life*, whereof Mike Mahony could not comprehend a single word.

'Why, then, ye set of spalpcens,' was Mr. O'Doherty's immediate salutation to his pupils,—'why, then, am I a fatter seein' ye all sittin' down comfortable, an' the little girls standin' like images? Get up, ye unmannerly cubs, till the ladies is sated. Phil Dwyer, ye're the biggest; shake a whisp of straw along by the wall for the little gals, an' always consider them fust, all yer life, sir. I wondher ye aren't ashamed of yer-selves!'

Having administered this lesson of politeness, and marshalled the bare-footed young ladies in a row round the edge of the apartment, forming as pretty a fringe of blooming cheeks and bright eyes as one would wish to look at, Mr. O'Doherty passed to other matters immediately.

'Did any of yo bring turf to-day, as I ordhered?'

Only a few had remembered the command, as, during the summer, there had been, of course, no fires in the school.

'It's well for ye this isn't a cold day, or as much as yer noses shouldn't get the air of the fire. Don't forget yer sod a-piece to-morrow, or I'll know the reason why, I can tell ye.'

He took a review of the crescent of scholars.

'Stand out here, Pat Raymon. No shuffling, sir! You know what you deserve from mitching from school yestherday; an' there's no two words about it. Hold out yer hand!'

The cane descended twice with sullen 'swish' on the outstretched palm. 'I'll tacho ye to be a mitcher in future, sir; 'tishn't two but tin ye'll get next time, as sure as my name's Brian Boru O'Doherty, sir.—What's that ye're sayin', little Shamus?' to a 'gosssoon' who had come up in front of his chair, bearing some offering swathed in cool cabbage leaves. 'Spake out, acushla;' and he paternally bent his ear, having his eye unvaryingly on the gift.

'Plase, sir, my mother sind you a couple of prints from the mornin's churn, sir, an' to say she hoped you'd come over to dine a Sunday, sir; an I lost my "Red-a-mad-aisy"<sup>1</sup> in the bog last night, sir.'

'Shamus,' said the schoolmaster, with a majestic wave of his hand, 'ye come of a dacent stock, an' ycr mother was ever an' always a dacent woman, that had a proper respec' for the larnin', an' I hope ye'll take afther her, Shamus. Tell her that Misther O'Doherty, Philomath, and Professor of the Seven Sciences, is obleged to her'—

'She bid me tell you, sir, that's she's beginnin' to pickle the pigs this week, sir,' added Shamus, with another bob of his head.

'And that ho will help at the Sunday dinner with tho hoighth of satisfaction and agreeability,' continued the schoolmaster, apparently unmoved by the prospect of good fare, which nevertheless touched a tender chord in his bosom. 'Go to yer seat, Shamus, me boy, an' we'll find a "Red-a-mad-aisy" somewher' for ye.' Thus was the offence condoned.

'We all know who's tho white-headed boy to-day,' muttered Pat Raymon, rather sulkily; for which ho might be excused, the cane still stinging on his fingers. He had no presents to bring tho Philomath, consequently

<sup>1</sup> 'Reading made Easy.'



was always in receipt of rigid justice; and, had *he* presumed to lose his primer in a bog or elsewhere, would probably have received the number of its pages in 'pandics.'

The hearing of tasks previously allotted was the first business of the school; during which time Mr. O'Doherty made and mended pens assiduously, for the writing-class afterwards. As yet the 'Magnum Bonum' and the steel nib were not, but unsophisticated goose-quills, plucked from the live wing, perchance that very morning, performed all the caligraphy of all the hedge schools. Likewise were ruled paper and copperplate head-lines unknown; each copy had to be lined by a bit of soft lead carried by its proprietor, and its head-line written by the master in sight of his pupils. One by one the boys subsided to their places, and squatted into positions convenient for filling up the copies; some with slates on their knees, others kneeling on the ground, and resting the paper on a book upon the turf-covered seat; but there was no sort of uniformity among them in this matter. Occasionally a 'swish' of the cane, and consequent howl, denoted when sudden vengeance had overtaken a boy caught in the fact of playing 'fox-and-geese' on the sly with his neighbour, and not sufficiently alive to the master's approach, who meandered about the school, hearing the tasks of the little girls, overseeing the writers, and teaching the alphabet promiscuously where needed; while plenty of idleness went on in corners, especially among the privileged 'girlcons.' For no offence whatever was the cane allowed to descend on these: it seemed as if one of the matters most successfully cultivated at Mr. O'Doherty's establishment was a chivalry towards the weaker sex.

The reading-class was in full swing, engaged upon the oft-told tale of 'Tommy and Harry,' or the terrific consequences of saying 'Don't care,' when Mike Mahony, who had been watching the door intently at intervals, to the detriment of his studies, proclaimed that 'the sun was shinin' straight in.' Mr. O'Doherty, not quite

verifying the announcement by his own observation, postponed the break-up a few minutes longer, until Tominy had actually been devoured by the lion, and then gave the joyful signal for dispersion.

'Plase, sir, Misther O'Doherty, there's a gintleman rider comin' over the hill.'

'Come back, ye pack o' vagabones,' shouted the Philomath. 'How ready ye are to cut off widout the half o' yer lesson said! I'll tache ye better before I've done wid ye! Rehearse this minit! D'yo hear? Rehearse, I say!'

Everybody understood why the order was given, and everybody lustily obeyed it. The rider, at some short distance from the cabin, heard the mass of voices, and smiled to himself, as fully comprehending the manœuvre. 'Poor Brian Boru!' he soliloquized, 'I wonder if he is at it yet—teaching the young idea how to shoot. Dou't I remember him, with his crooked brown wig and his unfailing cane? 'Twould be well for many a professor of higher pretensions that he had the dignity of his calling so much at heart as my poor old friend, and was as much in earnest to impart his knowledge. Ay, 'tis Mr. O'Doherty still holding forth on the glories of learning.' For when the gentleman rider was supposed to have arrived opposite the doorway, and that the vehemence of simultaneous rehearsal had made due impression upon him, it was stopped by a raising of the Philomath's cane, and a monologue ensued; which on this occasion wandered away to the distant region of Shinar, and descanted concerning the original and patron of all schoolmasters, the King Feninsa Farsa, who went to study poetry in the Tower of Babel, and brought back to Ireland, as a result of his labours, 'the ouldest langidge entirely.'

'An' if it was a thing that ye wor bestowed with powers of bein' able to undherstand an' coutemplate—which ye aren't, of coorse—I'd give ye an expatiation on polite litherature which would show yo that the king didn't make the learnin' a bit illustrious, but the

learnin' made the king so, though he was born a genealogical an' heraldical monareh, the grandfather of Noah. Stand quiet, Shamus—what are ye starin' at ?'



## CHAPTER XVIII.

FERGUS KAVANAGH.

A TALL shadow fell along the sunlight on the threshold. The Philomath turned round, in well-feigned surprise, to greet the young gentleman.

'It's meself that's proud to hail the entrance of a member of the educated divisions of society into this humble repository of larnin' an' the Seven Sciences,' said he magniloquently, and with a deep obeisance which left only the crown of his wry wig visible for the best part of a minute to those in front. 'And might I appropriately inquire, sir, whether any person is taking care of your steed, as I observe you in equestrian costume?'

'Oh, my horse is well enough—cropping the house-leek, and his bridle round a stone,' replied the stranger. 'You have a flourishing school here, Mr.'— he hesitated, as if at a loss for the name.

'Brian Boru O'Doherty, Philomath (which manes a lover of knowledge, boys), an' your obedient servant, sir. The seminary's rasonable good, sir, if I could find the youth more compunctious, an' aggressive on politico litherature, sir.'

'Why,' said the other, laughing, 'don't they get on as fast as you could wish?'

'The customs of the counthry leave much to be desiderated, sir, with a view to the facilitation of

education; they forgets in the harvest weeks what they learns in the summer, and in the winter weeks what they learns now; and so it comes to pass that the sum-total of their acquisitiveness is hardly worth mentionin', sir, especially to one so grounded in all the branches of polite education as yerself.'

'Come, Mr. O'Doherty, I can't believe so badly of a school which has been under your presideny so long. Let me examine them.'

'Suppose I had an aere of potatoes, and got three and fourpence-halfpenny each hamper for them; how much money would my aere bring me?'

A few of the unwary arithmeticians floundered into the deeps of this problem, and proclaimed guess-work amounts.

'Well, that isn't a fair out question; but do any of you know how many herrings I'll get for elevenpence, if I pay three-halfpence for one-and-a-half?'

The seniors had been really well taught in elementary arithmetic, and answered the question. But never had an idea of geography crossed either their minds or that of their instructor. A map was as unknown as a mummy. Consequently, when the stranger demanded where London was, dead silence ensued; until one of the eldest scholars, a hulking fellow of nineteen, growled forth, 'It's the biggest town of the English—and we'll drive em' back to it some day, out of our own Dublin, wid the blessing o' St. Kevin!'

An alarmed glance shot from the schoolmaster's to the gentleman's face; but what he saw there reassured him. A pleased, thoughtful smile rested on the handsome features.

'So you feel the foreign yoke also, my poor lad? Well, when boys are thus eager, men should not be behind-hand. Your pupils do you credit, Mr. O'Doherty;' and he turned to leave. 'You will do me a favour by giving them a half-holiday;' whereat the welkin rang again with cheers, amid which the stranger mounted, and rode slowly away.

'Well, this other touch to the national pulse shows the same heat,' he soliloquized. 'Old and young have the senso of oppression; even as an indefinable weight in the atmosphero tells of the coming storm. Poor Ireland! and there is not a fairer country among all the lands! yet continually ten.pest-beaten, continually suffering—thy lot has been the lot of beauty—brightest sunshine only relieving the deepest gloom! But sooner would I link myself with thee, my country, in all thy degradation, than march after the conquering car of thine enemy, wearing her gilded chains!'

It will be seen readily that Mr. Fergus Kavanagh was of a metaphorical disposition and warm imagination. No offer, that his biographer is aware of, had been made to the young barrister to assume any English chains, whether gilded or otherwise: though it seems not improbable, if his present state of mind be cultivated, that the result may eventually be a goodly crop of tangible fetters, without the gilding.

The old rectory came in sight—the comfortable, ugly homestead, settled with some pains exactly in the position where there could possibly be no view; where a swelling pasture rose a few yards in front, crested with a row of elms, through which many a time had Fergus seen the crimson sunset burn on a spring evening. A very fragrant garden spread about it on all sides; an abundant garden, overflowing with wealth of every seasonable flower, and every useful herb, culinary and medicinal. As yet most of the complicated, highly cultivated, acclimatized blossoms of our modern horticulture had no existence; the rector's garden would be reckoned a wild scene of redundant commonplace growths by a flower-fancier of the present day.

But there he was in the midst of them—dear old gentleman! His son's heart warmed as he looked. 'At my very rose-tree!' thought Fergus; and had a glimpse of the care with which that shrub had been tended and nurtured, because of its associations with the absent one. He could not know that another foot,

lighter and youthfuller, had sometimes paused beside it an instant, for the same sake.

'I am glad to see you well, sir.'

The pruning-knife dropped from the rector's hand as he turned round. 'My son!' And though the scene was not in France, these men, dearly loving one another, kissed with the lips, and could scarcely let go the grasp of hands. 'You've been a long time coming, Fergus,' said his father. 'I suppose the packet had contrary winds. Never mind since you're here, dear boy!—I must not call you boy, indeed, any more—a full-fledged barrister-at-law!'

'Always a boy to you, father! always the son you have a right to order and direct, dear father!' They wrung each other's hands again, as they went into the house.

Then followed a scene with the servants—old retainers who had known the young man from his birth—not the hirelings of a year or two. They would be doubly happy this night, because the beloved son of the house was home again.

'I'm so sorry the Doon Castle people are away!' quoth the rector. 'I daresay they will come for the Christmas, though—or Gerald will be down for the shooting, probably.'

'I saw them all in Dublin,' remarked Fergus, with apparent indifference. 'Colonel Butler is looking extremely well, but as great a bigot in matters political as ever. He and I would never agree—that's one thing certain.'

'Well, he is certainly a little too stringent on some points,' admitted the rector, 'on which very points you are too lax, as far as I can gather from your letters. But waiving things political to-night—don't you think your old playfellow, Evelyn, vastly improved?'

'Yes, indeed,' answered the son, with an assumption of indifference which did not in the least deceive his father. 'Grown quite a fine girl, really—and does not seem to inherit the colonel's ultra-royalism; whereas

Gerald has it all, apparently. They'll find it difficult to make him the member for Doon, notwithstanding the overweening family interest, his politics are so dead against the people.'

'Why, when did the vacancy occur? "Saunders" said nothing of it.'

'The major is to have some job-Government place, just to make room for young Butler,' was the reply. 'The negotiations are not quite ended yet. I wouldn't be in that sort of political life, and soil my fingers in such transactions, for all his estate in reversion,' added Fergus, with a look of disgust. 'It is all corrupt—corrupt to the core, the whole representative system of Ireland. In every possible point of view it is a farce. Suppose Gerald is elected—whose representative will he be? Certainly not the people's; simply the representative of so much land and so much money.'

'There have been wise men,' said the rector gently, 'who thought that land and money should not go unrepresented among the Parliament of a people. But I am not going to differ with you, dear boy, the first night of your return home, though I had hoped that the news of the convulsions in France might have moderated your reforming fervour.'

'So it has, father,' answered the young barrister: 'I am not the republican that I was; but I still can see and condemn abuses.'



## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE COUNSELLOR AMONG THE HEATHER.

LIFE at the Doon rectory was very quiet; but all the better did it suit the young barrister's mood. Fresh from the excitement of the London season, he delighted in the autumnal calm and silence here. His father often feared that the monotony must weary him—one day lapsing past as like another as wavelets in a rippling stream, without events or apparent interests. But bustle would have wearied Fergus far more.

The servants soon began to conjecture that the young gentleman had something on his mind. He was given to long rides and walks alone about the country; objectless expeditions, except for the revisiting of old scenes connected with his childhood. And often would the passer-by gaze wonderingly at the abstracted eyes and folded hands of the rider, the reins lying on the neck of the sure-footed old mare for miles, as she followed her own sweet will concerning the path.

Fergus Kavanagh was constitutionally a dreamer. In his boyhood he had been the delight and the dread of his tutors, from his aptness for learning, and yet his indomitable self-will. Few would have thought that in the slight form and gentle face lay couched a determination like iron; though all could read the poetic temperament, the slumbering talent, perchance the fragile life. A greater contrast could scarcely be imagined than he and his father presented to a casual observer. The sturdy, spotless, silver-haired rector, who seemed generally the personification of health and uprightness and benevolence; the long, limp young barrister, with his dark fine hair brushed back from his temples and hanging in half-curved ends on his loose



collar—delicate-looking, and not always benevolent-looking; for moods swept over him as cloud-shadows over a mountain side, and on these fitful changes depended whether the young man seemed amiable or the reverse. But, when sunshine came, he was most pleasant to behold.

Being thus a dreamer, and of susceptible imagination, his thoughts had, of course, been coloured by the prevailing delusion of the day; the liberty mania had full possession of him. All Europe had awakened, three years ago, to find itself shockingly misgoverned in most places. Certain Britons imagined this to be the case with their 'tight little island' likewise; certain Irishmen looked at their penal laws, and had more reason for coming to the same conclusion. Fergus Kavanagh had been one of a motley association, entitling themselves 'Friends of France,' and aiming at a reproduction of much of that spirited nation's behaviour across the Channel. His grandest ovent in all history had been the taking of the Bastille, and his hero of all nations Count Mirabeau. Recent events had rather rudely upset his ideal; the crop of anarchy and crime resulting from those early seeds of liberty, equality, and fraternity had disgusted the young theorist's fastidious temperament. He would, however, separate these excesses as the mere exereescences of freedom—the scum working off in the regenerating ferment: his faith in the principles remained unaltered by the foulness of the practice he witnessed. Patriotism had been his passion from boyhood; and it was an age when the abstraction 'my country' exercised a mighty force among men. His dream was to regenerate Ireland. According to him, the nation was divisible into two great classes—oppressors and oppressed. He was not prepared to say that a republic would set this to rights, nor even prepared to shake off George III. in any shape; late events in the model nation had startled him, and many another pure-minded liberty-lover, into the conviction of how closely extremes meet, and how nearly an unalloyed democraey

is allied to an unalloyed despotism. Still, his dream was to regenerate Ireland.

As regeneration of a people was then understood, this meant a remodelling of its government. The time was prior to the days of sanitary reform, or educational reform, or any other reform really affecting the masses. That there were evils of even greater severity than political inequalities, even ignorance and improvidence and immorality, scarce entered the heads of the theorists who clamoured for political change. Few sought the latter as a step to higher improvements.

And now, wandering about sundry remote districts of the country during these shuuberous autumn days, Fergus Kavanagh took occasion—as he himself had phrased it before—to feel the pulse of the people. A certain degree of fever-heat was perceptible; a blind, unreasoning disquiet, in many cases quite unknowing what it was disquieted about. No high theories or ideals of freedom disturbed the peasant's existence; only those who dwell at home at ease, and have enlarged education, have time for such intellectual aspirations. But the peasant felt keenly certain hardships, the pressure of unjust systems on the commonplaces of his life; such as the tyrannical levying of the proctor or county-cess collector. The reason of a tax he never could be brought to comprehend. The penal statutes pressed on him without his knowledge; for he valued not the rights whence they cut him off. A higher class was irritated by the laws prohibiting sundry professions and callings to members of the Roman Catholic Church, and laying sundry penalties upon actions not criminal. This was the most dangerous class, wherein lay the brains to move the inert social mass beneath, and from whom the sense of wrong was suffused through the living tie of the common religion. Justice and safety would have lain in the removal of the disabilities which formed matter for complaint; so said the far-sighted men of the generation. Sometimes they gained their point,

and carried a Relief Bill; but shoals of grievances remained untouched by even the most liberal of these; and those practical abuses which affected the greatest numbers were totally unchanged. Added to which may be the fact, that, when men begin to expatiate on their wrongs, and get into the exaggerated state of mind regarding them which is the natural result, no moderate concession will do more than whet their appetite for alteration.

Were the rector's son extant in the present day, he would be deemed quite a moderate Radical. He would find most of his cherished reforms effected long since; and would probably wonder at the ingenuity of some grievance-mongers who get up subjects for grumbling in our times.

It was not exactly the aforesaid process of feeling the people's pulso that brought young Kavanagh to ascend the slopes of Slieve-Bui on one of those October days. He was a great lover of fine views, and had a boyish reminiscence of the wide lands to be seen from the mountain brow; he thought he would climb it again, for the sake of old times.

'An empty sky, a world of heather.' So has a poet in one line drawn a picture like that which surrounded Fergus when he had reached a sort of sunken dimple in the hill. The rim rose a broad, steep slope, thick with the tufted heath, which also filled the dimple from the edges to the centre; a treacherous centre, containing a hidden quagmire of soft bog, only perceptible by a few tufts of rushes, and having a furrowed outlet where might be a runlet, breaking the rim of the cup-shaped hollow. Over all, shut down a pale-coloured sky without clouds.

Mr. Kavanagh was heated by the ascent, accomplished with the bridle on his arm from some distance below; he guessed there was a spring at that central quagmire, and directed his steps toward it. Like the raising of a curtain from a camera-obscura, came a sudden remembrance of a tired boy in the same spot, plucking

up a knot of rushes, scooping out the soft soil, waiting until a cavity full of ice-cold water rewarded his thirsting toil. He looked at his small neat hands and filbert nails; could they have ever executed such a feat as that scooping, with such relish for the work?

He found a regularly-shaped well there now, a little to his surprise, and traces of footsteps in the soft ground about. The place was evidently more frequented than of yore.

'Arrah, suro it's only his honour the counsellor;' we needn't mind *him*, Misther O'Doherty;' and Fergus, following the unexpected voice, saw one man half visible, sitting upright in the deep heather, and apparently endeavouring to induce another, as yet concealed, to render himself visible likewise.

'I tell ye 'tis only Misther Fergus, that's one of ourselves, an' that knows how often yearlins goes astray on the hills, an' we has to be huntin' 'em. Get up, man alive; 'tisin't a militia at all, at all.'

With much shamefacedness the Philomath elevated himself from among the brushwood.

'Your servant, counsellor; and it affords me the very intensity of melancholic reflection that you should behold me in such a disingenuous plight—in fact, I may say, skulking on the mountain; but I was over-persuaded by this gentleman that your approach was that of an enemy—one of the militia-men, in fact; and so I was induced, against my better judgment, counsellor, and against all my principles as professor, however unworthy, of the polite sciences, to—to—in fact, to conceal my person beneath the herbage of the district.'

Mr. Kavanagh assured him that further apology was unnecessary, and divined in his own mind that, unless the pair were up to sedition, the presence of even a militia-man need not be productive of so much consternation.

'And your cattle have been tempted up into these

<sup>1</sup> Every barrister is called by the Irish peasantry 'the counsellor.'

solitudes by the heather,' he observed. 'I don't wonder at it; it is so fragrant. What multitudes of wild bees are about; I found a nest down yonder, and got stung for my pains.

Another resuscitation of boyish amusement. It was not that he valued the sparse brown cells of golden honey, but that the capture brought back to him those old careless times to which thoughtful men generally look so lovingly.

'Yes, yer honour, the yearlins is mighty frisky entirely, an' forgets the bounds. It's lookin' for Fin the farrier they are, the ould people says;' and Fitzpatrick's face was a study of demurcness; but the glance he shot from under his brows at the counsellor was answered by one which was not unintelligent.

'Oh! that's the way the wind blows, is it?' returned the young gentleman. 'I guessed as much; and you're in it also, Mr. O'Doherty?'

The Philomath had been making up for his undignified exit from the heather by an additional strut and inflation of his small self, although it was difficult to step with sensational stride over soil of the present description, especially when one had short legs, and the brushwood, thick on the bog, averaged a foot and a half high. But his mortification was deep that the 'counsellor' should have seen him in such inglorious predicament as condescending to seek safety by hiding like a rabbit; and could he have expanded physically to the proportions of Brobdignag, they would scarce have fittingly cased his swelling soul.

The immediate effect of Mr. Kavanagh's appeal was a sort of collapse to the Philomath; and, while casting a look of mingled fright and surprise at his companions, his right leg became incautiously immersed in an old rabbit-hole.

'We've heard all about you, counsellor—at least I have,' said Fitzpatrick, during the extrication of the schoolmaster. 'Don't be afraid, Mither O'Doherty;

he's a friend of Lord Edward's himself; an' if he isn't one of us yet awhile, he'll be before long.'

'No boucs broken, I hopo?' said Mr. Kavanagh to the upset one.

'He might as well have fallen into a limekiln of cold stirabout,' observed Fitzpatrick. 'Suro the bog is like sponges, and couldn't break a bone; sorra fear of his tough little limbs. Come along, Mither O'D., and don't be puzzlin' the gentleman.'

'I have remarked, sir,' began the schoolmaster, 'in the course of a long and variously diversified experience of the degenerosity of human nature, that persons in a class but little removed above the commonalty—above the vulgar herd, Mither Kavanagh—are morally incapable of perceiving the highly nervous temperament, full of emotiousness and sensibilities of those who are gifted with educational pereceptions.'

'Troth, as well as I can make that out, it's sayin' I'm not fit to hould a candle to you, Mither O'D.,' quoth matter-of-fact Fitzpatrick. 'An' sure I know no more of the seven sciences than that old mare; an' remarkable well I've got on without 'em, or navigation aither, though they say that's a fine thing to ondherstand, if a body's brains could come round it at all. But as I was sayin', counsellor, why aren't you one of us?'

'One of *you*, my friend? I don't understand.' The large grey eyes looked rounder than usual at his interrogator; yet the counsellor did understand in a measure.

'It's kind father for you' to be considherate for the poor, an' no tyrant in yerself; an' whinever everybody has their rights agin we'll take care his reverence the parson isn't much the worse,' observed Fitzpatrick, instead of answering the implied query.

'Come,' said Mr. Kavanagh, 'are you a delegate?'

'Troth, an' it's I that's proud to say I an,' was the reply, with a flashing glance.

'And you, Mr. O'Doherty?'

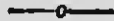
'Sir, the intherests of polite litherature an' tho seven

'It's hereditary.'

sciences would not suffer their professor, especially one indoctrinated with the honourable and most compendious degree of Philomath to follow any pursuit of politics'—

'You've words enough to swim a whale,' interrupted his companion; 'au' one can't no more see through 'em than through an ink-bottle. He's a-goin' to write a letter for us,' added Fitzpatrick succinctly; 'that's the long an' the short of it.'

An imploring glance from the schoolmaster was divided between Fitzpatrick's rashness and the counsellor's secretiveness; but, from long practice of magniloquent phraseology on all occasions, he was really incapable of getting out a few commonplace words. Indeed, he would have regarded ordinary speech as derogatory to his proud position as Philomath.



## CHAPTER XX.

### IN HIDING.

THE trio came to the brow of the hill whence slanted away at an alarming angle a side so steep as to be almost a precipice: a slope from a crest of grey mural rocks traced with green, and furrowed with marks of winter streamlets for some hundreds of feet to the valley; in which upland valley was one solitary farmhouse, and a few fields walled in from the moory slopes. But beyond the enclosing spurs of mountain lay stretched fertile counties, mapped out into a patchwork of many-coloured fields, among which one could trace windings of small rivers towards their rest in the great grey sea, which appeared as the binding girdle of the scene.

All things are as the eyes which look upon them. Fergus Kavanagh saw the wide fair prospect with that pleasurable mingling of emotions so well known to the educated imagination; the vague sense of power conveyed by the exaltation and the extent was not absent; but that higher appreciation, which would incline a soul to sing the 'Te Deum laudamus' in presence of any of God's grand works, was wholly wanting even in his poet-heart. Years of London society had rubbed away the religious lacquering of home education, and left Fergus Kavanagh what is called a man of the world; and which too often means 'without God in the world.'

'A beautiful country,' quoth Fitzpatrick, whose brow had contracted and darkened; 'the likes of it isn't anywhere for raisin' crops an' feedin' cattle. That's the work the Saxon would be plased to have us at—like the hastes, only mindin' what we ate an' drink—but, never mind! we'll disappoint 'em yet, the schamers!'

The last sentence was spoken with a smothered exclamation between his teeth. A curious contrast was the calm face of the young barrister—the political enthusiast of brain and theory—beside the rude fanatic whose passions were strongly engaged.

'You are warm about it, my friend,' remarked Fergus, as he recognised the true type of the dangerous demagogue whose heart-heat can inflame others. 'I daresay you do good work for the Union?'

'I'm thryin', sir; but this county o' Wexford is very backward intirely,' was the answer. Whereat the Philomath pricked up his ears, shook his head back like an affronted bantam-cock, and prepared to do battle for his barony.

'As regards the highest branches ov litherature an' the seven sciences,' said Mr. O'Doherty, 'the county of Wexford cannot justly be styled barren or backward, while the barony of Forth, an integral portion of the same, has produced such luminous stars of science as the learned Father Pat O'Rooney an' tho renowned



scholar an' philomath Billy Macan, to say nothin' of an humble disciple of litherature who in devotion yields to none, but who shall be nameless here;' and the remark was pointed by an additional strut.

'Why, then, I wasn't thinkin' ov you or yer seven sciences at all,' rejoined Mr. Fitzpatrick, 'though I don't know why a place mightn't be backward that had every one of the seven; an' Wexford *is* backward in all it ought to be forward in, while the people hardly knows what a Defendher or a Delegate is. Not a county in Ireland is so backward; but we'll mend that fault if there's a pike in the province.'

How fearfully his word was fulfilled let the annals of 1798 reveal. From being a peaceable agricultural population, the inhabitants of Wexford became altogether leavened with sedition; among them the Rebellion culminated into the grossest acts of tyranny and cruelty, and suffered its severest defeat at Vinegar Hill.

The trio were now descending Slieve-Bui at its farthest side. Fitzpatrick presently entered into details respecting their immediate business, which was to organize measures for opposing the return of Captain Gerald Butler as member of Parliament for Doon. Not only political antipathy, but also personal hate, was at work here. 'Black Butler' was cordially detested by the peasantry—a fact in which the stalwart colonel rather gloried than otherwise. He would have deemed himself false to British rule had he anything but the dislike of its opponents.

Halfway down the side of the mountain stood a small cabin of loose stones, with some perches of ragged cultivation about it. Nearing this, Mr. Kavanagh thought he noticed a man lounging against the doorpost and smoking; but the next time he looked the door was shut, and no trace of occupancy was about the habitation; not even smoke from the chimney.

'It's hard on 'em, the craythurs, never to be able to have a fire but in the night, when the smoke can't be seen,' observed Fitzpatrick. 'You see, counsellor, there's

people in hidin' there, an' they has to be very cautious intirely, whin there's such sharp eyes goin'.'

'Mind, Fitzpatriek, I'm to know nothing of these letters you're going to have written,' said Mr. Kavanagh. 'I suppose they will be a little in the style of what would be called threatening, and I might be obliged to inform, perhaps.'

'Yer honour an informer!' exclaimed the delegate contemptuously. 'I'd as soon believe that Slieve-Bui would walk away ov its own accord into the say over there, as one of the name wud do a dirty action. It's only jokin' you are, counsellor; an' you a frind ov Lord Edward's!'

The schoolmaster's pursed-out lower lip had turned quite white at the dreaded word 'inform,' and trembled visibly. 'Fear not, my poor Brian Boru,' said the young harrister, touching his shoulder compassionately; 'I would as soon think of telling tales upon the poor non-combatant camp-follower of an army as upon thee. Conspiracy is not thy vocation, doubtless.'

Mr. O'Doherty said something in a faint voice about the seven sciences. Meanwhile, Fitzpatriek tapped at the door, with the peculiar signal knock of his fraternity. In a minute or two—with a pause, as if some reconnoitring had taken place—a bar was lifted from the interior of the door, and the latch was raised.

'Save all here,' said Fitzpatriek, entering with a stoop to avoid the blackened lintel. 'Ye didn't hurry yerselves anyhow. Don't be afeard of the gentleman— isn't he the last of the Kavanaghs, as good a stock as ever wore shoe-leather?'

The man whom the counsellor had seen smoking at the door was smoking now in the fireless chimney-corner, and took no notice of the new arrivals other than by the watchful observance of his deepset eyes.

'Hollo, Myles! don't you know me?' said Mr. Kavanagh, coming forward with his extended hand, after his usual frank manner.

'Well enough,' was the somewhat sullen answer;



'HULLO, MYLES! DON'T YOU KNOW ME?'

Ep. 142.



'but I didn't know whether yer honour might choose to know *me*. My company isn't much desired these times, sir.'

'I hardly recognised you at first, from the cut on your cheek—that's something new, Myles?'

'Yes, sir, a touch from a friend one fine morning,' responded the blacksmith, with a smile unpleasant to behold. After which his fingers strayed to the scar, and seemed in a manner to caress it.

Many men dropped in, as if they had been waiting somewhere in the neighbourhood; and the delegate proceeded to business. Mr. O'Doherty was made secretary of the conference; indeed, though with furtive glances at the counsellor, he seemed naturally to drop into that position, as if it was nothing new. Nor was it. The Philomath's laboured and much ornamented handwriting was well known at headquarters.

The election was expected to take place some time in the ensuing month; and all the forces of the United Irishmen of the district were to be marshalled to oppose the return of Captain Butler. Fair means and foul, but chiefly the latter, were to be used for this purpose. A good deal of the conferences were carried on in the Irish tongue, which was only partially understood by Mr. Kavanagh; so that, in default of information from his ears, his eyes were much on the alert. Truly these conspirators seemed to be in earnest. Especially was he struck with the fell determination of Myles Furlong's face. Once something glittering rolled from his fingers on the earthen floor close by the counsellor's feet.

'A silver bullet, Myles! expensive sbot that!'

The blacksmith had been fingering it, as was his wont whenever the idea of his enemy and foster-brother occurred to him. He took it back, with his sinister smile.

'They say a silver bullet is sure to kill; it can never miss its mark,' was all he said.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## A SPINNING-WHEEL PARTY.

THE time for the election drew on. Captain Gerald came down to canvass, feeling sure, in his easy way, of his return: making a play of the whole affair, rather—which was his habit about most things in life. He was going into Parliament chiefly to please his father, who was himself the other member for the constituency, and had set his heart on having two Butlers representing the ancestral borough of Doon.

No need at all had there been of a canvass, if the constituency had been as obedient as of yore. The colonel hardly anticipated anything else; but, lo, an adventurous young barrister was found and qualified by the national party—*alias* the United Irishmen—to set himself up against the hereditary representative, Captain Gerald Butler. And this interloper had come down from Dublin, gifted with an abundant power of speech and of blarney, conveyed in the richest peasant brogue, and with an occasional interlarding of Irish phrases, which went straight to the national heart. Short, and broad, and comfortable, he seemed the personification of fun and ready wit: just the man to win the mob, and sway them with half a dozen words. And he thoroughly stole the hearts of the men of Doon.

True, there was a party unassailable—not in virtue, nor in attachment to the sept of Butler—but in position as tenants-at-will under the colonel, and his bailiff, Bodkin, who was in reality the great man and powerful, being the visible authority, wielding stripes and rewards; able to put out of holdings, and able to put in, apparently at his own will. Consequently, when he went from cabin to cabin among the voters on the estate, announcing

the captain's candidature, the announcement was intended to be a command, and was taken as such. No matter how cordially hated was Bum Bodkin, he was invested with all the terrors of a dog in office: the tenants knew that he had a long memory and a strong arm, and would sooner or later do them some desperate spito, if they dared affront him by opposing his mandates; so that even those who had a securer tenure than from year to year knew better than to exercise the franchise against their landlord.

Now the colonel was a chivalrous old gentleman, and stedfast in his own principles and practices of honour; he would take no part in any under-hand electioneering dodges. He would owe his son's return to the unsophisticated preference of a grateful tenantry; and even when he heard of the candidate set up by the enemy, and knew that they were straining every nerve to oust the Butler, he would still condescend to no devices for gaining the populace. He remained in Dublin, tranquilly pursuing his usual course; he would not even go down to the castle, lest it might be said that his presence meant intimidation. And, to do him justice, he knew not how perfectly Bodkin would perform the part of terrorist without him.

On this wise did the electioneering proceed.

It was that evening in the beginning of November when the first spinning-wheel party of the season was being given at Barney Brallaghan's cabin, a little way outside the village of Doon. The large low kitchen was flooded with light from a huge turf fire heaped on the hearth; in the very heart of the blaze hung a large pot of potatoes, now bubbling cheerily; and two other pots of potatoes flanked the fire, their stage of cooking not so forward. These were the preparations for supper. The guests were all the 'boys an' girls' of the neighbourhood, which term includes the unmarried up to fifty; and a considerable sprinkling of the married came also, scarcely so much for the sake of spinning as for the sake of 'divarshin.' Mrs. Barney, respecting whose

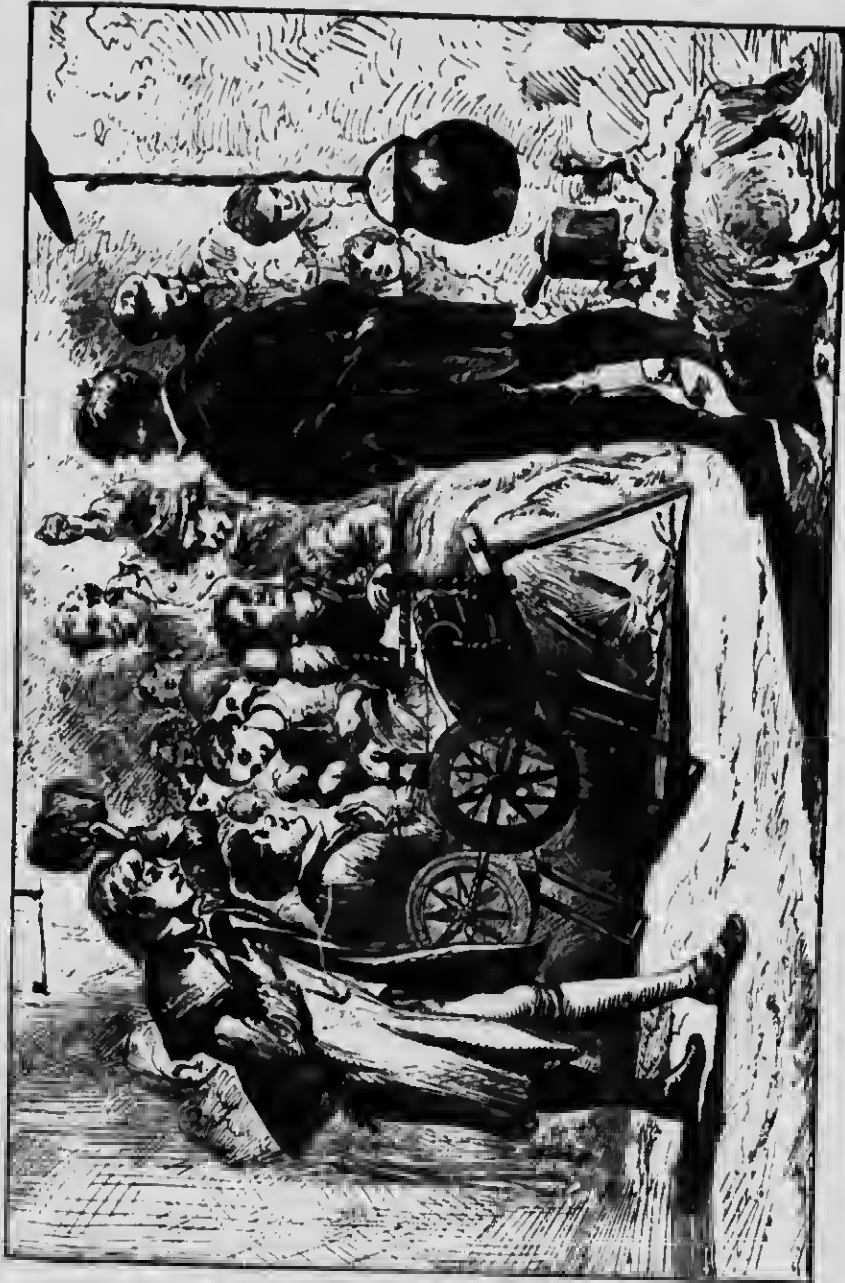
marriage we have heard previously in the course of this history, had brought as dower to her husband not only the pig and the poultry,—which last were roosting on the rafters above the company, and the former meandering in and out among them,—but also a spinning-wheel, which had done good service in her father's house, and won for her the reputation that there was not a girl in the barony could spin a finer thread of yarn. Anxious to keep up this reputation, she now led the array of wheels, deftly plying the simple machine with foot and hands, to the intense admiration of her lord and master, who averred he would 'back herself agin the parish for nimbleness.' Other young women and their wheels had also their admirers, though not so legalized as Mr. Brallaghan. Nearly every 'colleen' had a 'boy' at her elbow, ready to whisper soft nonsense as occasion served. Consequently, a running fire of such rejoinders as 'Arrah, be aisy, Pat!' 'Lanty, you're the biggest desaver in Ireland!' 'Mind your own business, Mистер O'Dowd,' and the frequent 'Behave yerself, sir,' might be heard by an attentive and sharp-eared observer, and reveal to him the state of things in many quarters, underlying the more public conversation.

'I donno what's become of Freney Furlong the night,' remarked Mr. Brallaghan, the host. 'He promised me sartin sure to be here, an' he's not used to be any way backward in amusin' himself; an' he all lonesome up at the forge there. Troth, I'm thinkin' that it's a fatter takin' a wife he ought to be. Come, girls, which ov ye will have Freney?'

A titter ran round the circle: nobody cared for a half-witted 'bachelor' like the blacksmith; and, during certain badinage which followed, in he shambled, ducking his shock head in obeisance to the company.

'We won't say before yer face all wo was sayin' ov behind yer back, Freney, mo boy,' said the host, 'lest yer complexion mightn't ever recover for the blushes. Mary Conolly was wondhering if ye don't find it a lonesome life up at the forge. Look how she tosses her





A SPINNING-WHEEL PARTY AT BARNEY BRALLAGHAN'S



head!—always a sign that the bit's in the horse's mouth, ma colleen!

'I'm sure if there wasn't another bachelor in the barony'—began the young lady in question; but her thread, snapping at the moment, demanded all her attention, and likewise the attention of a tall fellow behind her chair, who did not resemble her sufficiently to be taken for her brother.

'Tis manners to wait to be axed,' retorted Freney, as he began to tune his violin, having lifted it affectionately out of its case. 'It isn't my intintion ever to marry, but to lave all my goold to little Una,' he added, with demureness.

There was a general laugh at this boast, for Freney was hardly supposed to know the colour of a guinea.

'An' as to Una, they say Miss Evelyn is makin' a lady intirely of her up in Dublin; the housekeeper's daughter's sister-in-law was here yesterday, an' she says that the clothes that's put on her would stun any one: Miss Evelyn has her for a regular pet, an' dresses her like herself, in silks an' satins.' Which piece of information Freney put by in his memory for Myles, as he played the opening notes of that popular melody, 'Malony's Pig,' perhaps suggested to him by the immediate presence of that sociable animal.

'Where's himself to-night?' continued the host in a whisper, behind his hand, under cover of the music. 'I guess that was what kep' you late?'

Freney only nodded assent. He had learned what a considerable power was gained by keeping his tongue quiet within his teeth these dangerous times. The truth was, that Myles had been manufacturing pikes at the forge, and giving his brother a lesson in the same art, which seemed likely to be in large demand. Freney had left him at it, to keep his appointment at the spinning-wheel party.

Loud calls were now made on the fiddler for a song. One or two amateurs had obliged the public in this way previously, but in a very shamefaced manner, turning

their countenances to the wall as they sang, and holding down their heads, which was considered 'the thing' in Doon society. Freney had no notion of such bashfulness, being a professional: and it was in no timidity he gave forth the song ending thus:—

'Her name to mention might cause contention,  
And it's my intention for to have no strife;  
And as to woo her, since I'm but poor,  
I'm really sure she won't be my wife.'

This, considered as a pendant to the foregoing conversation, was received with applause. Mr. O'Doherty, the Philomath, who came in during the progress of the ditty, was next assailed for his contribution to the hilarity of the evening; though with a sort of reverential solicitation befitting his learned character.

'My frinds and pupils,' began the little schoolmaster, with henign pomposity, 'if aught from my poor accumulations of learning and philosophy can add to your agreeability on this ocession, far be it from me to withhold such effort and endeavour. Professors of the fine arts and the seven sciences, like me, have not generally a superfluity of time to cultivate light litherature; an' perhaps the ballad I'll sing is no sthranger to such of yez as attended to your Red-a-mad-aisy when ye wor young. Play up "Behave politely," Freney.'

To which tunc the Philomath, in a voice replete with cracks and strains, uttered a composition of which a single versc will probably satisfy the reader:—

'Great A he discompared to a cabin's gable end, sir;  
And B, it stands for butter, which you to the market send, sir;  
C is half a griddle, and H a haggard<sup>1</sup> gate, sir;  
While P, it stands for pitchfork, and K, it stands for Kate, sir!

It will be observed that the ditty aims at combining instruction with amusement; and so was in perfect keeping with Mr. O'Doherty's usual pursuits, while it was as far removed as possible from the dangerous topic

<sup>1</sup> Potato-garden.

of politics, of which (in public) the pedagogue had a wholesome horror.

'We thank yer honour humbly, sir,' said Brallaghan, with a pull of his forelock. 'Naney, I think we might sthrain thim praties—the boys an' girls 'll be gettin' hungry wid the fair divarshin. Ah, Mary Conolly, it's a shame for yez to be puttin' yer fingers in the eyes of me brother Jem that way!'

The maiden bridled, and declared that she didn't want Jem Brallaghan to take the knots out of her thread; she was perfectly well able to do it for herself: yet a glance from the kneeling swain, who held the tangled yarn in his fingers, covered her with vivid crimson. Meanwhile, the host carried the pot of potatoes in his brawny arms across the cabin, and emptied the entire contents into a basket set over a tub. Of course, the boiling liquid dripped through the wicker. Five minutes afterwards, the table had been pulled from the end of the apartment, where it had stood 'out of the way,' and its surface smoked with poured-out potatoes, bursting into balls of flour from their thick brown coats. And never was more hilarity at a Lord Mayor's feast than at that rude repast in Barney's cabin.

'Come in!' cried he in answer to some vigorous tapping at the door. 'Troth an' I don't know who's so mannerly as to knock here,' he added; 'we don't practise thim little pices of politeness in these parts. Naboklish!' Barney sprang to his feet, and dashed the potato which he was gingerly peeling into the ashes.

'Sure it isn't his honour the Dublin counsellor!'

'Exactly so, my friend; Counsellor O'Regan at your service; an' I hope you'll do me the honour of a shake-hands;' and the new candidate for the borough came forward into the full firelight, followed by two or three of his electioneering staff. His merry eyes twinkled as he glanced round. 'The fact is, Mr. Brallaghan, that hearing you had a few friends'—

'Yer honour's as welcome as the new praties,' asseverated Barney. 'Girls, push down there, an' make room for the honourable counsellor an' his friends; an' it's hopin' it's a mumber o' Parlymint he'll be soon, in spite of the black Butlers!'

'Whisht, Barney aehora,' whispered his wife. 'Sure the colonel's the landlord—an' Buu Bodkin has ears that'll hear anythin', anywhere.'

'An' it's sorry I am not to have nny dacenter supper to offer you, counsellor,' continued his host; 'troth, if that pig, tho villain, wasn't walkin' about, we'd have an iligant rasher off him this minit!' The beast seemed to feel its owner's covetous glances, and changed its whereabouts with a snort.

'Thank you,' said Mr. O'Regan. 'I'm too good an Irishman, boys and girls, not to think potatoes the best fare in the world!' And forthwith the candidate set himself down among the guests, and began to do as they did—peel the food with his fingers, and thereafter dip it into a little mound of salt common to half n dozen of his neighbours. The hearts of the table were gained instantly. And then—what an agreeable counsellor he was! what stories he had, and what jokes and pleasantries! Tho very thatch shook with the laughter he evoked. Yet it was his design to evoke rather a deeper feeling than amusement; and presently, treading on the very verge of sedition, he recited a certain poem current in those times among the disaffected, of which the following is a specimen:—

'Promotion in Ireland from Papists stande so far,  
That higher than a conetable they will none prefer;  
Captivating culprits being a dangerous snare,  
Employment for a Papiet, that berth they did prepare.  
They have made an English chain for all of Irish birth,  
They have made a Protestant sky over Irish earth:  
So that Papists for a livelihood must all turn knaves,  
Otherwise be craftsmen, or downright black slaves!'

Now, although the grievances here represented did in nowise affect the candidate's audience,—they being

all handicraftsmen born, and without ambition to be anything else,—yet it was strange to see how the eyes glowed and the faces became stern, and the men of the company forgot even the soft society of which they formed part, under the exciting influence of these dramatically delivered words. The cultivated reader may deem the effusion doggerel, but its rudeness made it only the more powerful with rude minds; to many of them it was not new from the candidate's lips, yet it had lost none of its force with its novelty. After the foregoing lines came others, relating how, after much labour and learning, a man becomes a priest:—

'Yet after such industry, Englie' law disowns  
Himself and his flock to be aught but vagabones;  
I defy the man in Ireland to thrive who goes to mass.'

'And here,' exclaimed the candidate, throwing forth both arms tragically,—'here, boys, if we wanted a proof of the iniquity of them same English laws—which we don't—but if we did, 'tis here ready for us. The man who wrote that ballad I've just said for you, poor Douocha Rua the Red-Pedlar, an' as harmless a creature as ever lived, was indicted for high treason at your own Wexford Assizes, an' thrown into prison—just because he dared to tell a little bit of truth, boys! But if your votes and voices put me into Parliament, boys, never fear but they'll hear enough about it! For they daren't imprison a Parliament-man, boys; an' up to their faces I'll tell 'em of their tyranny, ay, if the Lord Chancellor and the Lord-Lieutenant were to hang me up on the next tree—like the poor boys on Slieve-Bui,' he added in a tragic tone.

There were rounds of applause for the heroic and self-devoted candidate; and a disposition to hug him on the part of the more demonstrative. He went on to a white heat, pledging himself to martyrdom, if need be, or, indeed, whether there were need or not. The more extravagant his affirmation, the more stormy the

applause: he had them crying over their wrongs presently.

'Och, wirrasthru, an' murther in Irish! to think ov the way our ancesthors was kilt an' slaughthered an' med slaves of, for nothing at all, at all! Sure it's a wondher there's a single one of us here to-day, afther the thratment we got long ago—an' to say we'd know nothin' about it only for the counsellor comin' an' tellin' us!'

'Troth, an' we'd never know how badly off we wor only for his honour,' said Barney. 'I never sec'd a more iligant-spoken gintleman—he has the brogue in his shouldhers, so he has! Counsellor dear, it's meself that 'ud like to be walkin' afther ye in a fair, wid a shillelah!'

This vague expression of good-will seemed to satisfy the candidate, who instantly gripped Barney's horny hand in his genteeler palm. 'And now, my friends,' said he, subsiding from the tragic to the comic vein, 'as I've been talking so long to the men, it's only fair to give a little while to the ladies. Strike up, fiddler—give us "The Rakes of Mallow."'

Thereupon, gracefully advancing to Mrs. Barney, the candidate solicited the honour of her hand 'out on the floor'—*alias*, for a dance. Tho tears of the susceptible were immediately turned to broad grins; the pig, who lay across the front of the fire like an animated fender, was expelled into a corner under the dresser; spinning-wheels were piled away upon the settle-bed, and two ranks of youths and maidens stood along opposite walls, beholding the performance of the pair in the midst. Deftly and neatly did the candidate glide, and hop, and turn, and beat time with his heel all through, opposite his partner, fairly dancing himself into the affections of such portion of the constituency as were present.

And thus was Mr. O'Regan's canvass carried on, thus were voters won; not by the vulgar expedient of bribes, but simply by the blindfolding of their wits with illusive



rhetoric and popular manners. Captain Gerald was too indolent and too haughty for such electioneering as this; he would stand apart from the people, and be their choice because they durst not choose any one else.

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CHAPTER XXII.

*A BLISTER FOR MR. BODKIN.*

SOMEBODY had informed upon Myles Furlong; for in a state of society like that of Ireland at the era of which we treat, informers were a plentiful race, despite the terrors of the lawless law, which proscribed them as the veriest vermin. Consequently, on the same night of the spinning-wheel party at Barney Brallaghan's, and while Freney was playing with all his might 'The Wedding of Ballyporeen,' 'Teddy, you gander,' and a variety of other popular jigs, his brother Myles was in sore perplexity. A party of Mr. Bodkin's myrmidons, with Mr. Bodkin himself as leader, approached the forge silently, while the blacksmith was yet in the act of manufacturing pikes.

Not unwarned, however. Myles was too old in the ways of sedition to let himself be caught like a rabbit in a trap; he had a watch out, in the person of Old Jug, who sat wrapped in her cloak at the sheltered gable-end of the cabin, commanding a view of the three roads converging at the forge. Several nights during that autumn had she thus kept guard, and seen nothing but a flitting bat in the air or a belated turf-car on the earth. Perhaps her watchfulness hung fire a little on this occasion, therefore; perhaps she had dozed somewhat in the folds of the cloak; perhaps the flying

moonlight was in fault; but her attention was first attracted, as she gazed along the dull level expanse which lay black against the cloud-heaped horizon, by a flash of light, so short and sharp that it might be only a spark from a footfall against a road-flint. Alarmingly near! The old woman crouched, every senso on the alert, for a moment; then she stole to the cabin door and tapped in a peculiar way.

'They've sowld the pass<sup>1</sup> on you, Myles ahagur; they're comin' by the Doon road, an' I donno how ye'll have time to get away at all, at all.'

He went out without saying a word, shutting the door behind him; but returned immediately, and began to put up the bars.

'I'd inako a better fight here,' said he, with a concentrated glow in his eyes. 'Yon must ha' been asleep, mother—there's two parties of 'em—half coming by the bog, an' close to the back-door already, an' half by the Doon road. Come, now—it's no timo for whimpering—an' help me to hido the pikes. An' if I knew who's sowld the pass on me,' he added between his teeth, 'maybe I wouldn't.' And with an ugly scowl he hastily stowed away the pikes in a hole in the wall.

'Myles achora, sure ye'll be murdered if ye stay here!' whined the old woman, as with trembling hands she helped to replace the bricks; 'unless ye'd condescind to the chimbley; an' troth they're so knowin' they'd light a roarin' fire in a minit an' roast ye down—but only for that there's a couple of shelves inside, where I used to hide the bit of bacon from the tithe-proctor.'

'You're right, mother; the chimbley's the way. Pull out the sods here, that I won't be smothered wid the smoke; an' believe me I'll see you agin safe an' sound. There they are, the murtherin' villains!' and with an impotently wrathful shake of his brawny fist towards the door, which already shook beneath their blows, the blacksmith disappeared. Old Jug sat herself down.

<sup>1</sup> Sold the pass, given information.

'Why, thin, what for do ye come disturbia' a poor old woman this hour o' night?' she exclaimed in a tone of injured innocence, when the shivered fragments of the door lay before her, and the tread of Bodkin's men filled the forgo. 'An' mo the captain's own foster-mother, to be thrated in this way! I'll go up first light to the castle, an' tell it all to his honour's honour, that never refused yet to listen to his ould nurse! An' maybo 'twill be worse for all of ye'— She uttered a suppressed scream.

A shot filled the cabin with noise and smoke. Bodkin, guessing by what way his prey might have mado exit, had fired up the chimney. The mother listened in a perfect agony for the result. Nothing. The bailiff turned away with a muttered execration.

'Troth, an' I hope yo haven't hurt any of the poor jackdaws; there's a purty nest of 'em up there all the summer, the harmless crathurs,' she said, controlling herself with a strong effort.

'Hould yer tougue, yo jade,' exclaimed Bodkin fiercely, his oscillating eye literally ablaze, 'or I'll make it the dear talk to ye. You an' them preeious sons of yours are the biggest croppies in the barony— Ha! what's this?'

Ho turned over with his foot a piece of iron lying on the floor.

'A pike, as I'm alive!' He seized it triumphantly in his hand, flourishing it aloft for an instant, but almost immediately flung it down with a yell of pain, having left the best part of the skin of his fingers adhering. It had just passed from the red-hot stage of its manufacture.

'It isn't hurt yer honour is, sir?' cried the old woman, bustling forward. 'Frencey was at the coulters o' ploughs all day, sharpenin' 'em for the wheat plantiu' that'll soon be beginnin' through the counthry.'

'Don't let her get the pike, d'ye hear?' called out Bodkin, who was attending to his burnt fingers. 'It's wanting as evidence. Boys, the best thing we can do is

to put a coal in the thatch, an' burn down the ould rookery for a nest o' rebels.'

'An' as sure as ye do, I'll get justice from the colonel an' the captin!' screamed the old woman in a terrible fright, for she had a shrewd suspicion that lying along on the very thatch was her son the blacksmith at the present moment, watching his opportunity to drop down outside. 'Is it to burn the poor old widow's house about her ears? Av I had to walk on me own two bare feet all the ways to Dublin, but I'll have justice on ye, Mither Bodkin. But I couldn't believe such bad ov ye, hard as ye are. Ye wouldn't forget how I uursed yer own wife through the spotted fever, whin she was Mary Callaghan'—

'Pull her out!' was the bailiff's order. 'The colonel's the last man to let a nest of croppies stand for want of a bit of a blaze.'

'Ho gavo me the luso of it!' she shrieked, holding by the furniture and the brickwork of the forge. 'He gave it to me free for ever an' ever, because I was his only son's foster-mother. Ho said—his honour said'—

'Come in, you two, and help to carry her out,' ordered Bodkin, whose fingers were smarting horribly. 'Twould be a good deed to lave her inside to warm her this cowl'd night! Quick, boys, smarten yourselves; we have no time to lose.'

Old Jug's strenuous and protracted opposition was not without adequate motivo; she was thus taking up the attention of Bodkin's men, and making both opportunity and time for Myles to get away. Thoroughly overpowered and helpless, she was at last flung against the earthen fence at the other side of the road, and saw the cabin set on fire.

The mischief was not fully accomplished, however. Heavy showers in the day had soaked the surface of the thatch, so that only a portion of it was burnt; and Freney, returning after midnight, contrived to extinguish the smouldering remains.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## FURTHER CANVASSING.

OF course election dinners had to be eaten, among other of Captain Gerald's and Counsellor O'Regan's duties to their country. It was a fact that the sinews of war were much more at the disposal of the former and his party; consequently, their management had a greater degree of splendour and *éclat* about it. With the counsellor candidate were all unpaid agency and moral coercion, if that could be called moral coercion which constrained every action by the strongest political stimulants.

In the shabby little county newspaper—which, to our modern eyes, bears the aspect of being printed on grocers' grey wrapping-paper, in the very seediest of inks—appeared a flaring announcement of a great public dinner, to be given in Doon to the people's candidate, Theophilus O'Sullivan O'Regan, Esquire, Barrister-at-law. The people were invoked, by whatever value they set upon their ancestors, to crowd around his standard, and repulse the enemies of liberty; which invitation was to be understood figuratively, not literally, as implying any personal violence to the captain's party. The people were also conjured to expel the new families,—meaning the Butlers, who had only been Irish since James I.'s time,—and assert themselves by returning the lineal representative of the old families, in the person of Counsellor O'Regan, whose ancestor of the same date had been a yellow-haired galloglass, wearing very little clothes and a dangerous skean. But nobody could accuse the O'Regans of coming from anywhere to Ireland at any period; that was the counsellor's strong point.

All this was inserted in the county paper, as a mere advertisement of course; for the paper was intensely blue in politics, and upheld the colonel—who was, indeed, head landlord of its premises—and his son, the captain, through thick and through thin. Even Mr. Bailiff Bodkin always received an esquire when it was necessary to name him. The loyalty of the county paper was unquestionable; and the flare-up advertisement of the daring counsellor was supplemented with a few lines of very pointless sarcasm in the next column, rather making out the whole candidature to be an amusing joke.

Now, as to the public entertainment, Mr. O'Regan had to pay for the viands himself; and there was not a single dish with a French name present. A big barn at the back of the main street was the banquetting hall; and certain of the unsophisticated guests were seen to pour custard over their cabbage. Indeed, the odour of the latter vegetable everpowered all other viands for the early part of the evening, till the stronger odour of whisky-punch supplanted it. The forks were all of the two-pronged species; and many of the company, more accustomed to grasping the plough-handle, showed a disposition to take to the primitive instrument of their fingers as readier than any forks. Glorious potatoes laughed from fifty trenchers down the long table; for it was in the days before the blight had damped their spirits and ruined their constitution. Use knife and fork for the stripping these old friends of their brown coats! Never! The farmers could not take kindly to the steel for such a purpose.

Vast was the *débris* of bacon-bones and potato-peels, marshalled in a double line, along whose vista the candidate looked when he came to the gist of the whole proceeding, the talking part of the evening. A couple of hundred open-mouthed and good-humoured Celtic faces glistened at him from all parts of the barn, and set up a great shout as he rose. What a speech it was! Veluble and vituperative; sparing nobody

whom it could in the least please the populace to abuse; bristling with nicknames and absurd anecdotes; rising into thundering declamation, and anon sinking into the vulgarly colloquial. The strong point of race protruded often enough; he was of a family that had given martyrs to the cause of liberty (*videlicet*, sundry of his ancestors had been hanged as rogues and rapparees). His father had once a fine property, and sacrificed it in the promotion of his country's freedom (which, it is to be presumed, the old gentleman considered would best be served by unlimited personal consumption of claret and whisky, and keeping open house for every passer-by). But the applause greeting these exertions was nothing to the wild enthusiasm that rent the air of the barn when the candidate suddenly stepped into the Irish language, and harangued them fluently in the Leinster dialect.

Oh, the beloved native tongue! the words that went right to their hearts without translation! It scarcely mattered of what he spoke thenceforth; every man became his fierce partisan. Verily he was one of themselves when the language of their childhood glided off his tongue like oil. Some sturdy fellows, perchance aided to this access of emotion by previous potations, actually shed tears, and had a tendency to embrace the candidate. Not particularly relishing this tender mood in his audience, he touched upon one or two of their wrongs, and presently every eye was flashing or scowling resentment. How did he denounce tithes and proctors, and all other taxation and its machinery! More than one farmer seized the two-pronged fork, which had helped to demolish his dinner, as though with it he would further demolish his enemies. How softly did the candidate glide into a minor strain of deprecation, and thence into a sweet melody of eulogy on the patriarchal Catholic priest, 'the revered and saintly pastor of a loving people, the venerated guardian of a nation's faith,' meekly receiving their free-will offerings! Perhaps it is necessary to say

that Mr. O'Regan professed himself a Protestant; by law he must be so to enter Parliament; and, though he did not exactly assert that this trifling bond of legality alone kept him from fraternizing with 'the ancient faith' of Ireland, he contrived effectively to insinuate the same.

Finally, as the mood of exalted indignation was deemed the best in which to leave his flexible auditory, he exhorted them to stand by their colours, and uphold Ireland in her hour of need, unless they had a particular fancy for being drawn on hurdles to the gallows by 'the old hereditary enemy!' This peroration, delivered in English with an unctuous brogue, left no doubt on the minds of the majority that 'the old hereditary enemy' must certainly be Colonel Butler of Doon; whereas Mr. O'Regan probably meant to impersonate the Saxon. And the assemblage separated in a state of high inflammation, from various causes, physical as well as mental.

Barney Brallaghan, nursing his wrath in company with a knot of neighbours on the road home, and roaring at intervals a stave of a seditious song,—to the peril of his neck were militia-men abroad,—reached his cabin in a temper fit to awaken the alarm of any peaceable wife. He nearly burst open the door in his impatience to have it opened, and then banged it back with as great a crash as the old timber could make. Flinging his remnant of a hat into one corner, he sat himself down beside the table and struck it with his fist, after certain mutterings and a tragic stare into the turf fire.

'Arrah, Barney, avick, what's gono wrong wid ye?' asked his helpmate, timidly picking up the battered *caubeen*. 'An' the hat, the crathur, throth an' it has got awful thratement entirely somewhere; one 'ud think the parish danced on it,' observed Mrs. Barney, handling the article regretfully, with a due appreciation of how long it would be ere her lord could get another.

'Tut, woman! to be thinkin' ov an ould caubeen whin



we ought all to be cryin' over the miseries of our country, an' the wrongs ov our posterity an' our ancesthors! 'Twould melt a heart of stone to hear how his honour the counsellor expounded all about the horrid way the Parlymint thrates us, an' the Lord-Liftenant, an' the'—

'Why, thin, Barney Brallaghan, is it yer ancesthors that's throublin' ye this way? Aisy known, there isn't much on yer mind else, honest man, an' 't isn't to dig up that patch o' flax ye would this eveuin'; only goin' off to listen to speeches, just as if the counsellor had any other business in life but to be talkin' like a house a-fire. An' look here, av he talked till ho was black in the face, you'll have to vote for the captain all the same, an' you *know* you will. What's anybody's wrongs to us, or all the wrongs in the world, compared wid the wrong of not havin' a cabin to put our head into?'

This unanswerable logic seemed rather to pose Mr. Brallaghan, who merely looked into the fire with a very wise face, and shook his head slightly a few times. One glance at his wife had showed him that lady in an attitude not to be trifled with—a hand on each hip; and a belligerent countenance gazed straight at him. 'The girl of the Malonys' had asserted herself before now, and governed Barney for his good; and so, in the present instance, when she ordered him to bed, remarking that he would never be in time 'to overtake mass in the mornin' av he didn't go at wonst,' his remonstrance was very feeble.

'They're the ganders for men, so they are,' was her uncomplimentary soliloquy as sho 'raked' the fire,—which process means the preserving of some turf in a smouldering state under a heap of dry ashes, to act as kindling next morning. 'They b'lieves every single word that's said to them, an' would sooner be takin' care of their ancesthors than their own little haggarts,' just as if their ancesthors would ever be the value of a pratie to 'em. What do I care av they were killin'

<sup>1</sup> Potato or cabbage-ground.

one another from mornia' till night long ago! They're welcome, so long as nobody comes to kill ourselves; an' the long and the short of it is, Barney must vote for the captin, that owns the roof over him, if all our ancesthors was to die on the spot.'

But this valorous determination Mrs. Barney wisely kept to herself, so far as the public were concerned. She drew her red cloak over her pretty head, with its plentiful hair, and dutifully followed her lord and master, about a yard in his rear, next morning (Sunday) to the chapel, carrying in her hand the ponderous 'brogues' which clenched her full dress, but would not be put on her feet until she arrived at the corner of the road next the place of worship. Verily, she was much lighter for travelling without them; the soles were a curious mosaic of nail-heads, and looked as durable as a piece of ordnance, and well-nigh as uncomfortable to wear. And, as the pair trudged along, Mr. Brallaghan vouchsafed to talk condescendingly to her over his shoulder; in fact, she had a continual little run to keep up with his stride. Nohody would have guessed how completely the tables were turned indoors, and which was the veritable ruler.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

FATHER COSTELLO'S SERMON.

THERE was generally half an hour of waiting in the chapel-yard for the arrival of his reverence—a space of time improved variously by his congregation. Much business was transacted, on the principle of another exchange, without seeing the property in question. Much gossip slipped from tongue to tongue, chiefly among the women. All the news of the neighbourhood, and of many neighbourhoods, was retailed. Matches were made up, sometimes; labourers were hired, bargains were struck. The people had never learned, ‘Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work.’ It was simply a holiday: not all a holy day.

Of course at this time the coming election engrossed everybody’s thoughts, more or less, and it was anticipated that Father Pat Costello would ‘give a sermon from the altar’ on this day concerning the same subject; whence there was, perhaps, a larger attendance than usual, drawn from neighbouring parishes for the nonce, by the interesting alliance of politics with religion.

At last the steady old grey horse, which had borne his reverence for many a year at the same hour, to the same place, on the same day, was seen turning the corner of the road under the elder-hedge; whereupon the women shook out their blue petticoats, and let down their skirts, which had been pinned up for preservation, and turned back the hoods of their cloaks a little more; and children’s hair was smoothed with mothers’ fingers, and the men doffed their ‘caubeens;’

for the magnate of the parish was passing by. He alighted at the gate of the chapel-yard, under the pair of poplars which flourished there; a dozen boys pressed forward to take charge of the steed, and lead him to the grassy end of the enclosure, where he fed himself during mass. The parish clerk, carrying a bundle of his master's vestments, came close behind, and shared in the bows and curtsies bestowed on the principal personage. He was a pleasant-looking, middle-aged priest, verging on the antique; plenty of grey hairs were round the tonsure, now bared in the sunshine. He had a clear, penetrating eye, which could comprehend most things at a glance, and produced tremendous effects on the evil-doers of his parish. Right and left, wherever he looked, his people did obeisance. He dropped a few words here and there, 'shook hands to' three or four of the wealthier and more powerful of his flock, and passed into the chapel smiling. Already in the chapel was the ecclesiastical personage known as the 'cowjutherer,' being Father Costello's coadjutor or curate, Rev. Connor Cregan. Tall and lank and cadaverous, he was the very antipodes of his good-humoured chief; severe about his own duties, he was severe about everybody else's too, and was a fierce United Irishman at heart.

Father Pat donned his vestments in public, at one side of the altar, and, the clerk having lighted the two tall candles, the congregation flocked in, and packed themselves everywhere on the ample floor. There were no pews or seats of any kind; down on his knees went each person as he entered, after having dipped a finger and thumb in the holy water and crossed himself as a preliminary exorcism. Many could not get into the building at all; they knelt round the doorway and the open windows, quite satisfied that they were 'getting mass' all right so long as they could hear the sound of the priest's voice. Of course, comprehension was out of the question, even for those nearest the altar; though Mr. Brian Boru O'Doherty, Philomath, used to look

very wise and abstracted, in lofty contemplation, as though he understood it all.

So the awful travestie of the awfullest event of earth, the passion and death of our Saviour Christ, went on as usual; and, when the wafer-God was raised up over the bended head of the priest, all the people fell upon their faces. Did Father Costello believe that he had indeed transmuted bread, flour-and-water cakelets, made by his own clerk, under his own eye, into a thing divine—nay, into a person divine? We cannot tell. Habit and education blind a man strangely; he behaved in all respects as if he did. But how unlike to the faith which the gospel requires and the Holy Spirit gives was the credulity and superstition of priest and people! What a mournful lack of spiritual insight and feeling! The Virgin was exalted, the wafer was worshipped; but the one Saviour, crucified for us, was almost forgotten.

When the mass was over, the people rose to their feet with a subdued murmur of expectation, and those nearest the altar rails were urged violently against them by a sudden influx of outsiders. Father Pat came forward, adjusting his cope comfortably on his broad shoulders, and began his 'sermon.'

'My dear friends an' parishioners, I've a word or two to say to yez this day, for which I hope ye'll be the better, an' if ye aren't ye can't say it's my fault anyhow; for it's my business to tell you what ye ought to do, an' if yo won't do it afther, how can I help ye? Only don't let any man be coming to me wid his complaints, an' sayin', "Yer rev'ence, I'm in an ocean o' trouble through the manes of that adviee you gev us to keep clear of the Right-boys an' Defendhers, for the chaps have burnt down me little cabin, or rooted me pratie-garden, or whatever else they did." Whereas, I tell ye plain an' clane, the law's dead against Right-boys, an' Defendhers, an' United Irishmen, an' I can't do more than give ye fair warnin', an' tell ye 'tis best to take care of yerselves in time.'

Here the worthy priest was seized with a vehement fit of clearing his throat and coughing, and Jemmy Davis, the clerk, had to bring him his red handkerchief from the crown of his hat.

'An' while yo're about it, Jemmy, yo might as well bring me my horsewhip too; for throth I'm thiukin' I'll have to lay it on some of them unmannerly rapscallions over at the dure that's pushin' an' sthrivin' as if the place was a fair. I'm lookin' at ye, Jerry Scanlan!' he roared in a stentorian voice, which startled some of the nearest women; 'I'm looking at ye, elbowin' Mrs. Cassidy, honest woman, as if she hadn't no manner of feelin', ye big bosthoon! My hand to ye, if I was over widin arm's length, but ye'd taste what a lashin' is!' The individual thus signalized shrank out of sight as quickly as might be, and the grateful Mrs. Cassidy preened her ruffled plumage with a reddened face. 'I promise ye, if Mike was to the fore—the heavens be his bed this day!—instead of her bein' a lone widdler over her couple of orphants—ye'd think twice afore ye'd knock her roughly, Jerry Scanlan! An' I never knew a man cross an' hard to a woman, but he was a coward inside in his heart.

'As I was sayin' to ye,' continued Father Pat, resuming his normal tone, and wiping his heated brow, 'tis between the fryin'-pan an' the fire wid ye, poor people. Of course every man has his complaints to make; an', b'lieve me, the Catholic elargy aren't widout their own share. But these Right-boys, an' Defendhers, an' United Irishmen, are only drawing down the army upon us entirely; and the whole of it is, boys, ye've yer choice betune being hung an' bein' piked or burnt; an' if it was offered to meself, I'd be in a quandary which to chose, they aro both so pleasant.' The orator made a wry face at this junecture, and his flock grinned a universal grin. They knew well the meaning of all the foregoing studied ambiguity, and also that Father Pat dared not speak plainer his eneouragement of sedition. The dark 'cowjutherer' standing beside the

altar thought his chief too engimatical ; but then, he had been a shorter time in this world of danger than Father Pat.

' Now, boys, ye'll be wantin' to know somethin' about this election that's comin' on Friday. I'm fond of a whole skin an' a roof over me head meself, an' indeed I don't see rightly how both of 'em is to be had togedder on this occasion. I'm afeard ye must take yer choice agin, boys—or let the wives take it for ye. There's a dale o' sience in the women's heads, boys, an' a dale o' sience outside 'em too. Somehow, I think the counsellor has put his "comedher"<sup>1</sup> on a good many of 'em, an' they'll coax their husbands to give him one vote, anyhow. I'm not sayin' they're wrong or right, remimber. I christened a dale of ye, an' 'twould be the sorra day I got ye into any throublo through advico of mine. Why, then, talkin' of christenin's, Mrs. Ryan, is it yerself I see standin' over undher the window? Yer welcome to mass agin, ma'am, an' so's the little sthranger that you has in yer cloak ; an' that was the dacent christenin' you gave him, an' didn't forget yer priests nayther, signs by ho'll have all sorts of prosperity.' The blushing matron curtseyed as well as her baby burden would permit. ' An' I'm proud to say yer a respectable example to tho parish, Mrs. Ryan—not like other christenin's I could mintion, where your clargy didn't even see the colour of a "thirteen."<sup>2</sup> An' sure it stands to rason the ceremony can't do half the good where the dues of tho clargy is forgotten, or paid out wid a grudgin' spirit.'

Certain parties in the body of the building looked conscious under Father Pat's roving gaze, but he was too politic to let it settle on anybody in particular.

' It's for yer own sakes I spake ; if ye send the worst bit o' butter to yer clargy, ye can't expect but the next churnin' will turn out badly. An' be the same token,

<sup>1</sup> From 'come hither'—a winning invitation, as it were.

<sup>2</sup> Vernacular for a shilling at the period ; which, in Irish coinage, represented thirteen pence.

Pierce Collins Bat, I never ate a finer fitch o' bacon in all my days than the one you sent me at Michaelmas. I hope tberes' more in the chimney-corner where that came from.'

'Twill be up to you in the mornin', yer reverence, the fellow fitch of it,' responded the gratified Pierce, pulling his forelock; 'an' herself'—by which he signified Mrs. Collins—'has a couple o' fat geese ready, one for yer reverence, an' the other for Fathel Connor, wid ber humble duty.' Whereat the lady beside his elbow curtsyed.

'The Collinses were always dacent people,' remarked the priest contemplatively; 'an' I'm glad to find yer father's son isn't degeneratin', but keepin' up the credit of the family like a man.'

Be it here remarked that the aforesaid father's name was Bartholomew, which, being contracted into Bat, gave his sons their distinctive appellation; for, when there were three or four of the name of Pierce Collins in the neighbourhood, it was convenient to tack the parent syllable to the end, for precision's sake. Thus there came to be Pierce Collins John, and Pierce Collins Tom; as well as our personal friend, Pierce Collins Bat.

But the winding-up of the priest's address was by far the most telling portion. After sundry other individualities like the above (which were never considered in the least out of place by the audience in a country chapel, but rather lent zest and life to the whole affair), he alluded to some of the hardships endured by Roman Catholics on account of the penal laws affecting their religion. 'Boys,' said he, 'far be it from me to say ye have no wrongs, for ye have, an' t'hey're as deep as the salt sea, an' as black as twelve o'clock at night; but now's not the time for taking notice of them. They say the Parlymint will settle 'em all byne-bye; an' sure ye're only imitatin' all the blessed saints in stayin' quiet, an' bein' patient, as long as ye can;' and he ended with some anecdotes of St. Dionysius, and St. Fin Bar, and St. Laurence O'Toole;



after which came the Latin benediction with three uplifted fingers, and the congregation dispersed.

They had 'got mass,' which was to do them some imaginary good for the week to come. Again the women tucked up their gown-skirts, and many of both sexes doffed their shoes, to be carried like dumb-bells in their hands, swinging all the way home.

'Throth an' 'twould puzzle a conjuror to tell out o' that sermon who 'twould be plasin' to his roverence we'd vote for,' quoth thick-headed Barney, rubbing his brows. 'But somehow it don't seem as if he meant the captin: sorra bit o' me but wishes they never came for elections, to be botherin' a poor man's little han'ful o' brains this way.' The latter sentiment he had gathered from the lips of his better half, and dutifully repeated without owning the authorship; and Mrs. Barney, like all true wives, was well pleased to minister an idea in secret to her liege lord, and merge her own wisdom in his.

'Well, you got mighty meek-spirited since you was married,' observed a bachelor companion with whom he walked; 'you that used to have the best shillelah at every fair an' hurlin' match, an' thought the greater ruction the bigger fun.'

'Wait till yer married yerself, Shamus, an' ye'll find it's more pleasant to be sittin' by the fire wid a purty little girl o' a wifo, than to be comin' home wid yer head in two halves, an' yer eyes like blackberries. Talkin o' that, how's your own skull, Shamus, that Paddy Blake made sich a hole in?'

'Oh, the bonesetter abovo at Ballyallus repaired it wid a two-an'-eightpence-ha'penny piece, hammered out nately: an' I can take it off any day I want the money—*thigum thu?*'<sup>1</sup>

Which it may interest the medical reader to know that Mr. Shamus actually did at a subsequent period.

A gang of women behind on the road were meanwhile condoling with one another on the life they would lead during the election.

<sup>1</sup> Do you understand.

'Nover a stroko of a spado will my Phelim put in the ground for the week,' said one aggrieved matron; 'an' tho pratie pits not roofed in yot. An' when I says to him maybe we'd loso 'em all thro' the wet gettin' in an' rottin' 'em, he just says, "Who cares? I'd like to know;" so I would meself, if the 'lection 'll put bread into our mouths for the winther?'

'As to my Pat,' said another wife, 'he's most out of his mind already, listenin' to specchin' from mornin' till night; an' ho roars out in his sleep, "The counsellor for over!" rousin' up all the childer like a clap o' tundher, an' flourishin' his arms as if they was wind-mills. An' sure we wouldn't care if ho was to get any good by it; but ho won't; only coming home to me wid his bones in smithereens, maybe.'

The 'ladies' were recognising in their own homely way the great fact that an overweoning attention to political agitation was a domestic and social bane in Iroland. The cottor left his own proper business—digging his potatoes, or tending his cattlo, or labouring for a day's hire—to join a shouting mob about any conceivable subject, but especially about an election. In this cause he was ready to bruise and be bruised, to beat and be beaten, no matter what interests of his own suffered thereby. Common senso has modified this feeling of lato years.

All the week Doon and its electoral divisions were in a ferment. The popular party were straining every nerve for the return of their nominee; and though Captain Gerald affected a sublime indifference, yet his party were working might and main also—led in every crooked transaction by Mr. Bailiff Bodkin, with his hand in a sling.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## BEFORE THE NOMINATION.

FOR the entire week, ushered in by the aforesaid Sunday, the little town of Doon was in a ferment. The husbands of the good women who had so pitifully lamented the distractions of the period were quite as excited as they supposed—to such lengths that some of them never came home at all, but lay on tavern floors, and in deep doorways, and on committee-room tables, for snatches of sleep. Very few of them, it may be premised, had the least idea of the meaning of the word ‘committee;’ and, indeed, that body was a metropolitan improvement, scarcely appreciated by the aborigines whom Mr. O'Regan aspired to represent.

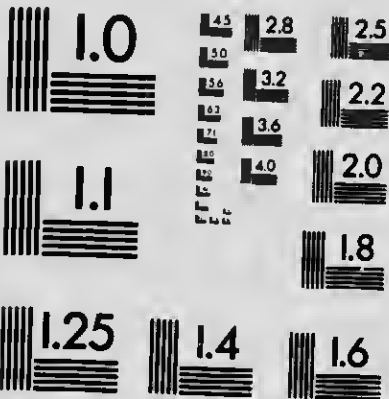
The earliest act of the election drama, the nomination, was not to take place till Friday; but the foregoing section of the week was short enough for the needful preparations of both parties. Irish human nature (among the peasantry) delights in things combatant, more especially in a well-contested election. It is not too much to say that not a stroke of real business, in the way of trade, was done in Doon that week. Even the turf-boats were lying idly high and dry in the mud, or swaying with equal idleness in the water when the tide was in, their owners being too much occupied with politics to lade them; and the worthy shopkeepers passed their time in gossiping at their own or neighbours' doors, or swelled the ‘tail’ of either candidate.

Of course, there were sundry ‘ructions’ (concise for insurrections) between the followers of captain and counsellor; shillelahs were flourished, and heads were broken in these preliminary skirmishes. The O'Regan



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colour was green, the Butler blue—symbols of nationality, and also of religious tendencies. The former badge was considerably the cheapest; for the leaves of the trees and herbs of the field furnished distinctive marks enough at the cost of plucking, whereas the latter required an exchange of coin to deck out its adherents. The Greens and the Blues went about in batches, for the sensible reason that an isolated man was in danger of his bones. A neutral man was nigh in as perilous a position: he was pounced upon as fair prey by both parties, and was glad to save himself by taking colour from the strongest; though instances of political tergiversation were not uncommon, and men would (under pressure) shout for Butler this hour, and for O'Regan the next.

A frequent transgressor in this way was Freney Furlong, the blacksmith. His violin made him a valuable ally; and before he could make up his own mind as to which side he would take in the contest, seeing he was drawn different ways by motives of equal potency, he was carried off one morning by a detachment of Blues, and forced to fiddle before them all the way into the town. No sooner was the die thus cast than Freney became a prey to the most lively fears for the result; and his instrument gave forth such doleful notes, half-involuntarily, that he received more than one poke in the ribs from the zealous partisans immediately behind him, as a warning.

'Sure, amn't I doin' me best?' he retorted sulkily, to one such admonition.

'Deed, then, you aren't. Play up "The Widow's Pig," or "Laugh an' be Fat," or somethin' wid life in it, you old croppy, or maybe we'd make you ate the fiddle, eh?'

'Misther Bodkin himself is used to atin' more than praties an' pork, be all accounts,' was Freney's thoughtless rejoinder, in return for which he instantly received a sounding cuff over the ears. He had alluded to the sorest passage of the bailiff's life, and one which he

would have wished blotted from all living memories—even the occasion when he had been compelled to eat his own parchments. Mr. Bodkin had gone to serve a process on certain refractory parties; it was in the beginning of his career, when he was desirous of making a name for success and celerity as a humble officer of the law, therefore was, perchance, led into a foolhardiness of which he never subsequently was guilty; and, as he jogged along unsuspectingly in a lonesome place, he was seized by a dozen stalwart peasants, and carried off, across a bog, to a deep fissure known (from a previous catastrophe) as the Gauger's Hole, half-full of black, dead water. With horror he heard that drowning was too good for him, and the proposition mooted to build him up in a rick of turf, and so make a bonfire of 'the prossy-server;' fervently he vowed never to set foot forth with a law-paper again, if he escaped this time. And so, when the proposal was made that he should 'ate or swim,' he even essayed a bite of the tough parchment.

'Twill be the death o' me; 'tis so mortal hard,' said he.  
'An' too aisy a death for you, you thief of a bum,' said they; 'but as we don't want to be above measure sevore on you, we'll briug you to the little cabin, an' bile the bill in the bog-wather, to soften it a bit.'

And thus Mr. Bodkin saved his skin for that time, at the expense of being troubled with an indigestion ever afterwards, and a frequent rehearsal of the grinning eircle and the dreadful meal in his dreams.

It may be imagined, therefore, how unsavoury Freney's allusion was to him; and the fiddler took particularly good care not to resent the push he got as punishment, considering himself fortunate to escape so lightly. Bodkin would have been harder on him had he dared; but at the time of his blistered hand the captain had given him no sympathy, and a significant hiut to let the Furlongs alone.

Freney played up his liveliest thenceforward into town, until he beheld the dense array of O'Reganites. Whereat

his spirit fainted, and his bow became fickle in its aim, with a renewed propensity for the dolorous. 'Oh milia murther,' thought the fiddler; 'betune the boys an' tho bum I'll be kilt intirely; an' tho roof burnt off my little forge before.' Into these two powers, the populace and the bailiff, did the politics of the election resolve themselves, so far as Freney was concerned; and many others were similarly short-sighted.

The public-houses of the place were all in pay of one or other of the candidates; and day and night they frothed over with frieze-coats receiving all sorts of entertainment, and troubled with no subsequent bills. Election laws were not so stringent then as siuce: tho inhabitants of the contested borough believed it their appanage to be fed and otherwise nourished by the gentlemen who looked for the honour of representing them during the period of their probation. Hence did the accounts of the candidates frequently present such anomalous charges as—'To atin' an' dhrinkin' seventy-two vothers, eighteen pound ten an' tenpenee.'

Continually were the narrow streets vocal with ballad-singing—all political and personal. The tunes were few, the melody rude, the verses doggerel, and generally with a refrain which the popular voice could catch up and echo plentifully. What a saturnalia for all the boys! Mr. O'Doherty the Philomath made a virtno of necessity, and announced holidays on Monday to the half-dozen scholars that attended. As to himself, he would 'serenade' about a little among his friends for tho \ . . . Which 'serenading,' bo it known to all readers, meant not anything connected with strumming a guitar by night-time under the windows of a lady-love; but simply that the Philomath purposed paying a series of promiseuous visits, wherever it suited him to journey. His enemies said that he was secretly at work for 'the O'Regan' all the time, employing his pen in the back-parlour of a certain shebeen-house; and the present writer is not in a condition to refute the charge.



The excitement was drawing to a climax the day before the nomination. It was not like a county election, where the field of battle was large, and the excitement widely diffused; where voters would have to be unearthed in the most distant parishes, and marched under proper escort—frequently sacerdotal—for miles and miles to the place of polling. But here the scene of action was limited—the excitement concentrated. Every individual vote was a prize worth fighting for to the last. The electors were conscious—such of them as retained any reflective powers by reason of continual ‘treating’—of a singular dignity and influence. They could talk tall, and balance rival claims. Mr. O’Regan’s oily tongue went like the elapper of a mill; Captain Gerald did his persuasion chiefly by deputy.

Detachments of the frieze-coated marched in on the Thursday numerously. One was headed by the Rev. Connor Oregan, his sombre face having a glow on it like smouldering iron. These were the non-electors, who could give their ‘voices’ to the counsellor, though not their ‘votes.’<sup>1</sup> They lay out in all sorts of places that night; and, seeming to regard sleep as a superfluity, they passed the time in singing and shouting, and practising episodes of battles among themselves, as if to keep their ‘hands in.’ A considerable division kept guard all night round the court-house, which was to be the centre of the morning’s proceedings; and half a dozen prisoners within the black bossed door hard by had an uneasy time of it, so far as concerns slumber, during the hours of the mob-guard.

Likewise was it tantalizing to these prisoners, after daylight came, to hear the various evolutions in which they could take no part. There were most stimulating shoutings and groanings at intervals, and peals of hoarse laughter, and the hiss, which concentrates so much venom, from a hundred throats. The click of the

<sup>1</sup> An Irish peasant elector calls his two votes by the above names, his vote and his ‘vice.’

cavalry was heard as they trotted into the open space, and ranged themselves before the court-house; also the tramp of a body of Feneibles. Still the mob about the door and on the steps held their position, and presently became obstreperous concerning the length of time that the building continued shut up.

'Throth an' ould Keefe is sleepin' mighty sound the mornin',' remarked one, signifying the keeper, who resided in underground apartments within.

'Why, thin, if he's asleep through all this noise, he's a great hand at it intirely,' was the rejoinder. 'Suppose we rise a bit of a song to wake him?'

The prescription had been tried so frequently for the last twelve hours, that it might well be believed to have lost its efficacy.

'Knock at the doore, will ye? I'll get the rheumatiz from standing on the cowld flags much longer,' said a black-browed Hereules, with a smith's development of limb. This also had been done so often, to the extent of dinting every several panel, that Mr. Keefe had become hardened to the consequences.

'Break the windies, maybe that 'ud bring him round,' suggested a little red-haired tailor, who was looking under the elbow of the smith.

'Ye're squeezing me, ye onconsiderate crather,' observed Hereules, looking patronizingly down on his little neighbour. 'Maybe you'd like to get up on my shouldher for awhile? Ye'd have a fine view of the redecoats.'

'Long life to his honour the captain!'

Instantly there was a dash of fifty bodies in the direction whence the alien cry proceeded, and the feint was successful in a measure: for just then the doors were flung open, and some of the Butler partisans attained their object of crushing in before the O'Reganites. A dozen Fencibles, who had been stationed in a line within as a sort of breakwater, were instantly doubled up and flattened against the wall of the passage. Mr. Keefe himself was utterly swept away, and not heard

of for some time, till he emerged near the platform, looking crushed and breathless. In a twinkling the torrent-crowd filled every crevice; even the dock had half-a-score occupiers, despite the spikes on its margin, and a couple of small boys clambered atop of the sheriff's box.

Part of the space had been boarded over so as to make a platform convenient for the candidates and their immediate friends. Two shrunken galleries at the sides were already filled with the captain's men, who had been admitted by a back entrance in virtue of some connivance with the sub-sheriff. Great was the yelling of the O'Reganites when they had leisure to look about and recognise this fact, and find that they had been forestalled in the field so far. The grinning of the Blues over the balustrades was more than they could bear, and probably there would have been a guerilla warfare of missiles had not the attention of all parties been diverted by music and shouting without the court-house.

It was the O'Regan procession, glorious with green flags and boughs like Birnam wood. Additional emphasis was afforded to the demonstration of the latter by the fact of their being evergreens, as the advanced season of the year precluded the use of others. The main feature of the march was the candidate counsellor himself, attired in a complete suit of peasant's frieze, and born aloft in a rickety manner on a chair by his zealous partisans; and all his political fervour and faith in his supporters did not preclude an occasional heartfelt desire that he was trusting to his own feet for progression instead of to their arms. Before him waved the chief banner, and it was occasionally ducked back within an inconvenient nearness to his face when its bearer shifted the pole or forgot his burden in a yell. The device—in amber on grass-green—was Hibernia in a bathing dress playing a harp; and already had she suffered some contusions in the cause to the extent of sundry tatters in her scant raiment, which rendered her more in keeping with her sons round about.

When to the previous packing of the court-house was added the pressure of the procession, the result may be imagined. A mosaic of ragged heads paved round the platform. The flags and boughs remained outside to rock and reel in charge of a large number of zealots who could not possibly get inside. Skirmishes continually took place on the debatable land of the staircases; which being a narrow frontier, persons were occasionally pitched over the banisters without apparent detriment to anybody. Whenever the crowd inside yelled or groaned, the crowd outside took the keynote and performed the same, ignorantly, by reason of the contagion. Once the surge of voices had a reflux, beginning from outside, which was when Captain Gerald Butler made his appearance, leaning on the arm of his proposer, Mr. Waddell, and attended by two or three gentlemen partisans. He scorned a procession or an escort too much to make use of either; and through the densest throng of Greens he passed quietly, wearing his blue cockade, while all men made way for him, only venturing to hoot when his back was turned. Reaching the platform with some exertion, owing to the dense throng, he answered the popular groaning with a courteous bow and removal of his hat as he sat down to wait the performance of the preliminaries.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

## AFTER THE NOMINATION.

A GREAT silence ensued when the sheriff made his way to the front of the platform, bearing His Majesty's writ which reminded Mr. Bodkin unpleasantly of his own enforced dinner on one occasion, for he was observed to shut his eyes with a wince. There was great commotion thereafter when that purplish and plethoric magistrate, Mr. Waddell, advanced to propose the Blue candidate. He was in a passion before five sentences were out of his lips, and could have pleaded guilty to a longing to spring down among all those yelling faces, and lay about him with the riding-whip in his hand; so that his speech was rather a failure. In vain the sheriff tried to procure him a hearing; the idea of clearing the court was received with peals of derision, as well it might be nothing short of musketry could clear it. In vain Mr. O'Regan brought his persuasive powers into play: 'He'll soon be done, boys, if ye'd only bring yourselves to hold yer tongues for three minutes,' which was equally impossible.

After the seconding—a mere pantomime—he again stood up to procure a hearing for his rival, Captain Butler. They were a contrast. The slender, handsome young man—gazing before him with a quiet, calm eye, his arms folded in a quiet, careless attitude—and the plump, ugly, animated little demagogue, whose very soothing of the mob was after the manner of pouring oil upon blaze. Presently Captain Gerald, seeing that there was no likelihood of silence, began to speak in his usual effortless manner, addressing himself to those on the platform, and taking no notice whatever of the

writhing mob beneath. He said as much as he desired to say, and tranquilly sat down.

The counsellor started to his feet. Was he to understand that Captain Butler had stigmatized his efforts to produce silence as a feint—a pretence?

'Something very like it,' nonchalantly replied that officer, vouchsafing but a single glance at Mr. O'Regan; 'and I don't eat my words.'

'Then, sir, you know the next step among gentlemen!' Whereto the other bowed indifferently, as if it were a matter that very little concerned him.

Scarcely a stage aside was all this; and though plenty of magistrates were within earshot, not one used the powers vested in him to prevent the threatened breach of the peace. In fact, hostile meetings were considered the rule at elections; and it would be ungentlemanly and unneighbourly to do otherwise than wink at them and their awful consequences.

Mr. Waddell, sitting beside the Blue candidate, fidgeted and primed his pistols, in imagination, incessantly thenceforward. He heard but little of the proceedings: for, having hoarsely whispered the words, 'I'll stand by you, Butler,' and received a nod in return, which was his commission as friend for the occasion, his thoughts were wholly occupied with arranging how to fulfil his onerous position in the most dignified manner.

Yet Mr. O'Regan's speech was one not to be lightly glossed over in the record of the nomination. It was embroidered with rapturous applause. Therein he vowed to achieve the deliverance of his native land despite all conceivable tyrants; and he reiterated his statement about the purely Milesian origin of the O'Regans; while the best feather in the cap of the Butlers was shewn to be an alliance with a certain maiden of the sept, a couple of hundred years before, which gave them their solitary drop of Irish blood—and so on. Like the ranting of an aimless storm, the rhetoric all passed by Captain Gerald's ears without apparent heed. In his pride of birth and position, he

despised the whole affair; and the popular hiss had no more power to annoy him than the popular applause would have had to elate him.

A forest of dirty hands was held up for O'Regan, a few clean ones, from the platform and galleries, for Captain Butler. Yet, somehow, the former did not feel that he had experienced much of a triumph. The impassibility of his rival was a perfect provocation; the counsellor began to add a personal animosity to the political. What if a lucky shot should decide the election in his favour?

Far and near, through the county and borough, spread the tidings of the expected duel between the candidates. The whole population were in the secret; they knew what friend had gone on behalf of the counsellor to the captain, and that Fireball Waddell was arranging matters for the last-named. Mr. Waddell had acquired this *sobriquet* from his readiness at hostilities of the kind; his father had bequeathed him a case of 'tools' marked with the dates of half a score affairs of honour, and the son had kept up the fighting reputation of the sire. It never seemed to enter anybody's head that duelling was only disguised murder; in the Ireland of that day it was a conventional arrangement intimately interwoven with the constitution of society. Every dispute between gentlemen was thus settled: from the judges on the bench down to the lowest attorney practising at sessions—from the lord-lieutenant of a county down to the youths of a university—the climax of every difference was that fatal standing at ten paces, pistol in hand. A man was a coward if he refused a hostile meeting, no matter from what motives; and many a barrister is said to have shot himself into practice and position by his dexterity in duelling. What could be expected from the rest of the community when those charged with the custody of the laws were the first to break or evade them?

It was in the haze of the November dawn that

Captain Gerald alighted from his father's carriage, on the road by the field which had been selected for the meeting. His second had insisted on his driving in a closed vehicle, instead of coming to the ground on horseback, as was his own desire.

'Many a fellow loses his shot through the cold morning,' observed Mr. Waddell. 'With all the courage in the world, a fellow might shiver; and that's awkward when your finger's on the trigger—rather:' so he took the precaution of wrapping a cloak round his man, and keeping up the glasses of the coach on the way.

Mr. O'Regan was already pacing up and down, arm-in-arm with his second, who left him on perceiving the new-comers, and joined Mr. Waddell with an affectation of hilarity which grated even upon that gentleman. The principals were left to a saunter for a few minutes, having raised their respective hats in a distant salute; an action—as well as all other of their actions—watched breathlessly by some hundreds of spectators gathered on and behind all the fences and ditches within seeing distance. Presently the seconds paused at a particular level of the grass.

'A sweet spot for a stand,' said Mr. O'Regan's friend. 'Will you measure, Mr. Waddell?'

He courteously waived his privilege, and the other stepped the paces, fixing a stick at the extremities of the allotted distance. Narrowly was he watched by the connoisseur eye of Mr. Waddell nevertheless; who moved the mark of his man an inch or two, that it might be mathematically straight with the opposite one.

'These are old friends, major,' said he, opening the case which had lain on the grass, and revealing an ancient-looking brace of pistols, having their stocks inlaid with sundry bits of brass bearing dates as aforesaid. The military man laughed and nodded, producing those which were to be used by Mr. O'Regan. Both brace were snapped in the air, and reloaded carefully.

'Av he had the silver bullet, now,' muttered an aged



man, leaning on a stick in the corner of the field,—‘the silver bullet that never misses!’

Captain Gerald was holding some conference with his second. There was a difference of opinion, evinced by gesture; but at last Mr. Waddell, having placed his man, spoke up, addressing the other second, though rather sulkily.

‘Captain Butler is anxious to state, before this matter proceeds any further, that he has no personal quarrel with Mr. O’Regan; and—~~and~~—does not want to shoot him, in fact,’ said Mr. Waddell, whose rhetoric was limited.

‘Aro we to understand that Captain Butler retracts the offensive expressions made use of on the hustings?’ asked the counsellor’s second, drawing himself up very stiffly.

‘What I said was the truth,’ averred Captain Gerald, taking the part of spokesman out of Mr. Waddell’s mouth,—‘what I said was the truth, and cannot be retracted. Mr. O’Regan was only professing to get me a hearing, as I sta’ed at the time.’

‘The affair must go on,’ said the counsellor’s second, after speaking in a low tone to his principal, whose excited manner showed his anger. ‘My friend’s honour is not satisfied.’

Honour! under the name of this shadow what crimes have been perpetrated! Let us be thankful that we live in days when the falso sense of honour has given place largely to the true.

The dull November sun, looking from the horizon redly along the level lands, threw the shadows of these men far upon the sparkling grass, as they stood—perchance a death in each pistol—waiting for the word.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## OLD JUG'S REQUEST.

THE people ran and crowded over the fences at that exciting sight. Two gentlemen in a position to commit murder was not an everyday occurrence at Doon. The coachman and footman of the Butler carriage, having bribed a gossoon to hold the horses, pressed forward in their blue and silver-laced liveries to the front, close by that bent old man in the corner of the field who had muttered the remark about the silver bullet, and whose ragged hat was crushed down so as nearly to conceal his countenance.

The seconds, after a whispered word with their principals,—probably some murderous direction, such as 'aim low,'—retired a few steps; and Mr. Waddell gave the signal to fire.

Only one pistol exploded; and through the smoke all the straining eyes could see that both parties were still standing. Captain Gerald had merely thrust his left hand into his pocket, when the smoke cleared away.

Amid breathless stillness he raised his pistol. 'I stated that I had no desire to shoot Mr. O'Regan; I have permitted him to have a shot at me because he believed himself insulted. I don't know whether he will deem the insult aggravated by what I say now; which is, that I adhere to my former declaration concerning his conduct on the hustings; and, at the same time, having once placed my life in his power as reparation, I have no intention of doing so again. I can have no quarrel with him; I fire in the air:' and he did so.

Nevertheless, Mr. O'Regan took it upon himself to be very wrathful; to talk a good deal about injured honour,

and the like, and declare himself not at all satisfied, as yet.

'Let us go,' said Captain Gerald. 'He must excuse me. Come home to breakfast, Waddell; the morning is very cold;' and he shivered.

'But—but—I am the guardian of your honour in this case; and the matter has not been quite according to rule'—

'No; I gave my opponent every advantage against myself. Perhaps he would like another chance of putting me out of the way, and walking in over my corpse as member for Doon; but I'm not going to give it to him, I assure you;' and Captain Gerald laughed, though with pale lips. 'Come, Waddell; I want to get home.'

So that gentleman had to gather up his precious pistols, and thought of the other little brass plate he would have inserted, in addition to the list of dates on the handles, containing mention of this November morning. He was much dissatisfied, nevertheless. 'Out of all rule, out of all rule,' he kept repeating to himself; but his limited wits showed him no way from the dilemma but that which the imperious will of his principal indicated. Mr. O'Regan chafed to and fro, leaning on his tall military second, who had indeed come expressly with him from Dublin, to back him through any such little affair as this, considered at the time almost inseparable from electioneering.

Captain Gerald was endeavouring to wrap himself in the cartouche cloak (which had been cast on a black-thorn bush at the beginning), but, as he tried to do it with only his right hand, and kept the left obstinately in his pocket, he would have failed, except for the help of the footman, who stepped forward from his corner.

'Sir—sir,' exclaimed the man, beholding the crimson stain which was working through his master's clothes, 'there's blood!—you've been wounded somewhere!'

'Hold your tongue, sirrah, and help me on with this.

Button it at the throat—there! say nothing about the blood to anybody—'tis only a finger.'

Nevertheless, the news spread about the field like wildfire that the captain had been wounded; and the fact had much to do with the pacifying of Mr. O'Regan's further bloodthirsty desires. 'I have punished him, at all events—the aristocrat!' said the son of the people. 'He will know what he is to expect if ever again he should dare to insult the majesty of the nation!' And this was the burden of a short speech he made from the earthen wall to his adherents, while his rival was retiring across the fields to the waiting carriage. Somehow the speech was no great success, and the applause was but feeble; owing to the chilling influence of the severe weather on political sympathies, or, perchance, because the crowd felt in their hearts that Captain Gerald had acted the more magnanimous part of the two.

The latter had not reached the carriage when an old woman came hurrying from the outskirts of the gathering and intercepted him.

'Oh, Mister Gerald, acushla! is it thrue that ye're wounded; that that vilyan of a counsellor dhruv a ball through you? Let me look at it, me darlin'; sure who'd have a betther right than yer own Onld Jug, the foster-mother that rared ye? Au', throth, ye look mighty pale intirely in yerself, alannuv. Oh, captin dear, 't isn't a bad wound, is it?'

'Only a finger, Old Jug, I do assure you—only a finger,' he said. 'I've bound it up in my handkerchief; 'twill do for the present; there's nothing to be alarmed about,' said he, trying to escapo from her.

'Keep off the woman; take her away,' ordered Mr. Waddell roughly. His temper was sorely ruffled by the unconstitutional ending of the duel in which he had taken part. But, supposing the principals had been savage enough to fire a dozen shots at each other, demanding pistol after pistol until the death, as he had sometimes seen, he would have tranquilly loaded in

compliance with their fierce desires, and felt he was only fulfilling a duty.

It is wonderful how habit will pervert even the ordinary humanity of a man, and blind his moral senso to the nature of crime. Mr. Waddell would have unquestionably declared any peasant guilty of murder who shot another over a fence; and, except that in a duel the opportunity occurred for a double murder, a dispassionate mind would be puzzled to tell the difference.

There is an old Gaelic proverb—'Kindred to twenty degrees, fosterago to a hundred;' and the tie was strong in Myles Furlong's mother. She knew that her own son had lurked in a disguise among the crowd, hoping to see his hated foster-brother slain; she knew that she incurred his heaviest wrath by her continued interest in, and love for, the Butler whom she had nursed upon her knees. Yet she could not repress the yearning, poor woman, that made her run after the carriage as long as she could, and never turn her face from where the castle looked over the leafless trees until she was on the gravel drive before the windows. The servants were civil to her, and permitted her to stay in an outer kitchen by the fire until she could speak with 'the young mather' himself; for nothing short of this would satisfy the faithful old creature's craving. She rocked herself to and fro, with her red cloak drawn over her head and a low 'croon' issuing from her lips, unheeding all the chat between helpers and hangers-on about her, until she heard her foster-son's voice.

'Well, old Mother Jug, you see I'm better than you expected, eh?'

His hand was bound up and hung in a sling; his handsome face, a shade paler than it had been before the loss of blood, was looking down upon her. She started to her feet, and dropped a reverential curtsey.

'I know the best herbs in the world for a cure,

acushla,' she said, her eyes lingering upon him lovingly. 'If you'll let me tend it an' dhress it'—

'Why, Old Jug, it's only a broken finger, and the surgeon of the Fencibles has just spliced it up; and there's no need for any more dressing for a while. Just be satisfied with his doctoring, there's an honest woman; and be quite sure I'll not let myself die this time, if I can help it.'

'But young crathurs like you are mighty giddy, asthore; an' sure don't I know how careless you are about yerself, Masther Gerald?'

'Shall I give you some money?' he interrupted. 'Old Connor tells me you've taken up the calling of a goose-plucker, and wander about the country huying and selling feathers. Now, I don't like my nurse, one so publicly known for her connection with the family as you are, to be getting a livelihood in this ramhling way. What's the reason you don't come here as usual, and get whatever you want? Bodkin has orders.' And the captain's brow was contracted unpleasantly.

'Well, yer honour, Masther Gerald, I can't live at the forge, he rason of a little misfortun' that happened it, as dhruv me an' the boy Freney out on the world in a manner.'

'What do you mean by a misfortune?' he asked quickly.

'The roof to be burnt off ov it one fine night,' she replied. 'Be the same token, it's quare enough that it was the very night Mither Bodkin's hand got hurnt, too.'

There was a suppressed chuckle among the helpers and hangers-on standing by, who, though sycophants in the hailiff's presence, cordially hated him when it was safe to do so.

'Well,' said the captain, with a short catch of his hreath, 'the roof shall be put on again. Connor, remind me to tell Bodkin to send thatchers up there to-morrow. And then I hope you'll stay at home, old lady, and keep your sons out of mischief these troublesome times.'

'Throth, yer honour, Masther Gerald, the boys has a cleverness for gettin' into throuble that defies me intirely, intirely. It's only last night that Freney came home to me fairly kilt be the counsellor's party; he was half-dead before wid playin' jigs for yer honour's vothers in Martin Dwyer's shebeen-house, an' the others caught him an' bate him whin he was comin' out. Oh, sorra taste of his four bones but's as black as yer shoe to-day. An' as to Myles, yer honour's own foster-brother, poor boy, he daren't show his nose at all; sure there's warrants out afther him since that little bit of a risin' in the summer.'

'I remember. Well, if he will mix himself up with such things, he must take the consequences. I have no power to remit them; the law must deal with him. Good-bye now, Old Jug!' and ho extended his hand graciously to shake hers.

'Masther Gerald,'—he held his strong white hand in her own pair of withered ones,—'will yer honour allow yer poor old nurse, that often had you lyin' a wake wee shy baby across her arm—will yer honour allow me a kiss of yor hand?'

He laughed; her yearning love was rather a bore to him. 'What a question! Kiss away, of course, Old Jug; few people have a better right;' and, nodding to her, he whistled to his dogs, and went out.

'I do believe the old lady cares for me more than for her own flesh and blood,' he ruminated, going along to the stables. 'I'll be bound she never wanted to kiss Myles the blacksmith's paw. Curious institution, fosterage, isn't it? Relic of barbarism, I should fancy. Unpleasant, as binding the higher with the lower classes in an imaginary way. Something about it in the old Greek poets, isn't there?'

But his classicaal recollections, never very vivid, were becoming more and more dull with lapse of time: books were no pursuit of Captain Gerald's.

'It's a partieular wonder to me,' he said at last, 'that she didn't inquire after little Una. Such a pretty child

as that's growing up; she'll make a tolerable girl by and by—Evelyn's maid, I presume. Not an inch of the black-browed father in her—though she certainly favours me with a species of rabid dislike, which would be amusing enough were it not so persistent and implacable. Evelyn ought to teach her more Christian charity, at all events. Wonder if the parents reckoned on her being brought up a Protestant, and being taught to read the Testament, as I found her in Evelyn's boudoir the other day? Evelyn's grown quite an enthusiast on that subject.'

He hesitated a moment, and there came a lull in his thoughts, as he looked at various segments of his life which would not bear close inspection. The view was not pleasant; he shut it up, and turned away his eyes as quickly as might be. The sufferer from a bodily disease is eager to know his malady, and to find a remedy. In the deeper and deadlier diseases of the soul how commonly does the sufferer strive to conceal his malady from himself, and turn away from the 'balm in Gilead, the Physician there:' as he does so, choosing death rather than life.

'One thing is certain, she never will give herself to that rollicking, swaggering Waddell. No, I don't know any one good enough for Evelyn—high or low, far or near. I used to fancy, long ago, that there was a boy-and-girl liking between her and Fergus Kavanagh; but of course all that is dead and buried. He, a penniless barrister, and only the son of a poor clergyman, could have no pretensions to the hand of Miss Butler of Doon; to say nothing of those political opinions which, were he a prince of the blood, would disqualify him in my father's eyes.'

Captain Gerald went in to while away the time and the smart of his finger in the company of his favourite horses.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

## A STATE TRIAL.

THE Saturday and Sunday were periods of frightful exertion on the part of the counsellor and his allies to whip up the poll. No stone was left unturned to secure a favourable issue. Tallies of voters were locked up, where at all doubtful in their adhesion, and guarded day and night jealously. Mr. O'Regan was hoarse from holding forth, and his mob hoarse from shouting responsively. He began with a great flush of success on the polling day; and the non-electors, well primed and loaded by the oratory of the neighbouring chapels on the Sunday, were resolved to prove their prowess and assert their freedom by putting down the freedom of everybody else. Nevertheless, surely as a tide creeps up the shore, did Captain Gerald's minority creep up upon the counsellor's majority, narrowing it, overwhelming it, leaving it nowhere when the assessor's books were closed.

Mr. O'Regan avenged himself in a stinging speech. For the thousandth time had Ireland demonstrated herself to be down-trodden, crushed beneath the tyranny of a Saxon oligarchy (he was not particular now as to being comprehended by the people, for his address was veritably to the Congress of United Irishmen in Dublin, his employers). Ireland had preferred the descendant of the stranger and the alien to the descendant of her own ancient kings; and the eyes of the world were looking scornfully at Ireland that day—more particularly the eyes of America and of a neighbouring nation (by which periphrasis was indicated France), and wondering how long she would wear chains and smile

in her fetters; with more to the same purpose, well interlarded with cheering and groaning.

The successful candidate returned thanks in a few commonplace words, and, in his regal good-humour, announced an amnesty to all the subjects on his father's estates who had been misguided enough to vote for his opponent. A scathing scowl dwelt on Mr. O'Regan's brow, and a curl on his lip, at this additional proof of the slavery of the constituency which he had in the previous week declared free and glorious, but which, being now decided against him by a majority, was in worse than Cimmerian darkness and Egyptian bondage.

So the election was over; and Captain Gerald posted up to Dublin in the family carriage, bearing the news of his own return. It was no surprise to himself; he had never doubted his success all along, even when the adversary's exertions were most spasmodic. Territorial weight must carry the day, he had always affirmed; but there had never been a contest against the will of the Butler lord paramount on any former occasion. And even this was considered a point gained by the Backlane Parliament which sat in Dublin, and had been the means of gaining the elective franchise for Roman Catholics in the spring of this self-same year—1793.

Colonel Butler of Doon was more chafed by the opposition than pleased by the victory. The constitution of the country must be coming to pieces, when it was possible for a gentleman to be thus bearded in the heart of his own estate. For he considered that the political powers of his tenants were as much his appanage as their rents. The ill-judged Relief Bill of last session had done it all—had introduced an element of discordance which must finally ruin Protestant ascendancy. So did the colonel hold forth to his son, the new M.P., in his study at the back of the family mansion in Stephen's Green.

'There's no saying where it will end, sir,' he observed irately, as he paced up and down. 'They have opened a sluice which may let in a drowning deluge; and that

in obedience to pressure from an illegal body—for as such I look upon the Back-lane Parliament, sir.’

Captain Gerald, smothering a yawn with his uninjured hand, muttered that he had never understood exactly what the Back-lane Parliament was.

‘Not understood, sir?’ His father came to anchor for a moment in front of him. ‘That proceeds from your culpable habit of ignoring all political questions, sir; but now that you are a member of the Legislature of the realm, sir, I will hope for better things.’ Captain Gerald looked listless, as his eyes strayed to the dreary strip of town-garden at the back of the house, wherewith the study window cheerfully looked out.

‘Then you must know, sir, that the Catholics of this realm, not satisfied with the humane government under which they live, and ungratefully agitating against it—as if that very power of agitation were not a proof of their perfect liberty, forsooth!—and not remembering that the many rebellions and massacres perpetrated by their forefathers had rendered the penal laws a mere measure of safety—chose to appoint the Legislature, and assemble a body of delegates after the French model, duly elected throughout the country from the lowest of the populace. These persons,’ added Colonel Butler, after pausing for a suitable epithet, and finding none more applicable than this neuter expression,—‘these persons, thus illegally, as I maintain, elected, met in the Taylors’ Hall of this city a year ago; drew up a petition to His Majesty, containing a most audacious statement of grievances, to which His Majesty was advised to lend a too favourable ear, and, further, advised to recommend from the throne that measures should be adopted for relieving Roman Catholics still more.’

‘I know all about the Relief Bill that followed,’ said the captain, fearful that he was about to have the whole history detailed. ‘And I never saw it so pernicious a measure as I do now, when it risked my seat,’ he added, with a laugh.

'Insufferable, sir! perfectly insufferable, that we are to be bearded in our own borough by a—a—nenentity—a briefless counsellor—a demagogue, like this O'Regan. It is something unheard of in the annals of the kingdom, sir; and I hope may not prove the beginning of the end, sir!' Colonel Butler pursed out his lower lip pertentously, as he paused before his son.

'Certainly,' said Captain Gerald, uttering the platitude impressively, 'we live in dangerous times.'

'Never were stormier, sir,' responded his father gloomily. 'The country is like the crater of Vesuvius as I saw it once when I was a young man, and made the grand tour; all heaving and throbbing—no knowing where it will break and let out the imprisoned fire.'

'I wonder what Government will do about that last proclamation from the Society,' calling on the volunteers to arm in defence of the liberties of the people? It is rather violently worded; I daresay an indictment would lie.'

'Last night it was reported that an information would be filed *ex officio* by the Attorney-General against Archibald Hamilton Rowan, who signed the production as chairman or secretary of the Society. I don't know what could have induced that man to put himself in such a position—a person of his high character and fortune.'

'I thought I had heard of Simon Butler as their chairman,' observed Captain Gerald, 'and Napper Tandy as secretary?'

'But they were arrested for breach of privilege; and Tandy, having escaped in the first instance, had some dodging about during last session, suffering himself to be taken into custody just half an hour before Parliament was prorogued, in order that he might be liberated in due form. Now he's gone abroad for his country's good, finding Ireland too hot to hold him; but Hamilton Rowan has taken his place. I'm sorry for it; I hoped

<sup>1</sup> Of United Irishmen.

better things of Rowan. A misplaced enthusiasm every whit; like that of our friend Fergus Kavanagh.'

Captain Gerald pricked up his ears at the familiar name.

'He's in town then?'

'Yes; I asked him why he didn't stay at Doon and help you to win your battle, and he replied that you were quite sure to win without his aid; yet I own I should have been better pleased to see the son of my old friend the rector standing by you at such a crisis.'

'We did very well without him, sir,' was the observation of the new M.P., between whom and the young barrister there was not much congeniality.

Captain Gerald took his seat in form on the 21st of January, when the session was opened in all pomp and state by the Earl of Westmoreland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Assembled in that noble chamber, which is still tapestried by the battle of the Boyne, and contains the empty gilded throne of the defunct Legislature, as a thing for show, the peers and commons of Ireland listened to the viceregal address, assuring them that the spirit of insurrection was, in general, suppressed (Colonel Butler shook his iron-grey head), and that no exertion on the part of the Executive should be spared 'to prevent and punish the machinations of those who might aim to seduce the people from their accustomed loyalty into acts of sedition and outrage.' Colonel Butler shook his head again dissentiently at the phrase 'accustomed loyalty;' he knew that this was no correct representation of the temper of the people.

The addresses from both Houses, in reply, caused very little discussion; and Captain Gerald had nothing to do for some time in his senatorial capacity but lounge on the benches for awhile every evening. A more interesting matter than the opening of the session was engaging all thoughts in this month of January 1794. The trial of Archibald Hamilton Rowan was fixed for the 28th; and, as a contest between the Government and the powerful Society of United Irishmen, the result was

looked for with the greatest interest. Rowan was no lay figure of a conspirator, nor a mere vulgar enthusiast risen from the ranks of the mob. He was a gentleman of position and property, joining the popular party from a conviction that their struggle for further liberty was just and right. Rather in the knight-errant style of character, eager to redress wrong wherever he saw it, he was easily led into indiscretions which a cooler temper would have avoided; he was the champion of the oppressed everywhere, and got himself into frequent troubles by this disinterested bent of mind.

Fergus Kavanagh was an eager listener to the whole State trial, as may be supposed. He sympathized heartily with the noble-looking prisoner, who was proved neither to have written nor circulated the address for which he was prosecuted as a libeller, and suspected of high treason. Yet he would not shield himself by any defence which could criminate others; he had signed the objectionable paper—he would manfully abide the consequences. Two words in it gave occasion to one of the noblest passages in the oratory of any age, for the prisoner's counsel was John Philpot Curran.

The little man, with the wondrous star-like eyes lighting his mobile Celtic countenance, had caught an inspiration from those two fortunate words—'Universal Emancipation!'

'Yes,' exclaimed Curran; 'I speak in the spirit of the British law, which makes liberty commensurate with, and inseparable from, British soil; which proclaims, even to the stranger and the sojourner, the moment he sets his foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of Universal Emancipation! No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced—no matter what complexion, incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burned upon him—no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down—no matter with what

solemnities he may have been devoted on the altar of slavery—the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, that altar sinks in the dust; his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of the chains that burst from around him, and he stands disenthralled by the irresistible genius of Universal Emancipation!

The court drew a long breath after that burst of eloquence. Even Lord Clonmel, Chief Justice, and the clever advocate's bitter foe, could scarce suppress his symptoms of admiration. But notwithstanding all that Curran's rhetoric could do, and the total insufficiency of evidence to prove publication on the part of the prisoner, Rowan was found guilty, fined £500, and sentenced to an imprisonment of two years; while the real author, afterwards prosecuted, was acquitted, and the man who really distributed it was never even indicted! What wonder, then, that Hamilton Rowan gained the *éclat* of a political martyr?

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### IN NEWGATE.

THE session of 1794 went on with considerable dulness until Mr. Ponsonby introduced his Reform Bill on March 4th; but this stagnation among the legislators was not because the country was in a lulled state. Right-boys and Defenders had never been more rampant. A large body of the former, assembling near Bandon, in the county of Cork, swore the inhabitants of the districts round not to pay tithes, taxes, nor hearth-money; when the police and militia

attempted to disperse them, the Right-boys routed those authorities completely. The organization of the Defenders spread into many counties heretofore free from their influence, and the outrages they committed were more frequent and ferocious.

But Parliament in College Green tranquilly discussed a new Reform Bill—as if a man should arrange for the patching up of his roof while his house behind him was in flames. Sir Hercules Langrishe led the ministerial opposition to the measure, and declared that reform was but one step to revolution, and that the political convulsions of France were only the natural consequences of ‘a reforming spirit.’ A majority of ninety-eight against the bill proved that most of the House agreed with him; and Parliament was prorogued on the 25th March, having nothing more to do.

Society stayed in Dublin for awhile amusing itself. *Après nous le déluge* was the language of plenty of pleasure-seekers, dancing, as it were, on the crust of a volcano. Beneath the smiling surface of balls and routs and viceregal entertainments, a world of conspiracy and unrest was seething. The mock Parliament of Catholic delegates continued to meet in Taylors’ Hall, Back Lane, and whispered of French alliance as the only hope of Ireland. A man had come over as secret envoy from the Committee of Public Safety in Paris to report on the political temper of the commonalty and the chances of success for an invasion. He was called William Jackson, and was accompanied by an English attorney named Cockayne, whom he believed a personal friend, but who had in reality sold his services to the British Government as spy. By information from this person, all Jackson’s letters to his employers were intercepted at the post office; and had not the leaders of the United Irishmen been jealously guarded in their intercourse with him (as they distrusted Cockayne from the outset, naturally wondering what could be the motive of an Englishman





THE IRISH HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT (NOW THE BANK OF IRELAND), COLLEGE GREEN, DUBLIN. (P. 186.)



for playing falso to his own Government in favour of aliens), the whole conspiracy might have been fathomed at this period, and the rebellion of 1798 crushed in the germ.

Mr. Rowan's imprisonment in Newgate was not a severe one. His friends were allowed access, under proper restrictions; the leaders of the United Irishmen were his frequent visitors. Fergus Kavanagh, though not sufficiently implicated in their plans to be known as one of them, was yet considered a promising pupil in those liberal theories which precede the practice of sedition; and, having an admiration for Rowan's private character (which was, indeed, blameless but for certain eccentricities), he sometimes whiled away one of the prisoner's hours with his conversation.

They were sitting thus one April day in the small stone room which was Rowan's residence, and which the care of his friends had made more habitable than a prison cell is usually. The turf-sods were smouldering on the broad hearth, sending a lazy curl of faint blue smoke straggling up the wide chimney, which was laced across with hidden bars; the small window had bars of great strength across it, though it only looked into a dismal grey paved courtyard, deep as a walled well. Many books and papers were lying in disorder on the deal table, which was covered with a cloth cover; close to the i stand, with its upright goose-quills, was perched the elbow of the prisoner, as he half sat, half lay, in an arm-chair talking to Mr. Kavanagh.

'I didn't like what MacNally's footman told him about Cockayne's mock sleep after dinner there one day. Jackson and he and Tone, and one or two others of our party, had got a little free-spoken over their claret, when the man who had brought in some fresh wine beckoned his master out of the room. "Sir," says he, "be careful what you say; for the strange gentleman that seems to be asleep hasn't his eyes shut at all, but is watching you all through his fingers;

I saw his eyes glistening as I passed by." That was the very evening Tone agreed to draw up the report for the French committee, detailing the exact state of Ireland; and if that English fellow should prove to be a traitor'—

'Let us hope not, sir,' said the young barrister when he paused; 'the very idea of such treachery is so repugnant'—

'You still hope the best of all men!' exclaimed Rowan, who was himself one of the most benevolently credulous of beings. 'My young friend, you have much to learn; the longer you live, the more distrustful will you become. I tried to dissuade Tone from furnishing the promised paper, and have at least the satisfaction to know that my warning made him more guarded, and that he refused, in Cockayne's presence, to have anything to do with a projected embassy to France. I hope this renders him pretty safe; but it's an uneasy subject—very uneasy.'

Rowan's head sank on his chest as he gazed on the smouldering embers of his fire—that resting-place for all troubled eyes from immemorial times. His personal prospects, should Cockayne prove traitor, were none of the cheeriest; before he suspected him—as, indeed, proof almost indubitable was required to make Hamilton Rowan suspicious—he had committed his own self largely in his conversations with Jackson.

'The report was to have been forwarded to-day under cover to a friend in Hamburg,' he said, rousing himself from unquiet thoughts; 'I hope it's all right. Not that I wish for French intervention here,' he added, with a quick change of position; 'I am not in love with their triad of liberty, equality, and fraternity. But I *do* think the Catholics of this country are oppressed—heavily oppressed.'

'And Mr. Rowan has ever been the champion of the oppressed,' said young Kavanagh, recalling in memory many instances of his friend's almost quixotic opposi-

tion to social wrongs, and his extraordinary sympathy for human affliction in every shape.

'But the remedy lies not in rebellion,' said the prisoner, rising to his feet. A very noble figure, with great reserves of strength latent in it, and neither the head nor the face of a conspirator, but an honest, manly countenance, with fearless and benevolent eyes: the worthiest and least guilty of United Irishmen was he.

'The remedy lies not in rebellion,' he was saying, 'though that unfortunate manifesto (by reason of which I am here) seems to imply so. I can only say I never meant the words charged with such meaning to have an import so violent. But still, I adhere to the line of that document which says, "In four words lies all our power—Universal Emancipation and Representative Legislature." These are the great needs of Ireland.'

That is, viewing Ireland as agitators of the day were wont to view it, merely from the political side; but what vast things else did Ireland need, and *does* Ireland need! There are things more essential to social welfare than even a parliament which shall personify purity; there is needed, above all other needs for a nation, the wider diffusion of the fear of God, which verily would bring the halcyon day of universal emancipation. 'Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.' 'If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.'

Mr. Kavanagh's memories reverted to the trial, and to Curran's great oratorical effort.

'Though I was in the dock of the King's Bench,' said the prisoner, 'I positively enjoyed that speech as if I had no personal interest about it. The general overcame the local.'

'I was witness to a curious scene afterwards,' said the young barrister. 'When we came outside the court, the populace were bent on chairing Mr. Curran, and he had no taste for the honour. But his declining was of no use, though he looked as dignified as he could, and

desired them to desist with his best air of authority. A gigantic porter stood by, looking down on the little lawyer with a sort of contemptuous admiration. "Arrah, boys," says he, "don't let us mind the little cratur; here, Paddy, pitch him up this minit on my showldhor." And so Mr. Curran was carried to his carriage, from which the horses were taken, and the mob drew him home. A second-hand tribute to yourself, Mr. Rowan.'

Just then the under-gaoler knocked at the door, which was without fastening inside, and so stood perpetually open an inch or more; but a brawny padlock and formidable bolts were outside, used in the night-season. He merely looked in, ushering a gentleman whom Fergus Kavanagh knew to be a Mr. Dowling, one of the clique of United Irishmen. His half-scared look immediately struck both. Coming up close, without any of the usual prefaces of intercourse, he uttered the words, in a low tone, 'Have you heard that Jackson is arrested?'

Mr. Rowan sat down, and a little of the scared look crept into even his countenance. 'This is Cockayne's doing!' was his first remark.

'They seem to think not: Cockayne himself was arrested and brought before the Privy Council yesterday; and Jackson was taken to-day in the Fives Court.'

'What is the charge?'

'The worst: high treason.'

Mr. Dowling sat down, and stretched out his feet towards the hearth. A silence fell on all three for a few minutes, while they looked the possibilities of the situation straight in the face.

'I know him to be a highly honourable man,' was Mr. Rowan's next observation. 'Desperately indiscreet; the worst person possible for a secret envoy; but I could never connect the idea of him with treachery. He'll hold his tongue.'

'I hope so,' said Mr. Dowling. And there was another silence. Fergus Kavanagh, knowing that these gentlemen had an intimacy to which he made no

pretensions, rose and took leave. Mr. Rowan shook his hand in an abstracted manner, as if he scarcely was conscious of the action. The news just brought in was truly of importance to him, and might make all the difference between the tranquil endurance of his two years' imprisonment, and his public execution for high treason.



## CHAPTER XXX.

## IN SACKVILLE STREET.

NEXT evening but one the Butlers' mansion in Stephen's Green was grandly lighted up, and an assembly of the fashionable world was in progress. Round the doorway, where two feeble oil lamps twinkled and smoked in the yet lingering daylight of the sweet April evening, was gathered a whole *posse* of those inimitable beggars who are, alas! not yet extinct in Ireland, and who passed their remarks with much freedom upon the occupants of every carriage that drove up. A string of vehicles, slowly filing by, lined one side of the noble square, and deposited their contents in succession opposite Colonel Butler's hospitable threshold. Within the open door was a brilliant hall full of servants, a vista of staircase and passage, leading to somewhere yet more dazzling, along which pairs and groups slowly vanished from view of street eyes.

'Arrah, an' sure there's Counsellor Curran himself. Long life to his honour, that do be always definin' the poor! An' it's yerself that won't be plased, counsellor dear, to find ould Clonmel in forenent yc.'

For these Irish crowds seemed to know all the personal predilections of everybody; and the feud

between the Chief Justice and the celebrated barrister was no secret. And there were cheers whenever a favourite appeared, groans when any person alighted who had offended the populace by any public or private act. The neutral mass were allowed to pass with only personal observations, such as—

‘There’s onld Lady Leithrim, wid a row o’ curls that would delight your heart, an’ as black as a sloe. I wondher how much they cost, Paddy?’

‘But look at the beautiful crature behind her, Mogue. Tundher-an’-turf! av sho’d only allow me to light the pipe at the sparkle of her cyé!’

‘Whisht awhile; here’s a grandee intirely, Jim. Och, murther! look at the postillions an’ all the silver they has on their backs; as much on one wristband as ’ud feed the likes of uz for a month. Troth, an’ ’tis only Jack Toler, after all; ’twould be too much throuble to groan him, boys; an’, moreover, me throat is sore afther Lord Clare; we’ll let him pass this timo.’

There was nothing very forbidding in the short pury figure and jovial countenance of the gentleman who emerged from the coach and turned his twinkling eyes towards the speaker, with a quizzical look. Yet, when he was Attorney-General in the State trials, and at the time of the Union, no man in Ireland was more detested; all his wit and talent could not redeem the fact of his being a Crown lawyer. He was afterwards Lord Norbury, ‘the founder of two peerages and an enormous fortune.’

Wit and talent of no ordinary order were circulating in Colonel Butler’s reception-rooms that night. Wandering from group to group, Fergus Kavanagh could not but admire the versatility of mental power that abounded and overflowed on all sides. It was not the mere frothing of fun and humour, though that was indeed plentiful, but the shrewdness, the sense, the cleverness, that ran like silver veins through the common ore of conversation. ‘A noble people,’ said he to himself, lately come from the duller and more decorous



circles of English society ; ' noble in volume of brain, in thew and sinew, but with a great deficiency somewhere : is it in practicality ?'

Card-tables were set in various corners, according to the pernicious fashion of the day, and were crowded with players and lookers-on. Certainly the stakes were trifling, seldom exceeding fourpenny points ; but there was as much excitement about these, especially among the turbaned old ladies and half-pay militia officers, as the heaviest bank at loo could create. Their chief interest in life were these nightly whist-tables, with the small successes and disappointments appended thereto ; and they made the most of the questionable enjoyment, forgetful of the weightier matters of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come.

Evelyn Butler received her father's guests ; and very radiant she looked, though her abundance of fair curls was concealed as much as possible, and a feather ornament crowned her brows. On one point she had been firm with her milliner : she would not consent to appear in the terrible extent of undress which was coming into fashion, and which culminated to its extreme of scant drapery in 1800. Beside her stood an elderly aunt, her chaperon, who had made no remonstrance to the same effect ; consequently was an embodiment of limited clothes, arranged very tightly about her figure. If any belle of 1865 were to behold those of 1794, beyond doubt she would be indisposed to admire the *tout ensemble*, and would marvel as much at the peculiar costume as the fashionable dame of 1900 may be astonished at our crinolines and cylinder hats.

'How are you, Fergus?' she said, when he made his way to her through the crowd ; and a 'dandy macaroni' (to use the phrase of the day) who stood at her elbow, with quizzing-glass dangling from his fingers, certainly envied the long limp young barrister the manner of that greeting. They exchanged a few immaterial words ; but one, at least, felt that, in having met, the event of the evening for him was over.

Yet he sauntered away after awhile, and joined in various strips of the political conversations going on around. Of course all these were of pretty much the same complexion; he was himself about the largest Liberal in the room. Colonel Butler prided himself on the fact that his house was a sort of nucleus for the Tories and True Blues. Counsellor John Philpot Curran was looked at rather suspiciously, because of all he had said about universal emancipation in the speech for Rowan; but he had always had the *entrée* of the establishment, and after all, Colonel Butler reflected, it might have been done in the way of trade. Lawyers were expected to say so much more than their convictions, in order to serve their clients.

So that Fergus Kavanagh heard but one class of opinions concerning the great news of the day—Jackson's arrest, and probable disclosures before the Privy Council. The most exaggerated rumours were afloat as to the plot thus nipped in the bud: twenty-five thousand French would otherwise have landed next week at the mouth of the Shannon, or a fleet would have burned up the shipping in Belfast Lough, or the Cove of Cork. It was known for a certainty that Jackson's friend, Cockayne, had been liberated after examination, and had gone to visit his unfortunate companion in Newgate, with condolence on his lips. Nobody but the hirers and the hireling as yet were aware that it was his information which had caused Jackson's imprisonment, and was laying the train for Jackson's ignominious death.

'They say he could compromise Reynolds, Wolfe Tone, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald if he could be got to speak out,' said one old gentleman, with a queue that rivalled the colonel's.

'Well, I am informed that Lord Edward was very cautious, and refused to hold any communication with Cockayne,' was the reply.

'I wouldn't have given him credit for so much discretion, after the foolish way he acted in France—'

completely identifying himself with the *sans-culottes*, and the rest of them.'

'Reynolds has disappeared,' said a third, 'supposed to be off to America; and Wolfe Tone is in a terrible fright at his country-house, not quite knowing whether he's to expect the pillory, or the gallows in Green Street, for his share of the favours going. That was an unlucky paper of his that got into the hands of the post office people.'

'They talk of dispersing the Back-lane Parliament very speedily,' observed the first speaker. 'Treason has been too long hatched there with impunity.'

'But what about Rowan?' observed another mysteriously; 'no doubt about it, he's deeply implicated;—we will have a second State trial, probably, and another brilliant oration from Curran. Look at him yonder—what a peculiar face and gait! Impossible not to say, "There's a remarkable man!"'

With his head elevated, and face turned up towards the ceiling, as if his brilliant eyes were studying every inch of the stucco, his hands in his side-pockets, and his full under-lip protruded, the little man was sauntering down the apartment, apparently regardless of the throng of company who made way for him. Yet he had just left a group convulsed with merriment at some sahy of his wit, and not a movement in the crowd escaped his quick observation.

'Studying some Nisi Prius effect,' whispered one of his detractors, a briefless man of the same profession. Fergus Kavanagh went up and spoke respectfully to the 'star;' at the same moment the Solicitor-General came by and paused. Among John Toler's talents was an almost unlimited power of pun and repartee. When upon the bench afterwards, his court in the Four-courts might be identified by the frequent peals of laughter issuing from it. Those eyes, not large and luminous with the fire of eloquence like Curran's, twinkled perpetually with an effervescence of humour, which covered a hard and selfish nature.

Curran was inquiring from young Kavanagh concerning a mutual friend named P'epper, who had received a fall from his horse.

'Has he named the beast?' says the Solicitor-General, during his momentary pause; 'tell him, with my compliments, he ought to be called Pepper-caster.'

The broad grin on the jester's own face was not reciprocated on Curran's. 'Ah, Toler, that is too like your "Shako-speare,"' was his rejoinder. For a story was going the rounds that the Solicitor-General had met an acquaintance named Spearo out riding, and complimented him on the paces of his horse. 'I've been ordered to ride him for the exercise,' said the latter; whereupon Toler remarked, 'I hope, then, his name is Shakespeare.'

Such bubbles of word-playing rolled on the surface of society, while the deep dark current below contained almost fathomless possibilities of ruin. But Curran was not one of those who could play the fiddle when Rome was burning. The state of his native land caused him deep anxiety; and even now the thoughts were brooding in his bosom which gave rise to his effective speech on the condition of Ireland, delivered in the next session of Parliament.

He took Fergus's arm for a turn into a quieter room, where card-tables were commoner than conversation.

'I am pleased to see that you are prudent enough to attend the levees at the Castle,' he observed; 'for people suspect you of too great intimacy with the United Irish cliquo, my young friend.'

'Indeed, sir!' Though it was no surprise to Fergus to hear it.

'No man would less advise you to become a sycophant for place or power than would I,' the elder barrister went on; 'and I am well known to be no friend to the politics of the present Viceroy. Lord Westmoreland has trafficked in places and pensions to an extent unparalleled in the annals of patronage; and I have incurred a large amount of odium by opposition, in my

seat in Parliament, to the wasteful expenditure of public money for the purpose of procuring influence. Never was the nefarious practice of granting reversions of offices carried to such extent as during the existing administration. But, my young friend, with all this righteous indignation against abuses, there should co-exist prudence. And in one's outset there is apt to be hotheadedness—do you perceive ?'

It was not the first friendly warning Fergus had had. He knew that even his childhood's friend, Colonel Butler, looked suspiciously upon him; for he had not as yet Talleyrand's art of using words to conceal his thoughts instead of to declare them.

A circumstance happened next afternoon which seemed to merge him deeper than ever in these political embroilments.

He was passing along Sackville Street, going to visit a friend at the north side of the city; and, where the upper part of that street debouches into Rutland Square, opposite the Rotunda, his eye was caught by the figure of a man walking up and down, somewhat apart, in the shadow of the buildings. A second glance confirmed the first idea, which had been rejected instantly by his mind as impossible: there was scarce any mistaking that noble figure, though it was endeavoured to be disguised with a slight stoop and the meanest garb, and that manly countenance, though the hat was pulled deep over its brows.

Fergus walked on a few paces in positive bewilderment. Should he volunteer help? To do him justice, he thought little of the risk to his personal safety in so doing; his ability to render any aid was the measure of his hesitation. He came back after a few moments, affecting a careless manner, as if nothing was further from his thoughts than the tall figure in the shade. But he went up quite close and said in a low tone,—

'Mr. Rowan!'

'I thought you would know me,' said the other, shaking hands as with an ordinary acquaintance. 'I saw

you passing, and you well-nigh started—little wonder that you should. I have just escaped from Newgate; and I know my secret is safe with you. Don't stay here and get yourself into trouble: farewell.'

'But, sir,' pleaded Fergus, 'I may be of some use to you; two persons walking up and down in close conversation are much less noticeable than one person loitering about. Pray take my arm, and tell me of this affair.'

'I believe you are right; at the same time, I cannot bear to expose you to danger. Have you any idea of the penalties you incur?'

'Certainly, sir; I know them all accurately,' said Mr. Kavanagh, with a smile, running over the list in his mind: 'it is part of my profession to know them.'

'True, true; I forgot you were a lawyer.' Taking his arm, then, Rowan proceeded to detail the particulars of his escape: how he had persuaded the under-gaoler to bring him to his own house for an hour to sign some legal paper which would have lost force had it been executed in the prison; and then, going into a back room to speak with his wife and children, had changed his clothes, let himself down from the window by a rope, found his horse ready saddled in the stable, and rode to his friend Dowling's. Here he found that the house was full of company, and Mr. Dowling could not leave them without suspicion, but appointed to meet him at the top of Sackville Street as soon as he could.

'And never did I endure such a weary half-hour,' said Rowan.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

## A PROCLAMATION.

THE officer of the day rode by, with his orderly at a respectful distance, and one or two dragoons, all flaunting in scarlet and gold; Rowan fancied that their glances rested on him and his companion for a moment. 'That subaltern's fortune were made,' said he, unconsciously drawing up his tall figure from its disguising slouch, 'did he but guess who is here.'

'Hush, my dear sir,' quoth Fergus; 'even an unguarded look might betray you now. And your plan is to get to France?'

'Yes, if a fishing-smack is found venturesome enough to take me, and meu can be found incorruptible enough to navigate it. Of course there will be a considerable reward offered'—

A third party coming quickly up shook hands with both, and drew Rowan's other arm within his own.

'I acknowledge to some hesitation before I recognised you, Mr. Kavanagh,' he said. 'You must excuse me, my dear Rowan; but a few friends stepped in all unawares, and when once the claret began to circulate, I could not be the one to break up the company—you perceive? But you may believe me, I was wishing them all at Dingle just at this juncture. I was thinking over the best plan for your escape all the while; the fellows found me abstracted, and I stopped the deacenters so long that they voted Mat Dowling in the blues.'

The speaker was rather out of breath, and wiped his heated brow with his handkerchief.

'Well, and what was the result of your cogitations?' asked Rowan as quietly as if the plotted escape concerned any party beside himself.

'Come to Sweetman's at Sutton near Baldoyle; he's a friend of yours, and can easily find a smuggling boat somewhere in his neighbourhood which, being used to running contraband goods, will easily be induced to run a contraband man—eh?'

'I was thinking of making the coast at Dunleary,'<sup>1</sup> observed Rowan in a wearied way.

'Just like you,' said the other: 'why, that's one of the first places the military will be sure to search, because of the multitude of all sorts of craft leaving there; whereas they can't watch every headland of the bay above or about Howth. Don't you think with me, Mr. Kavanagh?'

'But,' said Rowan, 'there are persons at Rush who have frequently dined with me at Newgate; and Dowell will be sure to search their houses; and Rush is dangerously near Baldoyle.'

These were people who had been 'in' for some affair in connection with the revenue, and had shared Mr. Rowan's prison hospitality. After due consideration, his advisers still thought it best that he should seek shelter in the house of Mr. Sweetman; and thither the trio proceeded on foot. They durst not hire a hackney coach, lest a figure so noticeable as the late prisoner's should be recognised by the driver: for Mr. Rowan and his huge pair of attendant Danish wolf-dogs had been almost as well known in Dublin as the armoured statue of King William in College Green.

Mr Dowling returned back to the city in order to lull all suspicion of his being an accomplice in the escape, and with the further purpose, if possible, of throwing the authorities off the scent. Fergus Kavanagh accompanied the fugitive; and as twilight deepened around them into the brief gloom of a summer night over the open country, they were able to quicken their steps with less fear of detection. Not that Rowan seemed in any haste; he was rather inclined to take the matter too easily.

<sup>1</sup> Called Hungstown since the landing of George IV.



'They mistake me,' he said. 'I am not disloyal at heart, whatever I may have seemed to a superficial observer. I want reform, not revolution; but this will not be believed. My poor wife and children! I hope my outlawry will not injure them. Of course I shall be outlawed if I succeed in getting away.'

As there was a pause, apparently of expectance that his companion would say something, Fergus was obliged to utter the truth.

'Yes, sir; a writ of outlawry will issue, I suppose.'

'And that involves the estates?'

'Yes, Mr. Rowan.'

The escaped prisoner stopped short. 'I will go back, and give myself up. I could better bear to die ignominiously than to live, and know that those whom I love more than my life are starving.'

The agonies of an amiable man who is also a conspirator were upon him: the young barrister noted with deep pity the emotion that almost convulsed that fine face, and filled with tears his eyes.

'But, sir, if you are convicted of high treason, your property is irremediably confiscated to the Crown; if you merely lie under a writ of outlawry, and take no further steps against the Government, there may be some chance that the intervention of friends might procure the reversion of your estates to your children. Do you perceive?'

'My friend,' said Rowan, who had the palm of his hand pressed to his aching brow, 'no man with domestic ties should ever be a politician. Verily are wife and children hostages to fortune, as Lord Bacon has it; our first duty is to them and their interests, before we set about righting all mankind.'

He walked on thereafter some time in silence, while Mr. Kavanagh, at his elbow, was debating certain thoughts arising from those words, which bade fair to overturn one of the dearest day-dreams of his own life. Was it indeed true that a man must choose between domestic happiness and the performance of his duty

to an oppressed country, and must utterly reject the one if he would fulfil the other? Then, between him and all his political aspirations arose the sweet face of his boyhood's playmate, with such a halo of happiness about it! and how cold and dull, like a landscape iced over with one of winter's blackest frosts, seemed the prospect opened up by love of country beside the warm sunlit summer-world opened up by love of home!

And already he knew that he had compromised himself considerably; aiding in this escape, if discovered, might be of the most serious import. But his chivalrous nature only clung the closer to the man who was thus cast upon his generosity; he never left him till he was safely housed with his friend Mr. Sweetman, and in a fair way of making good his flight beyond the realm.

Early next morning, Fergus, in his Dublin lodgings, —whither he returned at an unheard-of hour,—was roused by the newsman in his peregrinations singing forth in recitativo the contents of his whitey-brown printed sheets; and, among other items of intelligence, the 'Escape of Hamilton Rowan from Newgate' was foremost. The ragged vendor made good sale of his wares that May morning, owing chiefly to this startling piece of news; and the tribe of 'the great unwashed,' who had no coppers to buy, formed an active tail behind him, demanding the particulars at every pause. For Rowan was a popular favourite; he had always been kind to the poor; and to tell him of a case of hardship or oppression was instantly to enlist his warmest sympathies.

'Some say 'twas the doore, an' some 'twas tho windy, my dear,' answered the newsman to the pertinacious inquiries of a matron, with one untidy ehild in her arms, and another holding by her petticoat, who had run out to follow the crowd and add to it, leaving her good man's breakfast to take care of itself.

''Twas a powerful big windy would let out Mither Rowan, I'm thinkin',' observed a man with an awl and

hog's bristle in his fingers, betokening from what occupation he had been drawn aside by the seduction of hearing some new thing.

'An' there's a proclamation as long as me arm out dis mornin', offerin' any of us a thousand pound that'll give him up,' shrieked one from the outskirts of the gathering.

'An' if they made it a thousand million pound,' said a soberer body in the midst, whose garb revealed the fact that the possession of a thousand halfpence would have been to him fabulous wealth, 'they wouldn't get a mortal erathur in the whole entire city of Dublin, boys, to bethray Hamilton Rowan!'

Three cheers were forthwith given, in approbation of the sentiment, by the disaffected crowd.

'Arrah, wisha! will yo keep back out o' that, an' don't be takin' the bread out of a man's mouth!' exclaimed the newsmonger, with reference to the impossibility of a purchaser coming near him for the throng. 'Besides, ye're all talkin' thrason, ye set o' reprobates.'

The twinkle in his eye belied the censure of his words, as the public prints in his hands contradicted his own political predilections. It is curious, now-a-days, to look over a file of newspapers of the time, and note the servile tone of ultra-loyalty that possessed them. Government could do nothing wrong; this seemed to be the leading principle of the press. Far safer for society would it have been had there been an abundant licence of Radical publications to carry to the surface the peccant humours of the body politic.

It was true about the Governmental proclamation issued from the Castle, with the royal arms atop, and setting forth that a thousand pounds would be given for the apprehension of Hamilton Rowan. By its side, on all the dead walls and hoardings, and at the police-offices and barracks, appeared a further promise of another thousand pounds, being five hundred from the city, and five hundred from the authorities at Newgate

(anxious thus to prove their want of complicity), and from sundry extra loyalists. Wherever it could be done without danger, these placards were all torn away before nightfall; but an interesting ballad was compounded from them and such events of the escape as transpired, which was sung about the streets in the dusk, by parties who in general contrived to elude punishment.

Meanwhile, Rowan having put to sea in his friend Mr. Sweetman's pleasure-boat, manned by two brothers named Sheridan, who only knew that they were to take a gentleman to the nearest French port, a favourable wind carried him as far south as Wrexford, and then, changing, drove back the little craft under the Hill of Howth. They lay at anchor here, and procured a third hand to aid in the navigation, and, in a bright fresh morning, once more turned the bows southwards. Running along over the dancing waters, they came close to a revenue cruiser on the tack, the skipper of which hailed them, and, after a question or two, flung on board some papers ere they parted.

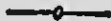
Rowan was sitting in the stern, disguised as a fisherman, and a misgiving crossed him, as the large print of the papers caught his eye. And surely it was the proclamation concerning himself! He read the accurate description of his person (not very flattering, after the manner of such descriptive delineations), and wondered if he could escape recognition by the boatmen. Presently he saw them grouped together at the bows, reading the proclamation. 'Now,' thought he, 'if these are not sterling fellows, all is lost.' But he looked as unconcerned as he could at the outlines of the magnificent Bay of Dublin, which the boat was traversing; right forward were the spurs of the Wicklow Mountains, with a cloud across the peak of the Sugar-Loaf, making it an aerial islet; he noticed this, and the purple of bold Bray Head, and the grey line of Shaugana strand, with white foam streaking its edge—noticed without much realization in his sense of them.

In the deep curve of the Bay lay the capital, with all its bridges and spires, and morning smoke over it from ten thousand breakfast fires. As yet the arms of Kingstown Harbour were not, nor did the Obelisk crown Killiney Hill; but the grand lion-like mass of Howth lay sentry along the north—Nature's largest feature in the panorama.

The occupants of the boat were little heeding. The sailors had recognised their passenger, and he met them with the calm front of a man more prepared for treachery than for generosity. 'My lads, you are right; I am Hamilton Rowan. You will get two thousand pounds by setting me ashore yonder, and walking me to the nearest barrack; but, lads, it is for the sake of your country and my country that I have become a prisoner and an outlaw: you are Irishmen, my lads!'

'Give us yer hand, sir; we'll land you safe,' said the elder Sheridan, after an instant's pause. 'Here goes the proclamation, boys!' It was torn, and flung overboard.

A few days afterwards they fulfilled their promise by bringing the exile under the French batteries at St. Paul de Léon, having set up for their ensign a red night-cap filled with straw, and lashed to a boat-hook, as a *bonnet de liberté*. Almost as much a make-believe as this ensign did Rowan himself prove in the land of equality subsequently—a mere man of straw among the red republicans. Several times in the course of the same year he narrowly escaped the lantern as a spy of Pitt's, and was glad to get away to America, and finally to accept the pardon of England, in 1806; living peaceably to a good old age.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

## 'FRESH FRUIT,' AND WHAT IT INVOLVED.

THE glory of summer-time was again on the woods about Doon Castle. The beeches had flung forth their silken-shafted leaves in trembling masses to the wooing winds, which by gentle wrestling had so developed and strengthened them, that they covered all the parent trees with a close mantle of verdure, and caused alcoves of green gloom within. Some of the beeches' copper, which had been pale enough in May, had been bronzed quite brown, as if the foliage were flexible.

Evelyn Butler was walking among the trees in the shrubbery—her only companion little Una. She had become singularly attached to this beautiful and friendless child; and, in the dearth of other young-lady pursuits here in the country, she had pleased herself with the idea of educating her *protégée*. Fitful lessons in Dublin, where Miss Butler was more or less absorbed by society and its claims, had given place to regular lessons at Doon; and the child, having the natural quickness which seems inherent with Irish children, made such rapid progress as to delight her teacher. Already visions of qualifying her, perhaps, to be a governess flitted before that teacher's mind; Una had become a fresh interest in life for the pretty lady of whom she was so fond; and thus the benefit (as do most benefits) worked reciprocally, back on the giver as well as forward to the receiver.

For there had been times of vacancy in Evelyn Butler's life, surrounded as she was by all the appliances of wealth and ease, when she felt a want that these could not satisfy. Love was lavished on her by father and brother, so that this greatest famishing of woman's

nature was abundantly fed; and another love, deeper and tenderer than either, she knew to be hers, though as yet it had not found a voice in words. But youth and health long for something beyond the merely passive; the impulse 'to do' is strong upon such; and to accomplish something worth doing must be a desire of any soul which has awakened to a sense of its own value and responsibility. Evelyn could not think that perpetual embroidery, or perpetual morning calls and evening parties, were the things best worth doing in this mortal life. She had more than once acknowledged to herself a wish to be stationed a step lower in the social grade of wealth, where interests lie thick on everything, in the connection of industry and endeavour, with enjoyment. To Miss Butler of Doon every enjoyment, every indulgence, came so easily, she could have wished them somewhat more difficult to obtain, which is indeed the secret of zest. To give her existence a little of the neutral tint of daily duty, and thus cast her amusements into the needed relief, she became Una's instructress. 'You will spoil that child,' Captain Gerald used to say; but Evelyn was not afraid of this result,—the sweet, clinging nature seemed to require all the affection it could get.

Now, walking in wood-paths under the summer-laden trees, Miss Butler thought it not beneath her to tell the little one a story—as a reward for some feat in English spelling or pronunciation. Una had been a far greater talker in the Irish vernacular than in English when first she was left at Doon by her grandmother; but the year which had elapsed, during which she had heard little or no Irish, had improved her much in the use of the other language. Still, in her sleep she would murmur the old familiar words with which she had been many a time soothed or amused; and Evelyn often imagined that many of her waking thoughts were in Irish: she appeared sometimes as if she translated her sayings.

The story was one of those which always interest

children above every other; it was from the pages of the Bible—about the naughty and foolish prophet who imagined he could run away from the presence of God, and was met by the terrible storm, and the great fish that had been prepared. Little Una listened with all her ears and eyes; for familiarity with the outlines of the wonderful tale, and the knowing exactly what was coming, did not damp her interest in the least. Upon these two, thus occupied, came three gentlemen through the copse, with a following of dogs of various sizes and appearances. Instantly Una's frank, childish demeanour subsided into a dumb and downcast gravity, which was quite repulsion when Captain Gerald extended his hand to her. Mr. Waddell did not condescend to notice her at all; but Fergus Kavanagh's greeting almost made her smile.

'What! invincible still?' said the young officer, playfully pinching her cheek, which was most decidedly turned away. 'You certainly show a preference for the learned professions, unusual in your sex when a red-coat is in question.' Perhaps there was something in the observation meant for his sister also; her throat and brow became dyed with conscious crimson for a moment.

'Eh, what! is she a stubborn little thing?' said Mr. Waddell, looking down upon her from his considerable altitude. 'Then we'll make the dogs eat her. Here, Bran, old fellow, Bran'—

He caught the huge hound by the ears and held him back, snarling and showing all his white fangs to the affrighted child, who seized upon Fergus Kavanagh's hand instinctively, with a tightness which revealed to him her terror, while she clung also to Miss Butler at the other side.

'Don't fear, Una; ho shan't touch you,' said the last-named gentleman, in a low, reassuring tone, holding the little fingers firmly.

'Eh, sir? what, sir? Did you allude in that observation to me, sir?' inquired Waddell, exasperated by a grateful glance from Evelyn to the young barrister.



'Only to your dog, Mr. Waddell,' was the quiet reply.

'Pooh—as if you didn't know it was all a joke,' he said, sullenly dropping Bran, and dealing him a slight cut with his riding whip, to reduce him to good temper. But little Una would not relinquish her protector's hand.

'Evelyn,' said Captain Gerald, 'Waddell has brought us news of a consignment of "fresh fruit," and wants us over to his place for a few days. There's to be a great meet over the lemons and oranges this evening. Can you do without your graceless brother?'

'I suppose I must,' she answered, not well pleased. She was aware that 'fresh fruit' was an ordinary signal for a hard drinking-bout, such as most country gentlemen of the time delighted in. And though Gerald had the reputation of being wonderfully steady, 'a good hard head,' etc., still she knew that he always took more than was good for him at such scenes. She had often tried dissuasion, and had once or twice succeeded; but she perceived by the expression of her brother's face that his mind was made up now, and that he would brook no interference in the presence of third parties. The captain could be wrongheaded enough; and did not every gentleman of his position in the country, and numbers above and beneath him in position, meet at these convivial gatherings, to carry on what they called 'good-fellowship' over the bottle? Whatever exceptions there were to the rule of winebibbing, the young man looked upon as being caused either by poverty, eccentricity, or weak digestion.

'You'll come too, Kavanagh,' said Mr. Waddell, not very cordially.

'Thank you—yes,' replied Fergus, after a moment's hesitation, during which he had met Miss Butler's look, with some meaning in it which he was able to read. The truth was, that he would go simply to look after her brother, and stave off as much of the mischief as he could. She had given him a similar commission once

before, justified in such confidence by their long-lived friendship, and by her own well-grounded fears about Gerald. Many a duel had arisen from these drinking bouts; many a word of passion or of wrong spoken suddenly, in the inflammation of too much wine, had to be answered for next morning at the pistol's mouth; and his sister well knew that the captain's steadiness was more relative than absolute.

She was scarcely inclined to resume her story when the gentlemen left her; though little Una, who recovered speech with a great sigh when the last dog's tail had vanished among the bushes, was clamorous to hear the rest about the foolish prophet. It was told in a spiritless and abstracted way, which the little auditor felt, though she could not define the fault of the narration; and, after she had been dismissed to play, she stole wistful glances towards her pretty lady walking all alone under the trees, with a book unopened in her hand, and looking sad and preoccupied enough.

Presently the child became absorbed in the making of a chain of daisies as she sat on the grass, stringing them together by slits in their own flexile stems. So quiet was she at the manufacture, that a great brown bird lighted on the elm above her, and began to call 'Cuckoo, cuckoo!' with startling loudness. Una sprang up, letting fall her skirtful of daisies andcelandines; for a cuckoo is not every day to be seen—generally it so shrouds itself in leaves as to be but 'a wandering voice.' And when, after a minute, it flew down a green glade of the park, Una followed, anxious to see it again.

She was looking at it, perched on a high branch, and, with its beak wide open, giving forth its velvet disyllable, when some disturbance made it suddenly silent, and it flew away with the utterance of its alarmed third note. A man came forward out of the thicket. Una recognised her father.

'I've been watchin' ye, asthore, for the last hour, to get spache of ye, my darlin'.' He caught her up in his arms, and gazed fondly upon her. 'Ay, ye're growing

the very image of her that's gone, yer own blessed mother—the heavens be her bed! An' I saw ye 'while ago with the captin—ye're a good child not to forget what I tould ye about him—that it was ho disgraced yer father, an' cut open his face liko this.'

Taking the child's hand, he guided it along the bluish mark that disfigured his cheek, while the whole expression of intense hate came across his hard features, and smouldered in his deep-set eyes. Una struggled to get away from him, so repulsive did he look then; but he held her fast.

'My white little girl,' said he in Irish, 'they're training ye rightly for yer own place in Doon Castle yet, not as a servant nor a waitin'-maid, but as the mistress of yer mistress, when every one has his own again, in the time that's comin'. An' then she'll find that it was the lucky day for her she took up Myles Furlong's child.'

Miss Butler, noticing the disappearance of her little charge, had left her walk under the trees and turned into this glade in search of her. She certainly hesitated for an instant before she recognised the man holding Una in his arms; and the child herself cried out, 'Oh, there's Miss Evelyn! let me go to her.'

"I'll guide her towards the lady. 'You know me, Miss Evelyn?' he said, 'the captin's foster-brother, Myles Furlong?' 'It's not safe entirely for me to be here, maybe; but I knew that yer honour wasn't an informer, an' I wanted to see me little child again, an' av I could rightly spake to yer honour, to thank ye fer takin' care of her, which I do with all the veins of my soul, Miss Evelyn—bless yer purty face! An' maybe, some day or other, it wud be more than words wid me in the way of showin' how thankful I am.'

'Ah, Myles! I was so sorry to hear you had taken to bad courses,' said the young lady, using an expression familiar to him. 'Why don't you come back to the forge, and live a decent, proper life, and earn your bread as usual? I'll speak to papa, that you shan't be disturbed; and you know you're the best blacksmith in

the country-side. Freney the other day "pinched" our best coach-horse in shoeing him—you're a real loss, Myles.'

'Miss Evelyn,' said he, setting down the child and standing before her in all his grim, unshorn strength, 'it's too late for me to go back; I'm gone on too far. The marks of a croppy is on me, an' the character of a croppy; an' I've wrongs to revinge, an' rights to get, if I can; an' I couldn't no more settle agin in the ould forge than I could go to live in the river or the say. But whatever I do, or whatever becomes o' me, I'll never forget that yer honour took in me little child whin she hadn't a roof to her head, an' fed her and clothed her, an' tached her, and she mustn't ever forget it, aither, for the length of her life, long or short. Una, machree, good-bye! the blessing's ov the heavens be about yer mother's child.'

And he went away through the trees towards the wildest and most desolate tract of the park.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE ORANGE LILY.

MR. WADDELL'S honso was an ugly block of building, partly unfinished; for his late father, the constructor, had launched into the development of ideas larger than his means would allow; so there was a whole wing unroofed, and with scaffolding dropping away from it, under the weather of season after season. Latterly, indeed, the servants had begun to help in the disruption, and purloined pieces of the wooden stages and supports to help to light the fires; observing that 'sure it might

as well be dacently burnt up at wanst, as be left to rot away on dher the rain.'

In the habitable parts of the mansion hospitality was carried on with profuseness. Several intimate friends lived altogether at Mr. Waddell's abundant board, and were candidates for his smiles and jokes. One of them had a particuar turn for breaking horses, and devoted his talents to that end, having a sort of supervision of his patron's stud. Another had a speeciality for dogs, and was understood to be all-powerful in the kennel. A third was the best boon companion possible—had endless stories and songs for all occasions, acting the part of court-jester. A fourth condescended to employ his leisure (which was perpetual) in keeping some sort of order in Mr. Waddell's accounts and correspondence. All these were cousins of that gentleman; and, as may be imagined, there was no love lost among them.

Their patron had uncertain humours, and frequently required propitiation. No one's tenure of favour was secure for a week together; which kept all on an agreeable stretch to get what they could while the sunshine lasted. But in one point they agreed cordially: by hook or by crook, Mr. Waddell must be kept from matrimony. To this end was he amused and toadied, and plans of jollification devised, such as the entertainment to which he had invited Captain Gerald and Fergus Kavanagh; for, the more engrossed he became in these things, the less would he relish to think of the gentle control of a wife, who might endeavour to stop them, and who, at all events, would check them materially.

A horse-load of the 'fresh fruit' had come, and was stowed away in huge boxes in an apartment which ought to have been the grand drawing-room of the mansion, but had never been even plastered. In the hall stood a hogshead of claret, into which a cock had been inserted: for Mr. Waddell was resolved this time to save the trouble of corkserews! A piper and a fiddler tuned their instruments alongside, and another

piper was in reserve in the kitchen. A couple of dozen big dogs walked about, and thrust themselves everywhere.

It may be believed that the scenes suggested by these preparations were not agreeable to the refined tastes of Fergus Kavanagh. He was quite aware that he would be deemed a 'kill-joy' by many of the carousers, and he could not for the life of him pretend to be interested in their perpetual discourses of dogs and horses, coursing-matches, cock-fights, and the like, and abundant stories with broad allusions provoking loud laughter. He found himself at a long table with about twenty other men, in a room from which the daylight had been carefully shut out on this fair July evening—a room steaming with hot and savoury meats, and hot and savoury drinks, and echoing again with loud talking, riotous laughing, the half wild music of the violin and pipes, which last had a most stunning and all-pervading drone. Again and again he set the jugs of mulled and buttered claret past him to his next neighbours, at the imminent risk of being made to drink salt-and-water as a defaulter.

Of course the conversation turned partly on the state of the country: on the latest news from the Right-boys in the south and the Defenders in the north. All present were red-hot loyalists, and Mr. Kavanagh heard plenty of injustice broached—hard things uttered about the peasantry, and hard measures advocated, and a considerable quantity talked concerning what they called (by an expression of the times) 'Protestant ascendancy.' Unworthy representatives of the Reformation were the present roomful, no doubt! We doubt whether, with all their boasted Protestantism, one of the company could tell what was the grand doctrine which set Luther free from the shackles of Rome, and with him all Europe that would learn from him his great secret—salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone; which is, indeed, the truth that must ever give Protestants the 'ascendency.' If they knew

it, it was rather as a point of their political creed than as a living faith to rule in their hearts and lives. The Protestant faith was merely a political expression, signifying the dominance of themselves. Fergus Kavanagh was too fearless not to controvert much that was said around him which he thought untrue or unjust. In particular he expressed himself as altogether opposed to the corporal punishment so frequently inflicted on the peasantry, declaring that it was a degradation only fitted for beasts. 'You would scruple to beat one of your hounds, Mr. O'Brien, as I have seen a man lashed for a trifling offence, or, perhaps, for only a suspicion.'

'Then the hound never could commit the same sort of crime,' was the quibbling reply; 'sedition ought to be treated more severely than anything else.'

'I wonder whether a man was ever made a loyalist by the triangle,' said Mr. Kavanagh contemplatively.

'As to your opinions,' called out Mr. Waddell rudely, from his end of the table, 'every one knows you are as great a croppy as any that ever was strung up!'

Hereupon a clamour arose, and many took the young barrister's part, asserting that he had said and done nothing to justify a charge of the kind. He was himself the coolest of the party, and said scarcely anything till a sort of apology had been wrung from his host in the terms: 'Well, well, a fellow mustn't have his words looked into too close of a night like this. Here's your health, Kavanagh; and whenever you're a judge, you won't have them opinions so brisk as now, that's all;' at which Fergus laughed, and declared that the ermine was never likely to cover his shoulders. But the slight fracas left an unpleasant sensation, and evidently Waddell was eyeing him malevolently between times.

It might have been an hour later that that gentleman sang out: 'I say, Kavanagh, that's the tenth time you've let the punch jug pass, to my knowledge. Lanty,'—

turning to the old butler, who was brewing compounds of liquor at the fire—'a tumbler of salt-and-water for Mr. Kavanagh; and mind it's strong!'

The servant hesitated; he and his fellows admired the young man who had stood champion of their order against odds of the whole assemblage.

'You know that I never drink, Mr. Waddell,' was the young barrister's remark; 'and not all the salt water in the Atlantic Ocean could make me drink,' he added.

Those who had taken less liquor than Mr. Waddell interfered—among the rest, Captain Gerald: 'Let him off, and he'll drink fair in future,' was the plea.

'Certainly not,' said the offender; 'I'll drink so much as suits myself; and it strikes me as an odd form of hospitality to force a man to do what is downright repugnant to him. I don't intend to touch the claret again to-night.'

'Then, if you don't drink, you *shall* eat!' roared Mr. Waddell, springing to his feet. 'A plate of bread and butter here, at once!'

While all were amazed at the order, he took from the button-hole of his embroidered vest a large orange lily, worn by some of the gentlemen present in commemoration of the anniversaries of Boyne and Aughrim, occurrent in this month; and, when the bread-and-butter was brought, he cut the flower into suitable pieces, and placed them upon it.

'Take that to Mr. Kavanagh, with my compliments, and tell him that, if he is not a black-hearted rebel, he will eat it, every crumb!'

The young barrister stood up quietly, and met the eyes that glowered upon him with the unmistakeable hate of an ancient grudge. 'If Mr. Waddell was quite his own master, he would not make such an outrageous proposition to a guest in his house,' he observed; 'but, as it is, the insult is beneath my notice'—

'Beneath your notice!' repeated the other loudly.



The piper in the hall suspended his droue that he might catch the sounds of the rising storm. 'Yes, surely, "beneath your notice;" for you're resolved not to fight, counsellor—oh no, nothing would tempt you to risk your precious skin opposite a pistol,' he added, with an endeavour at a sneer. 'But I tell you, sir, you *must* fight; you must either eat that orange lily, to prove your loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty, or abide the consequences at my hands.'

'I will neither eat the orange lily nor will I fight, Mr. Waddell,' repeated Fergus, in the same unexcited tone; 'for I have heard of a commandment from the highest Power in the universe, saying, "Thou shalt not kill;" and I have quite as great an objection to being your murderer, as to letting myself be murdered by you. Good-night, sir;' and he pushed back his chair to get to the door.

Waddell made a spring forward to prevent his exit, but was held back by sundry arms, which yielded not for his chafing or struggles. He roared for the door to be fastened; but Mr. Kavanagh had passed through it before the servants could collect their faculties enough to make sure of the propriety or otherwise of obedience to the order. And so, leaving the scene of conviviality behind, Fergus walked away in the cool twilight through the glades of the grounds, homewards.

It would be exaggeration to say that he was not annoyed by what had happened. He was sorry that the smouldering dislike between himself and Mr. Waddell (for which he was at no loss to assign a reason) had come to this outburst. He could have thought that the latter was watching for an opportunity of quarrelling with him; and he was resolved that, come what might, the quarrel should go no farther. Probably 'a friend' would wait upon him in the morning, with a message from the choleric Waddell, demanding—according to the bloody usage of the day—life against life to satisfy the anger of a few words. Mr. Kavanagh was one of the limited number who believed duelling to

be both a social and a moral mistake; for many were found who admitted it to be wrong in a moral point of view who yet justified it as a social necessity.

Ho had not gone to the stables for his horse, in his haste to get clear of the house; he would walk across country by a way he knew, including some distance through the Doon park, and so reach the rectory—some time later, certainly, than he would have reached it on horseback. Before him rose the round amber moon, through stripes of pearly cloud, as he cleared the green mossed wall at a low decayed place, and entered the aforesaid park. Great neglected trees stood about, and branches blown down in last winter's storms lay yet just as they had fallen: the shadows on the grass were most weird and uncouth. After walking a little farther, he could see at some distance the dark mass of the old castle, outlined raggedly against the pale sky. What a contrast was the calm and gloom to the place he had left!

Scenes of riot and revelry did not suit Fergus Kavanagh's temperament in the least. When very young, he had once been at a convivial gathering of the sort, which lasted for more than a week—in fact, was only brought to a close by a cessation of the supplies. Every night these boon companions drank each other under the table (he knew that the same would happen to-night at Mr. Waddell's hospitable board), and they only revived next day to begin potations again. This they called enjoying life, and it was the usual way in which the words were understood in country houses of the period. Thank God for the immense improvement in the manners and morals of Ireland since then! Fervent prayers have been heard. Faithful labours have been blessed. God's word has not returned to Him void, but, like the rain from heaven, has prospered in the thing whereunto He has sent it. There is still much in the state of Ireland to stimulate effort and to cause sadness. But it is ungrateful and unbelieving to say that 'the former days were better than these.'

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE MIDNIGHT OATH.

FERGUS KAVANAGH was crossing an open space towards the old castle of Doon, when his eye was caught by a momentary glitter in the mass of shadow cast westward by the risen moon from the keep. It was as if a ray had struck for a second on some moving metal—a bayonet-point for instance. Perchance it was the reflection of a little pool left by the morning's showers: it could be nothing else in this lonesome place.

He was curious enough to turn slightly from his path to look for the cause of the scintillation. Before he came close he discerned the darkness of a man's figure holding some weapon, which the intruder knew at once to be a pike. Tho same minuto his arms were seized from behind in a grip which admitted of no controversy; and he was hurried through a little postern door in the wall—he knew it well in daylight rambles—without time for a struggle or a protest.

'Tis the counsellor, sure,' whispered a voice which he thought he recognised; 'I'd go bail for him anywhere: he's most as good as one of ourselves, though he isn't swore all out.'

'If he was yer father, or St. Patrick himself, he'll have to be examined,' was the response from another party. 'D'ye think we're goin' to trust our lives that way, more especially to a blaekmouth?'<sup>1</sup>

'I only wish more of 'em were like his honour,' said the man who held him by his left elbow, and whom he was now convinced was Myles Furlong the blacksmith. 'He's betther than a dale of our own sort, so he is.'

'Thank you, my friend,' said Mr. Kavanagh; 'and,

<sup>1</sup> Cant term of the period for Protestant.

having such a good opinion of me, I think I might be trusted to walk, without being dragged along, as I've been hitherto.'

Myles at once released his arm; but the other escort muttered something sullenly, and held rather faster than before, leading him through a sort of arched cloister overgrown with a huge yew-tree, where at noonday the gloom was excessive, but now the darkness was as of ebony, till, at the end of steps downwards to the crypt under the ruined chapel of the castle, a glimmer of light began to appear.

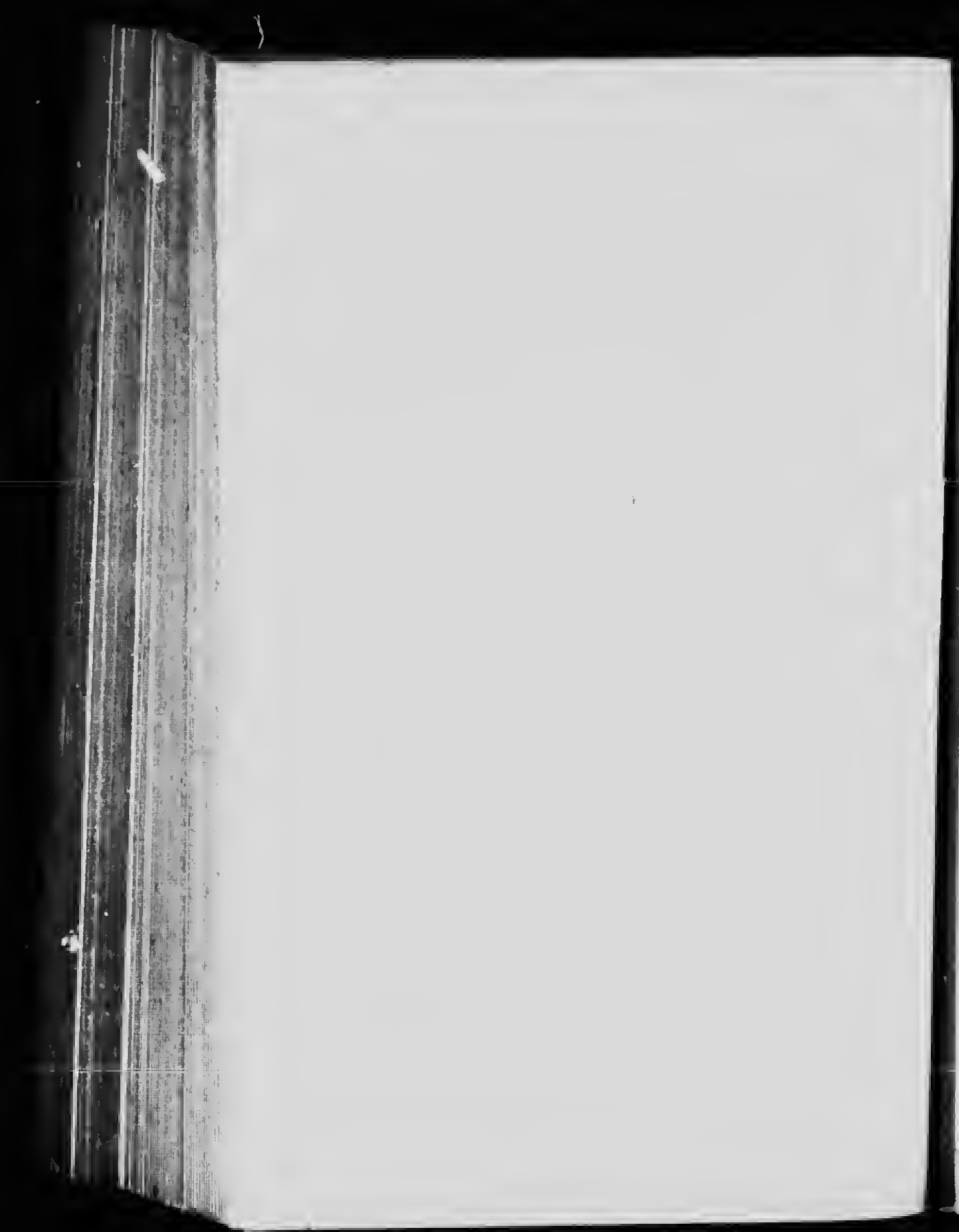
There was dead silence in the sepulchral apartment, and the scant illumination of two or three wretched guttering candles scarce revealed more at first to the new-comer's gaze than the slime-smear'd walls close by which they were stuck. But, as he passed to the upper end of the place where they were, and his sight became more accustomed to the visible gloom, he perceived that ranks of men were stationed in lines along the sides of the vault—silent, motionless men, in an almost military array. Mr. Kavanagh's heart did beat a shade faster when he saw dimly all these faces bent on him, and reflected that, if their purpose should be unfriendly, how very easy, and how very undiscoverable, would be the crime of murder executed on his own person.

The men standing at the lighted extremity of the crypt were total strangers to him, except one. He quickly recognised the ugly face of Fitzpatrick the delegate, who took a candle from the rude altar to hold it near Mr. Kavanagh's features for the inspection of the others. Then they held a whispered consultation, in which the prisoner (for such he was virtually) could distinguish such words as 'frind ov Lord Edward's;' 'saw him one night in Kevin Street;'<sup>1</sup> 'he'll not refuse the oath himself,' etc. The last observation apparently suggested their mode of procedure; for the man who seemed to be leader stepped forward.

<sup>1</sup> A street in Dublin containing a house which was noted for being a haunt of United Irishmen and other disaffected persons.



THE OATH WAS BEING ADMINISTERED TO NEW MEMBERS IN THE CRYPT.



'If Counsellor Kavanagh is sincere in his frequent protestations of attachment to the popular cause,' said this person, in an accent and language removed from the vulgar twang of the others, 'he will now join with us in taking the oath of our noble confederacy; and he must see that it is in a manner due to us, upon whom he has unexpectedly intruded, that he should set us at ease as to his future conduct by doing so.'

Dead silence followed this speech; it would not have been thought there was as much as a lizard in the vault, such was the stillness. All eyes were bent upon Fergus Kavanagh, waiting his reply; a line of faces, down to the doorway, turned towards him.

'Mr. M'Cabe'—began he.

'I guessed you'd know me, counsellor! You and I have been in the same ship before, sir.' Myles's first tempter was at his work again.

'Mr. M'Cabe,' continued Kavanagh, 'the chief objection I have to your proposition is, that it savours too much of compulsion to be a correct representation of what I feel towards the cause of the people. Suppose I take your oath here, can it not be said to be the fruit of fear rather than of deliberate choice? You know that I am a friend of Lord Edward's; can you believe that I would betray you?'

'No, counsellor,' answered the other frankly. 'Boys, we'll trust the counsellor this time; and, if he informs—which is impossible—but, if it was a thing that he did, you all know how to punish a traitor.'

The oath was being administered to new members in the crypt of a chapel, where stood an ancient altar, having a hideous image carved in a stone over it, because the place was considered to add vastly to the binding nature of the obligation. Fergus noticed that, in addition to the picturesque promise of forming 'a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every persuasion,' and the vow of secrecy, there was also a declaration that the swearer would join the French whenever they landed. It struck him as a novelty, and

not a pleasing one. The oath-taking finished, Mr. McCabe treated all present to an oration on the existing oppressions of Ireland, chiefly with reference to the imperfections of her representation in Parliament, etc.—grievances which must have been altogether imaginary to the sons of the soil whom he addressed; but under his rhetoric they flourished like a branch, and seemed portentous of untold evils,—worst of all, in that they gave rise to such demagogues as himself, though this he published not.

There was a tone of greater daring and more open defiance of the law than there would have been a year before. Blood and death were hinted at, not obscurely, as the desperate remedies for desperate men to use. Here, in a coarser and more tangible form, were reproduced the ideas and arguments on the subject of separate nationality which Fergus Kavanagh had heard mooted in sundry conferences at the aforesaid house in Kevin Street, at Byrne's, the seditious bookseller in Grafton Street, and other resorts of the malecontents in Dublin. What the metropolitan leaders seemed to start as theories were likely here to be seized and reduced to practice by their humble followers the peasantry; fire and sword was the interpretation these rude men put on the fine-spun speculations of the higher grade of United Irishmen. But that McCabe had received his instructions, and was carrying them out correctly, who could doubt?

'Boys,' said the orator, adopting the manner and brogue that suited his audience, 'our enemies won't let us have as much as a place of meeting in Dublin; it's two months now since the hireling sheriffs of the English Government broke into 'Taylors' Hall, Back Lane, where your delegates used to meet in convention, boys, and with a hireling guard of constables drove away your delegates, and left the Catholics of Ireland without a voice, trampled them into dumbness again, stifled them, so that all that can be heard from them is a groan! And shall we submit to that? Will we allow



the iron heel of the Saxon oppressors to be for ever grinding on our necks?' With much more to the same purpose.

Fergus Kavanagh could see that this tirade acted like a fiery stimulant on the rough natures which listened, and which, to say truth, but half comprehended. They were quite as likely to take literally the 'trampling,' 'stifling,' 'the iron heel,' as to apprehend it in figure. But no such mistakes could be made when Mr. McCabe began to address them in their own tongue, the fluent, slippery Irish, as if his thoughts had irrepressibly burst into the language of his affections. It was now Mr. Kavanagh's turn to but half comprehend. He could distinguish that the reasoning was rather more flimsy, and the conclusions drawn more violent, than in the preceding speech. Lord Edward Fitzgerald's name was frequently mentioned with great affection; he was evidently looked up to as the principal leader, the possible king; for the Celtic mind is eminently monarchical, and follows a chief more than upholds a system of politics.

'He gave up his title, boys, the way he'd be exactly like one of ourselves, and the better able to fight for ould Ireland. He wants every man to have his rights again, and the rael ould families to be set up in their own places,' said the orator, relapsing into English. 'Usurpers will be torn down, and every poor man will be equal to his rich neighbour,' added he, pandering to that dream of equality which is the passion of weak and ignorant minds. A most inflammatory account was then given of certain riots in the North, at Belfast especially, where the military had acted in truth with most indefensible violence; and, but for the determined stand made by the volunteers, who took possession of the Exchange, the strongest post in the town, matters would have been much worse. 'But they had their revinge in puttin' down the volunteers ever since,' added McCabe. 'Not a volunteer will be let say as much as "good-morrow" to another all through Ulster' which

was his way of affirming that all gatherings for reviews and martial evolutions were prohibited.

We have mentioned the volunteers more than once, without explanation; perhaps a few sentences concerning them may not be amiss. In the year 1779, Great Britain was at war with three formidable enemies—the French, the Spaniards, and her own lately revolted colonies in America. All available forces were concentrated on the coasts of England, and used in her foreign expeditions; Ireland was left nearly defenceless. Some maritime towns, apprehensive of privateers, which swarmed in the narrow seas, asked Government for protection, and received for answer that they must arm themselves—not a soldier could be spared. And this was the origin of the volunteers, who at first procured weapons for themselves; but afterwards the Executive, wishing to encourage them, distributed large quantities of muskets and cutlasses among them. When the immediate danger was past, the volunteers continued their organization, though now it was more for political than for military purposes; and the greatest day in their history was the memorable 15th of February 1782, when delegates from a hundred and forty-three corps of the province of Ulster met at Dungannon, under the presidency of the Earl of Charlemont, and were addressed by Grattan and Flood, and entered their energetic protest against certain unconstitutional measures by which it was sought to fetter the Legislature of the kingdom. But during the twelve years which had elapsed since then they had deviated very much from the moderate tone of their earlier political proceedings, and were more than suspected to be helpers of sedition.

When Mr. McCabe had said as much as he thought proper on these and cognate subjects, he gave the signal for dismissal. Every man made a gesture of obeisance as he left the crypt, and marched up the narrow winding stairs into the unroofed chapel, where a bar of moonlight lay along the broken pavement through the ivied window. The leader turned to Mr. Kavanagh.

'Well, sir, what do you think of that? A fine lot of lads, sir; and all devoted heart and soul to the good cause.'

'I am rather sorry for them, to tell truth,' replied Fergus; 'they know not what is before them, Mr. M'Cabe; they have a sort of hallucination'—

'I didn't expect such language from a friend of Lord Edward's,' interrupted the other sourly.

'You asked me my opinion, Mr. M'Cabe.'

'You'll be one of us yet, counsellor,' he rejoined, regaining good-humour; 'you're one of the moral-force men now: you'll have to come over to our side. Ireland will get nothing by holding out her hand like a beggar to the charity of England—charity, when we are four millions!'

'Tell me one thing,' said the barrister, who had been marvelling at the fact since he entered the crypt. 'How is it that you dare assemble so near Doon Castle? If the colonel was absent, I could understand it better.'

M'Cabe grinned. 'We've sent him and Bodkin off on detachment—false information, you know; and as to the servants, they bear us no ill-will, Mr. Kavanagh. This vault is thought to be a very holy place among the country people, by reason of some saint's bones being under the altar here; and they daren't break an oath taken on it; that's why we've brought our lads here to-night, Mr. Kavanagh. And now, sir, the honour of a gentleman that you'll say nothing of what you've seen.'

'I give the promise,' said Fergus. 'And I think I ought to get a promise on the other side; for suppose some of your fellows should inform on me?'

M'Cabe laughed. 'You may be easy on that point, sir.' Nevertheless, he thought of it again, as an engine which might be advantageously brought to bear, perchance.

As they came outside the ruins, saffron streaks of dawning day were lying along the dark hills to the eastward.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## A DRAWING-ROOM, VICEREGAL AND OTHERWISE.

THE Viceroy of Ireland, for the last few years previous to 1795, had been a most unpopular man, and received abundant tokens of disfavour both in and out of Parliament. The citizens of Dublin believed that his sole object was to help 'the British minister' (being William Pitt of mighty memory) to enslave Ireland completely, by getting full control of her Legislature. English influence was watched with the intensest jealousy by all parties, but especially by the Roman Catholics; who, though their religious belief disqualified them from sitting in Parliament, had a strong body of Protestant Liberals in their favour, with Henry Grattan as leader.

The penal laws were the great battle-ground of politics each session. Sometimes what was called a Relief Bill was passed, after a desperate fight over the clauses, and a score or so of speeches replete with picturesque language and personalities; sometimes the Relief Bill was rejected, and a tremendous agitation resulted outside the House. The Lord-Lieutenant was looked on as the great enemy of enfranchisement; and when a rumour spread that he would soon be recalled, undisguised joy was manifested by the populace.

His recall arose out of the circumstances of the English ministry at the period. A large division of the old Rockingham Government, alarmed by the revolutionary spirit spreading through Europe, resolved to strengthen the hands of William Pitt by forming a coalition with him. Edmund Burke and Mr. Wyndham passed over to the ministerial side of the House of Commons, while the Duke of Portland, Earls Spencer and Fitzwilliam, did the like in the Lords. It was

understood that a more liberal policy would be the result of this infusion of new blood. The Duke of Portland was made one of the State secretaries, with an especial care of Irish affairs, and Lord Westmoreland, the Lord-Lieutenant, was supplanted by Earl Fitzwilliam.

Great was the excitement in the Irish capital when it became known that Ponsonby and Grattan, chiefs of the Whig party, had been summoned to London for consultation with Mr. Pitt. At last the 'British minister' was beginning to perceive that he must propitiate Ireland, and that the Catholics of the empire were a body so powerful as not to be neglected with impunity. Entire emancipation was confidently expected—eligibility for Parliament, the judgeships, all the offices of State. The ensuing session of Parliament must see the measure completed.

Colonel Butler of Doon was one of those who viewed with disgust and alarm the change in the Government. His appearance at Lord Fitzwilliam's first levee was merely in compliance with a certain code of etiquette; and the fine old gentleman walked through the Castle rooms in the stateliest manner, and exchanged a word or two with the new Viceroy, with an iron politeness which was suggestive of sufferance rather than of welcome.

'And why, sir? Because I regard him as the representative of a policy which must end in the subversion of His Majesty's Government over this kingdom; the policy of time-serving, and of cringing, and of submission to the despotism of the mob. Because I regard that policy as a cowardly compromise with the declared enemies of Church and State; men who would utterly overturn the Constitution as by law established, and deliver us bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of revolutionists such as Marat and Robespierre. This is the thin end of the wedge, sir—the thin end of the wedge.' Such were among the murmurs that circulated about the reception-rooms of the new Viceroy—'not loud, but deep.'

The colonel did indeed escort his daughter to the subsequent drawing-room, but simply that she might show herself, as he informed her. 'However we may disapprove, we must not be deficient in loyalty, Evelyn, my dear;' and Miss Butler, who did not disapprove of Lord Fitzwilliam, knowing of no adequate reason why she should, was perhaps a little put out at being wrapped up and hurried away from the courtly scene at the earliest hour feasible.

'You see, my dear, we must assert our political principles,' quoth the colonel, as they drove through the Castle yard and past the scarlet sentries set at intervals. 'As to Gerald, I know not what to think of him,' he added gloomily. The captain had refused to leave the drawing-room as yet, pleading that the evening had just begun. 'He appears so indifferent to the principles of his party, at least to the outward expression of them—I shouldn't literally be surprised if he voted against me on the Relief question, when it comes before the House.'

Evelyn said nothing; being, as before intimated, slightly out of sorts herself, after all the trouble of an elaborate court toilette for so short a time at the drawing-room. But after a sentence or two of other grumbings, to which she paid no attention, one fell upon her ear which quickened the sensibility of that organ considerably.

'I have long had doubts as to young Kavanagh's influence over him,' said the colonel: 'his known sympathies with the so-called popular party render him a most unsuitable intimate for one whose whole leanings should be to the constitution of our country. How unfortunate that our rector's son should have imbibed the demoralizing principles in which he glories!—'

"Demoralizing," papa!' gently repeated Evelyn, unable to withhold her protest against this view of Fergue Kavanagh's politics. 'And I have never heard him talk of them to Gerald, papa.'

'Ha! so he does *not* bring them into a lady's presence!

I hardly gave him credit for so much good taste. I did not know but he had been endeavouring to make you a convert likewise.'

Had the light cast into the carriage been more powerful than that of the dim oil-lamps dotting Damo Street and Collego Green, the colonel might have seen the vivid flush which this allusion called up on the fair cheek of his daughter. But he went on purblind.

'And now—when our country is on the verge of a crisis so tremendous—perhaps close to a convulsion such as none living remember, there must be no paltering with the enemy, no admitting of traitors into the camp. The Butlers have shed too much blood in the cause of loyalty and Protestant ascendancy to swerve from their duty now. Painful as it may be to me to speak unpleasantly to the son of my old friend and parish clergyman'—

There was a slight rustling in the rich silk that filled Evelyn's corner of the carriage, as she sat straight from her leaning posture. What could her father be going to say?

'I shall feel obliged to intimate to him my displeasure at the opinions and connections he has formed, and to show him how distasteful to me his frequent visits to my house are, under the circumstances.'

Under what circumstances? Evelyn's dry lips could not frame the question; and her timid girl's nature recoiled from the bare idea that anybody—least of all, her father—should suspect the interest she took in Fergus Kavanagh. How great that interest was she herself began to know only now that a suspension of their friendship was threatened.

'I don't think Gerald will be pleased, papa,' was all she could say.

'Gerald pleased!' reiterated the colonel irately. 'I shall certainly not consult him in what arrangements I think proper to make respecting my own house. He has shown too frequently a culpable disregard of my

desires'— and so on. The father magnified in his imagination sundry small instances of incompatibility of tastes; not greater than most other fathers have to lament in their heirs; but which, when talked over, and turned round and round, seemed huge matters. Meanwhile, during the long steady trundle of the family coach and four up narrow Grafton Street, and along two sides of Stephen's Green, poor Evelyn sat in her corner, and more than one irrepressible tear forced its way under the closed lids of her eyes. She knew the proud nature of the young barrister, and how probable it was that a word from her father, of the kind he intended to speak, would cause him to cross their threshold never to return. And it did not enter into her calculations that, perchance, the feeling he entertained for her was strong enough to survive even such a shock.

Hastily removing the traces of emotion, she was ready to be handed forth by her father at the door of their mansion, and passed to her own apartments, wearing the same pleasant smile which made her so beloved among the retainers of the family. A glance from the colonel perfectly satisfied him concerning what had occasionally amounted to a disagreeable doubt, as to her liking the company of Fergus Kavanagh beyond that of any other gentleman.

She was no heroine of romance; so she shed no more tears, but sat before the fire in her dressing-room thinking the matter over soberly. Certainly she would be very sorry if she was not to meet him any more. There would be a blank somewhere, a blank almost a pain. But, after a few desponding moments, came a thought kindred to those which Fergus's father had been sedulously instilling during his intercourse with her: Would not all be as her heavenly Father willed it? In such small matters as daily intercourse with friends—if, indeed, there be anything 'small except to a mortal's fancy'—was not God the guide of His people as truly as in the greater matters which more prominently appear to shape destinies? And Evelyn was comforted and



strengthened by that beautiful belief, the providence of God in little things.

Next day the colonel made the opportunity which he wanted, and sent for Mr. Kavanaugh from the drawing-room to the library. Here he addressed him in a manner as unbending as if he had been a bronze statue; informed him loftily that he did not approve of his intimacy with Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other persons more than suspected of disaffection; and asked him whether his father the rector knew the particulars of his intercourse with the popular party. The young barrister felt the hot blood flushing up into his brow; and, had he been of an excitable temperament, perhaps all his self-command would not have kept under some expression of annoyance or impatience. But his mind was too thoughtful and philosophic to be easily roused to anger; and he knew of that valuable receipt for suppressing the beginnings of irritation, to speak in a low, unimpassioned tone.

Thus he replied: 'My father has been always very kind in trusting me respecting the formation of my friendships, and I have endeavoured to repay that trust by doing nothing of which he could be ashamed. But I must be permitted to be the best judge of what my father would approve: I cannot allow any other person to be my censor.'

'Am I to understand then, sir, that you reject my admonition?' asked the colonel, his very queue vibrating like an iron-grey rod.

'I think you have been misinformed respecting me,' was the reply. 'I am grateful for the interest you have always shown about me; but you have condemned me unheard, Colonel Butler, a practice contrary to the spirit of the British Constitution, sir.' Which was an appeal the other could seldom withstand, though he might pass mercy and justice unheeded by.

'Why, sir, are you not a partisan of Roman Catholic Emancipation in the widest sense?'

'Certainly; innate principles of justice'— he began;

but his interrogator's chin rose higher in the air, and he launched the second question without regarding anything except the first word of the answer.

'And are you not acquainted with Napper Tandy, Wolfe Tone, the proven traitor Hamilton Rowan'—

'I doubt that he was a proven traitor, Colonel Butler; but he did me the honour on one occasion to call me his friend.'

'The friend of such men is no friend of mine, Mr.—Mr. Kavanagh.' For in all his wrath the old familiar name of boyhood would rise up, and he had some ado to substitute the title of a stranger. He pointed with his hand majestically to the door; and the young man, not willing to have further altercation with his father's old friend, left the room, after a courteous bow.

But ere he left the house, chafed and sore as he felt, he made his way to the drawing-room again, where Evelyn was sitting at her work, and Captain Gerald was standing on the hearth-rug before the great turf-fire. Her face was blanched as she looked up at him, and noticed the change in his, although it was expected.

'The colonel has been catclhizing me in politics, and is not satisfied as to my orthodoxy,' he said, with a faint smile. 'I think he scarcely deems me fit company for either of you; so I fear this is my last visit for some time, Gerald. You know that I could not submit to dictation even from your father,' he added, with a shade of sternness; 'and I believe that my principles are right, and that his are illiberal and—and, in fact, wrong, if you'll forgive me for saying it.'

'My dear fellow, I am perfectly aware that you do; and of what consequence is it?' broke in Captain Gerald. 'Politics should not separate old friends like ourselves'—

'Oh, it is impossible that I can come here, except by express invitation, in future,' said the other; 'and, believe me, it will give me the sharpest pain to stay away,' he added, turning with an irrepressible gesture of regret towards her of whom he had all along been

thinking, and parting from whom he felt to be a wrench greater than he could almost bear. Captain Gerald would have regretted the circumstance more had he not seen that gesture. But for how long and long a time was the same slight incident, and the momentary appealing glance that accompanied it, remembered with a thrill of regretful pleasure by poor Evelyn!

'I suspect I know who has been setting my father against him,' mused Captain Gerald; having a mental (and not mistaken) reference to Ulick Waddell, Esq.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### *EARL CAMDEN'S WELCOME.*

THE events related in the foregoing chapter had certainly one disastrous effect on Fergus Kavanagh's fortunes: they threw him more directly into the arms of the party who were on the look-out to grasp all young men of mark or promise. His evenings, heretofore spent (commonly) in innocent fashion at Colonel Butler's, were now open to the blandishments of sedition. He became well acquainted with all its haunts about town, and was taken into the counsels of its propagators to an extent which might seriously compromise him. Meanwhile he was following his profession in the way and after the manner that a briefless barrister can: he regularly walked the courts, listened to all cases of note, and appeared in his wig and gown whenever he ought to do so. But the grand pursuit of his life was politics. No more attentive attendant on the important debates of the House than he; and it need not be said that all his sympathies lay on the popular side.

He was present at the opening of Parliament on the 22nd January 1795, when the new Lord-Lieutenant spoke lengthily of the war then going on between Great Britain and France, and made a general promise on the part of His Majesty that any measure passed by the Irish Legislature would meet with his royal sanction. This clause was considered to embody the future and near emancipation of the Roman Catholics. And a further most marked sign of the times was the fact that Grattan, the leader of the Liberals, and of what had hitherto been the Opposition, rose to move the address. In his powerful speech he drew a very correct picture of French freedom. 'Her liberty is death, and her state Bedlam. The sceptre is broken into ten thousand scorpions in the hands of ten thousand maniacs, scourging one another for offences that are only exceeded by the barbarity with which they are punished.' He declared that the great question before the Irish Parliament was, 'What part in this war shall be taken by Ireland? If you fail England now, she will probably have no other opportunity to need your aid. Vulnerable in Flanders, vulnerable in Holland, she is mortal here. Here will be the arsenal of French artillery, the station of the French navy: through this wasted and disembowelled land will be poured the fiery contents of their artillery. As the British empire must be saved on the Continent, so it may be overthrown in Ireland.'

All thinking and moderate men were so convinced of the danger besetting the empire from French ambition, that men and money were voted to the Imperial Government abundantly, and almost with unanimity. The Liberals agreed to everything, because they hoped that their darling measure of emancipation was about surely to be carried; and indeed their opinion was justified by the division on Mr. Grattan's motion for leave to bring in a Relief Bill, which was opposed by only three votes. But shortly afterwards, on the 19th of March, a British Cabinet Council unanimously decided

on Lord Fitzwilliam's recall from the viceroyalty. He had gone too far in his compliance with the popular voice, they thought: he declared himself that he had done nothing but obey his instructions.

'The treachery of Pitt' became the one subject of demagogue discussion. The United Irish Confederacy received many accessions of persons who had hitherto kept aloof; and the minds of the popular party were intensely exasperated against Government. A regular demonstration of the people's regret was made on the day of Lord Fitzwilliam's departure, 24th March: he was attended to the shore by a procession containing some of the most distinguished men in the capital, all dressed in mourning, the Parliamentary leaders foremost. The shops of the main streets along which they passed were shut; the horses were taken from the carriage, and the outgoing Viceroy drawn to the water's edge by gentlemen of high position and character.

A very different scene was enacted five days subsequently, when Earl Camden arrived to fill the vacant office. A guard of cavalry, with drawn swords, protected his landing, and escorted him through densely crowded streets to the Castle. But none in all the throng which surged over the footpaths and lined the windows had a word of welcome for the stranger; scowling looks of hate were bent upon the viceregal equipage as it passed slowly along, even the armed guards and outriders being unable to clear the way as rapidly as its occupant could have wished. The glittering sabres could scarcely keep his Excellency from personal insult at the hands of the mob; and as to the Lord Chancellor and the Archbishop of Armagh, they were saluted not only with hard words, but with hard paving-stones, one of which cut the brow of the former dignitary.

'Three groans for the Beresfords!' And the living masses, jammed together up the steep ascent of Cork Hill, returned a yell of execration from a thousand throats. 'Three groans for Fitzgibbon!' and an equally

ferocious shout was the response. But at the Castle gates was the nucleus of the mob: a strong body of dragoons could scarcely keep them back from bursting through into the courtyard, and were, of course, wholly inadequate to the duty of keeping their tongues in order. Indeed, the forbearance of the soldiers under the copious abuse showered upon them was worthy of all wonder and praise. Volleys of hisses and howls burst forth at intervals like an explosion; and as the Viceroy's state-carriage gradually worked its way through, his lordship was received with the stormiest demonstrations of dislike, here, at his own stronghold, as elsewhere.

'An' it's yer father's son hasn't any business to be sittin' where yez are this blessed day!' Whatever voice uttered this allusion, it reached the Lord-Lieutenant's ears out of the tangled mass of yells, for he glanced forth to try and see the speaker; but he might as well have endeavoured to individualize a blade in a field of tossing corn. He could discern nothing but scores of wild screeching faces under all sorts of ragged head coverings heaped against the dark arch of the Castle gate and the quaint houses about its entry. The last Earl Camden had been in great repute with the volunteers, who, in his time, were looked upon as the conservators of the liberties of Ireland; and the populace deemed his son a renegade for accepting office in an Executive that had put down these volunteers by main force. His Excellency's slumbers that night in his State apartments were ruffled by the distant rumours of riots; and he learned by experience how 'uneasy lies the head that wears' even a delegated 'crown.' It was an ill omen, perhaps, that his first official act was a proclamation offering rewards for the conviction of the rioters—an abortive measure, inasmuch as the guilty parties included about two-thirds of the commonalty of Dublin.

'Saunders' News-letter' lay damp on Colonel Butler's breakfast table next morning, informing him how the mob had on the previous night attacked the houses of



AT THE GATE OF DUBLIN CASTLE.





the Speaker of the Commons and of John Claudius Beresford, who was believed to be chiefly instrumental in the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam; likewise how the Lord Chancellor had had an exciting run from the Castle gates to the shelter of his own mansion in Ely Place, and reached the latter amid a shower of stones; likewise that in sundry country regions the Protestant gentry were beginning to keep armed men in their houses as the only security against outrage. And there were rumours that a new organization of Romish insurgents had appeared in the north, bearing the name of Masons, and were very active in robbing Protestants of their weapons; while the Defenders had by no means diminished in numbers or in evil deeds.

'I learned yesterday,' said the colonel, addressing his son, as he lounged in with his favourite and most hideous dog Esop at his heels, 'that young Kavanagh has at last openly joined the United Irishmen, and is seen with their leaders everywhere; so I hope you are now satisfied respecting the wisdom of my decision that his further intimacy with my family, loyal as it is, is wholly inadmissible under the circumstances.'

'I don't wonder at his doing so, sir,' answered Captain Gerald, settling himself in a comfortable arm-chair to his breakfast: 'with his predilections, the only marvel is that he did not take that step long since. I would, were I in his place.'

'It would be preferable that you did not make impossible suppositions,' his father observed haughtily, swinging his gold eye-glass from his finger. 'You have the traditions of your ancestors to keep up: the far-reaching loyalty of generations has descended to you. A Butler could never be a rebel.'

Captain Gerald's memory went back too faithfully to sundry occasions when the sept had given their liege sovereigns no little trouble; but he made no remark of the kind.

'I daresay the United Irishmen will prosper more than ever,' he said; 'and it must be acknowledged that

the Catholics have cause to grumble in the sudden quenching of all their hopes and plans. They were fully persuaded that the day was won at the change of policy inaugurated by Lord Fitzwilliam; and the disappointment was cruel.

But the colonel could not agree with him in thinking that the party to which he was opposed had a right to have any expectations whatsoever; and as to their disappointment, he gloried in it.

'I see that the traitor Jackson's trial is fixed for the 23rd,' he said, reverting to his newspapers. 'I expect that treasonable revelations will be made on that occasion which will astonish the loyalists of the empire.'

'He was a wretched fool for his pains,' observed the captain, shrugging his shoulders. 'How a sane man could have brought himself within the statute of treason I cannot imagine.'

'The first trial for high treason these hundred years in Ireland,' said the colonel, with a certain satisfaction. 'I am curious to know what His Majesty's law officers will do about a second witness.'



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### WOLFE TONE'S PLANS.

THAT little matter of the second witness was puzzling more heads than Colonel Butler's. On it seemed to hinge the successful prosecution of treason trials in Ireland for the future; and the establishment of a precedent of the sort was of great consequence to the Government. It was the earliest point debated in the trial of William Jackson, April 23, 1795; and, despite

the utmost exertions of his counsel, Mr. Curran, who denounced what he called 'the injustice of convicting for high treason in Ireland on the evidence of one witness, while two are requisite in England' (under 7 William III.), the matter was decided against the prisoner by the judges. At a later period the law was assimilated in both sections of the United Kingdom by an Act introduced by Lord Holland.

There was documentary evidence in abundance against the unfortunate man, who had so far forgotten the dignity of his profession (he was a clergyman) as to become a mover of sedition. But the single witness was the attorney Cockayne, who had betrayed all Jackson's letters to the Government, and was deep in his confidenco. The universal detestation for this man and his treachery found ample voice in Curran's invective. 'Gentlemen of the jury,' quoth he, 'did you ever hear of a man sacrificing his life to the law of the country upon the testimony of a single witness, and that single witness, by his own confession, an accomplice in the crime? Take his own vile evidence for his character: he was traitor to his client. He was the spy that hovered round his friend, and coveted the price that was to be given him for shedding that friend's blood. He was the man who yielded to the tie of three oaths of allegiance to watch and be the setter of his client, to earn the bribe of Government, securo with his pardon already in his pocket. He was to put letters in the post office, to do what he himself stated pressed on his mind the conviction that he was liable to the penalties of treason; and this very act did he do from the obligation of three oaths of allegiance. Was he aware of his crime? His pardon tells it. He came over to be a spy and to be a traitor, to get a pardon, to earn a reward; although, if you believe him, it was to be all common agreeable work to be paid for, like his other ordinary business, by the day or by the sheet. He was to be paid so much a day for ensnaring and murdering his client

and his friend. Do you think the man deserving of credit who can do such things?'

But the evidence was too clear to be rebutted, and the jury had in reality no choice but to declare the Rev. William Jackson guilty of high treason. He was remanded for a week, before sentence should be passed—a week of terror for his fellow-conspirators. Although for a year he had held out against all threats and promises lavished on him to induce him to betray those with whom he had conferred on the subject of a rebellion and French intervention, yet who could tell the terrifying effect the near prospect of the scaffold might have upon his solitary spirit brooding in the gloomy cells of Newgate? Until now, Jackson had been freely permitted the society of his friends, and every alleviation which could be granted to his position was bestowed. But alone to face the ignominious death which he might avoid by a few words—this was an ordeal of no common intensity.

On the evening of the trial, a person muffled in a large cloak might have been noticed going through the narrow and ill-lighted thoroughfare called Kevin Street. Daylight still lingered in the sweet country beyond the city; but here were murky shadows from the tall houses, burying the untidy footpaths and the hurrying passengers; dingy oil-lamps glared or quivered at certain intervals; stands for the retail of stale herrings and cabbages had knots of purchasers about them, and an odd ballad-singer's voice was heard above the din of carts and cars. One could have told what the ballad would be about without hearing a word; some doggerel concealing covert disaffection, abusing the Viceroy and his ministers, or perhaps a monody over the last sacrifice to treason—William Jackson. The gentleman muffled in the cloak thought it was the latter; for he detected that time-honoured tune, 'The night before Larry was stretched.'

This quarter of Dublin was a noted haunt of the disaffected. The watchman, calling the hour with

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THE WATCHMAN SAW HIM, BUT PASSED ON, BAWLING THE HOUR.



sonorous twang, which rendered it next to impossible to understand him, was sure that the gentleman who passed him by in the shadows was bound for some place connected with 'the Union.' But it was no business of his; he rather secretly sympathized with all opposition to the Government, and had visions of better paid watchmen under the new régime. So he invariably turned away his head when passing the noted 'number thirty-nine,' and bawled out his passing hour more lustily, to drown the secret signal of the knock, and click of withdrawing bolts.

A conference of the leaders was held to-night. Wolfe Tone, Russell, Addis Emmet, M'Cormick, and Keogh were among those present. To them now entered the comparative neophyte, Fergus Kavanagh. Fatally had he progressed in the arts of sedition since that day when Colonel Butler had shaken him from loyal society into the very arms of the rebel party. His fine imagination had been worked upon by florid declamation; his sense of right was being perverted by ingenious sophistry. He was deep in plots ere this time; and though, in his cooler moments, conscience and reason asked him where it would end—where it *could* all end, save in bloodshed—his own or others'—he found the opiate for such unpleasant reflections in a further draught of the Cireean cup of conspiracy. He told himself that he had gone too far to recede with honour; and, though many of the United Irish counsels were too violent for his taste, he was satisfied with standing aloof from such, and declaring his reprobation of them.

'I have no fear that Jackson will turn king's evidence, after what he did one night Keogh visited him,' said Wolfe Tone. 'Eh! you didn't hear that story, Kavanagh? Then here it is. Keogh stayed till a very late hour at the prison, and when he was going away poor Jackson accompanied him to the outer doors. In the little room beside the archway was the gaoler fast asleep, with the keys of the prison lying beside him.

"Poor fellow," says Jackson, "we won't disturb him; I have already given him too much trouble." He took the keys himself, and opened the doors. Instantly it flashed on him that here was escape. He was deeply agitated for a moment; but his old honour was uppermost still. "I could do it," says he; "but what would be the consequences to you, my friend, and to the poor fellow who has been so kind to me? Nay, let me rather meet my fate;" and he locked the gates again. Wasn't that it, Keogh?

The individual addressed gave token of acquiescence. Wolfe Tone had most to fear from the doomed prisoner's possible treachery. He had had more intercourse with him of a treasonable nature than anybody else. Sundry persons in power had threatened that he should be forced to appear on the trial as a witness against Jackson; and, now that that danger was over, there still remained the danger of the condemned man's being frightened or cajoled into revelations which would compromise numbers. Wolfe Tone had friends in high places, who had successfully sheltered him hitherto, but could not do so if he were proved any deeper in treason than he was at present known to be.

'I want to tell you all my plans,' he said presently. 'I have undoubtedly been guilty of a great offence against the existing Government, and I cannot say but they have dealt leniently with me. In consequence, I intend to expiate my misdeeds by a voluntary exile.'

'I thought it was to be involuntary, and to the East Indies,' remarked Dr. MacNevin.

'Well, I was willing to accept that,' said Wolfe Tone; 'but I would bind my hands by no engagement to abstain from politics for the future. Perhaps they think the country so prostrate that a patriot or two left in it makes no difference.'

A smile passed round the table.

'And whither do you go?' inquired one.

'To Philadelphia, there to solicit the French minister



to make known to his Government the wants of my beloved country.'

A murmur of approval was heard, whercin Fergus Kavanagh did not join. He felt there was something mean in the proposed line of action, and that Mr. Tone, escaping from the country under an unspoken amnesty, ought to have considered himself bound to refrain from future plots against a Government which had been so lenient. But the moral sense must be nearly extinguished before a man can make a good conspirator.

'If the Castle fellows hear you're bound for Philadelphia, they'll make you promise to hold no communication with the French minister,' observed a delegate farther down the table.

'Does any one know the name of the ambassador there?' asked Tone.

Some one answered, 'Citizen Adet: an honest fellow.'

'Then, if he's a lover of liberty, he will further my designs,' said Tone. 'I'll not stop short with a memorial, believe me; the doors of great men must be besieged in order to wring concessions from them. But what shall I take as credentials? I shall hardly be attended to on my own representations.'

'You have a certificate of admission into the Belfast Volunteers, have you not?' asked Dr. Ryan.

'Ay; but I would like some further guarantee. Stay—I have a vote of thanks from the Catholic Committee, engrossed on vellum; would that do?'

They voted him another, then and there, which was signed by the chairman and secretaries. Likewise they voted him three hundred pounds to bear expenses, in addition to a discharge of all arrears due.

'My plan is to go to Belfast, and thence take ship for New York,' said Tone; 'and my compromise with the Government extends no farther than to the banks of the Delaware. I hope to work well for the cause there, brothers.'

Fergus Kavanagh could have said, 'This is unworthy casuistry; no Government would spare a man's

life, except on the implied condition that he was to abstain from conspiracy in future;’ but he felt that his words could do no good. He listened, and thought some of the planning very Utopian; that an ambassador should give heed to a friendless exile, and recommend him to the powerful Directory of France, and that the Directory should expend a vast quantity of treasure in invading Ireland at the aforesaid exile’s request—all seemed improbable in the highest degree. Yet all was accomplished by the indomitable perseverance of the man. In that night’s conference, and in another which took place in a certain ‘little triangular field’ near Rathfarnham, between the three ruling spirits of the committee—Toué, Russell, and Addis Emmet—lay enfolded the germ of General Hoche’s ill-starred expedition to Bantry Bay.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### DEATH IN THE DOCK.

AND thus the Irish Executive, in permitting Wolfe Tone’s unquestioned transit from the kingdom, were doing about the most injurious and injudicious thing they had done for some years. Poor Jackson, with his incomplete treason and his rash manner of crime, was less dangerous by far than the gentle and kindly-natured Tone, who had the resolution of iron under his yielding exterior.

Ere he left for Belfast, on the first stage of his expatriation, the day of Jackson’s doom had come and gone. Not as was expected, however. Perhaps the *causes célèbres* of the United Kingdom do not contain

## DEATH IN THE DOCK.

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a stranger or a sadder scene than was presented by the Irish Court of King's Bench on that 30th of April 1795. A dense throng filled all the galleries and passages, as well as the body of the building; scarce room was there for the officials to get to their places. The counsel for the Crown were this morning to pray for the judgment of the court upon the Reverend William Jackson.

Before the appearance of these gentlemen, all eyes were bent upon the prisoner in the dock. Leaning against the front of it, supporting himself as best he could by his nerveless hands on the ledges and about the spikes, was a pale, perturbed, shivering man. 'Fear! abject cowardice!' say numbers of the spectators; for party spirit in those unhappy times ran so high that even an emotion of pity could not be spared to political adversaries. 'He is sick with fear; we always knew he was a coward;' while a small minority in the dense crowd believe not this, but have a doubt, nevertheless, and cannot satisfactorily explain to themselves the emotion which almost convulses the frame of the heretofore calm and self-possessed prisoner; until one dread word comes whispered through the mass, passing from man to man of Jackson's sympathizers like a thrill of electricity, turning blanched faces and startled eyes as with a sudden shock upon him. Now he sees M'Nally, his junior counsel, and makes some feeble sign for his approach; tries to press the offered fingers with his own damp hand, and whispers words from a mournful smile which a moment transmutes into a quiver of physical anguish. The words were a quotation from a French play—

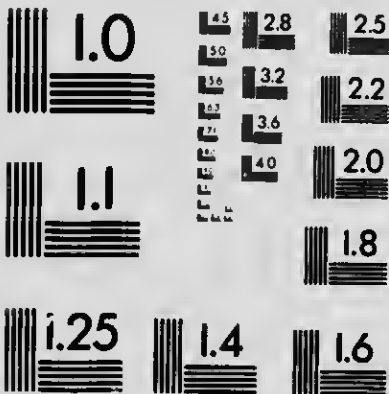
'We have deceived the senate.'

Lord Clonmel, Chief Justice, was on the bench, and, seeing the violent illness of the prisoner, spoke to his brother judges of remanding him. But now entered, all in a bustle, with wig and gown awry, His Majesty's Attorney-General; who, according to form, called on the court to pronounce sentence on the Reverend



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William Jackson. The convict is summoned to stand up, and collects his failing strength to do so; but, as he endeavours to hold himself erect, the wretched man sways from side to side like a broken reed; the last stern effort of the will folds his arms across his breast, and strains his trembling features into an expression of proud composure.

'William Jackson, hold up your right hand!' orders the clerk of the Crown. The prisoner drew forth his hand; but no power in his nerveless frame could prevent its dropping instantly, though the lips were firmly scornful still.

'What, now, have you to say, William Jackson, by yourself or your counsel, why judgment of death and execution should not be awarded against you, according to law?'

Mr. Curran rose, and, believing he had discovered some technical informality in the proceedings, addressed certain arguments to the court in arrest of judgment. Mr. Ponsonby followed in support of the same.

'My lords,' said Mr. Curran, interrupting his junior, 'my client the prisoner is not in a fit state for the prolongation of this discussion. He is seriously ill—I believe him to be even now insensible; there can be no communication between him and his counsel, and the law does not recognise an unconscious man as a fit subject for her operations.'

'It appears to me, Mr. Curran, that the truest lenity to your client is to dispose of the present matter out of hand,' replied the Chief Justice. So the legal men went on with their technical pleas, until the agony of the miserable Jackson became such that every barrier of pride or of pretence was broken down; he sank from his chair to the floor in a species of convulsion. Through the spectators ran a shudder and a stifled moan.

The windows of the court were opened; many common restoratives were brought; medical men were sent down into the dock to examine him. You could have heard

a pin drop in all that mighty crowd, as Doctors Waite and Kingsley raised the prostrate figure and held a whispered consultation over it.

'If the prisoner be insensible,' quoth Lord Clonmel, 'it is impossible that I can pronounce the judgment of the court upon him. Humanity and common sense alike require that he should be in a state of sensibility.'

The Attorney-General hereupon signified that he had no objection to a remand. But now the physicians were ready to be examined as to their opinions; and, being sworn, Dr. Waite deposed that William Jackson was dying at that moment. Dr. Kingsley, who was one of the jurors, affirmed the same.

'Do you think he can hear his sentence?' asked the Chief Justice, 'or know what is said for or against him?'

'Certainly not,' declared the doctors.

'Then he must be taken away; and have a care, gaoler, that, in sending him away, you do him no mischief. We remand him till further orders.'

The Sheriff looked up with a whitened face, and informed the court that the prisoner was dead. After the momentary pause of excitement—

'Let an inquisition be held on the body,' ordered the Chief Justice. 'Let it be carefully inquired how and by what means he died.'

Then the bench was vacated, and the great crowd began to empty into the streets, debating with haggard looks and hushed voices the terrible death-scene. The news crept into every house in Dublin ere the evening was over, associated with the single explanatory word—Poison; while the dishonoured body of him who might have been a valuable and happy man, but who sacrificed all things on the altar of sedition, lay during the night in the dock of the empty court, just as he had died, and was next day subject to a coroner's inquest, which proved that he had committed suicide.

After that scene in the King's Bench, Fergus Kavanagh felt he wanted air and change; the gossip

of his companions was insufferable; thoughts of too serious a nature pressed upon him. He took his horse and rode forth towards the green Phoenix Park, along the quayed lines of the Liffey, spanned by bridges frequent as on the Seine. As yet the great dome of the Four Courts rose not on King's Inns Quay, above the northern division of the capital; many of the fine public buildings which decorate the Dublin of the present, and have procured it the name of the City of Palaces, had commonplace substitutes at that period. But the broad roads and umbrageous alleys and grassy slopes of 'the Phoenix' were then as now, forming a public park matchless for salubrity and beauty. On galloped Fergus, till he came to Lord Chesterfield's marble pillar, surmounted by the fabulous bird and its flames, whence the park is named; when, seeing a group of riders before him, he drew his rein, and subsided into a walk.

He had recognised Evelyn Butler and her father among the equestrians, and was willing to linger behind for a short space, while he might keep them in sight. A minute afterwards he found that he was not so willing; for, riding on her other hand in the group,—there might be a dozen ladies and gentlemen of the party,—was Ulick Waddell, Esq. This discomposing vision caused Mr. Kavanagh to turn aside along the first branching road; though, could he have heard the amount and manner of conversation wherewith his rival was favoured, he might have been less dissatisfied.

He assuaged himself by a fierce gallop on the sward of the review-ground, the well-known Fifteen Acres. And the thoughts with which he had left that reeking court-house returned to him; thoughts suggested by the miserable fate which he had witnessed. Was this the end of the glories of a conspirator, and the dream of Ireland's regeneration? Fergus Kavanagh was disgusted with sedition at that moment; a public execution would have been nothing in comparison with the horror of that deliberately self-imposed destruction of body



and soul. The young barrister was none of those swaggering sceptics who would applaud such a deed, and enhance it by examples from Greek and Roman heathendom. His pious education had left in his mind more than a remnant of belief in the eternal judgment. And this wretched man, William Jackson, had sold his soul for the chimera of promoting a certain national independence; had staked his prospects for eternity as well as for time, and lost all.

A turn of the road, on the brow of a gentle slope, brought him in view of the silvery Liffey, meandering through woods and meadows towards the city and the sea. Very fair was the landscape—all *habitués* of 'the Phoenix' know it well: though now sundry chimneys and a distant line of rail add features which Fergus would have been prophet to anticipate. He paused here awhile, imbibing composure from the quietness of nature. Was the political turmoil in which he lived worth anything, after all? Was not that other part of him, the soul, which admired this scene, which felt perturbed or pleased, which must live for ever—was it not worth attending to occasionally? Mr. Kavanagh's cogitations were of a very grave nature, both here and in the Valley of Thorns, through which he afterwards rode.

The gnarled and knotted old trees were young enough then, and were just putting forth their May buds in tender green and white, with a suspicion of perfume about them; and primroses peeped forth in companies from their crumpled leaves in the grass under the thorns—grass so juicy and verdant that Mr. Kavanagh's steed very excusably longed for a bite.

And this longing was gratified a few minutes afterwards, when his master pulled up abruptly to speak to two persons whom he recognised lounging at the foot of a tree. Fitzpatrick, the Doon delegate, was one; and the other Myles Furlong, who had come up on 'society's business' from the baronial committee; and, being desired to make themselves scarce during the day-

light, and having a natural affinity for anything like country scenes, they had wandered to this green secluded place, and marvelled at the interminable length of the idle hours, only alleviated by smoking bad tobacco.

'And how do you like Dublin, Myles? I believe you never were here before.'

'Deed, then, I heerd tell a dale more ov it than it desarves,' was the answer, somewhat doggedly spoken; for the blacksmith was not well pleased at the rencounter. 'The mnd an' the cabins is just as bad here as at our own little humblo place; sure I thought meself all the houses in Dublin would be like the big Castle o' Doon, an' the shreets like boarded flures.'

After a few further words, Mr. Kavanagh was moving off, when Myles looked up and exclaimed, rather as if the request were forced from him, 'Counsellor dear, sure you won't tell the masher or the captin that you see mo in Dublin?'

'Certainly not, Furlong: I meet them as little as you do yourself. Besides'—

'You're in the same boat wid ourselves now, counsellor, in a manner,' interrupted Fitzpatrick, rubbing his hands with a vulgar glee which especially grated on the fastidious Fergus. In the same boat with this desperado—pledged to the same enterprises! His opinion of himself was not improved by consideration of the fact.

Among the news he had gleaned was, that these two men, reputed among their fellows for certain qualities valuable to those who would sway a mob, were to be sent southwards or westwards—as yet they knew not which—to work up some hitherto slumbering district; to sow it thoroughly with seeds which would bring forth a harvest of rebellion. They were proud of the job, and would do it well.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## A NIGHT OF DEBATE.

It was the evening of the 4th of May 1795. College Green was thronged with a swaying multitude, among which mounted police rode about; and a line of dragoons were drawn up near the portico of the Parliament House. One might have wondered how quietly the noble horses stood, with shouts and yells bursting about them at spasmodic intervals; or how patient their riders were amid the gibes and provoking sneers of the populace, whose object seemed to be the infuriating the military, if possible. But not even the flat of a sabre retaliated a taunt, though under the glittering helmets more than one pair of eyes gleamed dangerously, and seemed to promise that, in case of collision, not the flat but the edge of the sword would be used.

King William's statue was heaped high with boys and men; so were the lamp-posts and all available railings. Those at the College were held by their own proper tenants—the students in cap and gown; who had sufficiently shown their political predilections some short time previously, by deserting the provost and fellows as they proceeded to present an address to his Excellency Earl Camden at the Castle, and paying homage to Grattan, the leader of the Liberal section, instead. Likewise a large body of them had joined with the Roman Catholics assembled in Francis Street Chapel, when resolutions were entered into respecting the expediency of a separation of Ireland from England, and it was publicly stated that 'Ireland, but for the British connection, would be happy, and of some consequence in the world: ' and the soldiers were exhorted

to desertion as a duty. In fact, the seditious spirit leavening the freshmen of Trinity College could scarcely be controlled by the constituted authorities of that seat of learning.

Now a multitude in College Green, on nights when any important debate was going on in the Houses, was no novelty. Every street boy in Dublin was a politician in his own way; the most violent personal likes and dislikes were entertained for public men by the masses. This personal element coloured all political matters among the Irish people: perhaps it was the relic of that olden spirit of clanship and chieftainship which is rightly said to be the key to Hibernian history. Men, not measures, were always the principal rallying-points. The measure before Parliament to-night was of great consequence. Grattan's Catholic Relief Bill was to be brought forward for second reading, and all understood that the battle would be decisive.

A very considerable amount of the discreditable political process called 'ratting' was understood to have been going on among M.P.'s since the change in the vicereignty. Honourable members, who would certainly have voted for Catholic Emancipation when the measure was smiled upon by Earl Fitzwilliam, were believed to be ready to oppose it under the frown of Earl Camden. This was a suggestive text for the populace. The broadest accusations of bribery were flung about by the crowd, in connection with the names of sundry legislators. Old stories were raked up to their discredit; nicknames were shouted, personal peculiarities of every sort were loudly commented on, rousing roars of laughter in the mob. Abundance of plain speaking was being indulged in: and it may be imagined that slander had at least as fair a chance of expression as unwelcome truth.

Fitzpatrick and Myles Furlong had worked their way from the outer edges of the crowd, through lanes made by the police movements, or by adroit pushing and squeezing, or by running the gauntlet under the horses'

bodies, and at last reached the vicinage of the entrance to the House of Commons. 'I want to look at Mither Grattan an' Lord Edward; I'd givo all that ever I see for a sight of Mither Grattan an' Lord Edward,' Myles had said to his comrade: and now they were in a fair position to behold those notables, also to behold a great variety of other men not quite so distinguished. These arrived in all sorts of vehicles, from the open landau or sociable down to the meagre sedan-chair; and eager, as for the exposition of a comadrinn, were the crowd for the discovery of the occupant of each; unless where, as was often the case, the liveries and appointments were recognised by the *habitués* of the streets, and declared beforehand in a rolling shout from Grafton Street over the Green—a shout which was either defiant or laudatory according to predilection.

'Arrah! who's the little chap like a priest?' asked Myles of his friend, when that hired vehicle of the period, called a noddy, struggled through the lanes of the mob, and discharged somebody whose advent was greeted with terrific groaning. The little figure looked round sharply and defiantly, and pushed his brown bob-wig farther on his forehead as he strutted up the steps. 'Paddy Duigenan! Paddy Duigenan!' was the cry. A faint counter-cheer came from Protestant partisans at the college; for Doctoor Patrick Duigenan was the anti-papal incarnation of the time, and led fierce opposition in the House on every question concerning the Catholic claims. 'An' how does yer honour get on wid herself?' asked one fellow, peering almost into his face. 'She'll have you goin' to mass yet!' The doctor actually winced; it was the most vulnerable point about his career that he had married a Roman Catholic lady, and, notwithstanding his utter detestation of the creed, had daily to associate with her confessor and other priests.

The groans and gibes had scarcely died away when applause which rent the air testified the coming of some popular pet. Quickly through the willing crowd

marched the bearers of a sedan-chair, closely curtained round, for it was not the pleasure of the great man to reveal himself prematurely to his admirers. When Henry Grattan stepped forth, they saw a small, bent, spare form, with long arms and ordinary face; no insignia externally of the royal soul which dwelt within. 'Arrah! is that crathur the great Misther Grattan?' observed Myles, who had looked for a chieftain six feet high at least, and imposing as his fame. There was no mistake about it; the welkin rang with his name, and he bowed his gratitude as he disappeared within the portico.

Close after him came matter for groaning again—the Butlers of Doon, father and son. Greater ovation than applause were such testimonies of popular dislike to the stalwart old colonel; and his son was simply indifferent to it all. He did not know that the fiercest groan in the chorus arose from the hating heart of his foster-brother.

The debate, one of the longest recorded in the sessions of the Irish Parliament, duly began according to form. Toler, the Solicitor-General, led the opposition to the Relief Bill, declaring that it would overthrow the British Constitution. Lord Kingsborough said that admitting Roman Catholics to Parliament would take all power from the hands of the Protestants of the realm. Sir Hercules Langrishe declared himself a supporter of the bill, and defended it from the charge of being a move towards democracy, or towards French exemplars, 'where,' he affirmed, 'we see not equal rights, but equal wrongs—an equality not of property, but of poverty.' Another honourable member spoke much of the United Irishmen, and the three millions of backers which they boasted. 'The wretched peasant, whose head is counted to swell this awful number, is called on by his priest to subscribe, and is told that Mr. Grattan is to relieve him from rent and wretchedness; the innocent man blesses Mr. Grattan, and subscribes the little produce of his sweat. The miserable dupe,

plundered of his scanty earnings, returns to his cabin, and dreams of nothing but less labour for himself and more food and raiment for his children. But this man, under the guidance of such leaders, is the more dangerous as he is the more innocent. I therefore deem it inexpedient to admit such leaders to any share of power: we should be the more careful in a country where government seems to be the science of all, and obedience the habit of none. But we are told, sir, that these men will rebel if we do not comply. Why, sir, if their loyalty is so loose a cloak as to be thrown off in every contest for rank and power, let them rebel.'

Thus the gage of defiance was flung down, and the truth more than hinted at, that in this debate the destiny of the agitators was bound up, and that they would shape their course by the result; which seemed to be accepted as an inevitable fact by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, the ultra-Liberal member for Philipstown, whose maiden speech on the occasion cost him his seat, Lord Longueville, the owner of the borough, having demanded his resignation next day. Such was the parliamentary independence of the times.

'The decision of this night goes much further than the bill,' said he. 'Let me caution you. Have you not had a great and memorable example to convince you that the soldiers of an odious Government may become the soldiers of the nation? Take care what part you act on this night.' The threat was perfectly comprehensible to the listeners, and created a certain sensation. Mr. Arthur O'Connor plunged into the hottest ebullitions of the United Irishmen a week after, and became a noted rebel.

Grattan of course defended his bill, and especially took into consideration the coronation oath of the king, which was alleged to be an insuperable bar to the emancipation of the Roman Catholics. All his eloquence and his logic were unavailing: a great majority of the House was unwilling that concession should go any further.

The roseate dawn of a fine May morning blushed over the purple Irish Sea, and paled the manifold lamps of the capital; the rising sun lit up the Dublin mountains, and shone through green alleys of the Phoenix, and through scores of easterly-lying streets, and cast a great magnified shadow of the pilastered front of Old Trinity across College Green and its diminished crowds. The guard of dragoons was there still, though the boisterous element had long since passed from the mob, under the sedative influence of many inactive hours. Faintly were the cheers and counter-cheers from within re-echoed now from without; yet not a legislator had come forth—the great event was, not yet decided. An attempt to adjourn had been at once suppressed. Worthly citizens, coming forth to their day's duties in mart and manufactory, saw the jaded soldiers amid the dregs of the over-night mob, and marvelled at the strenuous continuance of the legislative contest. At last, not more than an hour from noontide, the crisis came.

Cheers broke forth from the interior—vehement, vivid, oft-repeated cheers—unmistakably the shout of victory. The people in the street held their breath; for who had been victorious? It was soon told. Members oozed forth singly, in pairs, in half-dozens—some talking with eager, angry looks, others simply tired out, others with elated step and triumphant glance. Among the grave and reticent was Henry Grattan, who drew the curtains of his sedan close, and scarcely noticed the feeble cheer of the populace.

'So it's all up,' says Fitzpatrick, turning moodily from the spot of his weary night-watch. 'A hundred and fifty-five against the bill.'

Myles did not quite understand this till it was further explained; but the ensuing sentence required no commentary except the glittering eye with which it was spoken.

'I'm thinking 'twill be the pikes in real airnest now an' no mistake.'



W.

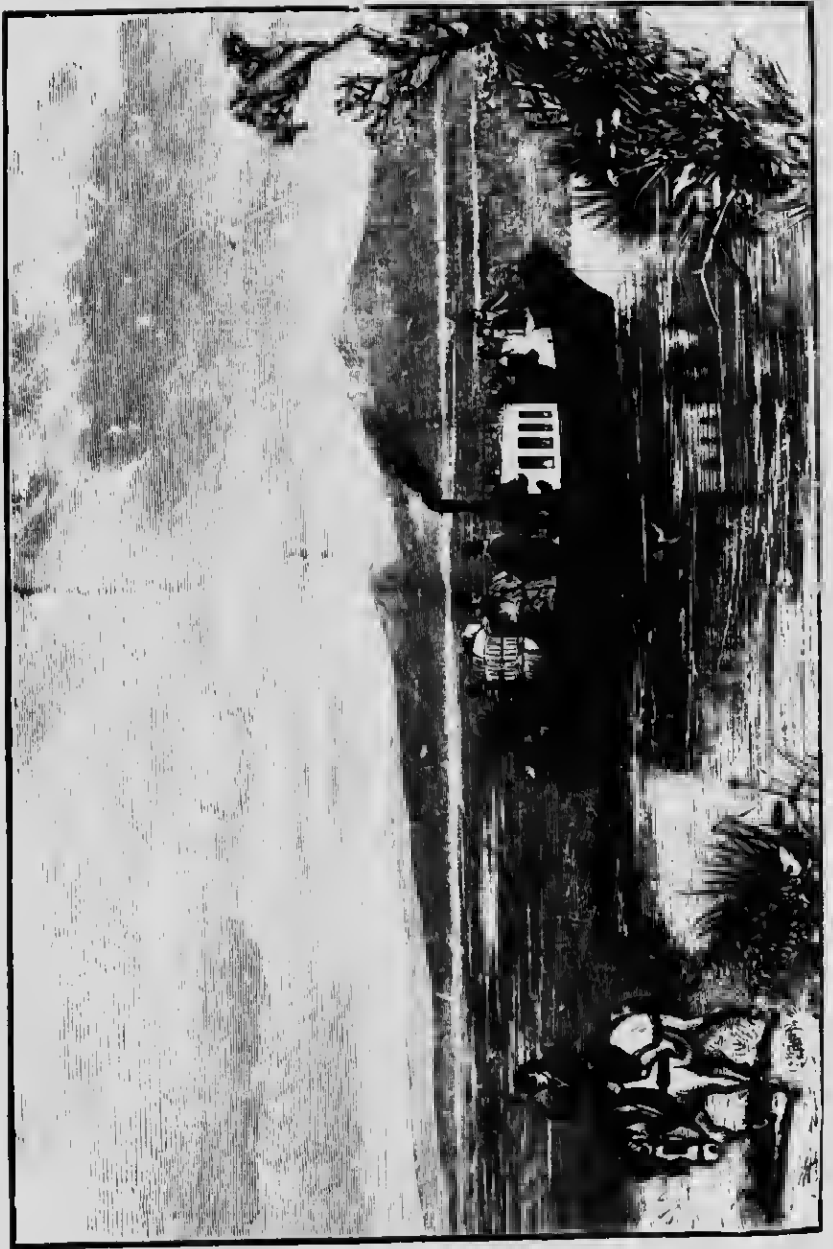
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## CHAPTER XL

## ON THE CANAL

THERE were miles of bog on every side, almost perfectly flat, as far as the pale greyish hills that stood on the horizon. Right through the level tract lay a canal and a towing-path, along which a large lumber-boat and its attendant horse were slowly travelling. On the back of the singularly unkempt horse, who seemed in bad spirits, and hung down his head as if nothing in nature was worth looking at,—a conclusion which was very nearly the truth here,—was an equally unkempt boy, having withered saffron hair, appearing not only around his ancient cap, but also through sundry holes in the midst of it, suggesting vegetation that had penetrated all obstacles, and was determined to assert its uprightness. Occasionally the boy administered a spurring to his steed, by means of a vigorous drum on its sides with his naked heels; but neither that nor other stimulant of curb or short stick had any effect on its equable motions; a mild surprise that anybody should take such trouble might have been detected in the big rotund eyes behind the blinkers; in jog-trot had the brown horse lived, and in jog-trot would he die.

The deck of the lumber-boat had built upon it a long, narrow cabin, with railed top, intended for passengers who might be induced to trust themselves to the conveyance. At either end was a broader space, piled up with merchandise, and diversified with live-stock going to some fair; a little black iron chimney sent forth turf smoke into the eyes of anybody incautious enough to promenade the railed space aforesaid, so that most of the passengers chose to congregate with the cattle. Here were Myles Furlong and Fitzpatrick smoking

their pipes in company with the drovers, and busy at the same time about their avocation of sowing sedition.

'Troth an' that's terrible news entirely,' said one fellow in frieze, who held a ponderous oak bludgeon in his hands, neatly filled in with lead at the thicker end, for convenience of use at fairs. 'An' do you say, sir, that all our little farms is to be tuk from us, an' given to Protestants?'

'Deed an' I do: it's a great plan of the Parliament-men in Dublin,' declared Fitzpatriek, who never hesitated at an untruth to baek his own purposes. 'Mo an' this man is jist down from the middle of 'em all, an' heerd tell a tale beside that same;' an announcement which stimulated the curiosity of the group not a little; and, after some provokingly persevering whiffs of his blackened clay pipe, the delegate was persuaded to favour them with further revelations, Myles merely acting the part of corroborator.

'Well, as to that about Catholics bein' turned out to make room for Protestan's, the wondher to me is that ye didn't hear it long ago. Why, it's two year since Mистер Byrne wrote a long letter about it, to give the alarm properly. An' the Connaught people—small blame to 'em, the crathurs!—tuk the law into their own hands, bein' aggravated, like, an' didn't leave a gun or a sword in a Protestan' house the counthry over.'

'Small blame to 'em,' chorused the company, shaking the ashes from their pipes over the edge of the gun-wale. 'But what was it you said about bigger taxes?' inquired he of the bludgeon. 'I'm thinkin' they wor big enough before.'

'To be sure they wor; but the English Protestan's don't think so, d'ye see?' said Fitzpatriek, with a poke of his finger. 'An' they're masters, you know, yet awhile. There's to be a land tax double what it ever was, an' the tithes is to be increased, and the hearth-money'—

'Blessed hour!' exclaimed the aghast agriculturists; 'how'll we ever live at all, at all?'

It need scarcely be said that the above statements were pure inventions of Mr. Fitzpatrick's. Such was a common practice with the incendiary itinerant demagogues of the period: they even printed handbills containing the grossest falsehoods about Government and its intentions, in order to stir up the discontents of the people, and fan the spark of disquiet into a flame.

Then the delegate proceeded to insinuate the remedy—secret political combination; which was not unknown to some of them already. And in this sort of talk the afternoon wore on among the wide reaches of bog lands, where only an occasional cabin or a set of turf-ricks diversified the prospect, and knots of yellow rag-weed and the pretty tufted bog cotton were the chief vegetation, beside flabby-leaved potatoes. And Tommeen, the boy on the low-spirited horse, sang, as a diversion to his own monotony, that strain to which Burns's 'Poor Mailie' is but a parody (say zealous Hibernicists), entitled 'The Widow's Pig':—

'I placed her on the hearth-stone,  
A sod beneath her head I laid,  
In hopes she would come to herself,  
And keep the cabin o'er our head.  
At last her eyes she opened,  
Saying, "Mistress dear, will you sit still?  
I'll make you the executor  
To my last testament and will."'

And so on, until the boat came to a lock, where Tommeen's steed was enfranchised, and another put in bonds, and a set of very unwelcome passengers appeared in the shape of a party of yeomanry, who jumped in over the side, and took possession of the little cabin immediately, stowing their muskets away in every part of it,—talking loud, and swaggering about, to the disgust of Fitzpatrick and his companion.

'Well, my men, and what are you doing?' asked the officer, coming over to the group who had been sedi-

tiously employed. 'Talking on some interesting subject, eh?'

'Did yer honour hear tell,' says Fitzpatrick fawningly, 'how Misther Burke ov Coonagh dug up his rath, and what the fairies did to him afterwards to punish him?'

'No,' said the other, with a short laugh, 'nor would I b'lieve it if I did. Some of you lend me a light of your pipes, and we'll have a draw together.' This request was rather sullenly complied with. 'Where's that boy who was singing as we came up to the lock?' for by this time the second pair of gates had been passed, and the boat was gliding along a higher section of the canal. 'I'll be bound 'twas a rebelly song of some sort. Where is he, I say?'

Tommeen had been left behind at the lock with his steed; but, as it was the good pleasure of the man in uniform, the boat was stopped while a yeoman went back to fetch him. He of the saffron-coloured hair was grievously frightened, and his teeth not far from chattering, when he was caught and presented.

'What was the song, sirrah? No prevarication, sirrah; state, without more ado, was it a seditious ballad?'

'Plase yer honour's majesty,' said Tommeen, his knees almost knocking together as he spied a club of muskets behind his questioner, and red-coats all around, 'it was only "The Widow's Pig," and I didn't think it was any har-rm!'

'And what's "The Widow's Pig," sir? Pipo it up this minute, sir.'

Perhaps he was amused by the terror of the poor boy, who immediately struck forth into the ditty with most quavering accents, so that every bar was filled with a truly natural shake. He forgot half the words, and mangled the remainder, to the high entertainment of the yeomen; but the officer's scowl never left his face.

'And is that what you call a loyal song, sir?'

Tommeen gaped, between fright and non-comprehen-

sion, and stood with his mouth wide open opposite the awful authority. 'I've a mind to shoot you, sir,' said the military man, slowly drawing a pistol from his belt; 'you know you deserve it, and would be sentenced to it by any court-martial. What have you to say in your own defence, sir? Hold his arms, Grady: make ready—present'—

As he put the pistol to the lad's forehead,—it was all a joke, remember,—suddenly his hand was struck up, the weapon wrenched from it by Myles Furlong, and thrown far into the canal.

The wild confusion that ensued may be imagined. Half a dozen yeomen flung themselves on the blacksmith, to obey their officer's stentorian orders for his arrest; but his great strength enabled him to cast them off, after a struggle, and to plunge over the side of the boat. Tommeen made his escape ashore in the *mêlée*, and could never afterwards be persuaded but that he would in reality have been shot, except for the stranger's interference.

The boat was stopped for some time. Lights were procured from a neighbouring cabin to aid in the search; for darkness lay thick on the line of the deep-cut canal, though a westerling gleam was still in the sky. No trace of the daring stranger could be discovered. Fitzpatrick, dismayed beyond measure, yet dissembled his emotions, and aided in the hunt most officiously, so as to receive the thanks of the officer afterwards, and to escape the overhauling which the innocent drovers experienced in virtue of the search-warrant of his will and pleasure.

Thenceforth skulking was the order of the day for Myles in that district. Tommeen and his family became vigorous 'croppies' in consequence of the above-mentioned tyrannous pleasantries. It is a fact that scores of rebels were made by the unlicensed conduct of the troops whose business it was to keep the peace. One of the Irish Opposition papers of the period gave the following 'receipt for making a rebel,' which was

practised extensively at a time somewhat later than the date of this chapter: 'Take a loyal subject, uninfluenced by title, place, or pension; burn his house over his head; let the soldiery exercise every species of insult and barbarity towards his helpless family, and march away with the plunder of every part of his property they choose to save from the flames.' Whence it will be seen what a trifling exploit even the shooting of Tommeen would have proved; not a blot on the escutcheon of the yeomanry officer.

Myles Furlong made his way along the Shannon to Lough Allen, and thence into the disturbed districts of Ulster. He earned his bread everywhere in the practice of his trade, and taught pike-making in many a previously unsophisticated forge. He was in the Tyrone mountains when the commotions began which ended in the Battle of the Diamond, where a very large body of Roman Catholic Defenders was beaten by the Protestants, with a loss of forty-eight persons killed, and a great many wounded.

Local hostilities of this kind spread in many places over Ireland, awaking the bitterest feelings. Civil war is never so fearful as when intensified by religious hate. The Orangemen now began to come prominently forward, and were in some instances so intolerant as literally to drive from their homes the Roman Catholic population. Numbers passed over to their co-religionists in Mayo and Sligo, as despairing of being let to live in Ulster. On the other hand, there was the cruellest of retaliation by the popish organization in the southern and western counties. Nothing could be more distracted than the state of the kingdom.

Meanwhile in France was a little cloud forming—no bigger yet than the will and endeavour of one man—the expatriated Wolfe Tone; which may grow large enough to overshadow all Ireland with the thunder tempests of invasion.



## CHAPTER XLI.

## CHIEFLY IN FRANCE.

Nothing appears more strange to a student of the history of that convulsed period which closed the eighteenth century in Ireland, than to find men of humanity and probity doing their utmost to involve the people whom they wished to benefit in all the horrors of civil war, and for this object breaking the bonds of even ordinary honour, and setting at nought the dearest and closest obligations of life. We may be thankful that this exaggerated and mistaken patriotism has ceased to exist, except among perhaps half a score wrong-headed Celts, who have chiefly found shelter on the other side of the Atlantic, and succeed in deluding a few dupes occasionally into deeming them (the wrong-headed Celts aforesaid) the greatest and wisest of mankind.

During the period of which we write, Ireland and her people suffered many wrongs. No dispassionate reader of her story but will acknowledge this, and feel for the immense amount of injustice borne by the subject race. The statute-book contained laws of the harshest type, rigidly put in practice. Educated men revolted against such injustice; and, when they could not at once have the abuses of ages swept away in the regular course of legislative action, they turned their eyes to the perilous example of France, who had just flung off every shackle (and, sooth to say, almost every remnant of the decent garb of government also), and stood stretching out her hands to all nationalities that deemed themselves oppressed. Across the sea it was not so readily visible that those French hands were

stained with blood, and that her boasted liberty was mainly a licence to do evil.

If the patriots could have had patience, they would gradually have seen all the abuses which roused their indignation removed. The process was slow but certain, and has left Irishmen of the present day with scarce the shadow of a pretext for dissatisfaction with their rulers. But the British prerogative of grumbling seems to have been imparted by the legislative union of the countries, and is without doubt exercised to the full in the Emerald Isle.

Concurrent authorities represent Theobald Wolfe Tone as an earnest, disinterested, humane man. He had no personal end to gain by tearing his country in pieces with civil discord: he would have sacrificed time and money to relieve any individual distress. Yet he worked with might and main to bring the sorest of all calamities on the land—invasion and war; which must render thousands homeless and penniless, and desolate the fairest scenes with death and fire. But then—oh, glorious result!—as soon as a dozen battles had sacrificed masses of valuable lives, and fifty towns were in blackened ruins, and the industry and commerce of the whole nation were paralyzed for a time, Ireland might be dubbed a republic, free and indivisible, and the Parliament in College Green be swamped by a Convention.

Here was Mr. Tone's ideal. He brooded over it in his American refuge, and pestered the Citizen Adet, who represented France at Philadelphia, with memorials in reference to French interposition. Irish friends wrote him exaggerated accounts of the spread of republican ideas in their country. At last the Citizen Adet gave him letters of introduction to that other Citizen who was charged with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs in Paris; and Tone, having spent a month in the voyage, landed at Havre on the 1st of February 1796, his credentials in his pocket. A single Irish rebel hoping to move the whole might of France! how chimerical! Nothing but the intensest enthusiasm

could have dreamed of such a feat, or carried the projector through the rebuffs and disappointments he was sure to experience.

Mr. James Smith (Tone's *nom de guerre*) came to Paris, presented his cipher credentials to the minister, on 26 Pluviôse, according to the confusing nomenclature affected by the republicans, and was received with great politeness. More than mere politeness ensued: we find him in the bureau of Citizen Charles de la Croix, conferring with him on the subject of the deciphered letter, and amid all the gravity of the matters under consideration noting the Citizen's dress sufficiently for a minute description to his wife. 'A grey silk *robe de chambre*, under which a kind of scarlet cassock of satin, with rose-coloured silk stockings, and scarlet ribbons in his shoes,' was attire which scarce seemed to suit the Spartan simplicity of a democracy which eschewed titles and decorations. But the wearer of all this pompous raiment was not so brilliant in his promises as the Irishman hoped.

'The marine of France is so dilapidated that Government will not hazard a large fleet:' needful precaution, with Nelson and Dunean on the high seas. 'Two thousand troops, and arms for twenty thousand; any quantity of artillery:' which seemed a large donation, but was delusive.

'You might as well send twenty men as two thousand,' observed Tone bluntly, thinking of the garrisons that studded Ireland. 'If your Government send only a corporal's guard, I will go myself; but it will be to certain destruction.'

And how many troops would satisfy the Citizen Tone? What number would he consider adequate for successful invasion?

Twenty thousand men. If they would commence with a great *coup*, and seize the capital at once, all the other cities in the kingdom would fall, as a necessary consequence; the militia and the army would join the invaders, and English domination was at an end!

But twenty thousand men was a simple impossibility: the Citizen Tone might as well ask for a quarter of a million. Finances—the exigencies of the Republic—forbade it. Could no more reasonable number be named?

Conference and consideration beat down the requirement to five thousand as the least. They should be the very flower of French troops, and the chief part of them artillerymen. Also the general should be one with a reputation—Pichegru or Jourdan; or, if neither of these could be had, Hoche, the youthful hero of Quiberon.

A few days afterwards, and Tone advanced a step higher in his diplomatic relations; he went to the palace of the Luxembourg, and demanded to see Carnot, 'the organizer of victory,' as he was styled in the inflated language of his compatriots. It happened to be his day for giving audience (each of the Directors did so in turn); and Tone found himself in a magnificent antechamber filled with dazzling uniforms. Here he sat in a corner, and conned over in his memory a certain French speech, previously composed for the occasion—for he had a just distrust of his powers as a linguist; and he gazed round at the crowded levee with some little wonder as to how he ever came there; but his reveries were interrupted by the sound of a bell, giving notice of the great man's approach. Has not equality already been proved a dream in this model Republic?

Citizen Carnot comes forth, in his *petit-costume* of white satin with embroidered crimson robe, resembling the draperies of Vandyke. And when all other audiences are over, the Irishman steps forward, and in 'his jargon' informs the Director that he represented three millions of Catholics and nine hundred thousand Dissenters, the disaffected of Ireland (which is more than a slight exaggeration on Mr. Tone's part).

'All eager to throw off the yoke of England!' says the enthusiastic ambassador. 'All unanimous in their love for France!'

The 'organizer of victory' expressed 'himself much

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WOLFE TONE IN THE ANTE-ROOM OF CITIZEN CARNOT.



gratified by this unsought affection. 'But what do they want?' he asked, with the practicality of a man of action.

'An armed force as a *point d'appui*,' replied Tono 'some weapons, and some money.' Ireland was a beggar at the feet of France—a position pleasing to the latter, who would be sure to reimburse herself, as in the case of the Cisalpine and Transalpine Republics, and other hantlings under her patronage.

'And the fortresses in Ireland?' quoth Carnot. None: except some works in Cork Harbour. But the landing should take place as near Belfast as possible; then the whole of Ulster would be in their hands immediately. For, strange to say, that province, which is now the richest and quietest in the kingdom, was then a seething mass of disaffection from end to end, distinguished for the outrages that its inhabitants committed against each other.

Thus 'James Smith, Citoyen Américaine,' developed his plans, and gained a hearing from the influential men of France. But he found dire delays interposed; he was sent from bureau to bureau with his atrocious and was wearied with endeavours to make his atrocious French comprehended. Going back day after day to his lonely lodging, he brooded over the Irish news till his mind was in a fever. All the wrong and violence done by the agents of Government were reported to him with faithfulness by the correspondents of his party, in letters smuggled by fishing-boats off coast, or *via* Hamburg, or *via* New York. The foul deeds of the Defenders and United Irishmen were glossed over as mere natural ebullitions of popular resentment; yet since 1641 more dreadful cruelties had not disgraced Ireland than were perpetrated in the smiling summer of this year.

'The idea of assassination has become familiar as that of fowling,' said Teler, the Attorney-General, from his place in Parliament. He demanded the passing of an Insurrection Act, containing the following pro-

visions:—That the administration of unlawful oaths be felony of death. That a majority of seven magistrates might declare their county in a state of insurrection. That any two magistrates might break open houses at any hour of the day or night to search for arms. That every man found absent from his house between sunset and sunrise should be subject to imprisonment. That all persons having no visible means of livelihood should be arrested, and sent to serve on board the King's fleet, at discretion of their worships in quarter sessions assembled.

Now, the conduct of the magistrates and the military authorities had in many counties been so severe, that an Act of Indemnity was required to blot out their offences this session; which act legitimated all that had been done, especially certain questionable proceedings of Lord Carhampton's, the Commander-in-Chief, who had exerted what was called by the Government prints 'a vigour beyond the law,' in the management of disturbed districts. He anticipated the clauses of the Insurrection Act (or set example for them) by drafting off the Defenders brought before him, on board a tender stationed at Sligo, in order that they might be turned into soldiers and sailors; which looks very like discretionary transportation, without even a form of legal trial. It is said that thirteen hundred men were thus treated, 'tied on cars and dragged away for shipment, weeping in agony, and crying aloud for justice.' The story is an old one. Those who were infants then are aged more than seventy years this day; yet we cannot help thinking of the destitute families, the bereavement in the humble cabins, perhaps more than of the disturbances so illegally punished.

Such stories—and many worse than these, because exaggerated into untruth—stung the very soul of Wolfe Tone, as he hung about the French public offices, and tried to get some means of practising his panacea upon his country. What a cure for the manifold Irish evils was French invasion!



In July he found himself one day in Fleury's cabinet, when there entered 'a very handsome, well-made young fellow, in a brown coat and nankeen pantaloons, who said, "Vous êtes le Citoyen Smith?"' Wolfe Tone, thinking him a *chef de bureau*, not in the secret of his nomenclature, answered, 'Oui, Citoyen, je m'appelle Smith.' 'Mais,' said the young man in the bourgeois dress, 'vous vous appelez aussi, je erois, Wolfe Tone? Eh bien; je suis le General Hoche.' That was the meeting of men who stood towards each other almost in the relation of employer and employed, the less splendid of the two being the former.

Thenceforward, preparations for the expedition to Ireland went on with vigour and alacrity. The midmost day in December all was complete; fourteen thousand troops were aboard forty-three vessels at Brest, and the signal was made 'to heave short.' So the gallant armada passed out of harbour laden, among more material freight, with the largest mischiefs for Ireland, and were immediately met with fierce weather—a worse foe than the fog-bound fleets of England.

## CHAPTER XLII.

CHRISTMASTIDE, 1796-97.

It was a troubled time, on earth and in air—among men and among the elements. The south-west corner of Ireland is bleak enough on the sunniest summer day; there is something sternly grand, and that comports not with sunshine, in the long promontories of stone set round with perpetual surge. The roar of the Atlantic resounds for miles inland, forming the bass undertone of all other noises and voices. Whoever would behold the unfettered sea in every mood of might or of playfulness should travel to some of these iron-bound headlands, and we promise him a fascination which he shall desire to prolong.

Opening to the west, and sweeping for many a mile into the heart of the country, one of the noblest of the Atlantic inlets is Bantry Bay. Several islands break its broad expanse, and afford shelter to shipping at all angles. But the white line of surge is inclosing it on every side, fringing the low brown cliffs, and never ceasing to fret upon innumerable olive-coloured tidal rocks. Beside the bay rises the indented Sugar-loaf mountain, bare and sterile as Sinai—the highest point of a very desert of stones—a wilderness of crags, and cones, and boulders, with the thinnest veil of greenery in recesses. In recesses are a few stone-heaped huts, looking more like chance cairns than deliberately made human dwellings.

Those who dwelt in them saw a strange sight at that Christmastide. Ship after ship came rounding the point from the west; huge ships with tiers of guns, and laden with multitudes of men. The fierce weather aforesaid had driven them to this shelter; albeit the

well-read among them knew that the place was not propitious for a French fleet. One had been here in 1689, with succours for James II. when struggling to retain Ireland; and had been met, to its grief and discomfiture, by Orange William's admiral, Herbert. The simple mountaineers gazed with wonder at the swarm of sails whitening their bay. Seven ships of the line, majestic in their many decks as no ironclad can ever be,—two frigates, and seventeen transports, were assembled. But nearly twenty others were missing which had completed the Irish Armada; and among them the key of the whole expedition, General Hoche, was missing too.

What chafing hearts were in those ships! We have a glimpse of one in Wolfe Tone's diary. Wanting to land at all hazards anywhere; withheld by the wiser counsels of experienced veterans, who verily must have been deterred (among other reasons) by the barren aspect of the country they had to conquer; dreading continually the advent of the English fleet, or of some storm that should drive ashore the transports, which had already shown an unreasonable inclination to knock together; planning a hundred plans in the twenty-four hours, only to have all defeated—Tone's situation was not enviable. Councils of war were held, eventuating in nothing. Christmas Day was fixed for debarkation; but the gale grew severer than ever from the east—the direction worst for the expedition. Six days they spent at Bantry Bay, within five hundred yards of the shore very often, and were finally forced out to sea, saluted there with a hurricane which prevented their making the mouth of the Shannon, and were glad to get back to Brest,—a fleet literally in fragments.

The Irish Government slept securely in their Castle of Dublin during those snowy and stormy days and nights, while the weather was defending the land with a force more powerful than men and guns. But when the news arrived,—brought post over knee-deep roads

from the Bantry mountaineers and their trifling guard of militia,—great was the consternation. Nobody knew but Cork or Limerick might be in the enemy's hands at that moment. The prestige of continental campaigns had caused an unreasonable dread of the prowess of French soldiery; and like a tinder-box to tow would be their appearance among the peasantry. Troops were hurriedly marched to the south; the capital resounded with the clang of arms; and the panic continued for many days after the storm-tossed cause of it was driven again away towards France, and Bantry Bay echoed only to the scream of the curlew and the sweep of the wave.

Then everybody felt that a mighty danger had been escaped—blindly escaped. A few looked up to Divine Providence in hearty gratitude, and traced the hand of the Disposer of events through all; for if the French fleet had appeared in almost any other corner of Ireland, it would have met with crowds of sympathizers; but the south-west was not yet 'organized.' Or, if the weather had permitted a few thousands to land, they might have pushed on into inflammable districts, and got possession of some places whence dislodgment might be difficult; and a rising in the north would certainly have ensued. Pious observers of the occurrences of that December said reverently, 'The Lord hath fought for us, and we held our peace.'

So thought the rector of Doon, as he carefully combed the columns of his 'Faulkner's Journal'—an intensely Tory print of the period—and read about the petty exertions of sundry parties near the dangerous spot; of Mr. White and his chain of yeomanry posts—for which he was subsequently rewarded by a peerage as Baron Bantry; of Mr. O'Sullivan, of Berehaven, who captured the only French lieutenant and boat's crew that ventured inshore; and many records of the fierce weather that in reality had confounded all the councils of the enemy. The dear old man reads, and his troubled face grows calm under the grand peaceful thought of the sovereignty of God. Often has he had to still his

anxious heart with the same thought, during some time past. For he is not satisfied about Fergus, his only son; he knows that he has gone over altogether to the disturbing side in politics; and his chances of success in life wane accordingly, or are cast on the desperate issue of the rebels' fortunes. How they would end, the rector very well knew.

As he sits and muses in the fading daylight over the 'Faulkner' outspread on his knee, a messenger comes riding up to the house through the snow, bearing an ill-written and ill-spelt epistle from Mr. Waddell, asking his assistance as a brother magistrate in the detection of a number of Defenders who were to meet on that night, being little Christmas night, at a certain cabin which he indicated. The rector felt strangely disinclined for such work: he never had taken part in anything of the sort. 'But Waddell thinks he never can be zealous enough since the new Insurrection Act,' said he to himself; 'and probably he wants to demonstrate his zeal to Colonel Butler.'

Drawing over the hugo brass-bound box which was his writing-desk, Doctor Kavanagh wrote a few lines courteously declining to assist Mr. Waddell at such domiciliary visit as he proposed; stating that, as a clergyman and a minister of peace, he made it a rule to exercise his magisterial functions in no way that could excite the angry passions of those among whom he hoped to do good.

'Twaddle and stuff!' exclaimed Mr. Waddell, when one of his satellite visitors made the meaning of this plain to him. 'The parson's afraid, that's the truth; but I'll not be baulked in that way. The Act requires two magistrates, do you say? I don't care a snap of my fingers for the Act: like to know who'll complain that I act on my own authority, eh? Who do you think, eh?'

'But, Ulick,' began Miss Dolly Waddell, his elder sister, and despised by him because of a gentle temperament and nervous, 'you know you oughtn't'—

'I know I oughtn't what?' he returned, with a sort of bark,—'oughtn't what?'

'To break the law you're going to enforce,' she replied, collecting her small allowance of firmness, which was exceedingly liable to melt into tears before her brother's irascibility. He scouted the notion—he would go—he didn't care what anybody said; and so he and the satellites went out in the bitter cold.

Picking up a yeomanry guard in Doon on their way, they tramped off, the gentlemen on horseback, towards the cabin respecting which information had been received. A glimmering light in the solitary window was not suspicious; for, on this 'little Christmas night,' or Epiphany, every peasant that could afford it burned a whole long candle during the dark hours in honour of the Virgin. But this beacon guided the party comfortably; they took no pains to conceal their approach; and when Mr. Waddell entered,—having opened the door by the expedient of a kick,—he saw only the man of the house, his wife nursing an infant, and another man sitting at the fireside, ruling head-lines very innocently upon some sheets of bluish pot-paper.

'I arrest all here,' proclaimed Mr. Waddell, as a safe preliminary.

'Troth an' I hope that doesn't mane the baby,' said Mrs. Brallaghau, with true female presence of mind; 'for if it does, wherever he goes I'll have to go too.' She set aside the rush-bottomed chair on which she had been sitting, and moved somewhat between her husband and the enemy.

As for the poor Philomath, he might have been the guiltiest man in all creation, for his looks of fear. Drops broke out on his pale, quivering face; and he stammered something about being a lodger, in answer to Mr. Waddell's short, fiery questions. The ruling of the pot-paper went on mechanically, but was singularly crooked and tremulous.

'Put down that, sir,' thundered Mr. Waddell, 'and attend to me. Don't you know that any person not

giving a satisfactory account of themselves'—such was the worthy magistrate's grammar—'is liable to imprisonment, and to be sent on board His Majesty's fleet to serve during pleasure? Don't you know that, sir?'

'Av yer honour wouldn't spake so loud,' insinuated Mrs. Brallaghan at his elbow. 'There's my sither in typhus in the room inside'—

'In what? in typhus fever, woman!' roared Mr. Waddell, clapping his handkerchief to his face, and backing instantly out of the house. His intensest horror was infectious disease, which was well known; for the Irish peasantry study minutely the peculiarities of the gentry with whom they have to do. 'In typhus fever!' he reiterated, terror-stricken, coughing and blowing his nose, as if either operation would do him any good. Instantly he mounted his horse. 'But arrest that man,' he shouted; and the hapless Mr. O'Doherty found himself seized by the ycomen, ere he could anywise get rid of certain papers thrust into his broad pockets in the emergency of a moment.

The feet had died away along the road before Barney Brallaghan recovered self-possession sufficiently even to stare at his wife.

'Ahagur, surc there isn't anybody in typhus inside?' he asked timidly, spreading his palms on his knees, still bewildered.

'You omadhaun! no. But didn't they make off!'

She laughed a little at the success of her stratagem. 'Come out now, Myles, an' run for yer life, while ye've the chance.'

Some struggling among bed-clothes in the fixture which acted as bedstead in 'the room,' and Myles Furlong made his appearance. 'Troth an' I won't take the road at this hour,' said he, 'when I can sleep near a blessed candle undher shelther. The yeos won't come back here to-night—there's no fear.'

'Oh, but she's the cliver woman!' said Barney, looking at his wife with great admiration. 'To say she'd go an' think o' that, all in one minute!'

None of them had the least qualm of conscience about the lie: their religion had always taught them that the end justified the means; and if there was a tiny particle of sin in it, wouldn't confession to Father Connor take it away as soon as his absolution was pronounced?

'So Misther O'Doherty is gone,' was Myles's remark. 'Well, he has a better chance than I'd have. Fireball would hang *me* up to one of his trees. But 'twill be bad if he has any o' thim ballads about him anywhere. I wondher had he the sinse to burn 'em.'

And, not much moved by the loss of his friend, the blacksmith commenced to troll out words he had learned from the self-same ballad—

'Oh, the Frinch are on the say, says the Shan van vocht;<sup>1</sup>  
The Frinch are on the say, says the Shan van vocht;  
Oh, the Frinch are in the bay,  
They'll be here widout delay,  
An' the Orange will decay, says the Shan van vocht.'

'Why, then, I'm thinkin' ye needn't be in such sperits afther yer narrow escape, an' be dhrawin' down more yeos on the house wid yer noise,' observed the mistress.

'Very well, ma'am; av it's more plasin' to yez, I'll hould me tongue. But, ye see, thim little evints is nothin' at all to a man that has gone through the power ov acciden's I have: many's the day I wondher is it meself that's there at all at all, wid the shots, an' the dhrownin's, and the hurnin's I've come out of. Barrin' I borry the wings of a bird, I donno how I'll escape much longer.'

<sup>1</sup> 'The Old Crippled Woman:' allegorical for Ireland.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

## A FRENCH ALARM.

MR. WADDELL was very fond of what he called summary justice. It suited his quick temper exactly to catch, convict, and chastise a 'croppy' within the hour, if practicable, and to be himself captor, judge, and jury. Consequently, when he reached his abode, and had provided himself with some disinfectant against the dreaded typhus, he constituted himself into a court of justice without delay, though the hour was midnight, and commanded the prisoner to be brought before him.

The magistrate and his three satellite companions sat at the dining-room table, which bore the usual burden of punch jugs and claret; also the pen and ink bottle of the establishment, and a large ledger, loosely scrawled over in the very indifferent handwriting of the secretary satellite. Herein a sort of record of Mr. Ulick Waddell's magisterial performances was kept; and the size of the volume had considerable effect in awing the vulgar. The very fact of the writing going on before their eyes—stereotyping their offences, as it were—struck the weak-minded among them with a sort of despair. Another imposing effect was produced by the yeoman cavalry uniform in which Mr. Waddell always appeared on such occasions—the heavy sword, helmet, jack-boots, and buckskin breeches, with a black stock of great stiffness and discomfort to the throat.

So the first sight that met the shivering vision of the Philomath as he was ushered over the threshold, was the *coup-d'œil* of sword, helmet, and punch jug grouped in front on the shining mahogany; and Mr. Waddell's face over them (somewhat in the manner of a crest over a coat of arms), rather purpler than usual, and with

vengeful eyes. He could not forget his late exposure to infection, and its possible results; for which, in reality, would the prisoner be punished, rather than for the more venial offence of 'croppyism.'

Some papers were produced, as having been found in the pockets of Mr. O'Doherty—a bundle of dirty-looking ballads, printed on the coarsest discoloured paper, and a few manuscripts. The ballads looked as if they had been in the fire and snapped out of it ere they began to blaze—which was indeed the truth, as the Philomath had endeavoured thus to destroy them; but the vigilance of his guards intercepted the intention. And Mr. O'Doherty gave himself up for lost thenceforth with as good grace as a man could who was fond of his life.

Mr. Waddell opened the parcel and drew out one long strip. 'A rebelly song, I'll be bound,' says he, holding the paper at a certain focus, like a person not very well accustomed to reading. 'What! the "Shan van vocht!"—look, O'Brien, isn't the chorus the "Shan van vocht!"? The most rebelly chorus in creation, isn't it, O'Brien?' who echoed that it was, and, at his superior's bidding, read aloud some of the verses: we give the verse next to that quoted in the last chapter:

'Where will the Frenchmen have their camp? says the Shan van vocht;  
Where will they have their camp? says the Shan van vocht.  
On the Curragh of Kildare:  
The boys they will be there,  
With their pikes in good repair, says the Shan van vocht.'

Further, the ballad goes on to promise the presence of 'Lord Edward' on the Curragh, and predicts that the yeomen would throw off the 'red and blue' in favour of the 'immortal green.' All present were greatly horrified, more especially the prisoner; who indeed had best reason, seeing that the ballad was likely to work most immediate consequences in his own case.

'Now, sir,' says the magistrate fiercely, eyeing him, 'what have you to say for yourself? How did you come in possession of these seditious and rebelly songs? If

you were a loyal subject of His Majesty's, you would never have kept such things in your pocket an instant. You would fling them out like—like scorpions,' concluded Mr. Waddell, with a very indistinct idea of what a scorpion was.

The Philomath, in sore dismay, cleared his throat, and put up his rope-tied hands to his mouth as he did so. A line of defence did not immediately present itself to his terrified imagination.

'I would just compendiously observe, most honourable sirs,' he began, with one of his usual low bows to the four gentlemen who were sitting in judgment on him, and whom he saw through the mist of immeasurable social distance at that moment, poor man,—'I would just compendiously observe that it is a new thing to have persons of our peaceful and literarions profession, teachers of the seven sciences, and Philomaths by name, charged with the heinous criminality'—

'Do you mean to deny, sir, that these rebelly ballads were found in your pockets?' shouted the magistrate, who understood about every third word of the defence.

'Allow me to ask your honourable person to use a suspension of judgment till I elucidate my signification,' said Mr. O'Doherty, with a shiver of his little spirit within him. 'I cannot deny'—

'Listen to that—"I cannot deny"—put that down, O'Brien: you see he admits it.'

The unfortunate schoolmaster turned of a greenish hue.

'I beg your most honourable pardon,' stammered he; 'but—but—I didn't elucidate strictly what it was I couldn't deny. I meant to declare that I hadn't a thought of disrespectful disloyalty against his most noble Majesty George the Third'—

'How came you to have the ballads in your pocket, sir?' shouted Mr. Waddell, conscious that this was the strong point of the prosecution.

'As I was animadverting, most honourable genteels,'—with another bow to the punch-drinkers,—'a man

can't always tell what's in his pocket.' Mr. O'Doherty was fast descending from his stilts into the vulgarest vernacular as his fright deepened. He told a circumstantial tale of how he came by the ballads, not one word of which was true, and not one word of which was believed.

'You haven't looked at these letters, Waddell: there might be some thing of consequence in them,' says the secretary satellite.

The first written paper was a list of names. 'Most likely the Defenders and Wreckers of Wexford,' says Mr. Waddell gloatingly. 'Dick's Shamus — Jack's Pandh's Mogue—false names, I'll be bound; but we'll wring the truth out of him'—

'Most noble genteels, that's only an enumeration of my poor school,' eagerly put in the prisoner. 'The boys that I'm learnin' in the seven sciences of minsuration, uavigation'—

'Hold your tongue,' roared the magistrate, 'and spare your breath for the triangle, where you'll want it, every puff.' He was additionally exasperated by finding some girls' names farther down on the list, which corroborated the schoolmaster's statement, and proved the mare's nest a nothing.

'But here's something!'

Mr. Waddell gazed at the outspread letter very unintelligently. It was written in a foreign language.

'Why, that's—that's'—he hesitated and looked to his underlings for relief.

'French, I'm certain,' says the chief satellite.

'French!' Both raised their eyes simultaneously to the countenance of the culprit. Some very odd expression passed across that disk; it might have been almost a smile; but his circumstances were too tremendous.

'That letter, most noble sirs, if you will allow me to elucidate, is a communication in the Latin tongue, received from my friend and brother Philomath, the O'Kennedy of Youghal, only yesterday.'

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'NOW, SIR, SAYS THE MAGISTRATE FIERCELY. 'WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY FOR YOURSELF

No. 1049. 20.



'Latin! That's just as bad as French; but I don't believe a word of it,' said Mr. Waddell. Whereupon the three satellites echoed, 'I don't believe a word of it,' and composed themselves to look wise after their various manners, and passed the letter from one to the other, each shaking his head dubiously in turn.

'Will you swear, sir, that it isn't a treasonable correspondence in French, kept up for a treasonable and rebellious purpose?' asked Mr. Waddell. 'Why need an honest man write an honest letter in any language but his own? All those foreign lingo are suspicious and rebellious. Will you swear, sir?'

'Oh, with all the pleasure in life,' said Mr. O'Doherty quickly. 'Any oath you please, most honourable gentlemen; but if there's any one here—any noble gentleman that understands the ancient and venerable Latin'—

'You were at Trinity,' says Mr. Waddell to his secretary, who was reputed a literate person in the household.

'Only on a visit to a friend,' responded that gentleman, keeping out of sight the little fact that he had gone in for entrance and been plucked. 'But it's my opinion,—taking the letter in his hand learnedly, with one eye half closed,—'it's my opinion that this is French, undoubtedly. You ought to send it up to the Castle, Waddell; the fellows there will decipher it in no time.' A whispered conversation ensued, in which the words 'treasonable correspondence' were chiefly audible. The remaining satellites looked portentous as they sipped their punch.

'If Araminta and Dolly weren't in bed hours ago, they could settle what it was,' their brother observed. 'I think they learned French somewhere. But I say, O'Brien, shall we deal summarily with this fellow, or remand him till morning?'

'Deal summarily, that's my advice,' says one satellite, seeing it in his chief's face; which the others echoed. And the Philomath had good reason to shiver in his skin, not knowing whether he was to be shot or hanged, or whether the milder (but still unpleasant) procedure

of flogging would answer the ends of justice; and all his objurgations were unheeded, though now delivered in very vernacular phraseology.

'The Act — what does the Act say about rebelly letters?' And the heads of the four dispensers of justice were bent over certain folios of yellowish paper, full of bewildering long s's and contractions, with very trifling results of enlightenment.

Mr. Waddell raised his red face with a strong exclamation. 'We can't be far wrong in ordering the fellow a hundred lashes at break of day,' he said. 'Those law papers would give a horse a headache.' And so the sentence was endorsed in the big book, with a subsequent entry: 'To be kept imprison'd till the plesure of the Castlo be known.' Spelling was a weak point with the Waddell secretary.

The poor Philomath! his dignity was so fearfully outraged that not a syllable could he utter; speech was frozen, though his lips moved inarticulately. With a strut grander than in his most pompous days, he left the judgment hall in front of his yeomen guards. 'He'll require more than a hundred of the eat to break his spirit,' quoth the magistrate to his subordinates. They would have been gratified by his giving way to the tears and cries they had known to be wrung from strong men with such prospects as his.

If they had seen him, the poor Philomath, shut up in the cellar, which was the Waddell prison, how he flung himself on the ground and writhed and moaned! Not loud enough for anybody to hear, but as bitterly heart-felt were those muffled moans as though uttered with all his strength. How could he ever hold up his head again among his humble admirers after the endurance of such indignity? Myles Furlong's feelings in like circumstances were his, with the added sting of the more educated mind. The sharp cold of the snowy night was literally unfelt in the sharper wretchedness of his spirit. But at last the balm of sleep, God's good gift to the miserable, stole over his tormented brain



and numbed limbs. Thenceforth the black cellar was as agreeable a sojourn as the canopied couch of his adversary up-stairs.

Daylight came unnaturally white from the reflected snow, and early roused the half-dozen yeomen lying in the kitchen on various articles of furniture, and before the great turf fire. They shook and stretched themselves, and bethought them of their morning's work and over-night's orders. The cellar was opened, and the prostrate figure, with its rope-bound hands, was commanded to get up; but no movement ensued, and a kick from a jackboot enforced the order.

'He's either sulky or dead asleep,' said the proprietor of the boot. 'But we'll soon teach him;' which he proceeded to do, in the style of instruction which suited their rough ideas. The poor little heap of clothes containing the prisoner gave no token of animation. They turned it over.

'Blessed hour! but it isn't to die he did?'

They dragged him out to the great fire, and unbound his hands, and chafed the icy limbs, being frightened. 'Twas the cowld night did it,' they said to each other. All the servants and haugers-on crowded around. Some secret sympathies for the 'croppies' lurked even in the Waddell household, and exclamations of pity were scarcely suppressed in presence of the uniforms. The harmless, weak-minded, foolish old schoolmaster was known to some of them for a long time; had taught them the immortal 'Red-a-mad-aisy' in his hedge seminary; had written letters for them to their sweethearts, or read letters for them from friends (perchance) in that foreign kingdom called England, whither they went on reaping expeditions. Certain of the satellites were by this time informed of the casualty, and, having a degree of uneasiness as to possible consequences, they used every effort for the prisoner's resuscitation. Life was only suspended, not extinct. A stiff dose of whisky served to revive the faltering existence; yet nobody would venture upon flogging

him for that morning. He was permitted to lie by the turf fire, his strut and his dignity all gone.

Through the deep snow, about an hour afterwards, came Dr. Kavanagh on horseback. The rector's conscience had been most restless since his refusal to join Mr. Waddell's foraging expedition for rebels last evening. He had mental pictures incessantly of the extremities of injustice to which that ignorant and hot-headed magistrate might proceed when alone in the judgment-seat, and caused his nag to be saddled at first light, that he might interpose the corrective of his joint authority. When he entered the untidy breakfast-room, booted and spurred, and with sundry light snowfalls in the creases of his riding-coat, he found Mr. Waddell and his companions in high consultation over the impounded letter. Should a special courier be sent with it to the Castle, or should it be intrusted to the ordinary course of His Majesty's mail? Mr. Waddell was really afraid that a document of its importance might be intercepted by some rebelly postmaster. He had half a mind to start off himself and ride to the capital, and intrust the missive to no power less than the Privy Council: he only wished he had gone last night.

'Show it to me,' asked the rector, when he had taken off his great leather gloves, and warmed his hands over the andirons at the glowing mass of peat filling the hearth. He looked at the paper, inside and out, and then at the zealous magistrate.

'My dear Waddell, don't send this to the Castle, unless you want to give Lord Camden a hearty fit of laughing. Why, 'tisn't French at all.'

'Not French at all! the ruffian!' says Mr. Waddell, in an apparently unconnected manner, but which meant that on the miserable schoolmaster vengeance would be taken for having the mistaken document about him at the time of capture.

'It's nothing but bog-Latin,'—and the rector laughed heartily,—'pure and simple bog-Latin. How you could ever have taken it for French'—

'You said it was French, and you've been at Trinity,' snapped Mr. Waddell at his secretary. He felt very savage; for down had toppled a whole card-palace, founded on his zeal and energy in connection with the mysterious letter, thanks from the Executive, notice in Parliament, and, sweeter still, Colonel Butler's recommendation in a quarter where he yet indulged hopes.

'My dear Waddell, you never could have stood the ridicule. It's so fortunate I looked in this morning. And that poor O'Doherty, what shall be done with him? Between ourselves, the flogging you ordered him was illegal.'

The disappointed magistrate indulged in some strong names with reference to the schoolmaster: there was no punishment too bad for the villain.

'We'll send him for trial to the Spring Assizes,' says the more moderate rector. 'He can be proved to have had seditious publications about him; but we have no proof as to what he intended to do with them—perhaps to destroy them.' Dr. Kavanagh's charity in covering offences was, perhaps, too extensive. It led to certain impetuous remarks about parsons, after he had withdrawn, though he had just done Mr. Waddell the service of promising perpetual silence with regard to the episode of the letter, particularly at Doon Castle.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

## HUE AND CRY.

ABOUT noon of the same day the unfortunate school-master found himself on the back of a horse, his wrists tied, though he was expected to hold a rein, and his feet tied underneath the saddle-girths. The half-dozen yeomen were taking him to the county town, there to abide in gaol until March.

The snow on the high road had hardened, so that travelling was not impossible, though it was far from agreeable. Poor O'Doherty, not being fortified with the warm outworks of riding-coats worn by his guards, was well-nigh famished with cold. Worse than the cold was the degradation. Every peasant who passed them he fancied was secretly scorning his perilous elevation; whereas he ought to have known that a sure chain of sympathy with their hearts was established by the very fact of his suffering in the cause of insubordination, so dear to their affections.

A few thoughts he had of shirking all the suffering by just revealing two or three little bits of information; but a certain amount of nobility hidden somewhere in his small nature recoiled from this mode of saving himself by the blood of others. At present his main thought was of how he could 'make his soul' in the limited space between January and March; that is, accumulate good works sufficient to float him across the fiery waves of purgatory, whereto he believed he should be consigned immediately on his decease. That 'there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,' was a truth the joyfulness of which was hidden from him by a dark veil of superstition.

Perfectly harmonizing with this hopeless view of his

affairs were the notes of a distant keen, or Irish cry, which came floating from a by-road among the hills. 'Save us! maybo 'tis foretelling me my ind the spirits are,' observed the Philomath mentally, the splendour of his diction having suffered an eclipse by circumstances; and he would have crossed himself but for the bound wrists. The yeomanry, talking among themselves at intervals, were rather stricken silent by that weird sound wafted from some hidden region, and looked round uneasily more than once for its source. For some time, while they were skirting an eminence crowned with spiky fir-trees, no living thing appeared, though the wild music strengthened. But they were approaching an open space at four cross-roads; and here indeed they beheld cause sufficient for the volume of voice they heard.

A mass of people were coming down from the hills, following a cart with a coffin set diagonally upon it; and every one of the throats in the multitude seemed to be giving forth the Irish cry. There were far more glittering eyes than tearful ones in the throng, however. One or two women sat wrapped in red cloaks on the cart in the spaces at each side of the coffin, and embraced it frantically just as the yeomanry came in sight, and at intervals afterwards.

'But that's a great funeral entirely,' said one of the schoolmaster's guards. 'The people is running to it from all quarters; look!—over the ditches an' fences like fun. Some strong farmer, I suppose. Honest man, who's dead?' addressing one of the foremost of the crowd, as they commenced to cross the road.

Instead of replying, the man threw up his arms with a fearful yell, and grasped his interrogator's bridle. It was the signal for onslaught. In two minutes the armed men were thoroughly overpowered by numbers, their weapons wrenched from them, and the prisoner set free.

'Now ye may go back to Fireball,'—Mr. Waddell's *sobriquet* among the peasantry,—'an' tell him this is more of the typus, an' that we've an iligant coffin

ready for himself any day he likes,' says Myles Furlong, the leader, tapping the long yellow box on the lid. 'See, it's nothing but stones that's in it at present, an' they're aisy turned out for a better tinant.' And so the yeomen, despoiled of muskets, swords, accoutrements, and horses, were left to find their way wherever they pleased, or wherever they were able.

The schoolmaster appeared quite as much alarmed as delighted at his deliverance; having an idea that, in addition to his previous offences, he would certainly be held responsible for this whole outrage and its consequences. The hilarity around him in the mob, while they conducted him away as in a triumphal procession, he sitting on the yellow coffin, with Myles Furlong before him whipping up the horse, had little response in his rueful face.

'Well, ov all the plans for risin' the neighbours, give me a coffin an' a couple of good keeners,' observed Myles. 'I see it thried in the north, an' it answered iligant: they all came like shot from every place anyway within hearin'. I think we could clear a fair now, boys.'

Considering that about a thousand men were in the gathering, this was no rash supposition. A chorus of laughter greeted it; for the keening was all silent now that there was no longer any pretence to be served by the noise.

'So, when I heard tell, as I was serenadin' about Fireball's place to find out what himself an' the yeos was goin' to do wid this poor man'—patting the schoolmaster's lank shoulder—'when I heard tell he was to be sint to Wexford, "Throth," sez I to meself, "I'll borry a coffin somewhere, an' rise the counthry;" an' so we did, grand, didn't we, boys? An' I defy 'em ever to have heard a purtier keen than we gev 'em, an' thrated 'em very dacent, only to take the guns and soords of 'em.'

'I'm sincerely obligated to all my kind friends,' said the poor schoolmaster, with an effort at a blaud

low. 'I'm only sorry that I circumstantially needed their most amiable assistance on this unfortunate occasion; and I'll do my best, gentlemen, never to require your sympathetic and amiable assistance in this way again.'

'How lovely he rowls the English off ov his tongue!' whispered a female admirer audibly. 'It's long till you'd spako that iligant way, Shanms;' which made the addressed one sulky for the rest of the march.

Thenceforth Mr. O'Doherty had to be 'in hiding.' He could work for the society just as effectively as ever; nay, more effectively, because he required to keep up no appearances with reference to his hedge school. The skulking life was not so agreeable to him; but his sense of self-importance was flattered by the deference paid to his scholastic acquirements, and by his real value to the agents of the United Irishmen.

That organization was spreading extensively, not only in Wexford, but in many other counties hitherto untainted. It had assumed a much more dangerous phase of existence. The purchase of arms, and the training of its members to use them, were now avowed objects of the society. In one district the members had resolved that, 'all money or subscriptions received for this society shall go to the use of buying pikes.' In the county of Antrim were twenty-two thousand men enrolled, and possessed of a most formidable assortment of weapons, including even eight pieces of artillery. To this had the boasted confederacy of universal brotherhood come.

So cleverly was the conspiracy organized, that rapid communication between all the seditious of the kingdom could be effected by the committees of districts—baronial, provincial, and national—as described in a former chapter; while the arrest, and even the confession of individual members, could scarce endanger more than themselves. But the greatest pains were taken to protect those members arrested; large sums were spent in their support, and in retaining counsel

for their defence. This fact further maintained the unity of the society; for each conspirator felt himself under unseen protection and care.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### PER SLOW COACH.

IN the long straggling High Street of the village of Doon was one neat-looking little shop, which struck the passer-by as affording a most marked contrast to the other shops of the place. Whereas they were in perpetual disorder, unpainted and unwashed, with things for sale huddled helplessly in the windows, and but dimly visible through the dusty and fly-spotted glass, this single specimen was clean and orderly, bright as to brasses and panes, fresh-coloured as to paint and scoured boards. The broad window contained a tastefully arranged assortment of goods for wear—being callimancoes, shalloons, serges, Wildbore and Durant stuffs—materials unknown to our more modern dressers, but which did durable service in their own day. A miscellaneous selection of other desirable matters was also presented to view; the most ambitious piece of property being a lady's canlet riding-hood, which was set on a stand of eminence as the crown of all.

Early as the hour was this August day, when few beside the poultry were up and stirring, a deft woman's hand was shaking out and settling the stuffs before mentioned in the newly-dusted window. You could have told what sort of person that hand belonged to without seeing any farther: you would have guessed



her to be an orderly, plump, natty person, with a comfortable, well-regulated mind. The face in the tight little white cap, which looked out after the hand, confirmed this character. It was a face accustomed to a quiet doing of duty, and ruffled by no breezes either of excessive mirth or any passionate feeling: a face which would keep its youth long in consequence, though Tabitha Taverner was now quite a middle-aged woman. But she had lived the even and peaceful life of the Friends from childhood, and reaped their reward of composure, mentally and physically.

A pretty girl, her daughter, was rolling lace on a card at the counter. A bald-headed man, her husband, was peering with spectacles over some letters and papers, apparently sorting them, and occasionally putting some into a soiled leather bag beside him. He was the postmaster of Doon, and was making up the mail for Dublin, to send by the coach passing through the village, and due presently.

It passed every second morning in those primitive times, returning every second evening, and was considered quite a recklessly rapid conveyance; for by its means people residing fifty miles off could reach the metropolis in a single day—an alarming innovation, dating back only a few years. Dr. Kavanagh intended to attempt the enterprise this morning, and rattled up the sunny street presently on his car, drawing as many of the inhabitants as were awake to their doors, with little regard to the purely personal consideration of attire; drawing likewise a following of little boys, some with sundry straws in their curly heads from the night's lair, and all with remarkably scant garments, of the kilt species, who raced after the car, uttering shouts of exhilaration, the most agile catching the back-rail, and getting lifted from the road for a few paces with a delightful swing; and the soft-hearted rector would never allow a hind sweep of the whip to disturb their pastime, but weakly made as though he heard not.

'Here is friend Kavanagh, the minister,' quoth Mrs. Tabitha from the window. 'It grieveth me to see him growing infirm lately: theo was saying, Ephraim, that he looked shaken-like. I fear me that his son is small comfort to his old age, with his new-fangled notions like the French people.'

'Maybe so—maybe not,' cautiously replied the postmaster, his lean finger between two piles of letters. 'Theo hath a woman's tongue, Tabitha;' which he intended to be reproof. 'Good morning, friend,' he said, as the rector entered the little shop. 'Tabitha, find the minister a chair.'

'The coach is overdue,' said Doctor Kavanagh, after the usual salutations; whereupon Ephraim drew a silver watch, little smaller than a tea-cup, from his fob, hauling it to the surface by a voluminous black string and seals, and affirmed likewise that the coach was overdue by five minutes. This daily want of punctuality was one of the crosses in the orderly Quaker's life: nothing short of railway regularity could have satisfied him.

'Great news from the Continent,' said he in the pause: 'Lafayette is released from Olmutz.' A characteristic of the cautious Ephraim was that he never would speak about Irish politics or current events. No news of the neighbourhood was to be looked for from him, rife as the people's tongues every day were with incidents of disturbance: he never seemed to know of houses burnt down by the disaffected or by the military; and the village might ring with outrage, and he remain serene in his neutrality. An opinion as to the merits of either party could never be extorted from him; but he was ready to talk of the foreign news—of what was going on in the Italian campaign or the French Directory, of the mutiny at Spithead, or of Nelson's unsuccessful attack on Teneriffe; but, of the forty soldiers of the Monaghan militia shot at Belfast for being United Irishmen, or of the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Commons on the alarming state

of the country—not a word. Nor yet of the armament known to be in preparation by the Batavian republic, under the command of Admiral de Winter, and destined to be dissipated three months later at Camperdown.

The rector had amused himself in happier times with endeavouring to overcome the repugnance of Ephraim to talk on any national topic; but to-day, notwithstanding all its summer brightness, was dark over the old man's heart with ominous gloom. Mrs. Tabitha noticed compassionately how spare and shrunk his once good figure had become, and how his white hair had thinned latterly, and the lines on his face had deepened into decided wrinkles. Truth was, that heavy on him lay all the misery he was daily witnessing—the bitter war of class against class, and creed against creed, the foul injustice of oppression, and the barbarous cruelty of retaliation. Look where he would over the land, the same dreadful scenes were occurring without pause; an utter lawlessness seemed to have seized all grades of the people. The rector was going to make some representations to the Castle authorities, in his magisterial capacity, which he hoped might be beneficial in softening the rigour of the law on behalf of certain offenders, whom he knew to appear more guilty than they really were.

But heavy on his mind was the doubtful position of his own son, swept into the vortex of a rebel clique, dallying with sedition, half as an amateur theorist, half in earnest. 'Oh Fergus, Fergus!' had been groaned from the depth of the old man's heart more than once, when his letters came, revealing through all their careful wording the matters that chiefly interested the young man, and the associates with whom he was chiefly intimate. Now he would step in upon Fergus unexpectedly; he would note his companions, his pursuits, his books; he would satisfy himself by personal inspection that the case was not so bad as he feared.

When the coach at last drew up, no observant

spectator would have wondered that it was behind time; for it was a crazy and antique affair, drawn by beasts which had served their best days to other vocations. The shafts were unpainted poles, as if cut fresh from fir-trees; the body was of brilliant yellow, surmounted by a railing, to which elevation any would-be outside passengers attained by a ladder. The rector, feeling perhaps infirm, preferred the interior of the vehicle; the bottom of which was filled with straw a foot deep, and the linings of which protruded their stuffing at all points. But, the glazing of the windows having long since perished, the ventilation at least was thorough.

One person was inside passenger already—an overdressed shopkeeping woman, on her way to Dublin for commercial purposes. But before the coach was clear of the village, there was a view-halloo after it, and Captain Gerald Butler rode up alongside.

'How are you, Kearney?' to a frieze-coated farmer on the box. 'Room up there, coachee? Top-heavy already, I'm afraid. What, sir—you inside? I'm glad I came in for such pleasant company;' and, committing his steed to Miko the gossoon, who had run over from Doon Castle after him as fast on his two legs as the horse could go on four, he took a seat beside the rector.

'Going up to the levee, sir, eh?' asked the captain. 'I'm going: my father wishes it—wrote for me.' The shopkeeper's wife looked at him with undisguised reverence. Anybody who could talk glibly about levees and the Castle was greater even than the priest of the parish.

'He thinks we loyalists should all rally about the throne these times,' said Captain Gerald, rubbing his shaven chin with his hand. 'And there's no doubt about it but the country's in a dangerous state. Lord Carhampton's martial law does not seem to be doing much good.'

'Too severe, too severe,' returned the rector. 'Lake and Carhampton are only exasperating the people. A

large proportion of the innocent must suffer—and the women and children, sir.’

These allusions were to the measures of the Commander-in-Chief and of General Lake, commanding the north district, who had set up and enforced the utmost rigour of military government. No magistrate’s order was now necessary for the acting of the soldiery: wherever they had reason to suspect the existence of sedition, they were entitled to inflict summary and irresponsible punishment.

As the lumbering mail-coach passed through the country on this bright day, signs enough of the disturbed state of its dwellers were visible. Half-burnt cabins were not uncommon, and whether due to the Defenders or the yeomanry no one paused to inquire. The fields looked neglected; potato-ridges had not been earthen up, and the stalks hung about weakly; cattle were few. Want of prosperity and decay seemed written upon the face of the land.

The captain and the rector could not agree on the subject of the cause. The predilections of the former, as an hereditary landowner and a military man, were altogether in favour of harshness and coercion. The latter had imbibed the spirit of the merciful teaching of the Book he studied most, and believed that death and fire were not the best civilizers of a half-barbarous people, nor the best sedative for their turbulent passions. Indeed, the travelling companions did not argue the matter much: the rector preferred silence for the most part, that he might chew the cud of his own thoughts.

After changing to another coach of more metropolitan appearance, their journey became somewhat swifter. It was close upon sunset when they drew near Dublin, and the guard’s horn sounded loud and long, to the admiration of scores of little boys, and of many of the more unsophisticated elders. Work was over, and numbers were walking about enjoying the fresh air. In the absence of an event, the faded coach and its passengers were stared at abundantly, and awaked much interest.

Here and there, as the streets grew closer, was a ballad-singer, shouting his political doggerel, with streamers of whitey-brown verses over his shoulder. A military patrol was occasionally passed, marching slowly, amid scowling glances, and sometimes more overt acts of dislike in the shape of jeers and hisses. The sentiments of the populace were certainly easy to be read, and unmistakable.

Arrived at Fergus's lodgings, the father found that he was absent, without having left a clue as to where he was gone. He was expected back to-morrow, his stout landlady said—'to-morrow or after'

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### SEDITION IN A SHOP.

STROLLING next day down Grafton Street, having been to the Castle on his main errand, and also to visit some of his college friends, the rector felt fatigued and heated, and turned into the open door of a bookseller's shop, where he sat down on a chair near the counter. After a few minutes' rest he drew over some of the literature for inspection. As yet the yellow and scarlet fever of modern novels was not; but an equally pestilential fever of political pamphlets effloresced from the printing press. Doctor Kavanagh found that the first drab-coloured pamphlet he opened was a vehement French diatribe against the principles of government—*any* government but that of the mob, or, as it was euphuistically expressed, the Sovereign Will of the Sovereign People. The second he opened purported to be an allegory, wherein was thinly veiled the present

state of Ireland from a United-Irish point of view. The third, in a stone-blue wrapper, was a poem in heroic measure, with the vowels struck out of the proper names of all the State celebrities lampooned. Dr. Kavanagh ceased his review of the current literature, and began to wonder whither he had gotten. He had not far to seek for explanation: written over the top of the shelves of books was the name of the owner, in this wise—'Byrne's.' The rector remembered that this shop was one noted rendezvous of the seditious in the metropolis.

The attendant behind the counter had, on his part, been watching the strange clergyman furtively, but narrowly. Doctor Kavanagh did not look like the usual class of customers and frequenters of the establishment, nor was he at all of the sort that could be suspected as a spy; yet the discreet attendant wished that the gentry farther on in the shop, and hidden from the rector's seat by piles of reams of paper, would not talk quite so loud, or be quite so reckless in their declaration of opinions. 'But Lord Edward is so reckless,' said he to himself.

Yes, that was Lord Edward speaking now; and half a dozen like-minded were listening obsequiously to the duke's son, who was willing to head an insurrection and fling his hereditary rank to the winds therewith.

'If Orr is executed, he will be a martyr to liberty,' were some of his words that reached the rector's ear. 'Trial! It was no trial: it was an infamous mockery of justice. Why, the soldier Wheatly confessed himself perjured.'

'But, on the evidence before the jury, and believing Wheatly as they did, I know not how they could do otherwise than find Orr guilty of administering the illegal oath,' said a voice which had not spoken before, and the first tones of which caused the rector to start slightly.

'That's one of your lawyer-like views, Kavanagh,'

replied Lord Edward Fitzgerald. 'But I assert that the statute under which he was convicted is an atrocious law, calculated to hang half Ireland; and, gentlemen,' he added in a lower tone, 'calculated to hang several of us here.'

The discreet attendant had glided from the counter to inform the company that they might be overheard by a personage unknown. Lord Edward's remark was loud enough to reach the farthest end of the establishment.

'If, as you say, he's a gentleman, and a clergyman of the Established Church, he can be no informer, sir.' And the discreet attendant came back with face reddened, bearing books in his hands as a subterfuge.

Doctor Kavanagh had no idea of going away, nor any distinct idea of overhearing further; but, as he continued to sit in the same place, not choosing to see out his son, yet waiting till he came forth, various parts of the subsequent conversation reached him. One or two persons who had spoken their minds previously took an early opportunity of leaving after they heard of the possible listener, and reviewed the rector well as they passed through the shop. He hardly saw it: he was thinking a good deal of the danger his son incurred by such company as the present; he was pained and disappointed to find his worst fears true so unexpectedly. The old man was scarcely equal to the endurance of many shocks now.

What he heard of the conversation going on within was not calculated to reassure him. They spoke of a Dr. MacNevin, who had been sent as accredited agent from the United Irish Executive Committee to the French Government, to procure an armament like Hoche's, which should co-operate with the projected insurrection of the United People of Ireland. They spoke of colonels, and captains, and divisions, and projected military movements; they evidently had



maps before them, and seemed as if planning campaigns; the voice of him they called Lord Edward being cheeriest and most distinct of all. The discreet attendant made what drowning noise he could with his arrangement of books, and was rather reassured when he saw that the suspected clergyman made no effort to hear.

At last the sitting was broken up, and the talkers came forth, Lord Edward first, speaking all the way, in his reckless, boyish, confident manner. Light-hearted and imprudent—it was his continual character; which had procured him dismissal from the British army, after he had attained sufficient experience in American campaigns to enable him to organize the military plans of the Rebellion of Ninety-eight.

Now was the discreet attendant's mind immensely relieved by seeing the young barrister, Mr. Fergus Kavanagh, start into sudden recognition of the little clerical figure that had sat by the counter so quietly. 'My dear father!' and he took both the rector's hands; but colour flushed nervously into his face meanwhile.

The rector said not a word, but took his arm as they left the shop. The old man's breathing was hurried, and he seemed to walk with difficulty.

'Fergus,'—when they had turned into the comparatively quiet Stephen's Green, and his son had more than once expressed his fears that he was not well, receiving no answer,—'Fergus, I have received a great blow—a great blow,' he repeated; and his son felt the aged hand within the curve of his arm tremble and grasp closer. 'I never thought you were so deep with these people, Fergus.'

'Lord Edward's conversation is known to be so indiscreet that nobody minds it, sir,' was all Fergus could think of saying for the moment. How fervently he wished his father had been a hundred miles off, sooner than have entered Byrne's shop on that day! 'All speculative talk, sir.'

'I'd like to sit down somewhere, Fergus—on one of the benches in the Green. I don't think I'm very strong. I have not been very strong for some time back, Fergus.'

And indeed, now that his son had time to look at the dear old face, and note the lines that had grown and deepened in it, and note how the figure had shrunk and become weakly, the change struck him forcibly. 'You never said a word of this in your letters, my dear father.'

'I never felt it so much as to-day,' he answered, his hand pressed on his heart. 'I've been thinking there's something wrong the matter here; but I never felt it so much as to-day.'

His son, conscience-stricken, watched the tumultuous breath coming and going; for a little while it was no easier. The palpitation was evidently violent; Fergus became quite alarmed.

'My dear father, you must see a physician about this;' and so persistently did he press the point and return to the charge, that before they went home to his lodgings he had succeeded in bringing the rector into the consulting-room of Sir Lucius Morgan, Knt., the eminent court doctor; and certain words had been spoken there of much import, which may be guessed at from what passed between father and son, after they were ushered down the long double flight of steps from the physician's door, and found themselves again on the wide pavement of the Green, with the untiring August sun still pouring down its glorious beams.

'Fergus, my dear son, you'll promise not to leave me now?'

'No, sir; I'll go home with you to Doon.'

Nothing more was said at the time; but an eloquent look was exchanged, freighted with much love and sorrow. The eminent court physician had pronounced the rector to be in an advanced stage of—something with a long Latin name: one of the varieties of heart

disease. The supremest quiet was ordered: all excitement was to be avoided, as likely to precipitate at any moment the invisible sword that hung over his white head by a link intangible as a hair.

Two days afterwards they set out to post the journey homewards. The dear old man was very tranquil: sentence of death recorded had not terrified him, but rather set him in sight of the haven where he would be. He seemed to have no earthly wish ungratified, now that Fergus was with him, and had promised not to leave him till he died.

Arriving in the village of Doon, and pausing at the little post office for a few minutes, they perceived that Mr. Ephraim Taverner's neat window had been driven in by some violence, and broken to pieces. 'Holloa!' said Fergus, leaning from the door of the chaise; 'how did that occur?'

The person addressed pulled his ragged forelock. 'Plase yer honour, 'twas the yeos did it, 'cos there was a green gownd in the windy,' he replied.

'Thee knowest that the troops have a dislike to the colour green,' said the postmaster himself, when he came forth with some letters in his hand, and was similarly asked for explanation of the dilapidation. 'I have instructed Tabitha to keep back in future any goods of that hue,' he added tranquilly.

'I verily believe the man does not feel a shade of resentment for the destruction of his property,' said Fergus; and would have inveighed against the capricious tyranny manifested in the incident, but for the need of avoiding all exciting topics with his invalid father. He was indulging in reflections of the sort, when, just outside the village, as the chaise was climbing a hill, a piteous family of beggars—mother and five children—besought alms.

'Stop' said the rector quickly. 'I know the woman's face: I've seen it often in my church. Ask her why she's on the road, Fergus.'

The reason was easily told: her husband, a yeoman

and a Protestant, living at the limit of the Doon parish, had been set upon and murdered by some of the lawless gangs of Defenders which infested the country—murdered while her arms clung about him; and she herself had received a wound from which she had but just recovered. ‘An’ I’m walkin’ to Dublin, yer honour’s reverence, wid the crathurs; for I’m tould there’s a dale of Protestan’s there, an’ we won’t be refused tho bito an’ tho sup, at all events, nor cursed as “blac’-mouths,” as we are every day in the countrys.’ So sho wound up a painful history, wiping her eyes with her ragged skirt.

The rector now remembered having heard of the crime. ‘Rather a worse offence than breaking windows, my dear Fergus,’ he said in a low tone to his son, of whose previous unspoken reflections he had been thoroughly aware. The gentlemen made some arrangement by which the destitute family could travel to Dublin in their return-chaise, and proceeded on their way amid many tearful blessings.

‘All wrong—all wrong!’ murmured the old clergyman. ‘Class against class, and creed against creed, and brother hating brother even to the death, and all evil passions rioting and triumphing through the land—Satan’s saturnalia of sin and anguish; and the Most High God overruling—overruling: I *will* believe that, I *will* cleave to that.’ Then he began to pray silently, earnestly, which was his great refuge from troublous thoughts. He was one of those Christians who have made God their habitation, whereunto they ‘may continually resort.’

Something in the Rectory fields excited Fergus’s curiosity as they drew near: he looked from the carriage window, wondering. The harvest ground was black with men, reaping, binding, gathering into sheaves; and one person upon horseback seemed to be directing the labourers. On seeing the postchaise, this man rode up alongside, touched his hat respectfully, and asked to speak with the Reverend Doctor Kavanagh.

Under his slouched hat and disguised features Fergus recognised the agitator Putman M'Cabe.

'We have taken the liberty, sir, of saving your harvest, as a small token of the regard and esteem in which you are held by the people, sir,' was his speech, in good, unaccented English. 'We may hope for your approbation of the step, sir?'

'It is kindly meant, and therefore I thank you,' said the rector, rather stiffly, and after some seconds' pause. 'I don't know who *you* are, though, and what you owe to me,' he added, looking keenly at the half-seen face; 'and I am sufficiently aware of the sort of things done by your party to know that this demonstration is not simply for the sake of my corn-fields, but to show your own strength, Mr.—Mr.'— He hesitated.

'And suppose it were, reverend sir? We are aware of your predilections for the popular cause.'

'No, sir!' interrupted the rector more energetically than was good for him; 'I am no friend to your secret societies of deluded peasants—to your pikings, and burnings, and shootings, and other villainies. I am a friend to peace and order, and all that you are trying to overturn. It is not because I am on the merciful side'—

'My dear father,' interposed Fergus, 'you excite yourself.' For the rector's hand went up involuntarily to press against the throbbings of his heart, and his breath came fast. His son spoke. 'My father is much obliged for the trouble you have taken, Mr. M'Cabe,' said he: 'it certainly is a great convenience to have the corn all harvested in one day. Will you thank the people in our names?' The rider made a military salute and passed on; he knew the young barrister perfectly, having seen him with certain of 'the United' chiefs in Dublin.

By and by the crowd of labourers, hundreds of men, filed in front of the rectory, and cheered the inmates lustily. Mr. M'Cabe was proud of his stalwart gathering; and from the minister's harvest-fields they

proceeded at word of command to a young plantation of Colonel Butler's, which was in an hour denuded of every tree stout enough to be turned into a pike-handle.

Fergus Kavanagh remained at the rectory for the ensuing winter and spring. His father's health required such care as love only could give it: not the mere vulgar care of preparing nourishing food, and looking after physical comforts, which any faithful hireling could render, but the nameless watchfulness, the '*loving-kindness*,' which nought but affection yields. In this quiet life the son was gradually calmed from his political fever. Attempts made by M'Cube to mix him up with the sedition of the district only disgusted him. Fergus was one of those politicians who can plan at headquarters, but cannot descend to the commonplace details of the hard hands who are to execute the plans.

On the 26th May 1798 he stood amid the flowers of the rectory garden, as twilight was descending on all their closed cups and pendent bells, and gazed fixedly towards a hill at some distance. A great fire was lighted thereon, its scarlet flame glaring far and wide. Presently, as if responsive, flashed forth another fire on another eminence. 'That's close to Father Murphy's house at Boulavogue,' said the spectator from the garden. 'What can it mean?'

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CHAPTER XLVIL

WHAT THE BEACON FIRE MEANT.

ALL that balmy starlit night of Whitsun eve, 1798, the ominous fire burned redly on the hill of Corrigrua, Wexford, and was responded to by that other at Boulavogue. The baleful signals were well and widely understood: a great stir was upon the face of the earth wherever their rays extended. The roads were thick with groups of people hastening towards a rendezvous, armed and unarmed. At the rectory was heard the passing tramp and hoarse murmur of voices going by all night. Dropping shots occasionally rang through the still air. The gardener came in with frightened looks, and told Mr. Fergus that the country had risen, and 'the yeos' were beaten already, and their officer killed, by thousands and thousands of men under Father John Murphy, who meant to burn every Protestant house in Wexford. Might he and his family come in from the garden house, and take up their abode in the back kitchen? 'for the wife is terrified out of her life intirely, yer honour, counsellor.'

These were not the only refugees. Several families of poor Protestants in the neighbourhood came also, seeking protection. The rector opened his house to them all, though being by no means sure that he could protect himself, much less have a shield for others. They brought in sad stories. Some came with bleeding feet at dawn from their burning cottages, which had been fired in very wantonness of destruction by passing bands of rebels. Women and children cowered in the sitting-rooms and kitchens, half-naked, from the suddenness of their panic flight. The dear old gentleman went about among them with kind, sympathetic

words, and the more tangible relief of whatever covering and food could be afforded from the resources of the house. He prayed with them, and exhorted them, in this their great need and sore suspense; encouraging them to look up confidently to the heavenly Father, to trust Jesus, their sympathizing Friend and Almighty Saviour. Through that dark night of peril and fear not a few proved the power of the Holy Spirit to give tranquillity and confidence to the troubled heart. Oh, how fervently did many a trembler in wayside homes long and pray for the daylight during that terrible night of alarm!

In the grey of the morning the tramp of trained men was heard approaching the rectory. They carried pikes and scythes and pitchforks, and one or two poles with green floating from them. A man walked in front, having what seemed a white handkerchief in his hand, waving it as a token of truce. The cowering creatures within the house thought of nothing less than immediate murder; yet there were few outcries; the women huddled their children together with a silent despair. Rough barricades had been made of the furniture against the shattered windows, more to reassure the refugees than because Mr. Kavanagh thought such fortification of any use against attack. Indeed, he did not think it probable that attack was the object of this armed party; which was confirmed when he saw from an upper window that the delegate Fitzpatrick was the front man.

They halted some yards from the house, where their leader ostentatiously put them through half a dozen of the simplest military movements, giving the word of command in a loud, hoarse voice. Fergus Kavanagh undid the fastenings of the window where he stood, and spoke: 'Well, Mr. Fitzpatrick, what is the object of this visit?'

The other returned a soldier's salute. 'We have come, sir, under orders from headquarters, to ask you to join the national movement, and take a colonel's commission in the service of the Republic.'



'Which I shall certainly not do. If there were no other hindrance, my father's state of health would render it impossible,' was the reply, rather haughtily spoken.

'Could I have a word with you in private, counsellor?' asked Fitzpatrick, with an evil sort of sneer. 'It might be for your advantage.'

After some hesitancy Mr. Kavanagh granted the request, and the delegate was admitted into the house, and into the study, whose windows were blocked up with furniture, leaving scarce a crevice for the admission of daylight.

'You didn't go for to put up all them things against your friends, counsellor?' he said, with emphasis, and a cunning leer on his ugly face. 'Hang one o' them green curtains out of a windy next the road, and not as much as a pane of glass will be touched by the Republic.'

'I suppose that's the Republic you've got on the lawn, Mr. Fitzpatrick,' said Fergus.

'Only the first company of the Doon Regulars, sir,' returned the other. 'The Republic in full force is on the hills of Oulart and Kiltomas this morning, waiting for the Saxon invaders, and commanded by the Reverend Doctor Murphy, parish priest of Kileornick, until the general comes from the United Government in Dublin, of which we have received sure intelligence'—

'That the attempt has been baffled, Mr. Fitzpatrick, I suppose. The design of seizing the artillery at Chapelizod, and the Castle of Dublin, on the 23rd, has totally failed; and of course you know that Lord Edward Fitzgerald is dying in Newgate?'

The man's face became livid for a moment. 'We'll win the day yet,' he said hoarsely, 'and revenge him on his murderers. But you haven't heard, Mither Kavanagh,' and he dropped his voice to a whisper, 'with all yer papers and letters, maybe, of the barracks at Prosperous?'

'Yes, sir, I have heard of that foul massacre: and I am more ashamed than I can say of my country-

men who committed it. Such an atrocity would call down Heaven's vengeance on the most righteous cause.'

'Well, well, counsellor,' said the delegate in a wheedling voice, 'sure the impetuosity of the boys can't be always kept in; an' that's the reason we want gentlemen like yerself to come an' lead 'em, and soother 'em down, an' make 'em peaceable. It's many a year since they had their own way a bit.'

'And if "their own way" be to pike defenceless soldiers in their beds, and to burn women and children—I can hardly believe I speak of Irishmen, and not of the savages of Owhyhee!' broke forth the young barrister, getting up and walking about the study in his excitement,—'Irishmen, whose proudest boast has always been their tenderness towards the weak, their protection for the innocent and helpless: I can scarcely believe it.'

'Counsellor,' said Fitzpatrick, who had been watching him narrowly, and thought he had found a lever with which to work in this very emotion—'counsellor, I'm afraid meself we'll have more of that work if the gentry don't come forward to head the movement. Such as you, now, would have a power over them common people that the likes of me, born among themselves, couldn't ever have. They don't look up to us; they don't feel the same respect for us at all. Now there's no knowing the good a gentleman like you could do, keepin' em in order—there's no knowing all the houses and people you'd save.'

Very specious Fergus felt this argument to be. Doing evil that good may come has always been one of the adversary's choice traps for human souls and bodies. But, fortunately, the rector had extorted from him a solemn promise to remain, under all circumstances, neutral.

'Well, counsellor, we'll have you in the green uniform yet,' said Fitzpatrick, as he rose to go; 'the old parson 'll come round when he sees the Republic

fairly settled. Hang the green curtain out of the windy, as I told you, an' nobody 'll do the house any harm.'

'Except the king's troops,' said Mr. Kavanagh. 'For though you've repulsed the Camolin cavalry, there's more behind.'

They came out of the dim room and the gloomy house into the full splendour of the Whit Sunday morning. 'Look, sir,' says the delegate, putting his brawny hand on Fergus's arm, 'our Republic is like that, sir—a-rising, a-rising!' He pointed to the glorious golden sun, which was just heaving in view over the belt of hills to the eastward. 'And nothing can stop it, sir—nothing, nothing!'

Mr. Kavanagh was rather surprised at this touch of poetical comparison in a nature apparently so arid as the delegate's. The next minute Fitzpatrick was marshalling his men, who had been sitting and lying about in very unmilitary fashion during his interview; and presently all tramped away again, surmounted by the motley forest of pikes, seythes, pitchforks, and green strips hanging from stieks by way of banners.

Oulart Hill was the main rendezvous on that day. Here the commander-in-chief had stationed himself, and at his elbow might be seen the dark countenance of that other coadjutor priest, Rev. Connor Cregan, his ablest lieutenant—abler, in fact, than his chief; for Father John Murphy was a man of shallow intellect and violent passions, but a thorough fanatic in religion, and with a sort of rough and ready eloquence which carried the populace by storm. He was elated inconceivably by his success on the previous day, in routing a detachment of the Camolin cavalry under Lieutenant Thomas Bookey, who was slain as he rashly advanced before his men to harangue the rebels. Father John saw already the whole county beneath his feet. He would march next to Gorey and Wexford. He entertained the wildest projects of conquest and extermination, which came to their guilty climax in the horrors

of Scullabogue and Vinegar Hill, less than a month subsequently.

The rebellion had indeed reached its outburst, after years of smouldering. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was its military organizer, and, but for the providential circumstance of his arrest, he would have been its commander-in-chief. Neilson and M'Caro were his adjutants. In his pocket-book was found the rough draft of the insurrectionary scheme: how the United Irishmen throughout the kingdom were to rise simultaneously on the night of 23rd May, the signal to be given by stopping all the mail-coaches from Dublin. On the same night the camp at Loughlinstown, the artillery at Chapelizod, and the Castle of Dublin itself, were to be successively surprised and taken; the desertion of the military in great numbers was expected to aid the insurgents in this part of their plan.

But the premature discovery and the arrest of the leader spoiled all. Guards were doubled everywhere; a search was instituted for suspected persons, and Byrne the seditious bookseller was one of those arrested. The policy recommended to the old Roman, under the significant emblem of striking off the poppy-heads, had been even before this successfully inaugurated by the Government; for the incipient rebellion had received its *coup de grâce* so early as 12th March, when the provincial committee of conspirators meeting at Oliver Bond's house, consisting of thirteen Leinster delegates, had been arrested and all their papers confiscated. Lord Edward escaped at that time, and was hidden in different places about the capital till 19th May, on which day he was taken prisoner, and received his death-wound in the struggle.

He lay dying in Newgate during the earliest days of the insurrection he had planned, a melancholy sacrifice of talent, rank, youth, at the shrine of a mistaken patriotism. We know not whether it would have gratified him, in those last solemn hours of existence, when generally the human spirit has an insight as to the

value of the things for which it has striven and spent itself, to have known that his plans had succeeded so far as to set the country in flames at a hundred points. Kildare, Carlow, Wicklow, Meath, and many other counties, were each a seething mass of proclaimed rebellion. Wexford was a few days later in the field; but as the latest, so was it the worst scene of fury and outrage during that miserable month of May 1798.

Dublin was saved by the pocket-book of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. On the night of the 23rd every lamp was out in the city, and the thoroughfares in profoundest darkness, owing to the collusion of the lamplighters with the rebels; but measures had been taken to prevent their entrance from the country. Evelyn Butler, looking from the windows of her father's mansion in Stephen's Green, could just distinguish the dark mass of the Cork regiment, with its two battalion guns, keeping guard at the north side of the square. She was in sore dread about her father and brother, who had gone to join the gathering of yeomanry and loyal citizens stationed about Smithfield to oppose the insurgents from Swords and Santry. She would have feared yet more had she known that Captain Gerald, meeting Lord Roden at the head of his dragoons (popularly called the Fox-hunters, from their fearless riding and fine steeds), had, like them, been unsatisfied to remain on the defensive, and joined them in a gallop to attack the Santry insurgents. He returned in the morning, greatly content with the expedition, which completed the discomfiture of the rebel plans so far as Dublin was concerned, and perhaps a little proud of a scratch from a pike, which had torn open his sleeve and damaged his arm.

Martial law was proclaimed in the capital on that day. Many rebels were hanged from the lamp-irons and on the bridges. Every housekeeper was required to post outside his door a list of all residents in his house, distinguishing strangers from the family. Between nine at night and five in the morning no person might

be abroad in the streets without a pass, under penalty of being sent to serve in His Majesty's navy. Says Sir Jonah Barrington, who lived and moved amid it all, 'The courts of justice were closed, except on civil subjects. The barristers pleaded in uniform, wearing side-arms. One of the judges appeared on the bench in the same uniform; and the city assumed altogether the appearance of a monstrous barrack.'

All this was before that Whit Sunday which opened the Wexford rebellion.



## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### AMONG THE INSURGENTS.

THE rebel camp on Oulart Hill presented an extraordinary scene. Many fires had been kindled to prepare food, and pots of potatoes were boiling in all quarters. Tents had been improvised of the strangest materials, chiefly pillaged from Protestant houses during the night and preceding day: carpets, bed-hangings, even tablecloths and sheets, were in requisition for the purpose. Numbers of women and children were squatting about the fires. There was no sort of uniform on the men, but some badge, such as white bands around their hats, or a roughly-made cockade of green on their breasts. A grim exception to the rule was the wearing of the slain yeomen's clothes by a few—clothes with still the rents and bloody stains of death-wounds upon them. Enormously long pikes and rusty muskets lay piled at intervals among the motley throng; and many of the former were deeply discoloured—not with rust.

Close by one of the fires, which was built against a

roek, a man was sitting sharpening or altering some of the aforesaid weapons.

'Man alive, sure I can't manage it at all, at all. Is it wid a handlo eighteen feet long? Take off the head, an' then I'll see what I can do; but it's too unwieldy now intirely. There, knock it off wid a stono, an' afther that I'll be talkin' to it.' And Myles turned to the next candidate for his services.

'Av you could mak this nate little seythe into a pike, sir'—

'What for do you "sir" me?' exclaimed the smith. 'Aren't we all in a republic now? There's no more gentlemen nor ladies except ourselves. Of coorse, barrin' I had a forge in my pocket, I couldn't make yer scytho into a pike. But you can be just as handy wid it against the yeos as if I did, by a trifle o' practiee. Freney,' calling to his brother, who was at a little distance, 'ye're mighty dead an' alive in yerself this mornin'. Play up somethin' to keep the army in spirits. I'm tired of that *croonaun*:<sup>1</sup> one wud think 'twas goin' to be defeated we wor.'

'Sure I'm afeard ov disturbin' Mистер O'Doherty, here, that's eomposin' a ballad about his reverence the gineral,' returned Freney, who had been merely passing the bow over the strings 'promiseously,' as he would have said himself. 'Maybe it's to spoil the ballad for ever an' ever I would, av the fiddle discorsed too loud.'

The Philomath made as though he heard nothing: with his scratch-wig pulled awry, and his face held in such an attitude that the right eye, screwed into the smallness of a gimlet-hole, looked straight upwards to the zenith, the appearance of abstruse contemplation was imposing. In his hand was a goose-quill, long enough to tickle his ear while writing—a portentous grey feather recently rifled from some patriarch of the species. Under his left arm, in the familiar position of the birch, was a blackthorn club. He would have been uncomfortable without some stick lodged there. Certain

<sup>1</sup> Melancholy ditty.

peasantry squatting about the stone which served him for desk contemplated him with grinning admiration.

'Sthraight—state—no, slate—"as if they ran from a weighty slate." That wouldn't do,' muttered the poet. He wanted a simile for the rout of the cavalry on the preceding day, and was trying to fetch it up from the draw-well of his imagination by the rope of a rhyme. 'Slate—mate,' by which the Philomath meant flesh. 'Date—plate, "as if they ran for a ten-pound plate." I have it. That'll do.'

He penned the line in a sort of subdued triumph, with his head still strongly on one side, but, by a rapid gyration, the left eye promoted to the upper position; and so buried were the words in flourishes that an unpractised reader would have required some time to disinter them. 'He's finished the ballad,' said the common herd, nudging each other. 'Isn't he great at the pen intirely?'

'Now, boys, shall I read ye a sample?' called the poet, when his last evolution with the goose-quill was elaborately rounded off. 'Would ye like to hear a verse made about his reverence Father Murphy?'

A ring of hearers gathered from all points, and Mr. Doherty felt himself great indeed. I am not sure whether he had ever heard of Tyrtæus.

In a sonorous voice, having coughed behind his hand, and cleared his throat, wholly without necessity, except the etiquette expected from him, he began:—

'Sure Julius Cæsar, or Alexander,  
Or renowned King Arthur, ne'er equalled him:  
For armies formidable he has conquered,  
Though with two gunsmen he did begin.

The shuddering cavalry, I can't forget them:  
We raised the brushes on their helmets straight;  
They turned about, and hid for Dublin  
As if they ran for a ten-pound plate.'

A fellow in the crowd who had on his head one of the aforesaid helmets, pillaged from some dead yeoman, took it off and flourished it lustily. The applause was



only silenced when the Philomath delivered his composition again. The audience got hold of it in broken lines, and re-echoed 'Julius Sarsar' and the 'ten-poun' plate' on all sides; which last allusion to a racecourse took their fancy amazingly. A real popular hit it was.

Some stir in the crowd denoted an arrival of importance on its outskirts, and, with a whisper and reverential gesture, all fell back before a man carrying a riding-whip and dressed in the long dark 'soutane' of his sacerdotal order. Black leather breeches and high boots—the usual priestly dress—completed his costume; and his tonsured head was bare.

'What's all this about, Molloy?' he asked in peremptory tones, while his sharp eyes travelled round the group. 'We must be under arms presently: we have ferns and Enniscorthy to take, boys.'

A wild cheer greeted the words.

'Ay, and lots of plunder in 'em too, boys!' added Molloy, a sort of petty officer who had found a green coat somewhere. 'We were hearin' a ballad about yer reverence's honour,' he said in explanation; and Father Murphy, seeing that the composition was short, listened to it without a smile on his dark face.

'Very good, very good; the classical allusion is very nate. A man of your acquirements in classics and the humanities, Mr. O'Doherty, need not be told of the important part that popular song played in the Grecian wars.' The pedagogue bowed, and adjusted the black-thorn under his arm as if it were a birch. 'But greater things are before us this day than what we've done yet, boys: the North Cork 'll be tryin' to revenge yesther-day, which frightened all the tyrants of Ireland out of their seven senses. The Lord-Lieutenant is shaking in his shoes this minit, boys; an' with the blessing of holy Mary, we'll be knockin' his Castle of Dublin about his ears before he's much older. Stay, an' I'll read ye a bit of the proclamation.'

Stepping on the stone which had been the Philomath's

desk, the priest took from his pocket a printed paper already much worn in the creases.

'Tis out in Dublin by this time,' he said, smoothing it in his fingers, and having a very shrewd idea that he was stating a falsehood. But it was a falsehood that was worth telling, to raise the spirits of his men; and persons who dabble in casuistry, and whose memories must be a sort of moral cesspool through the influence of the confessional, are apt to have elastic consciences. 'Tho National Committee intended to issue it at once.' Then, assuming the full round voice of the public speaker, he read a few sentences, of which the following were first:—

'Irishmen! your country is free, and you are about to be avenged. That vile Government which has so long and so cruelly oppressed you is no more. Some of its most atrocious monsters have already paid the forfeit of their lives, and the rest are in your hands. Tho national flag, the sacred green, is at this moment flying over the ruins of despotism; and that capital which, a few hours past, had witnessed the crimes of your tyrants, is now the citadel of triumphant virtue. Arise, then, united sons of Ireland!' and Father Murphy flung out his arm in declamation. 'Arise, like a great and powerful people determined to be free or die! Arm yourselves by every means within your power, and rush like lions on your foes!'

The excited multitude—for the group had swelled to that now—yelled a fierce response. Had the North Cork militia been accessible then, they would have stood a good chance of annihilation. Father Murphy looked along his paper, and proceeded with the next telling bit.

'Heed not the glare of hired soldiery or aristocratic yeomanry: they cannot stand the vigorous shock of freedom. Their trappings and their arms will soon be yours; and the detested Government of England—to which we vow eternal hatred—shall learn that the treasures which it exhausts on its accoutred slaves, for the purpose of butchering Irishmen, shall but

further enable us to turn their swords on its devoted head.'

Uproarious shouting broke in many times on this and succeeding paragraphs.<sup>1</sup> Having stirred them up sufficiently, Father Murphy moved away to another station among his forces, there to apply the same stimulant, having left directions to Molloy to get them under arms as soon as possible.

Myles Furlong was busy at the distribution of a bundle of pikes, when his mother, who had been watching her opportunity, insinuated herself among the men close to his elbow.

'The praties will be as cowld as stones av ye don't come to yer breakfast. How'll ye ever fight at all at all on an empty stomach? Do now, ahagur.'

'Is it to go 'atin' a breakfast with the inimy before us, woman?' Ho pointed over the plain to where a column of red-coats was slowly advancing, a trail of burning cabins in their rear. 'When we've settled wid them we'll be thinkin' of breakfast. Look! that's Jim Dillon's cabin, tho weaver of Ballinlough, they've just lighted—the venomous vilyans of the world!'

There was a burst of smoke and a gleam of flame from the little bog-cottage, which consumed as easily as tinder, and was chiefly ashes in half an hour.

'Wirrasthru!' moaned the old woman, clapping her hands. 'What's to become of us at all, at all? There won't be a livin' bein' left in the counthry, barrin' tho birds an' the fishes. Myles acushla, won't you strengthen yerself for the hard day's work by the breakfast?' she added, her voice dropping from the wail to a wheedling tone.

'What'll become of you? Is it that ye're asking, mother?' he said, turning sharply round. 'Why, we'll all have our rights again, an' you'll be the mistress of

<sup>1</sup> The rough draft of this rebel proclamation (given word for word above) was found in the house of the brothers Sheares; one of whom, however, seems to have remonstrated against its use, and the bloody schemes it unfolded.

Doon Castle before a month—you and little Una. May be that isn't worth fighting for.'

Thus, flushed with false hopes and past victory, the rebels on Oulart waited the onset of the loyalists.



## CHAPTER XLIX.

### BIVOUAC ON VINEGAR HILL.

AFTER a brief reconnoitring, the detachment of militia under Colonel Foote advanced to attack the position of the rebels on the southern side of Oulart Hill. Some insignificant defensive earthworks were carried instantly: the musket-shots of the soldiery bewildered the insurgents, who were chiefly armed with pikes, powerless except at close quarters. They were driven back in confusion, and panic arose, which was increased by the frantic cries of the women behind them rushing away for shelter. Still rained the balls, and many a stout rebel measured his length on the earth. Occasionally a score or so would dash forward with awful yells, and hold the pursuers in check for a few minutes. But the impulse of flight in a body of undisciplined men is an irresistible contagion. The fearless were hurried back by the great mass of the fearful. Worse than to be slain on the spot would it be to be taken prisoners; for the country had rung with the severities practised by the North Cork militia against even the defenceless; so the rebels thought of nothing except escape.

They were driven to the top of the hill. Flushed with success, the militiamen broke through all order, and pursued at full speed; but, standing on a projecting rock at the brow was Father John Murphy, among the

remains of their encampment and smouldering fires. That calm figure gave the defeated a new courage, as they beheld him unhurt by the bullets flying on all sides; and his ringing voice urged them to a fresh stand.

'Boys, are ye mad? Running away from the North Cork—the bloodiest of all the scourges of the Saxon that's in the whole of Ireland! The North Cork, that burned yer houses yesterday—that'll hang yer wives an' children in five minutes, if ye're such cowards as not to face them! Only for the vows that's on me, I'd rush at 'em with a pike meself. For shame, boys, to let yer clergy see yo liko this!—the women would fight better. Turn on 'em like men. Don't yo know that the Gorey horse is before yo on the other side of the hill?'

Perhaps all his reproaches and invectives would not have sufficed to make the panic-stricken insurgents face the foe so well as did this last intimation, which reduced them to despair. 'Yo *can't* get away—skewer to ye, for a set of cowardly vagabones!' shouted his reverence the commander. 'The Gorey horse is ready for ye on the other side, an' it's better for ye to face the foot than the horse any day'—

Myles Furlong, who had been making frantic efforts to rally his affrighted comrades, suddenly dashed forward with his long pike. 'I'll go by meself, yer reverence!' He threw his hat in the air with a yell, and ran right against a rank of advancing militia. The foremost man fell under the charge of the deadly weapon; two bullets whizzed through the blacksmith's hair and clothes; he drew from his belt a long double-edged knife, and fought desperately.

The rebels rushed to his aid; the sight of a stand anywhere encouraged them, while the remembrance of the Gorey horse made them think this was their only chance; they had the utmost terror of cavalry. Only a few minutes did the contest last; the immensely greater number of the insurgents rendered their victory

certain when once they came to close quarters with the mere handful of assailants: suffice it to say that, of the whole detachment of the North Cork militia, which had marched from Wexford in the morning in high hopes and spirits, only five men remained alive on Oulart Hill.

'Ye chose the best part,' said Father John, for all commendation: 'twas either conquer or die wid ye, ye set of spalpeens; an' I don't praise ye that ye did the first. We may thank the Gorey horse for this. I b'lieve ye wouldn't ha' stopped runnin' till ye got to Enniscorthy, only they had the luck to show their noses. I've a mind to lave ye there entirely, an' go back to me breviary.'

Notwithstanding which sulky speech, he spent the rest of the day haranguing them up to a boiling point; detailing the yeomanry outrages, which indeed wanted little addition from imagination to render them beyond measure atrocious. As for the two troops of cavalry from Gorey, he had known very well all along that there was no concert between them and the North Cork militia; and they, on seeing that the insurgents were more numerous than they expected, retired without attempting anything, except sundry cruelties on their way, in the shape of burning cabins and shooting the occupants.

Let not the reader imagine that the writer exaggerates in the least when depicting the state of Ireland at this dreadful period, or the excesses committed on both sides in the strife. Imagination dare not go so far as fact has gone. The most fiendish passions were let loose without restraint, both by those in authority and those under it. Never did rebellion wear any form so horrible as when to the bitterest sense of oppression were added religious rancour and intense ignorance. Thus it was in the Ireland of 1798. Thank God that at present the oppressions no longer exist which then goaded the peasantry to madness; and that the mass of the people, except misguided fools and interested demagogues, agree

in subjection to the laws and adhesion to the paternal Government of the realm.

Now there is nought to be said respecting these earliest days of the rebellion in Wexford, except that either side, rebels and yeomanry, seemed trying to outdo the other in mischief and cruelty. What houses were spared by the one were destroyed by the other: what persons were flogged or half-hanged by the yeomanry thereby escaped being piked by the rebels. The country was laid waste. Houses were in flames all over it, or in heaps of blackened ruins. Families fled by the score into the towns if loyally inclined, or to the hills if rebellions. No foreign invader could have produced half the terror and ruin that were produced in that fair and fertile county of Wexford by the evil passions of her own sons.

The army of insurgents under Father Murphy increased hourly after its success against the North Cork militia. He marched his men next day against Camolin and Ferns; a vast confused body of women and children and household goods following after them through the devastated land. Frequent outbursts of the wild Irish cry told when some people in the throng recognised their ruined homesteads, or were overcome by the reminiscence of calamity; or perchance when some wounded rebel expired. Down every by-road came accessions to the multitude as it surged onward. The village of Camolin presented no opposition, neither did the town of Ferns: on they went, with riotous acclamations, towards Enniscorthy, six miles southward.

Here numbers of loyalists had collected, trusting in the garrison of militia and yeomanry, and watched the approach of the host of insurgents along the western road with what feelings may be imagined. Clouds of dust veiled the foremost; and soon it was perceived that a quantity of cattle were driven in front, as they advanced wildly against the military. The most horrible shouts and yells filled the air; musketry began to peal from the rebel lines; and though the Enniscorthy

cavalry charged their pikemen twice, they were repulsed with loss on each occasion, and driven within the Duffrey Gate. What could three hundred men do against seven thousand?

For four hours the battle raged, however; discipline protracting it thus against numbers. At last flames burst from some of the thatched cabins in the suburbs, and the combatants paused amid the conflagration. All round the town the rebels spread, wading the river Slauey at a ford, and gathering on Vinegar Hill in a threatening mass. One way of escape remained open—the Wexford road. Presently the bugles sounded a retreat, and the defenders of Enniscorthy began to file away, to the utter consternation of the inhabitants.

What a flight was that! Supreme terror of the rebels prevailed among the loyalists, with good reason: they flocked out of the town after the yeomen, in hundreds. Delicate ladies, who could scarce walk a mile distance, were seen helplessly dragging along their little children, and actually fainting by the roadsides. The cavalry horses were given up to these by their humane riders. Had there been pursuit, the carnage must have been tremendous. But the rebels contented themselves with plundering Enniscorthy and murdering any persons therein whom they chose to denounce as 'black-mouths.'

They fixed their camp on Vinegar Hill, a place afterwards famous for their decisive overthrow. It was much as it had been on Oulart; except that, spoil having become more plentiful, their arrangements were more luxurious. Feather-beds were on the ground under tents of rich carpeting spread on poles. Window hangings which had graced drawing-rooms were coverlets for most grimy rebels, or wrapped round them as cloaks. Some had put on various fantastic articles of wearing apparel instead of their own rags—ladies' hats and tippets, shawls and mantles, among the rest. This was when they were all in good-humour, after their day of plunder and bloodshed, round the bivouac fires.



Old Jug faithfully followed her sons—indeed she never had to go far to find Freney, who kept carefully out of bullets' way, among the hindmost, as he said, 'for fear of anythin' wad happen the little fiddle—arrah, what wud I do av a hole was dhruv through it at all?' She had found some food, and was cooking it for them. Myles was lying asleep on the ground, even his hereulean strength outworn by his hereulean exertions—an ugly figure, his arms thrown over his head, his unshorn face smeared with gunpowder and grime, and a heavy frown between his heavy brows. He had escaped marvellously, with scarce a scratch, from the hand-to-hand combat with the yeomen on Oulart Hill, and had been foremost in all the fighting since, bearing, as the bravest often do, apparently a charmed life; whereas the luckless Philomath, who certainly did not court danger, had managed somehow to get a ball through his left wrist, for which Old Jug was preparing a poultice of what she called 'crribs' (*Anglice*, herbs), while she also superintended a pot containing potatoes and mutton boiled together in the fashion known as an Irish stew. Now that the wound had actually been inflicted, the Philomath was rather proud of it than otherwise, and was nursing it with great dignity.

'Some of my brethren in the literarious line hold that wo abecedarians'—a popular alphabetic name for schoolmasters—'should bo properly non-combatants; that is, that we should not condescend to tho maneness of fighting, unless with scientific weapons.'

'Troth, an' you jist followed their example,' quoth Old Jug: 'never a fear of yer fighting much, anyhow, unless agin somebody as couldn't fight wid *you*. Whisht, here's Father Clinch.'

The person so named was easily recognisable by anybody who had ever seen him, from his huge stature. He was a priest of Enniscorthy—a remarkable figure, and very remarkably got up, as he appeared there by the firelight: his sacerdotal vestments were visible under his military accoutrements; a broad cross-belt bore a

sabre and long pistols. 'Is there a man here called Myles Furlong?' he asked. 'Send him up after me to headquarters: he's wanted.'

He stayed not a moment for the lowly obeisance of all about the fire, but strode away on other business. It was an anxious night for the rebel leaders, notwithstanding their success. The undisciplined rabble they commanded were in sore need of organization of some sort. They must appoint petty officers of the most tried and trusty men, and endeavour to produce a semblance of companies and regiments, that the mass might be manageable. Myles Furlong was selected as one of these, and was summoned before the council (chiefly of priests) to receive his instructions.

He came back in high spirits, driving no less a personage before him, at the point of the formidable double-edged knife, than Mr. Bailiff Bodkin, who had his elbows tied behind him with a rope, and whose knees betrayed a marked tendency to knock together.

'Mother, they've made me a "ral" of some sort—'tisn't a general all out, but something not far astray from that—maybe it's a corporal. But I'm better pleased than a tub of gold to have found this fellow up there; an' they've given him to us to do what we like with—eh, boys?'

A derisive cheer greeted the bailiff's undisguised terror, as he looked round on the pitiless, grinning faces. Well he knew that he when in power had showed no mercy; what mercy could he expect himself? And there was no escape, no help; bare knives and pikes around, a fire before, and hearts like flint stones (to him), with his fate at their disposal.

'Gentlemen,' he began in unsteady tones. Shouts of laughter greeted the word.

''Twasn't that way you talked when you was tyin' me up to the triangle,' hissed Myles, 'an' lavin' this cut on me cheek-bone for evermore. But, troth, we're all gentlemen now, Misther Bodkin, an' no thanks to you nor yer masthers! Boys, what will we do wid him?'

A variety of merciful suggestions followed. But it was well for the victim that their bloodthirstiness had been sated during the day; the fiercest of them could scarcely imbrue his hand with a prisoner's life at this hour of relaxation and repose.

'I tell you what, boys; we'll make him a croppy, an' turn him over to the yeos for the rest. Nover fear but the North Cork will pitch-cap him—they won't b'lieve a word he says!'

There was something in this proposition that so suited the sense of humour in the breasts of the listeners as to cause it at once to be carried by acclamation. The idea of causing Mr. Bodkin to be ill-used by his own party was perfectly delicious. Amid great hilarity his head was cropped according to the most approved rebel type, and some old green clothes were put upon him. The bailiff, who had at first hailed the proposal with inter-nal joy, as being treatment considerably milder than he expected, began to think that the sole difference might be that he would be shot by his friends instead of being piked by his enemies; and the advantage of the former was not enough to improve his spirits materially. So he passed a rather unquiet night on Vinegar Hill, being chiefly occupied with reflections on the imprudence which had made him take refuge in Enniscorthy, instead of flying at once to Wexford, and the double imprudence of lingering in the taken town (with some hankering after goods and chattels, and storing away of money in his pockets) among the very last of the fugitives.

The sky was red with the glare of burning houses during the short hours of darkness. Even at early morning people looking from Wexford—eleven miles off—could perceive still the flame-tinged cloud of smoke hanging over Vinegar Hill.

## CHAPTER L

## THE WOODEN BRIDGE AT WEXFORD.

Two days afterwards—the intermediate time being spent in a species of negotiation, which was ineffectual, conducted by means of prisoners, of whom Bagenal Harvey was one—a large body of insurgents was seen encamped on the Three Rocks, a low ridge at the end of Forth Mountain, near Wexford. The inhabitants had made every preparation for defence. Knowing now what merciless foes were these rebels, despair prompted their most strenuous exertions. The walls of the town were yet standing, though the gates had long since been removed for public convenience of traffic: the openings were filled with the strongest barricades, and mounted with cannon. Large bodies of militia and yeomanry remained on duty every night, as during a siege. All ships were detained in the harbour, that, in the worst event, there might be some means of escape; numerous families removed to these vessels, weighting some of them almost to the water's edge. The shops were shut up in the streets, and the lower windows of the houses; and often was heard the miserable wail of the widows and children of those North Cork men who had been slain at Oulart, and whose bodies were brought in during these days for interment.

The long wooden bridge across the river Slaney was considered to be sufficiently defended by the raising of the portcullis in the midst. But a guard at each end would have been requisite; for at daybreak one morning the toll-house at the country side was discovered on fire, which rapidly spread to the timbers of the bridge, and threatened its destruction. Pitch and tar had been smeared over it by the incendiaries, as far as they dared

go; a dozen insurgents were seen making their escape through the dim twilight, and only one fellow—who could not run very well, owing to a wound in his foot—was captured. The fire was put out,—chiefly by sailors from a neighbouring ship,—and the solitary prisoner was haled into the nearest guard-house, protesting vehemently that he was no croppy at all, but a right loyal subject and honest man, Mr. Bodkin of Doon; and Colonel Butler knew him. Would they only spare his life, most honourable gentlemen, till they inquired from Colonel Butler about him? He was laughed at, his story derided as utterly improbable. Such was the temper of the townspeople—for terror is always cruel—that he could expect no mercy. They would just pitch-cap him, to make his croppy head comfortable; and then—the militiamen pointed to a rope wavering in the breeze from a hideous gibbet, erected before the gaol.

Now the operation of pitch-capping was thus performed—well did Mr. Bodkin know the process, for he had aided in its performance on veritable cropies more than once:—A cap of strong brown paper, well coated inside with pitch, was heated till the pitch was molten, when it was put on the victim's head, and pressed down upon and into his hair; and, after being allowed to cool and harden, it was taken off, with generally all the hair and part of the scalp of the head adhering. The unfortunate bailiff was still in the agonies of this savage treatment, when the sentry outside the guard-house gave notice that the colonel was coming; and the soldiers engaged in the torture ran for their guns, to turn out and present arms. Colonel Maxwell and some other officers rode up and stopped.

'Sergeant, I am informed that you have a prisoner from the attempt on the bridge this morning'—

'That's me, that's me, yer honour's majesty,' yelled Mr. Bodkin from within the guard-house, where he was sitting on a bench bound hand and foot. 'That's me, as loyal a subject as there's in Ireland; an' to say I'm thrated this way, an' to be hung hyne-by. Oh,

yer honour's reverence, only come in an' look at the way they've thrated me;' the wretched man's voice rose to a scream.

'Bring out the prisoner,' ordered the colonel sternly. 'This is more of your pitch-capping, North Cork, which is making the corps notorious for cruelty. The fellow should have been brought before me.'

They listened very sulkily; it was no secret that the regiment was in such a state of insubordination that the individual soldiers did pretty much as they chose, and scouted authority. After some delay, owing to the unbinding of the ropes about his ankles, Mr. Bodkin was brought forth, with the pitch-cap half torn from his head, and streams of the stiffened stuff over his countenance—a pitiable object, truly. Down he went on his knees, almost falling on his face because of his bound hands, and cried piteously that his life might be spared.

'Why, it's my father's bailiff!' exclaimed a young officer who had just then ridden up with some letter to the colonel. 'Bodkin! how ever did you get into that shocking state?'

The delivered man gave a bound into the air at hearing the familiar voice.

'Oh, Misther Gerald! Misther Gerald! *you* know that I am'n't a croppy. Oh, Misther Gerald, they wouldn't h'lieve me at all at all, no matter what I said! Tell them, sir, tell them, sir. Sure they wer goin' to hang me'—

'Captain Butler, your attention,' said the colonel, folding up his letter. 'We hold a council of war at the barracks immediately.' His face was troubled and dark with whatever news the despatch had contained. He turned his horse, evidently forgetting all about the illegal proceedings of the sergeant and the sufferings of the accused, who set up a fearful howl, as he thought he was about to be left to the tender mercies of the guard-house barbers.

'Release the prisoner,' was the colonel's peremptory

order, after a word or two privately from Captain Butler. The latter waited to see the mandate obeyed, and Mr. Bodkin limped away. 'They stuck me foot wid a pike, captain dear, the way I couldn't run off wid the rest of them after they firin' the bridge; an' then I was took for a croppy. Oh, murther! how'll I ever get off the rest of this pitch-cap at all?'

'With what measure ye mete,' were words in the captain's remembrance. 'Look here, Bodkin,' said he. 'Follow me to the barracks, where I'll get you a horse, and make off out of the town as fast as you can to Duncannon. Wexford isn't safe any longer—I may tell you that much;' and he put spurs to his steed, leaving the bailiff to make the best of his way after him.

The council of war was stormy, and the conclusion arrived at was that Wexford must be evacuated. General Fawcett had a considerable force at Duncannon Fort; but he either would not or could not advance to the relief of the town; while an army of fifteen thousand rebels hung upon the heights, and had procured some artillery, and threw shells in a manner which proved they must have practised gunners among them.

Ere the issue of the council was known, the insubordinate North Cork militia had taken matters into their own hands, and marched out of the town. The news spread on all sides that Wexford was to be given up to the rebels; and the quays were thronged with despairing families, troops of women and children especially, imploring to be taken to the ships in the harbour. But these were full already. All who could procure conveyance went after the troops towards Duncannon. The streets echoed with the most dismal cries—premonitory of the misery and murder that was coming. How to welcome the insurgents with most fervour was now the thought of all who could not escape. Counsellor Bagenal Harvey, who was in prison for his seditious

tendencies, was entreated to go forth to the rebel camp and procure a capitulation. He did write a few lines, requesting that they would not commit massacre on entrance; and with this single miserable security the town was surrendered.

Over the long wooden bridge—now repaired in a rough manner from the injury it had sustained in the morning—rushed a vast multitude, uttering the wildest cries of exultation. The gaol was instantly burst open, and Bagenal Harvey forced to become their commander. Every house not decorated with green boughs or hangings was sacked. The ships in the harbour, laden with refugees, were all brought back (except two, which were commanded by Protestants, and had set sail for Wales), and their passengers landed on the beach, at the mercy of the foe. But few assassinations took place, however, on this first day of possession; the rebels were gratified by their reception, by the tables spread in the streets to feast them, and the whisky and wine profusely distributed. They confined their outrages to plunder, and that only of places considered unfriendly. This forbearance lasted only a few hours.

Next day (the last of the eventful month) the insurgents became so unmanageable that even their leaders were compelled to devise expeditions for them which might remove them from the town. A sort of republican government was set up; but the last thought in the popular mind seemed to be that any obedience was owed it apart from a man's individual fancy. Nothing but the point of the sword could keep the mob in order; and occasional victims had to be given up to their fury. The safest place for loyalists was the town gaol; but even this refuge failed on that day in June when the savage Thomas Dixon overpowered the authority of the rebel leaders, and with a band of miscreants broke open the prison. For five hours they were slaying the prisoners on the bridge. Some, when they felt the point of the pikes, bounded over the railings into the river, and were shot; but the greater



number of the eighty-five victims were regularly tortured. One humane person was present—the parish priest of Wexford; and he, after using every entreaty to stop the massacre, commanded the butchers to pray before they proceeded further.

‘Pray, ye villains! Kneel down and pray to the God of heaven above, that’s looking at yer murder, an’ ask Him that His merey to ye in the day of judgment may be just what merey ye’re going to show to these miserable creatures now!’

None among all the bloodstained band had the hardihood to say ‘Amen’ to such a prayer. They hesitated, they recoiled; the priest poured in burning words of reproach, and denounced them with heaven’s vengeance. During the respito thus procured, Father Philip Roche rode up, and ordered them all to follow him to Vinegar Hill, where their headquarters were fronted by General Lake’s army.

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## CHAPTER LI.

### THE WINDMILL AT ENNISCORTHY.

As soon as Colonel Butler heard of the outbreak in his county, the chivalrous old gentleman would not be deterred from joining his corps of yeomanry, and giving his personal efforts towards the suppression of the rebellion. All Evelyn’s entreaties that he would not risk himself, but remain with her in Dublin, were vain. Was it not enough that Gerald had gone to Wexford, an hour after the news arrived of the rout at Oulart? Gerald could do everything her father could do: Gerald would keep the tenantry quiet, would command the

yeomen, would protect Doon Castle. 'No, my dear,' was the colonel's answer, as he fastened on his spurs; 'young ladies cannot be expected to understand these matters; but you have heard of such a thing as military honour, Evelyn. You wouldn't wish your father to compromise his honour. There now, my dear, don't cry; soldiers' daughters should not cry. I'll return as soon as I can, depend on it;' and he blessed her as he parted from her.

Dublin and its environs were perfectly safe and quiet now, owing to the precautions of the authorities. Eighteen miles from the capital had been fought the battle of Tara, where three companies of the Reay Fencibles and two companies of yeomanry had defeated a far larger body of rebels, and thus broken their force in the midland counties, and opened communication between Dublin and the loyalists of Ulster. The disaffected of the two Meaths, Louth, Monaghan, and Cavan, were watching the event of that conflict; and, had the insurgents gained the day, those counties would have risen *en masse*.

But, to the south, Wicklow was in universal anarchy. Poor Evelyn had cause enough for terror, in the dangers which her father must risk before he could even reach his own county. He had an escort of volunteers, and some cavalry going to join their corps; but her imagination conjured up swarms of pikemen in every hollow, and she knew that their ferocity spared none. Again was Evelyn driven to prayer as her sole strength and hope during the dark days that followed. God knew where were the loved ones, though she did not; God could take care of them. She felt at times as if she could scarce wrench away her soul from the earnestness of supplication.

Her brother could not remain inactive at Duncannon Fort, on the edge of Waterford harbour. He took the earliest opportunity of joining the garrison of Ross, who were appealing for help against a host of rebels gathered on Carrickbyrne mountain, under command of Bagenal

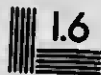
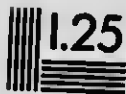
Harvey, wheuco they marched on the 4th of June for Corbet Hill, within a mile of the town, ranged in baronies and parishes, resembling at a distance brigades and regiments. Near at hand any military illusion of the sort was dissipated; the forest of weapons was seen to be composed not only of pikes and muskets and scythes, but of hay-knives, scrapers, currying-blades, old bayonets on poles. Their regimental music was the yelling and singing of their own throats. The sole uniform was some green badge, perhaps only a bough, worn by each man. When they came to a chapel by the roadside all the columns stopped, and fell on their knees while mass was celebrated, and holy water sprinkled by the priests.

Early on the morning of the 5th they poured down the declivity of the hill, 'liko a torrent of lava,' says an eye-witness, thirty thousand strong. Cannon were among them, and crucifixes moved about as ensigns of encouragement; for every day since its commencement this war had been more and more becoming a war of religious extermination, and Protestantism was hated as the worst of crimes. A summons of surrender had been despatched to the town at daybreak, but was unheeded. The outposts at the Three-bullet Gato were so troublesome while Bagenal Harvey was marshalling his forces for the assault, that he detached five hundred men to dislodge them. On seeing the success of this movement, the whole vast multitude confusedly broke bounds, and rushed towards the town uttering horrible cries. No plan of attack nor order of battle was attended to; no commander was obeyed. Carnage inconceivable was the consequence. The royal troops were at first repulsed, and some fled even as far as Waterford, with tidings that New Ross was lost. But General Johnson had planted his artillery at the corners of streets, and thus literally ploughed lanes through the dense masses of assailants. For ten hours there was alternate repulse and attack, and death perpetual on both sides from sword and fire. Houses full of rebels



# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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were burned by the military; an anticipation of the dread atrocities of Scullabogue, which were enacted on that same night.

Now it happened that in the very first onset of the insurgents on the outposts, at the time that Lord Mountjoy, colonel of the Dublin regiment, was killed, Captain Gerald Butler was wounded and taken prisoner. After prodigies of bravery, and being overwhelmed with numbers, unhorsed and disarmed, he would have been piked as he lay on the ground, except for Myles Furlong's strenuous exertions. 'Sure he's me foster-brother; ye won't kill me foster-brother!' he shouted, warding away the blows. 'We'll make him a prisoner, boys, an' bring him before the tribunal of the People. He's me prisoner, boys, Captain Furlong's prisoner an' foster-brother.' The claim of fosterage was recognised even by these wild rebels in their heat of passion. They tried no further to slay the prostrate figure, which Myles dragged aside into a dry ditch, as the rout rushed on towards the Three-bullet Gate, driving the soldiers before them.

'We'll keep you for the Windmill Hill of Enniscorthy,' muttered the blacksmith, tying the officer's cravat tightly about the severe wound in his arm. The expression of his face was certainly not that of a good Samaritan as he bent over him. 'I've no notion ov lettin' ye die awhile yet,' he added. 'I want ye to see yer despised foster-brother in possession of his own again—time enough for the silver bullet after that. Come, sir,' he said when Captain Butler opened his eyes, and began to move from his transient insensibility, 'ye must stir yerself, an' come up to the general; for I can't be answerable for yer life here, the republicans is so pervoked; an' I must turn yer coat, or a pike would be into ye before ten steps.' Finding the change impossible, on account of the wound, Myles took off his own, and buttoned it about his prisoner's shoulders, to conceal the yeomanry red as much as might be. One would almost think he loved him; yet Captain Gerald did not feel

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DOCTOR KAVANAGH OVERHEARS SAD TREASON IN THE BOOKSELLER'S SHOP.

(See page 321.)





altogether easy under the brotherly attentions, and looked into the sombre countenance with some distrust and bewilderment.

Bagenal Harvey was not far off, attempting the vain enterprise of marshalling his tumultuous forces somehow. They had met last at a friend's dinner-table, and pledged healths together—this prisoner and the rebel chief. Under the fixed and somewhat contemptuous gaze of Captain Butler, Bagenal Harvey felt the colour mount to his brow. Their mutual courtesies were short and scant. 'Take the prisoner to the rear; send him under sufficient escort to headquarters at Vinegar Hill. I charge you with his custody, Captain Furlong, and make you responsible.' The next minute the whole matter was forgotten; ten thousand things pressed on his attention; and Bagenal Harvey had not a military mind. This was the fifth day of his command-in-chief, and he had already proved himself far deficient in the qualities necessary for his position; among the rest, he had proved far deficient in ferocity.

The royalist officer's contempt for his breach of allegiance was considerably dashed with pity before the close of that eventful day. He saw that his authority was despised; he was a mere puppet in the hands of the military priests, who strode about in their stately, organizing and rallying the bands of insurgents that came back shattered from the terrible artillery. Lying on the grass at Corbet Hill encampment, guarded by Freney and the Philomath, in whose charge Myles had left his prisoner, with many adjurations to keep him safely, Captain Gerald had a full view of the battle of Ross, through all its awful hours of slaughter. Never for a moment through that long summer day ceased the thunder of cannon and the sharp, short rattle of musketry; the fair sky was defiled with sulphurous clouds and flame. Amid the pain of his arm and the faintness induced by loss of blood, his whole heart went out in anxiety for loyalist success; yet he had some misgivings as to what might be the result to himself

when the tide of desperate and disappointed men was hurled back upon their camp, mad with defeat, and thirsting for vengeance. They came in final rout, hotly pursued by the regulars and militia, three thousand of them left dead in the lanes and suburbs of Ross. They fled in broken squadrons over the country; some to Slievekilta, a mountain four miles off, where they made a stand; some to Carrickbyrne, their former camp, where, in their rage and discomfiture, they perpetrated the massacre of Scullabogue, which has become a byword of infamy; others as far as Enniscorthy, and the main body to Vinegar Hill.

How the captives—Captain Gerald among them—ever reached the windmill prison (at the latter place) alive, they could scarcely tell. All the authority and strenuous force of the guard set over them was barely sufficient to keep the pikes of the maddened multitude from their hearts. A miserable, motley throng of loyalists were shut up in the old windmill, every day receiving accessions from parties who scoured the country, and every day being thinned by public executions before the rebels on parade, with scarce a show of trial. Bitter hours did the young heir of Doon pass here, at the mercy of these merciless desperadoes, and far away from all human help. He could hear the sounds of their orgies outside, their shouting and swearing, their playing discordantly on various musical instruments pillaged from Protestant houses, their wild, exultant songs and savage outcries over their victims. Each morning he knew not but he himself might be dragged forth to die. It will be believed that these days to him were such as change a man's whole character. Half-famished with hunger (for the food supplied the prisoners was the barest possible, though the camp abounded in provisions), agonized with his festering wound, looking forward daily to a torturing death, the *insouciance* of his former life seemed to him something remote and wonderful. He was forced into contact with the Divine Ruler of the earth, who was

permitting all this. For the first time in his life Gerald Butler uttered words of real prayer—words from his soul, imploring mercy through the great Mediator and Advocate.

At last came the fatal morning. Never had there been remembered such bright days for six weeks as those of the Rebellion; and this day was no exception. Forth into the blinding sunshine he was led; a haggard, worn-down man, youth and hope both gone, his chief wish was to have it (whatever was coming) over. The delay was not long. Savage grinning faces were all around him, savage shouts in his ears, a belt of long sharp pikes encircling him as he knelt with bound hands. Why depict the scene? Four hundred victims suffered thus on Vinegar Hill.

The moon was up that night, and shone with cold clearness on the hill; on its hundred blazing fires its multitude of moving figures, its grotesque tents, and its crowning windmill prison, filled with languishing captives, who knew they were in the very antechamber of the grave. A little way down the side of the slope lay the victims of the morning in two or three ghastly heaps. Some people were examining them, dragging them apart, as if searching. Presently they found what they wanted—a body with the yeomanry scarlet still upon it, and a great gash from a pike laying open the head through all its fair hair.

'Oh, Mither Gerald! Mither Gerald! the vein of my heart you wor,' groaned poor Old Jug, pressing her withered lips to his pale brow. 'Freney asthore, he isn't all out cold. Who knows but there's a little bit of the life somewheres still?—aeushla machree he was!' She tore open his vest, and put her hand to the region of the heart. Another pike-thrust had grazed the ribs close by; but she thought she perceived a faint beating and a greater warmth. 'Heaven be praised, but I don't think he's dead intirely,' she said, closing his coat again. 'An' now, Freney asthore, what's to be dono before them vilyans come round?'

She meant the burying-party, who would thrust the bodies into holes and heap stones and earth on them as a hurried sepulture.

'Bury him ourself,' sententiously remarked Freney, who had a spade. This had indeed been the object of the old woman in seeking out her murdered foster-son: failing in all her frantic efforts to save his being piked among the other prisoners, she had resolved that as soon as night fell he should have a Christian grave, whatever was the consequence to herself.

'You omadhaun! don't I tell ye the breath is in him?' hissed Old Jug angrily.

'Mother, spake aisy,' was the rejoinder. 'I'll settle him with a weeshy bit ov earth over him, that won't do him any harm; an' when they're gone I know where I'll get a turf-creel, an' we'll take him away unbeknownst in the dead of the night.'

Truly Freney's intellects had been developed when he could invent a plan like this. He lifted the body on his back for a little distance into the shadow of a big stone, and there contrived some covering of grass and earth enough to elude any but close inspection.

'Now, Freney darlint, if ye'd find me a drop of sperits to keep the life in him, I'd be all right,' said the old woman, settling herself to her watch. 'He's bleedin' fresh wid the stirrin', an' that's a grand sign—only maybe he'll grow too wake.' Freney had not to go far for the restorative; the camp was always full of drinking and drunken people. After giving it to her, he joined the burying-party to ward off discovery. How did the old nurse, crouching in the shade, watch the dim figures at their work, and listen to their loud, boisterous talk, comprising many an insult to the helpless clay of those whom they called 'Orange thieves!' She saw the old man with the scythe, whose revolting task was to mutilate any bodies in which a lingering of life might yet remain, and shuddered to think of her beloved foster-son subject to his hacking blows.

'Troth, an' I miss one out o' the lot,' said the captain

of the gang, after two graves had been filled. 'I don't see that Orange yeoman villain, son of Black Butler of Doon.'

The unseen listener's blood ran cold. But if they came to where she was, guarding that half-animatèd body, she would let herself be cut to pieces ere it was touched.

'Why, then, 'twould be hard for you to see what's buried as deep as the praties in your own haggard,' interposed Freney readily. 'Sure I smacked the spado on him meself, tho Orange bosthoon.'

And so the danger passed off; and when the rest of the camp were buried in sleep under the stars, Freney carried the captain again, with many pauses and rests, to a by-road where he had driven up a turf-creel or wooden cart with high-railed sides dragged from a neighbouring farm. They travelled a few miles before morning, and spent all day in a deep, grass-grown ditch, where Old Jug dressed her foster-son's wounds. Hours before he had revived from the death-like stupor in which they had found him; but his life was little more than a flicker, and her utmost care was required to keep it from being blown out. Traversing the desolated country thus by unfrequented ways in the night-time, they reached the cave at the foot of Slieve Bui; the safest place of which the old woman could think wherein to nurse-tend her precious prisoner.

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## CHAPTER XLII

## 'WALKING THE PIKES.'

FOR many days the usual mail-bags had ceased to arrive at the village of Doon: the preconcerted signal of rebellion all over the country had been the stoppage of the coaches; and communication between the provinces and the capital was cut off, except by military couriers. The neat little post office at Doon was no longer neat, but, with broken windows and smirched front, attested violence. All the Quaker's elaborate neutrality had not saved him from some experience of the rage of both parties. First had poured in a discomfited body of yeomanry, firing shots in all directions, rifling cottages as they pleased; and, in spite of their officer's written protection, Ephraim Taverner's house suffered like the rest, though in a minor measure. Sundry cabins were set on fire, and some suspected 'croppies,' with coats turned, were shot in the market-place, and their heads affixed on the spikes formerly described as surmounting the door of the little gaol next the court-house. The prudent inhabitants took down these horrible trophies and interred them as soon as the yemen left, which they did with precipitance, hearing that a battalion of rebels was marching upon them. The latter poured in a few hours afterwards, a tribe of uncouth half-savages, without even the outward decorousness that had marked the proceedings of the troops: every man seemed to do what was good in his own eyes and every evil to the inhabitants. Instead of executions in the market-place, there were murders in the cabins and fields. Whatever houses escaped the last marauders were most maltreated now. Very little we, in our peaceful homes, know the extent of gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of events that

ought to accompany the prayer, 'From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, good Lord deliver us!'

After a few days of rebel possession and outrage, news came from flying scouts that the yeomanry were approaching again, headed by him who was hated as Black Butler of Doon. Would they make a stand? Trees were cut down for a barricade, and carts piled across the bridge, and the dwellers of the village trembled at the thought of a hand-to-hand battle among their cottages. But the tumultuous rabble could not stand before the army, especially in the shape of a cavalry detachment; and after some desultory shots against the advancing handful of uniforms, they fled, doing as much parting damage as they could to the village, which was followed up by the soldiery. When Colonel Butler rode in, having been detained by a flag of truce at the barricade (it was a small boy with a bit of white paper stuck in his hat, coming from a houseful of rebels by the roadside who wanted to surrender), he found the red-coats shooting down every man they saw in coloured clothes. The streets were strewn with earthenware and glass, pounded to dust by trampling, and broken furniture, oftentimes half-burnt. As much as he could do was to restrain the rage of the yeomen, who saw in every cabin a nest of rebels to be extirpated, and were maddened by rumours of the atrocities at Scullabogue and Vinegar Hill. Late at night he had succeeded in reducing the place to something like order, locking up the prisoners from immediate slaughter, and billeting his cavalry about wherever there was anything to eat; for the wanton waste of war was already causing scarcity through this most fertile of Irish counties. The main-guard he fixed at Taverner's dilapidated house; but, as for himself, he rode away through the summer twilight to Doon Castle, attended by a couple of orderlies.

An attack had been already repulsed from the old walls by the loyal servants and a few of the colonel's corps: the iron-bossed main-door was scarred and

blackened with the fire which had been kindled against it to force it; the windows were in fragments, and barricaded with planks and furniture, abundantly bullet-marked. When the master of the mansion got inside, he found it in a state of siege: a quantity of provisions laid in, the women stowed away in the underground apartments, heaps of big stones collected on the sills of the upper windows, the massive staircase barricaded across its first flight, and so arranged that all communication could be cut off with the upper floors, were the lower in possession of the insurgents; and thus the house could be disputed storey by storey. But the little garrison were disposed to regard all danger over, now that the colonel himself was among them, and slept very peacefully, so long as they did sleep, on that eventful night.

Whether the sentry fell asleep, too, nobody knew; but certainly no warning of any sort heralded a most hideous outburst of yells from a thousand throats swarming about the castle in the dead hour that comes before dawn. The rebels in mighty force were upon them—in numbers which could have taken the old house piecemeal, stone by stone. They had brought a field-piece, to blow in the iron-bossed hall-door; but how many gunners attempted to point and fire the gun, and were picked off one after another from the loopholes over the doorway, would be hard to count. A gallant defence was made; the gravel was strewn with dead and wounded; but at last the entrance was forced and the defenders driven within their staircase barricade. Another desperate combat ensued: every step, every foot of the balustrade, was contested. Smoke and shots filled the hall. Presently there was a cry to burn them out; and then the colonel consented, for the sake of the women, his servants' and yeomen's wives and children, to seek a surrender.

The parley was cut short by a party of the insurgents entering through an unguarded window at the back: they had no idea of the faith of a truce, nor, indeed, of



a treaty, and would probably have kept no conditions to which they agreed. Now all were at their mercy; and mercy was their mercy invariably. Their purpose in the present instance—carried by acclamation—was to make the survivors of the garrison 'walk the pikes.' For this end a multitude of the rebels gathered under the picture-gallery windows, which opened very low, and held their long pikes point upwards, so as to make a ghastly flooring of sharp blades, out upon which the victim was to step, and be cut to pieces.

Some of the more temperate-minded and humane among them tried to turn them from this cruel plan of murder, and after much clamour and quarrelling succeeded in having lots drawn for who should be saved and who should perish. The lots were simply straws of different lengths, held in the hand so as to conceal their size. Colonel Butler looked at the rebel leader who performed this office, and recognised the malevolent face of Myles Furlong.

'In possession of my own at last, colonel,' he said in a hissing whisper. 'You didn't think this day wud ever come the mornin' you ordered me the cuttin' at the triangle below, where the pikes are waitin' for yerself now.'

The old gentleman vouchsafed no reply, and he utterly refused to draw the lots; he sat quietly waiting their pleasure, prepared to meet death with the dignity of his life.

'Maybe he'd change his mind if he saw them.' Furlong, irritated by his composure, seized his arm and led him to the window. A great shout was set up by the savages below on beholding him, and their horrible weapons gleamed in the morning sun with an undulating movement.

'See, colonel, I don't want you to die, for the shelter you gave little Una,' said Furlong in his ear. 'I can't save you except you draw the straws: that one wid the joint in the end is the long one; pull it out, and ye're all right.'

The old gentleman seemed bewildered, as if he scarcely heard the voice; he continued looking straight down upon the death so near him.

'D'ye hear?' said the blacksmith, getting angry, and clutching his arm again. 'Maybe it's thinkin' ye'll be saved any other way ye are, when the Republic's victorious in every whole place; an' I saw the captin fall wid me own eyes, in the battle of Ross.'

Then indeed the father turned a quick, startled look upon the speaker, having caught his meaning too well; the instant after he fell heavily on the floor.

'Troth an' be's dead,' said Myles, after a minute's exclamation; 'dead without the pikes at all.'

It was a check on their insensate fury for the moment; it turned the tide a little. The old body-servant was allowed to raise his master, and lay him on a couch; and, while chafing his hands and mourning over him,—regardless of his own probable fate in a few minutes,—there was a commotion at the door of the gallery, and an authoritative voice.

'What is all this? I take possession of the castle in the name of the nation. Turn out those fellows, Furlong. Where is Colonel Butler?'

They dropped aside before the priest and his whip, when pistols would not have overawed them, and showed the prostrate form of the old gentleman.

'Not in time to save your friend, I'm sorry to say, Mr. Kavanagh; wish we were. There's too much of this sort of thing going on. Get out of this, ye pack of thieves!' for they were breaking open the cases of curiosities. He laid about him with his riding-whip zealously, and drove the armed men out of the gallery. 'As sure as my name's Father Pat Costello, I'll make ye behave yourselves!'

Fergus was meanwhile down on his knees, trying to open a vein in the arm whose sleeve he had cut up. His dagger was a clumsy lancet, and inflicted a wound much larger than he desired; but with what joy he hailed the first few drops of blood slowly oozing—then

flowing! To save the life of Evelyn's father he gladly risked his own.

With all his authoritativeness, and the superstitious respect paid to his office, the priest had much trouble in turning the insurgents from their fatal purposes towards the prisoners. It was only by his solemn promise to bring them before 'the tribunal of the People,' and let them be dealt with at the Windmill camp, that he succeeded; and, knowing the necessity of action for the restless mass, he split them into parties, and sent them on various enterprises, chiefly to aid their brethren in Wexford and Enniscorthy; on which two points the British troops were converging now.



CHAPTER LIII.

*THE LAST OF THE STORM.*

LONG did Captain Gerald lie between life and death; his wounds were desperate, and strength greater than his might have leaked away through them beyond remedy. All Old Jug's skill in simples was put in exercise: the herbs of the field were ransacked for poultices and healing lotions and strengthening draughts. Freney supplied them with food somehow: fowls and rude joints of meat from the rebel commissariat, which commissariat, in brief, consisted of seizing whatever they could lay their hands on anywhere. The wounded officer was brought to the mouth of the cave, and laid in the sunshine and fresh air for hours daily. Old Jug had great faith in the curative properties of sunshine and fresh air. As he grew better, and could think consecutively, he became most restless, and impatient

of his confinement, and anxious for news of what was going on abroad.

'Sure it's a fine sign to have you so cross, mavourneen,' said the old woman one day, when he attempted a sort of apology for some petulance. 'I'd a dale sooner have you bate me itself, than be lyin' white an' patient, till I'd think the sperit was dead intirely in ye; an' who in the world wud ye be cross wid, if 'twasn't yer ould foster-mother?'

He had news enough a day or two after. Bands of the broken rebels came flying to the glen for safety, with stories of the most utter rout and dispersion. The battle of Vinegar Hill had been fought, where thirteen thousand troops under General Lake had concentrated themselves about the insurgents' headquarters, forced all their positions, and must have destroyed and taken prisoners their whole army, but for a mistake on the part of a brigadier, who left the country open towards Wexford; thus allowing large numbers to escape by what was called after him 'Needham's Gap.' Then came fresh devastation of the country, not now by the insurgents, but by the soldiers, especially the Hessians. A house at Enniscorthy which had been used as a rebel hospital was set on fire, and many sick and wounded perished in its ruins.

Not merely the dispersed rebels and their families came flying to the glen, but farmers and others living in the neighbourhood, who dreaded unspeakably the indiscriminate vengeance of the military. Captain Gerald had learned lessons in his sickness and weakness; among others, was some sympathy for the people, and some knowledge of the oppressions which had helped to drive them to the great crime of insurrection. They cleaved to him now, in their wretchedness and despair, these miserable refugees. He offered to go and make terms for them, if possible. The idea was received with enthusiastic joy. A thousand blessings followed him as the turf-creel—again his chariot—passed out of the glen, and was directed by Freney as charioteer

towards the nearest outpost of the troops. This was at the very village of Doon itself; and, had it not been a place where he was so well known, the captain would have stood a good chance of being shot on his charitable errand; the martial law most frequently in operation being, 'Shoot a man first, and inquire his crime afterwards.'

But the only terms he could gain for the rebels in the glen were that, if they surrendered unconditionally, they should be indulged with a trial for their lives. His old foster-mother, Freney, and the Philomath, to whose care he owed his cure, were to get special protections; afterwards popularly called 'Cornys,' from a contraction of the name of the existent Lord-Lieutenant, Marquis Cornwallis. We may here mention that Mr. O'Doherty, being searched by a picket of zealous yeomen, as he came into Doon under the *agis* of his 'protection,' very nearly lost his life on account of the following verse belonging to his ballad, found scribbled in a 'Red-a-mad-aisy' in one of his pockets:—

'The streets of England were left quite naked  
Of all its army, both foot and horse;  
The Highlands of Scotland were left unguarded;  
Likewise the Hessians the seas they crossed;  
To the Windmill Hill of Farniscorthy  
The British fencibles they flew like deers;  
And our ranks were tattered and sorely scattered  
For loss of Kyan and his Shelmaliers.'<sup>1</sup>

And though this production attained much popularity, its author retained such a lively sense of the risks he had run concerning it, that he never claimed its honours, but addicted himself solely to prose for the remainder of his days.

Old Jug, having seen her foster-son safe at Doon Castle, and reunited to his father, set off with her 'protection' to seek for her real son, of whom she had not heard since the battle of Ross. But how many scores

<sup>1</sup> A regiment of rebels from the sea-coast district thus called, armed with long muskets, and commanded by one Charles Kyan.

of men disappeared in the 'Croppy War' without friends or relatives ever knowing more than the bare fact of disappearance!

The old woman sought for Myles in vain; and returned empty-handed to the forge, where Freney had already found shelter.

'I can't find a bit of him,' sho said, lighting her pipe by the primitive operation of crushing part of a burning turf into its bowl. 'I suppose he's killed. Sure he did his best to be killed, anyhow.'

Freney, who expected no other result, only paused in his nail-making to cross himself as he said, 'Then if that's the way, the heavens be his bed! Amin.'

The old woman uttered a sort of grunt, as her assent to the sentiment. Even Freney was amazed at her hardness; for he felt (as he would have expressed it) his own heart turned within him at the thought of his brother's death. But, looking at her as he added sods to the hearth a few minutes afterwards, he saw that down her poor wrinkled face were rolling big tears, leaving dust furrows, if the truth must be told: nevertheless, when the pipe was smoked out, she quietly rose and put it in the old familiar crevice at the back of the chimney. Then she busied herself for some time in searching about the house, up in the loft, down in the solitary bedroom; a low croon issuing from her lips the while, which swelled at last into a regular Irish cry—

'O Myles acushla, why did ye die?'

Freney pushed in the bedroom door after this had continued some quarter of an hour. She was sitting on the red box which contained in better days the best of their worldly goods, and on her lap she held a worn-out pair of his brother's shoes, the regular hob-nailed brogues which the blacksmith was accustomed to wear. These had been thrown aside as too bad for use, and had also been too bad for plunder at the time of Mr. Bodkin's domiciliary visit.

'Sorra thing elsc I can find that belonged to him—

my poor Myles!' she cried, looking up at Freney with streaming eyes. 'An' he had no rites of the Church, nor nothin' else, out on them wild mountains. An' he was mighty reckless in himself intirely. I don't know how he'll ever do without a funeral, or a wake, or a dacent herryin', Freney. I was thinking we'd have a wake of the oul' shoes itself, sooner than have him without any rites or attintions: sure it's better than nothin', an' tho neighbours 'ill come an' join.'

Neighbours—where were they? The country had been wasted with fire and sword; rogues and honest people were alike in hiding. Very few could be gathered to steal after nightfall to the forge (though it was known to be rather a privileged dwelling under the Butler protection), to mourn with the mother. Even yet it is a current superstition with the most ignorant of Irish peasants, that to 'wake' a man's clothes is as good as 'waking' himself, and attended with equally beneficial results as to purgatory: which this writer does not mean to deny.

The sympathizers had departed at early morn, and Old Jug, her wail having worked itself out, was preparing potatoes for Freney's breakfast, when the latter held out his hand with some small bright object in the palm.

'Look here, mother, did ye ever see that afore? I was tould a message last night that the man that owns it is gone safe over the say—to America itself.'

'Myles's silver hullet,' said she composedly. 'An' ye heard it last night. You great omadhaun, why didn't ye tell me before?'

'Troth, an' I thought it a pity to spoil the neighbours' divarshin, these times when a wake is as scarcee as a weddin'. What for wud I go disturbin' their iligant keening, an' their drop o' drink, an' their pipe of 'haccy, hy news that wud keep?'

The sole information he had was, that a stranger came to the door after sundown, called him outside,

and pressed the bullet into his hand as a true token. So Old Jug mourned no more for her eldest born.

Her second son, considerably sobered by the experiences of the past year, took up the blacksmith's trade for himself, and worked at it his simple best. He would have made no living by it, however, but for help received from Colonel Butler, in the shape of a comfortable annuity to Old Jug. There was scarce any need of smiths' work in the country: farms lay desolate; the roads were solitary. Very gradually came back the life-blood to the drained realm. A season of famine followed, owing to the destruction of the harvest, and suspension of all field industry for months. Robberies were constantly occurring; for numbers of poor wretches skulked about the hills, who could not get protections, and were starving in their fastnesses. Such a convulsion as the rebellion of 1798 leaves years of social misery and misfortune behind it.

Yet, as out of evil Divine Providence can bring good, even that season of crime and wretchedness was productive of beneficial results hardly to have been achieved otherwise. It was a storm of thunder and hail and fire along upon the ground; but it cleared the national atmosphere wonderfully. Class drew nearer to class in the pause that ensued; the common heart of human brotherhood was heard beating, and its claims began to be recognised as men grew calm.

An emblem of the change and the coming alliance of interests (since happily progressing) might be found in the marriage which took place at Doon Castle next autumn. Fergus Kavanagh and Colonel Butler had alike been taught, by the sternest lessons, how both had been wrong in their principles and procedure with reference to the people; each remembered with some shame how this political matter had severed them. As to Captain Gerald, adversity had been to him full of 'sweet uses.' The bonds of friendship between the rectory and the castle were reunited, and welded for ever in the furnace of suffering and danger. And when



the young barrister asked for a discharge in full of all the obligations declared to be owing to him by Evelyn's father, he was not refused. The colonel and her brother had formerly desired a title or great wealth for her, their fair and only one; but they had learned that life is too short and uncertain to be spent in the feverish pursuit of these prizes of mammon, when a treasure of incomparably greater worth is within our reach—even happiness. They had been led to know and feel that this is the prerogative and monopoly of no class; that power cannot command, wealth cannot purchase it; but that it is the gift of God through His dear Son. For individuals and for nations the secret of happiness and prosperity is to be found in a living faith and a spirit of true obedience. For Ireland, for England, for the world, peace, liberty, happiness, are to be gained in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, in the glorious liberty which Christ confers, and in the happiness which is to be found in doing His will.

'And so,' quoth the dear old rector, as he spoke some such words as these to the guests at the wedding banquet, 'let us all kneel down together, and give God thanks for deliverance, and pray for His blessing upon our dear ones and on our native land. The deluge has swept over us, and we have escaped. It is suitable enough that we should have a rainbow of hope spanning the last of the storm.'

'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever.' And so the vast majority of the actors and sufferers in that convulsed time lay down quietly at last, under a gradually widening and deepening peace. Of our personal friends, Captain Gerald went out to the Peninsular war ten years afterwards, and fell upon one of its hard-fought fields. Fergus Kavanagh became administrator of the Doon estates for the children of his Evelyn, and endeavoured to exemplify the axiom that property has its duties as well as its rights.

The foster-brother, Myles Furlong, had learned some lessons from sharp experience also. He pursued his calling in a town of New York State, and, by steadfastly turning his attention from politics to blacksmith's craft, he earned a living and something more. He married an American woman : he had American children. And often round the crackling log-fires, on winter nights, did he speak of his native land and the stormy scenes of his youth, with all the bitterness of an exilo who can never believe that his country has improved in the least since she cast him forth.

His Irish daughter, fair little Una, received a marriage portion from her mistress, earned by faithful service. She gave it and herself into keeping of a 'strong farmer' on the estate. We shall take the liberty of alluding, in her case, to a matter so delicate as the lapso of fifty years; and visit her again after her passage from golden youth and womanhood into 'the silver age.'

Una has strapping sons now, arrived at man's estate, ay, and grandsons also; but still her husband and herself dwell in the snug farmhouse, where all were reared and fledged for the flight that young things are certain to desire, and to adventure if they can. Comely, matronly, a large fair woman, with but few damaging symptoms of her sixty-three years about her, she sits knitting on the bench outside the door this summer evening, waiting for the return of 'himself' from the weekly market. A little child, very like the Una who once slept in a crib at the old forge, plays at her knee, and is called by the same name; Una the elder would scarce know herself by this time without a child at her knee.

She has heard the hoofs of her husband's horse for some little space in the by-road leading to their farmhouse, and raises her head just when she expects (by long habit) he will come in view beside the alder-bushes. He is leading his horse, and another man

walks with him; some friend home from market, and who will also pass the night, a is not uncommon.

'Una, run to meet yer grand-dad! do ye see him coming, dear?'

The child set off quickly enough, with a joyous cry; but on drawing nearer slackened her steps timorously. Then her grandmother saw that the second person was a stranger. A strong-built, tall man, with that pointed beard on his chin only, which was rarer in 1853 than now, and something peculiar about his garb and gait, also something peculiar about his way of speaking when he said, as they came close,—

'Well, I reckon she'll scarcely know me without an introduction, though we are such near relations!'

What was there about those eyes which was not unfamiliar, though she certainly had never seen the face before? The heavy brows and the keen eyes reminded her of those which had looked over her childhood. A faint colour grew on her cheek; she almost expected her husband's words: 'This is Myles Furlong, your father's son.'

Now, during all that gulf of a half-century they had heard of her father but once, and that in a fortuitous way—by report from some returned emigrant. Myles himself would never during his life make an effort to open communication with friends in Ireland, having a dread of some undefined danger, and little knowing, or not believing if he heard it, how perfectly the Government had forgiven the misguided men who were stirred up to that miserable rebellion.

'Yes, I'm your brother Myles,' said the stranger in his slightly nasal accent; 'so you may as well give me a kiss. Well, I guess I'm to hum now,' as he cast himself on the bench with a wearied air. 'And have you the silver bullet still?'

It may be imagined all there was to talk about in this unexpected meeting. His father had died some years previously, a prosperous man, head of certain ironworks in Albany, and leaving his sons prosperous likewise.

'And I've bin always intending to visit the old country, and see for myself what it's like; and I've seen a few things already that didn't square with my notions, I tell you.'

'And what were those, Myles?' asked his brother-in-law, as they sat in the ingle-nook until late hours that night. 'Una, when I met Mr. Kavanagh on the way home, and he stopped to speak civilly, as he always does (indeed, more than civilly: he always speaks real kind), this brother of yours was quite amazed to see a landlord taking any notice at all of a tenant, barrin' to drag the rent out of him by fair means or foul. And he was more amazed to find I couldn't be turned out on the road to-morrow, without rhyme or reason.'

'We are told these things in America,' said the other, reddening slightly.

'The like is sometimes said in Ireland too,' rejoined Una's husband, 'mostly by them that wants to breed discontent for their own purposes, and don't stiek at a few lies. Not that I mean to say every landlord is as good as ours; but, even if they are not, the law ties up their hands, and public opinion morecver.'

'But wouldn't you better like to be your own master, and have no rents to pay?'

'Ask me would I like to be the King of Spain or Emperor of Roosia. God Almighty didn't put me in that position of an estate-owner, but gave me head and hands to work for myself. Why should I want what belongs to another man? That's only a robber's thought.'

('Doesn't he talk like a book?' pondered the admiring wife, in the opposite nook of the ingle.)

'Far in the Western States of our glorious Republic'—began the Irish-American; but unluckily left a pause by clearing his throat.

'I know exactly what you are going to say. No rents or taxes there. Well, believe me, it won't be so always. Are there no rent or taxes in New York?'

'Well, I cale'late you might git along somehow if the rent was all; but the tithes'—

'Never paid a tithe these twenty years,' was the reply.

'No tithes!' said the other in unfeigned wonder. 'No proctors nor tithe-farmers, like what my poor father used to tell me about!'

'I think it's twenty year, anyhow,' said the farmer, thoughtfully gazing into the fire, 'since Parliament made a law that the landlords is to pay what they call the tithe rent-charge, a commutation of the old thing; and the tenant never hears as much as the name of it. But I want to tell ye, Myles, once for all, to put out of your head tee-totally all your father's descriptions of Ireland. I was only a very young boy at the time of the Rebellion, and I grant you there was something to complain of then. But now there isn't a penal law in the statute-book, and the Catholics are full equals of the Protestants, and more so, for there's such a many of them that they're half the magistrates an' the judges, and much more than half the corporation-folk in the towns, besides plenty of members of Parliament.'

Here the Irish-American thought he had a grand opportunity of striking in with his auditor's sympathies, by the remark,—

'Ah, now, if you Hibernians had a Parliament or a Congress of your own! But to be under foreign rule so entirely must rise the dander of such a spirited people.'

'Do you know, I was fairly took in by that sort of talk once. I subscribed to the Repeal "rent," and thought it would be a fine thing to have the bank in College Green a Parliament House again. But I was rather disgusted never to be able to find out what was done with my money, ay, or anybody else's money either: though it went by thousands a-week to the Repeal Association in Dublin. No more than the snow that fell last year did we ever hear tale or tidings of it. And it's my experience that the agitators who talk such a deal about oppression and Saxon domination are generally fellows without a penny to bless themselves, but expect to get money out of your pocket to line their

own. And when I read in the history-book what sort our own old Parliament was, I can't for the life of me see why we should want 'em back again. I've come to think it's a long sight better to belong to a great big empire, and share its prosperity and be sheltered by its power (ay, and sometimes be supported by its money too, like in the famine seven years ago), than to be trying to govern ourselves on separate interests, and squabbling like a set of Kilkenny cats.'

'You're a regular Britisber,' observed Myles Furlong, with a yawn and stretching of his great limbs. 'But I'll fair-ly acknowledge the country's better off than I was led to expect.'

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What further discoveries of the renovated condition of Ireland were made by the Irish-American during his saunter through those pretty pillared halls of Leinster Lawn it belongs not to this history to narrate. Perhaps the matter which made deepest impression upon him was the enthusiastic welcome accorded to Victoria, Queen of England. Not a man of all the millions congregated in Dublin during that triumphal procession but seemed proud to feel that the fair Lady was his Queen also; and the full chivalry of the Celtic heart clasped about her throne.

Myles Furlong the second had seen with his eyes and heard with his ears: he declined thenceforth to see and hear through the organs of interested damagogues. Would that all Irishmen followed his example!

THE END.

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