LEVER CHARLES JAMES

THE O'DONOGHUE: TALE OF IRELAND FIFTY YEARS AGO

Charles Lever

The O'Donoghue: Tale of Ireland Fifty Years Ago

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=25448228
The O'Donoghue: Tale of Ireland Fifty Years Ago:

Содержание

CHAPTER I. GLENFLESK 4
CHAPTER II. THE WAYSIDE INN 13
CHAPTER III. THE “COTTAGE AND THE CASTLE.” 24
CHAPTER IV. KERRY O’LEARY 46
CHAPTER V. IMPRESSIONS OF IRELAND 60
CHAPTER VI. THE BLACK VALLEY 73
CHAPTER VII. SIR ARCHY’S TEMPER TRIED 89
CHAPTER VIII. THE HOUSE OF SICKNESS 105
CHAPTER IX. A DOCTOR’S VISIT 115
CHAPTER X. AN EVENING AT “MARY” M’KELLY’s 127
CHAPTER XI. MISTAKES ON ALL SIDES 153
CHAPTER XII. THE GLEN AT MIDNIGHT 170
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 176

Charles James Lever
The O'Donoghue: Tale of Ireland Fifty Years Ago

CHAPTER I. GLENFLESK

In that wild and picturesque valley which winds its way between the town of Macroom and Bantry Bay, and goes by the name of Glenflesk, the character of Irish scenery is perhaps more perfectly displayed than in any other tract of the same extent in the island. The mountains, rugged and broken, are singularly fanciful in their outline; their sides a mingled mass of granite and straggling herbage, where the deepest green and the red purple of the heath-bell are blended harmoniously together. The valley beneath, alternately widening and narrowing, presents one rich meadow tract, watered by a deep and rapid stream, fed by a thousand rills that come tumbling, and foaming down the mountain sides, and to the traveller are seen like white streaks marking the dark surface of the precipice. Scarcely a hut is to be seen for miles of this lonely glen, and save for the herds of cattle and the flocks of sheep here and there to be descried, it would seem as if the spot had been forgotten by man, and left to sleep in its own gloomy desolation. The river itself has

a character of wildness all its own-now, brawling over rugged rocks-now foaming between high and narrow sides, abrupt as walls, sometimes, flowing over a ledge of granite, without a ripple on the surface-then plunging madly into some dark abyss, to emerge again, lower down the valley, in one troubled sea of foam and spray: its dull roar the only voice that echoes in the mountain gorge. Even where the humble roof of a solitary cabin can be seen, the aspect of habitation rather heightens than diminishes the feeling of loneliness and desolation around. The thought of poverty enduring its privations unseen and unknown, without an eye to mark its struggles, or a heart to console its griefs, comes mournfully on the mind, and one wonders what manner of man he can be, who has fixed his dwelling in such solitude.

In vain the eye ranges to catch sight of one human being, save that dark speck be such which crowns the cliff, and stands out from the clear sky behind. Yes, it is a child watching the goats that are browsing along the mountain, and as you look, the swooping mist has hidden him from your view. Life of dreariness and gloom! What sad and melancholy thoughts must be his companions, who spends the live-long day on these wild heaths, his eye resting on the trackless waste where no fellow-creature moves! how many a mournful dream will pass over his mind! what fearful superstitions will creep in upon his imagination, giving form and shape to the flitting clouds, and making the dark shadows, as they pass, seem things of life and substance.

Poor child of sorrow! How destiny has marked you for misery! For you no childish gambols in the sun – no gay playfellow – no paddling in the running stream, that steals along bright and glittering, like happy infancy – no budding sense of a fair world, opening in gladness; but all, a dreary waste – the weariness of age bound up with the terrors of childhood.

The sun was just setting on a mellow evening, late in the autumn of a year towards the close of the last century, as a solitary traveller sat down to rest himself on one of the large rocks by the road-side; divesting himself of his gun and shot-pouch, he lay carelessly at his length, and seemed to be enjoying the light breeze which came up the valley.

He was a young and powerfully-built man, whose well-knit frame and muscular limbs showed how much habitual exercise had contributed to make the steepest paths of the mountain a task of ease to him. He was scarcely above the middle height, but with remarkable breadth of chest, and that squareness of proportion which indicates considerable physical strength; his countenance, except for a look of utter listlessness and vacuity, had been pleasing; the eyes were large and full, and of the deep grey which simulates blue; the nose large and well-formed; the mouth alone was unprepossessing-the expression it wore was of ill-humour and discontent, and this character seemed so habitual that even as he sat thus alone and in solitude, the curl of the upper lip betrayed his nature.

His dress was a shooting-jacket of some coarse stuff, stained

and washed by many a mountain streamlet; loose trowsers of grey cloth, and heavy shoes-such as are worn by the peasantry, wherever such luxuries are attainable. It would have been difficult, at a mere glance, to have decided what class or condition of life he pertained to; for, although certain traits bespoke the person of a respectable rank, there was a general air of neglect about him, that half contradicted the supposition. He lay for some time perfectly motionless, when the tramp of horses at a distance down the glen suddenly roused him from his seeming apathy, and resting on his elbow he listened attentively. The sounds came nearer and nearer, and now, the dull roll of a carriage could be heard approaching. Strange noises these in that solitary valley, where even the hoofs of a single horse but rarely routed the echoes. A sudden dip of the road at a little distance from where he lay, concealed the view, and he remained in anxious expectancy, wondering what these sounds should portend, when suddenly the carriage seemed to have halted, and all was still.

For some minutes the youth appeared to doubt whether he had not been deceived by some swooping of the wind through the passes in the mountains, when the sound of voices fell on his ear, and at the same moment, two figures appeared over the crest of the hill, slowly advancing up the road. The one was a man advanced in years, but still hale and vigorous, in look-his features even yet eminently handsome, wore an air of mingled frankness and haughtiness; there was in their expression

the habitual character of one accustomed to exert a degree of command and influence over others-a look, which of all the characteristics of temper, is least easily mistaken.

At his side walked one who, even at a passing glance, might be pronounced his daughter, so striking the resemblance between them, She did not seem above sixteen years of age, but through the youthful traits of her features you could mark the same character of expression her father's wore, modified by the tender beauty, which at that age, blends the loveliness of the girl with the graces of womanhood. Bather above than below the middle height, her figure had that distinguishing mark of elegance high birth impresses, and in her very walk a quick observer might detect an air of class.

They both stopped short as they gained the summit of the hill, and appeared wonder-struck at the scene before them. The grey gloom of twilight threw its sombre shadows over the valley, but the mountain peaks were tipped with the setting sun, and shone in those rich violet and purple hues the autumn heath displays so beautifully. The dark-leaved holly and the bright arbutus blossom lent their colour to every jutting cliff and promontory, which, to eyes unacquainted with the scenery, gave an air of culture strangely at variance with the desolation around.

"Is this wild enough for your fancy, Sybella," said the father, with a playful smile, as he watched the varying expression of the young girl's features, "or would you desire something still more dreary?" But she made no answer. Her gaze was fixed on

a thin wreath of smoke that curled its way upwards from what appeared a low mound of earth, in the valley below the road; some branches of trees, covered with sods of earth, grass-grown and still green, were heaped up together, and through these the vapour found a passage and floated into the air.

"I am wondering what that fire can mean," said she, pointing downwards with her finger.

"Here is some one will explain it," said the old man, as for the first time he perceived the youth, who still maintained his former attitude on the bank, and with a studied indifference, paid no attention to those whose presence had before so much surprised him.

"I say, my good fellow, what does that smoke mean we see yonder?"

The youth sprung to his feet with a bound that almost startled his questioner, so sudden and abrupt the motion; his features, inactive and colourless the moment before, seemed almost convulsed now, while they became dark with blood.

"Was it to me you spoke?" said he, in a low guttural tone, which his passion made actually tremulous.

"Yes – "

But before the old man could reply, his daughter, with the quick tact of womanhood, perceiving the mistake her father had fallen into, hastily interrupted him by saying, —

"Yes, sir, we were asking you the cause of the fire at the foot of that cliff."

The tone and the manner in which the words were uttered seemed at once to have disarmed his anger; and although for a second or two he made no answer, his features recovered their former half-listless look, as he said —

"It is a cabin – There is another yonder, beside the river."

"A cabin! Surely you cannot mean that people are living there?" said the girl, as a sickly pallor spread itself across her cheeks.

"Yes, to be sure," replied the youth; "they have no better hereabouts."

"What poverty – what dreadful misery is this!" said she, as the great tears gushed forth, and stole heavily down her face.

"They are not so poor," answered the young man, in a voice of almost reproof. "The cattle along that mountain all belong to these people – the goats you see in that glen are theirs also."

"And whose estate may this be?" said the old man.

Either the questioner or his question seemed to have called up again the youth's former resentment, for he fixed his eyes steadily on him for some time without a word, and then slowly added —

"This belongs to an Englishman – a certain Sir Marmaduke Travers – It is the estate of O'Donoghue."

"Was, you mean, once," answered the old man quickly.

"I mean what I say," replied the other rudely. "Confiscation cannot take away a right, it can at most – "

This speech was fortunately not destined to be finished, for while he was speaking, his quick glance detected a dark object

soaring above his head. In a second he had seized his gun, and taking a steady aim, he fired. The loud report was heard repeated in many a far-off glen, and ere its last echo died away, a heavy object fell upon the road not many yards from where they stood.

"This fellow," said the youth, as he lifted the body of a large black eagle from the ground – "This fellow was a confiscator too, and see what he has come to. You'd not tell me that our lambs were his, would you?"

The roll of wheels happily drowned these words, for by this time the postillions had reached the place, the four post-horses labouring under the heavy-laden travelling carriage, with its innumerable boxes and imperials.

The post boys saluted the young man with marked deference, to which he scarcely deigned an acknowledgment, as he replaced his shot-pouch, and seemed to prepare for the road once more.

Meanwhile the old gentleman had assisted his daughter to the carriage, and was about to follow, when he turned around suddenly and said —

"If your road lies this way, may I offer you a seat with us?"

The youth stared as if he did not well comprehend the offer, and his cheek flushed, as he answered coldly —

"I thank you; but my path is across the mountain."

Both parties saluted distantly, the door of the carriage closed, and the word to move on was given, when the young man, taking two dark feathers from the eagle's wing, approached the window.

"I was forgetting," said he, in a voice of hesitation and

diffidence, “perhaps you would accept these feathers.”

The young girl smiled, and half blushing, muttered some words in reply, as she took the offered present. The horses sprung forward the next instant, and a few minutes after, the road was as silent and deserted as before; and save the retiring sound of the wheels, nothing broke the stillness.

CHAPTER II. THE WAYSIDE INN

As the glen continues to wind between the mountains, it gradually becomes narrower, and at last contracts to a mere cleft, flanked on either side by two precipitous walls of rock, which rise to the height of several hundred feet above the road; this is the pass of Keim-an-eigh, one of the wildest and most romantic ravines of the scenery of the south.

At the entrance to this pass there stood, at the time we speak of, a small wayside inn, or shebeen-house, whose greatest recommendation was in the feet, that it was the only place where shelter and refreshment could be obtained for miles on either side. An humble thatched cabin abutting against the granite rock of the glen, and decorated with an almost effaced sign of St. Finbar converting a very unprepossessing heathen, over the door, showed where Mary M'Kelly dispensed "enthertainment for man and baste."

A chance traveller, bestowing a passing glance upon this modest edifice, might deem that an inn in such a dreary and unfrequented valley, must prove a very profitless speculation – few, very few travelled the road – fewer still would halt to bait within ten miles of Bantry. Report, however, said differently; the impression in the country was, that "Mary's" – as it was briefly styled – had a readier share of business than many a more promising and pretentious hotel; in fact, it was generally

believed to be the resort of all the smugglers of the coast; and the market, where the shopkeepers of the interior repaired in secret to purchase the contraband wares and "run goods," which poured into the country from the shores of France and Holland.

Vast storehouses and caves were said to exist in the rock behind the house, to store away the valuable goods, which from time to time arrived; and it was currently believed that the cargo of an Indiaman might have been concealed within these secret recesses, and never a cask left in view to attract suspicion.

It is not into these gloomy receptacles of contraband that we would now conduct our reader, but into a far more cheerful and more comfortable locality – the spacious kitchen of the cabin, or, in fact, the apartment which served for the double purpose of cooking and eating – the common room of the inn, where around a blazing fire of black turf was seated a party of three persons.

At one side sat the fat and somewhat comely figure of Mary herself, a woman of some five-and-forty years, with that expression of rough and ready temperament, the habits of a wayside inn will teach. She had a clear, full eye – a wide, but not unpleasant mouth – and a voice that suited well the mellifluous intonation of a Kerry accent. Opposite to her were two thin, attenuated old men, who, for dress, look, age, voice, and manner, it would have been almost impossible to distinguish from each other; for while the same weather-beaten, shrivelled expression was common to both, their jackets of blue cloth, leather breeches, and top boots, were so precisely alike, that

they seemed the very Dromios brought back to life, to perform as postillions. Such they were – such they had been for above fifty years. They had travelled the country from the time they were boys – they entered the career together, and together they were jogging onward to the last stage of all, the only one where they hoped to be at rest! Joe and Jim Daly were two names no one ever heard disunited; they were regarded as but one corporeally, and although they affected at times to make distinctions themselves, the world never gave them credit for any consciousness of separate identity. These were the postillions of the travelling carriage, which having left at its destination, about two miles distant, they were now regaling themselves at Mary's, where the horses were to rest for the night.

"Faix, ma'am, and it's driving ye may call it," said one of the pair, as he sipped a very smoking compound the hostess had just mixed, "a hard gallop every step of the way, barrin' the bit of a hill at Carrignacurra."

"Well, I hope ye had the decent hansel for it, any how, Jim?"

"I'm Joe, ma'am, av its plazing to ye; Jim is the pole-end boy; he rides the layders. And it's true for ye – they behaved dacent."

"A goold guinea, divil a less" – said the other, "there's no use in denying it. Begorra, it was all natural, them's as rich as Crasis; sure didn't I see the young lady herself throwing out the tenpenny bits to the gossoons, as we went by, as if it was dirt; bad luck to me, but I was going to throw down the Bishop of Cloyne."

"Throw down who?" said the hostess.

"The near wheeler, ma'am; he's a broken-kneed ould divil, we bought from the bishop, and called him after him; and as I was saying, I was going to cross them on the pole, and get a fall, just to have a scramble for the money, with the gaffers."

"'They look so poor,' says she. God help her – it's little poverty she saw – there isn't one of them crayters hasn't a sack of potatoes."

"Ay – more of them a pig."

"And hens," chimed in the first speaker, with a horror at the imposition of people so comfortably endowed, affecting to feel any pressure or poverty.

"And what's bringing them here at all?" said Mrs. M'Kelly, with a voice of some asperity; for she foresaw no pleasant future in the fact of a resident great man, who would not be likely to give any encouragement to the branch of traffic her principal customers followed.

"Sorrow one of me knows," was the safe reply of the individual addressed, who not being prepared with any view of the matter, save that founded on the great benefit to the country, preferred this answer to a more decisive one.

"'Tis to improve the property, they say," interposed the other, who was not equally endowed with caution. "To look after the estate himself he has come."

"Improve, indeed!" echoed the hostess. "Much we want their improving! Why didn't they leave us the ould families of the country? It's little we used to hear of improving, when I was a

child. God be good to us. – There was ould Miles O'Donoghue, the present man's father, I'd like to see what he'd say, if they talked to him about improvement. Ayeh! sure I mind the time a hogshead of claret didn't do the fortnight. My father, rest his soul, used to go up to the house every Monday morning for orders; and ye'd see a string of cars following him at the same time, with tay, and sugar, and wine, and brandy, and oranges, and lemons. Them was the raal improvements!"

"'Tis true for ye, ma'am. It was a fine house, I always heerd tell."

"Forty-six in the kitchen, besides about fourteen colleens and gossoons about the place; the best of enthertainment up stairs and down."

"Musha! that was grand."

"A keg of sperits, with a spigot, in the servants' hall, and no saying by your leave, but drink while ye could stand over it."

"The Lord be good to us!" piously ejaculated the twain.

"The hams was boiled in sherry wine."

"Begorra, I wish I was a pig them times."

"And a pike daren't come up to table without an elegant pudding in his belly that cost five pounds!"

"'Tis the fish has their own luck always," was the profound meditation at this piece of good fortune.

"Ayeh! ayeh!" continued the hostess in a strain of lamentation, "When the ould stock was in it, we never heerd tell of improvements. He'll be making me take out a license, I suppose,"

said she, in a voice of half contemptuous incredulity.

"Faix, there's no knowing," said Joe, as he shook the ashes out of his pipe, and nodded his head sententiously, as though to say, that in the miserable times they'd fallen upon, any thing was possible.

"Licensed for sperits and groceries," said Mrs. M'Kelly, with a sort of hysterical giggle, as if the thought were too much for her nerves.

"I wouldn't wonder if he put up a pike," stammered out Jim, thereby implying that human atrocity would have reached its climax.

The silence which followed this terrible suggestion, was now loudly interrupted by a smart knocking at the door of the cabin, which was already barred and locked for the night.

"Who's there?" said Mary, as she held a cloak across the blaze of the fire, so as to prevent the light being seen through the apertures of the door – "'tis in bed we are, and late enough, too."

"Open the door, Mary, it's me," said a somewhat confident voice. "I saw the fire burning brightly – and there's no use hiding it."

"Oh, troth, Mr. Mark, I'll not keep ye out in the cowld," said the hostess, as, unbarring the door, she admitted the guest whom we had seen some time since in the glen. "Sure enough, 'tisn't an O'Donoghue we'd shut the door agin, any how."

"Thank ye, Mary," said the young man; "I have been all day in the mountains, and had no sport; and as that pleasant old Scotch

uncle of mine gives me no peace, when I come home empty-handed, I have resolved to stay here for the night, and try my luck to-morrow. Don't stir, Jim – there's room enough, Joe: Mary's fire is never so grudging, but there's a warm place for every one. What's in this big pot here, Mary?"

"It's a stew, sir; more by token, of your honour's providin'."

"Mine – how is that?"

"The hare ye shot afore the door, yesterday morning; sure it's raal luck we have it for you now;" and while Mary employed herself in the pleasant hustle of preparing the supper, the young man drew near to the fire, and engaged the others in conversation.

"That travelling carriage was going on to Bantry, Joe, I suppose?" said the youth, in a tone of easy indifference.

"No sir; they stopped at the lodge above."

"At the lodge! – surely you can't mean that they were the English family – Sir Marmaduke."

"'Tis just himself, and his daughter. I heerd them say the names, as we were leaving Macroom. They were not expected here these three weeks; and Captain Hemsworth, the agent, isn't at home; and they say there's no servants at the lodge, nor nothin' ready for the quality at all; and sure when a great lord like that – "

"He is not a lord you fool; he has not a drop of noble blood in his body: he's a London banker – rich enough to buy birth, if gold could do it." The youth paused in his vehemence; then added, in a muttering voice – "Rich enough to buy up the inheritance of

those who have blood in their veins."

The tone of voice in which the young man spoke, and the angry look which accompanied these words, threw a gloom over the party, and for some time nothing was said on either side. At last he broke silence abruptly by saying —

"And that was his daughter, then?"

"Yes, sir; and a purty crayture she is, and a kind-hearted. The moment she heerd she was on her father's estate, she began asking the names of all the people, and if they were well off, and what they had to ate, and where was the schools."

"The schools!" broke in Mary, in an accent of great derision – "musha, it's great schooling we want up the glen, to teach us to bear poverty and cowld, without complaining: learning is a fine thing for the hunger – "

Her irony was too delicate for the thick apprehension of poor Jim, who felt himself addressed by the remark, and piously responded —

"It is so, glory be to God!"

"Well," said the young man, who now seemed all eagerness to resume the subject – "well, and what then?"

"Then, she was wondering where was the roads up to the cabins on the mountains, as if the likes of them people had roads!"

"They've ways of their own – the English," interrupted Jim, who felt jealous of his companion being always referred to – "for whenever we passed a little potatoe garden, or a lock of

oak, it was always, 'God be good to us, but they're mighty poor hereabouts;' but when we got into the raal wild part of the glen, with divil a house nor a human being near us, sorrow word out of their mouths but 'fine, beautiful, elegant!' till we came to Keim-an-eigh, and then, ye'd think that it was fifty acres of wheat they were looking at, wid all the praises they had for the big rocks, and black cliffs oyer our heads."

"I showed them your honour's father's place on the mountains," said Joe.

"Yes, faith," broke in Jim; "and the young lady laughed and said, 'you see, father, we have a neighbour after all.'"

The blood mounted to the youth's cheek, till it became almost purple, but he did not utter a word.

"'Tis the O'Donoghue, my lady,' said I," continued Joe, who saw the difficulty of the moment, and hastened to relieve it – "that's his castle up there, with the high tower. 'Twas there the family lived these nine hundred years, whin the whole country was their own; and they wor kings here."

"And did you hear what the ould gentleman said then?" asked Jim.

"No, I didn't – I wasn't mindin' him," rejoined Joe; endeavouring with all his might to repress the indiscreet loquacity of the other.

"What was it, Jim?" said the young man, with a forced smile.

"Faix, he begun a laughing, yer honour, and says he, 'We must pay our respects at Coort,' says he; 'and I'm sure we'll be well

received, for we know his Royal Highness already – that's what he called yer honour."

The youth sprang to his feet, with a gesture so violent and sudden, as to startle the whole party.

"What," he exclaimed, "and are we sunk so low, as to be a scoff and a jibe to a London money-changer? If I but heard him speak the words – "

"Arrah, he never said it at all," said Joe, with a look that made his counterpart tremble all over. "That bosthoon there, would make you believe he was in the coach, convarsing the whole way with him. Sure wasn't I riding the wheeler, and never heerd a word of it. Whisht, I tell ye, and don't provoke me."

"Ay, stop your mouth with some of this," interposed Mary, as she helped the smoking and savoury mess around the table.

Jim looked down abashed and ashamed; his testimony was discredited; and without knowing why or wherefore, he yet had an indistinct glimmering that any effort to vindicate his character would be ill-received; he therefore said nothing more: his silence was contagious, and the meal which a few moments before promised so pleasantly, passed off with gloom and restraint.

All Mary M'Kelly's blandishments, assisted by a smoking cup of mulled claret – a beverage which not a Chateau on the Rhone could rival in racy flavour – failed to recall the young man's good-humour: he sat in gloomy silence, only broken at intervals by sounds of some low muttering to himself. Mary at length having arranged the little room for his reception, bade him good night,

and retired to rest. The postillions sought their dens over the stable, and the youth, apparently lost in his own thoughts, sat alone by the embers of the turf fire, and at last sunk to sleep where he was, by the chimney-corner.

CHAPTER III. THE "COTTAGE AND THE CASTLE."

Of Sir Marmaduke Travers, there is little to tell the reader beyond what the few hints thrown out already may have conveyed to him. He was a London banker, whose wealth was reputed to be enormous. Originally a younger son, he succeeded somewhat late in life to the baronetcy and large estates of his family. The habits, however, of an active city life – the pursuits which a long career had made a second nature to him – rendered him both unfit to eater upon the less exciting duties of a country gentleman's existence, and made him regard such as devoid of interest or amusement. He continued therefore to reside in London for many years after he became the baronet; and it was only at the death of his wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, that these habits became distasteful; he found that he could no longer continue a course which companionship and mutual feeling had rendered agreeable, and he resolved at once to remove to some one of his estates, where a new sphere of occupation might alleviate the sorrows of his loss. To this no obstacle of any kind existed. His only son was already launched into life as an officer in the guards; and, except his daughter, so lately before the reader, he had no other children. The effort to attain forgetfulness was not more successful here, than it is usually found to be.

The old man sought, but found not in a country life the solace he expected; neither his tastes nor his habits suited those of his neighbours; he was little of a sportsman, still less of a farmer. The intercourse of country social life was a poor recompense for the unceasing flow of London society. He grew wearied very soon of his experiment, and longed once more to return to his old haunts and habits. One more chance, however, remained for him, and he was unwilling to reject without trying it. This was, to visit Ireland, where he possessed a large estate, which he had never seen. The property, originally mortgaged to his father, was represented as singularly picturesque and romantic, possessing great mineral wealth, and other resources, never examined into, nor made available. His agent, Captain Hemsworth, a gentleman who resided on the estate, at his annual visit to the proprietor, used to dilate upon the manifold advantages and capabilities of the property, and never ceased to implore him to pay a visit, if even for a week or two, sincerely trusting the while that such an intention might never occur to him. These entreaties, made from year to year, were the regular accompaniment of every settlement of account, and as readily replied to by a half promise, which the maker was certainly not more sincere in pledging.

Three years of country life had now, however, disposed Sir Marmaduke to reflect on this long unperformed journey; and, regardless of the fact that his agent was then grouse-shooting in Scotland, he set out at a moment's notice, and without a word to apprise the household at the lodge of his intended arrival, reached

the house in the evening of an autumn day, by the road we have already been describing.

It is but justice to Sir Marmaduke to add, that he was prompted to this step by other than mere selfish considerations. The state of Ireland had latterly become a topic of the press in both countries. The poverty of the people – interpreted in various ways, and ascribed to very opposite causes – was a constant theme of discussion and conversation. The strange phenomenon of a land teeming with abundance, yet overrun by a starving population, had just then begun to attract notice; and theories were rife in accounting for that singular and anomalous social condition, which unhappily the experience of an additional half century has not succeeded in solving.

Sir Marmaduke was well versed in these popular writings; he had the "Whole State of Ireland" by heart; and so firmly was he persuaded that his knowledge of the subject was perfect, that he became actually impatient until he had reached the country, and commenced the great scheme of regeneration and civilization, by which Ireland and her people were to be placed among the most favoured nations. He had heard much of Irish indolence and superstition – Irish bigotry and intolerance – the indifference to comfort – the indisposition to exertion – the recklessness of the present – the improvidence of the future; he had been told that saint-days and holydays mulcted labour of more than half its due – that ignorance made the other half almost valueless; he had read, that, the easy contentment with poverty, had made

all industry distasteful, and all exertion, save what was actually indispensable, a thing to be avoided.

"Why should these things be, when they were not so in Norfolk, nor in Yorkshire?" was the question he ever asked, and to which his knowledge furnished no reply. There, superstitions, if they existed – and he knew not if they did – came not in the way of daily labour. Saints never unharnessed the team, nor laid the plough inactive – comfort was a stimulant to industry that none disregarded; habits of order and decorum made the possessor respected – poverty almost argued misconduct, and certainly was deemed a reproach. Why then not propagate the system of these happy districts in Ireland? To do this was the great end and object of his visit.

Philanthropy would often seem unhappily to have a dislike to the practical – the generous emotions appear shorn of their freedom, when trammelled with the fruit of experience or reflection. So, certainly it was, in the case before us. Sir Marmaduke had the very best intentions – the weakest notions of their realization; the most unbounded desire for good – the very narrowest conceptions of how to effect it. Like most theorists, no speculative difficulty was great enough to deter – no practical obstacle was so small as not to affright him. It never apparently occurred to him that men are not every where alike, and this trifling omission was the source of difficulties, which he persisted in ascribing to causes outside of himself. Generous, kind-hearted, and benevolent, he easily forgave an injury, never

willingly inflicted one; he was also, however, hot-tempered and passionate; he could not brook opposition to his will, where its object seemed laudable to himself, and was utterly unable to make allowance for prejudices and leanings in others, simply because he had never experienced them in his own breast.

Such was, in a few words, the present occupant of "the Lodge" – as the residence of the agent was styled. Originally a hunting box, it had been enlarged and ornamented by Captain Hemsworth, and converted into a cottage of singular beauty, without, and no mean pretension to comfort, within doors. It occupied an indenture of the glen of Keim-an-eigh, and stood on the borders of a small mountain-lake, the surface of which was dotted with wooded islands. Behind the cottage, and favoured by the shelter of the ravine, the native oaks grew to a great size, and contrasted by the rich foliage waving in the breeze, with the dark sides of the cliff opposite, rugged, barren and immutable.

In all the luxuriance of this mild climate, shrubs attained the height of trees; and flowers, rare enough elsewhere to demand the most watchful care, grew here, unattended and unregarded. The very grass had a depth of green, softer and more pleasing to the eye than in other places. It seemed as if nature had, in compensation for the solitude around, shed her fairest gifts over this lonely spot, one bright gem in the dreary sky of winter.

About a mile further down the glen, and seated on a lofty pinnacle of rock, immediately above the road, stood the once proud castle of the O'Donoghue. Two square and massive towers

still remained to mark its ancient strength, and the ruins of various outworks and bastions could be traced, extending for a considerable distance on every side. Between these square towers, and occupying the space where originally a curtain wall stood, a long low building now extended, whose high-pitched roof and narrow windows vouched for an antiquity of little more than a hundred years. It was a strange incongruous pile, in which fortress and farm-house seemed welded together – the whole no bad type of its past and its present owners. The approach was by a narrow causeway, cut in the rock, and protected by a square keep, through whose deep arch the road penetrated – flanked on either hand by a low battlemented wall; along these, two rows of lime trees grew, stately and beautiful in the midst of all the ruin about them. They spread their waving foliage around, and threw a mellow, solemn shadow along the walk. Except these, not a tree, nor even a shrub, was to be seen – the vast woods of nature's own planting had disappeared – the casualties of war – the chances of times of trouble, or the more ruinous course of poverty, had laid them low, and the barren mountain now stood revealed, where once were waving forests and shady groves, the home of summer birds, the lair of the wild deer.

Cows and farm-horses were stabled in what once had been the outworks of the castle. Implements of husbandry lay carelessly on all sides, neglect and decay marked every thing, the garden-wall was broken down in many places, and cattle strayed at will among the torn fruit-trees and dilapidated terraces, while,

as if to add to the dreary aspect of the scene, the ground for a considerable distance around had been tilled, but never subsequently restored to grass land, and now along its ridged surface noisome weeds and thistles grew rankly, tainting the air with their odour, and sending up heavy exhalations from the moist and spongy earth. If, without, all looked sad and sorrow-struck, the appearances within, were not much better. A large flagged-hall, opened upon two long ill-lighted corridors, from which a number of small sitting-rooms led off. Many of these were perfectly devoid of furniture; in the others, what remained seemed to owe its preservation to its want of value rather than any other quality. Cracked looking-glasses – broken chairs, rudely mended by some country hand – ragged and patched carpets, were the only things to be found, with here and there some dirt-disfigured piece of framed canvas, which, whether tapestry or painting, no eye could now discover. These apartments bore little or no trace of habitation; indeed, for many years they were rarely entered by any one. A large square room in one of the towers, of some forty feet in dimensions, was the ordinary resort of the family, serving the purposes of drawing and dining-room. This was somewhat better in appearance: whatever articles of furniture had any pretension to comfort or convenience were here assembled; and here, were met, old-fashioned sofas, deep arm-chairs, quaint misshapen tables like millipedes, and fat old footstools, the pious work of long-forgotten grandmothers. A huge screen, covered with a motley array of prints and

caricatures, cut off the group around the ample fire-place from the remainder of the apartment, and it is within this charmed circle we would now conduct our reader.

In the great arm-chair, to the right of the ample fire-place, sat a powerfully built old man, whose hair was white as snow, and fell in long waving masses at either side of his head. His forehead, massive and expanded, surmounted two dark, penetrating eyes, which even extreme old age had not deprived of their lustre. The other features of his face were rather marked by a careless, easy sensuality, than by any other character, except that in the mouth the expression of firmness was strongly displayed. His dress was a strange mixture of the costume of gentleman and peasant. His coat, worn and threadbare, bore traces of better days, in its cut and fashion; his vest also showed the fragment of tarnished embroidery along the margin of the flapped pockets; but the coarse knee breeches of corduroy, and the thick grey lambswool stockings, wrinkled along the legs, were no better than those worn by the poorer farmers of the neighbourhood.

This was the O'Donoghue himself. Opposite to him sat one as unlike him in every respect as it was possible to conceive. He was a tall, spare, raw-boned figure, whose grey eyes and high cheek-bones bore traces of a different race from that of the aged chieftain. An expression of intense acuteness pervaded every feature of his face, and seemed concentrated about the angles of the mouth, where a series of deep wrinkles were seen to cross and intermix with each other, omens of a sarcastic spirit,

indulged without the least restraint on the part of its possessor. His wiry grey hair was brushed rigidly back from his bony temples, and fastened into a short queue behind, thus giving greater apparent length to his naturally long and narrow face. His dress was that of a gentleman of the time: a full-skirted coat of a dark brown, with a long vest descending below the hips; breeches somewhat a deeper shade of the same colour, and silk stockings, with silver-buckled shoes, completed an attire which, if plain, was yet scrupulously neat and respectable. As he sat, almost bolt upright, in his chair, there was a look of vigilance and alertness about him very opposite to the careless, nearly drooping air of the O'Donoghue. Such was Sir Archibald M'Nab, the brother of the O'Donoghue's late wife, for the old man had been a widower for several years. Certain circumstances of a doubtful and mysterious nature had made him leave his native country of Scotland many years before, and since that, he had taken up his abode with his brother-in-law, whose retired habits and solitary residence afforded the surest guarantee against his ever being traced. His age must have been almost as great as the O'Donoghue's; but the energy of his character, the lightness of his frame, and the habits of his life, all contributed to make him seem much younger.

Never were two natures more dissimilar. The one, reckless, lavish, and improvident; the other, cautious, saving, and full of forethought. O'Donoghue was frank and open – his opinions easily known – his resolutions hastily formed. M'Nab was close

and secret, carefully weighing every thing before he made up his mind, and not much given to imparting his notions, when he had done so.

In one point alone was there any similarity between them – pride of ancestry and birth they both possessed in common; but this trait, so far from serving to reconcile the other discrepancies of their naturess, kept them even wider apart, and added to the passive estrangement of ill-matched associates, an additional element of active discord.

There was a lad of some fifteen or sixteen years of age, who sat beside the fire on a low stool, busily engaged in deciphering, by the fitful light of the bog-wood, the pages of an old volume, in which he seemed deeply interested. The blazing pine, as it threw its red gleam over the room, showed the handsome forehead of the youth, and the ample locks of a rich auburn, which hung in clusters over it; while his face was strikingly like the old man's, the mildness of its expression – partly the result of youth, partly the character imparted by his present occupation – was unlike that of either his father or brother; for Herbert O'Donoghue was the younger son of the house, and was said, both in temper and appearance, to resemble his mother.

At a distance from the fire, and with a certain air of half assurance, half constraint, sat a man of some five-and-thirty years of age, whose dress of green coat, short breeches, and top boots, suggested at once the jockey, to which the mingled look of confidence and cunning bore ample corroboration. This

was a well-known character in the south of Ireland at that time. His name was Lanty Lawler. The sporting habits of the gentry – their easiness on the score of intimacy – the advantages of a ready-money purchaser, whenever they wished "to weed their stables," admitted the horse-dealer pretty freely among a class, to which neither his habits nor station could have warranted him in presenting himself. But, in addition to these qualities, Lanty was rather a prize in remote and unvisited tracts, such as the one we have been describing, his information being both great and varied in every thing going forward. He had the latest news of the capital – the fashions of hair and toilet – the colours worn by the ladies in vogue, and the newest rumours of any intended change – he knew well the gossip of politics and party – upon the probable turn of events in and out of parliament he could hazard a guess, with a fair prospect of accuracy. With the prices of stock and the changes in the world of agriculture he was thoroughly familiar, and had besides a world of stories and small-talk on every possible subject, which he brought forth with the greatest tact as regarded the tastes and character of his company, one-half of his acquaintances being totally ignorant of the gifts and graces, by which he obtained fame and character with the other.

A roving vagabond life gave him a certain free-and-easy air, which, among the majority of his associates, was a great source of his popularity; but he well knew when to lay this aside, and assume the exact shade of deference and respect his company might require. If then with O'Donoghue himself, he would have

felt perfectly at ease, the presence of Sir Archy, and his taciturn solemnity, was a sad check upon him, and mingled the freedom he felt with a degree of reserve far from comfortable. However, he had come for a purpose, and, if successful, the result would amply remunerate him for any passing inconvenience he might incur; and with this thought he armed himself, as he entered the room some ten minutes before.

"So you are looking for Mark," said the O'Donoghue to Lanty. "You can't help hankering after that grey mare of his."

"Sure enough, sir, there's no denying it. I'll have to give him the forty pounds for her, though, as sure as I'm here, she's not worth the money; but when I've a fancy for a beast, or take a conceit out of her – it's no use, I must buy her – that's it!"

"Well, I don't think he'll give her to you now, Lanty; he has got her so quiet – so gentle – that I doubt he'll part with her."

"It's little a quiet one suits him; faix, he'd soon tire of her if she wasn't rearing or plunging like mad! He's an elegant rider, God bless him. I've a black horse now that would mount him well; he's out of 'Divil-may-care,' Mooney's horse, and can take six foot of a wall flying, with fourteen stone on his back; and barring the least taste of a capped hock, you could not see speck nor spot about him wrong."

"He's in no great humour for buying just now," interposed the O'Donoghue, with a voice to which some suddenly awakened recollection imparted a tone of considerable depression.

"Sure we might make a swop with the mare," rejoined Lanty,

determined not to be foiled so easily; and then, as no answer was forthcoming, after a long pause, he added, "and havn't I the elegant pony for Master Herbert there; a crame colour – clean bred – with white mane and tail. If he was the Prince of Wales he might ride her. She has racing speed – they tell me, for I only have her a few days; and, faix, ye'd win all the county stakes with her."

The youth looked up from his book, and listened with glistening eyes and animated features to the description, which, to one reared as he was, possessed no common attraction.

"Sure I'll send over for her to-morrow, and you can try her," said Lanty, as if replying to the gaze with which the boy regarded him.

"Ye mauna do nae sich a thing," broke in M'Nab. "Keep your rogueries and rascalities for the auld generation ye hae assisted to ruin; but leave the young anes alane to mind ither matters than dicing and horse-racing."

Either the O'Donoghue conceived the allusion one that bore hardly on himself, or he felt vexed that the authority of a father over his son should have been usurped by another, or both causes were in operation together, but he turned an angry look on Sir Archy, and said —

"And why shouldn't the boy ride? was there ever one of his name or family that didn't know how to cross a country? I don't intend him for a highland pedlar."

"He might be waur," retorted M'Nab, solemnly, "he might be

an Irish beggar."

"By my soul, sir," broke in O'Donoghue; but fortunately an interruption saved the speech from being concluded, for at the same moment the door opened, and Mark O'Donoghue, travel-stained and weary-looking, entered the room.

"Well, Mark," said the old man, as his eyes glistened at the appearance of his favourite son – "what sport, boy?"

"Poor enough, sir; five brace in two days is nothing to boast of, besides two hares. Ah, Lanty – you here; how goes it?"

"Purty well, as times go, Mr. Mark," said the horse-dealer, affecting a degree of deference he would not have deemed necessary had they been alone. "I'm glad to see you back again."

"Why – what old broken-down devils have you now got on hand to pass off upon us? It's fellows like you destroy the sport of the country. You carry away every good horse to be found, and cover the country with spavined, wind-galled brutes, not fit for the kennel."

"That's it, Mark – give him a canter, lad," cried the old man, joyfully.

"I know what you are at well enough," resumed the youth, encouraged by these tokens of approval; "you want that grey mare of mine. You have some fine English officer ready to give you an hundred and fifty, or, may be, two hundred guineas, for her, the moment you bring her over to England."

"May I never —

"That's the trade you drive. Nothing too bad for us – nothing

too good for them."

"See now, Mr. Mark, I hope I may never – "

"Well, Lanty, one word for all; I'd rather send a bullet through her skull this minute, than let you have her for one of your fine English patrons."

"Won't you let me speak a word at all," interposed the horse-dealer, in an accent half imploring, half deprecating. "If I buy the mare – and it isn't for want of a sporting offer if I don't – she'll never go to England – no – devil a step. She's for one in the country here beside you; but I won't say more, and there now." At these words he drew a soiled black leather pocket-book from the breast of his coat, and opening it, displayed a thick roll of bank notes, tied with a piece of string – "There now – there's sixty pounds in that bundle there – at least I hope so, for I never counted it since I got it – take it for her or leave it – just as you like; and may I never have luck with a beast, but there's not a gentleman in the county would give the same money for her." Here he dropped his voice to a whisper, and added, "Sure the speedy cut is ten pounds off her price any day, between two brothers."

"What!" said the youth, as his brows met in passion, and his heightened colour showed how his anger was raised.

"Well, well – it's no matter, there's my offer; and if I make a ten pound note of her, sure it's all I live by; I wasn't born to an estate and a fine property, like yourself."

These words, uttered in such a tone as to be inaudible to

the rest, seemed to mollify the young man's wrath, for, sullenly stretching forth his hand, he took the bundle and opened it on the table before him.

"A dry bargain never was a lucky one, they say, Lanty – isn't that so?" said the ODonoghue, as, seizing a small hand-bell, he ordered up a supply of claret, as well as the more vulgar elements for punch, should the dealer, as was probable, prefer that liquor.

"These notes seem to have seen service," muttered Mark: "here's a lagged fellow. There's no making out whether he's two or ten."

"They were well handled, there's no doubt of it," said Lanty, "the tenants was paying them in; and sure you know yourself how they thumb and finger a note before they part with it. You'd think they were trying to take leave of them. There's many a man can't read a word, can tell you the amount of a note, just by the feel of it! – Thank you, sir, I'll take the spirits – it's what I'm most used to."

"Who did you get them from, Lanty?" said the ODonoghue.

"Malachi Glynn, sir, of Cahernavorra, and, by the same token, I got a hearty laugh at the same house once before."

"How was that?" said the old man, for he saw by the twinkle of Lanty's eye, that a story was coming.

"Faix, just this way, sir. It was a little after Christmas last year that Mr. Malachi thought he'd go up to Dublin for a month or six weeks with the young ladies, just to show them, by way of; for ye see, there's no dealing at all downi here; and he thought he'd

bring them up, and see what could be done. Musha! but they're the hard stock to get rid of! and somehow they don't improve by holding them over. And as there was levees, and drawing-rooms, and balls going on, sure it would go hard but he'd get off a pair of them anyhow. Well, it was an elegant scheme, if there was money to do it; but devil a farthin' was to be had, high or low, beyond seventy pounds I gave for the two carriage horses and the yearlings that was out in the field, and sure that wouldn't do at all. He tried the tenants for 'the November,' but what was the use of it, though he offered a receipt in full for ten shillings in the pound? – when a lucky thought struck him. Troth, and it's what ye may call a grand thought too. He was walking about before the door, thinking and ruminating how to raise the money, when he sees the sheep grazing on the lawn fornint him – not that he could sell one of them, for there was a strap of a bond or mortage on them a year before. 'Faix,' and says he, when a man's hard up for cash, he's often obliged to wear a mighty thread-bare coat, and go cold enough in the winter season – and sure it's reason sheep isn't better than Christians; and begorra,' says he, I'll have the fleece off ye, if the weather was twice as cowld.' No sooner said than done. They were ordered into the haggard-yard the same evening, and, as sure as ye're there, they cut the wool off them three days after Christmas. Musha! but it was a pitiful sight to see them turned out shivering and shaking, with the snow on the ground. And it didn't thrive with him; for three died the first night. Well, when he seen what come of it, he had them all

brought in again, and they gathered all the spare clothes and the ould rags in the house together, and dressed them up, at least the ones that were worst; and such a set of craytures never was seen. One had an old petticoat on; another a flannel waistcoat; many, could only get a cravat or a pair of gaiters; but the ram beat all, for he was dressed in a pair of corduroy breeches, and an ould spencer of the master's; and may I never live, if I didn't roll down full length on the grass when I seen him."

For some minutes before Lanty had concluded his story, the whole party were convulsed with laughter; even Sir Archy vouchsafed a grave smile, as, receiving the tale in a different light, he muttered, to himself —

"They're a the same – ne'er-do-well, reckless deevils."

One good result at least followed the anecdote – the good-humour of the company was restored at once – the bargain was finally concluded; and Lanty succeeded by some adroit flattery in recovering five pounds of the price, under the title of luck-penny – a portion of the contract M'Nab would have interfered against at once, but that, for his own especial reasons, he preferred remaining silent.

The party soon after separated for the night, and as Lanty sought the room usually destined for his accommodation, he muttered, as he went, his self-gratulations on his bargain. Already he had nearly reached the end of the long corridor, where his chamber lay, when a door was cautiously opened, and Sir Archy, attired in a dressing-gown, and with a candle in his

hand, stood before him..

"A word wi' ye, Master Lawler," said he, in a low dry tone, the horse-dealer but half liked. "A word wi' ye, before ye retire to rest."

Lanty followed the old man into the apartment with an air of affected carelessness, which soon, however, gave way to surprise, as he surveyed the chamber, so little like any other in that dreary mansion. The walls were covered with shelves, loaded with books; maps and prints lay scattered about on tables; an oak cabinet of great beauty in form and carving, occupied a deep recess beside the chimney; and over the fireplace a claymore of true Highland origin, and a pair of silver-mounted pistols, were arranged like a trophy, surmounted by a flat Highland cap, with a thin black eagle's feather.

Sir Archy seemed to enjoy the astonishment of his guest, and for some minutes made no effort to break silence. At length he said —

"We war speaking about a sma' pony for the laird's son, Mister Lawler – may I ask ye the price?"

The words acted like a talisman – Lanty was himself in a moment. The mere mention of horse flesh brought back the whole crowd of his daily associations, and with his native volubility he proceeded, not to reply to the question, but to enumerate the many virtues and perfections of the "sweetest tool that ever travelled on four legs."

Sir Archy waited patiently till the eloquent eulogy was over,

and then, drily repeated his first demand.

"Is it her price!" said Lanty, repeating the question to gain time to consider how far circumstances might warrant him in pushing a market. "It's her price ye're asking me, Sir Archibald? Troth, and I'll tell you: there's not a man in Kerry could say what's her price. Goold wouldn't pay for her, av it was value was wanted. See now, she's not fourteen hands high, but may I never leave this room if she wouldn't carry me – ay, myself here, twelve stone six in the scales – over e'er a fence between this and Inchigeela."

"It's no exactly to carry you that I was making my inquiry," said the old man, with an accent of more asperity than he had used before.

"Well then, for Master Herbert – sure she is the very beast – "

"What are you, asking for her? – canna you answer a straightforred question, man?" reiterated Sir Archy, in a voice there was no mistaking.

"Twenty guineas, then," replied Lanty, in a tone of defiance; "and if ye offer me pounds I won't take it."

Sir Archy made no answer; but turning to the old cabinet, he unlocked one of the small doors, and drew forth a long leather pouch, curiously embroidered with silver; from this he took ten guineas in gold, and laid them leisurely on the table. The horse dealer eyed them askance, but without the slightest sign of having noticed them.

"I'm no goin' to buy your beast, Mr. Lawler," said the old man, slowly; "I'm just goin' merely to buy your ain good sense and

justice. You say the powney is worth twenty guineas."

"As sure as I stand here. I wouldn't – "

"Weel, weel, I'm content. There's half the money; tak' it, but never let's hear anither word about her here: bring her awa wi' ye; sell or shoot her, do what ye please wi' her; but, mind me, man" – here, his voice became full, strong, and commanding – "tak' care that ye meddle not wi' that young callant, Herbert. Dinna fill his head wi' ranting thoughts of dogs and horses. Let there be one of the house wi' a soul above a scullion or a groom. Ye have brought ruin enough here; you can spare the boy, I trow: there, sir, tak' your money."

For a second or two, Lanty seemed undecided whether to reject or accept a proposal so humiliating in its terms; and when at length he acceded, it was rather from his dread of the consequences of refusal, than from any satisfaction the bargain gave him.

"I'm afraid, Sir Archibald," said he, half timidly, "I'm afraid you don't understand me well."

"I'm afraid I do," rejoined the old man, with a bitter smile on his lip; "but it's better we should understand each other. Good night."

"Well, good night to you, any how," said Lanty, with a slight sigh, as he dropped the money into his pocket, and left the room.

"I have bought the scoundrel cheap!" muttered Sir Archy, as the door closed.

"Begorra, I thought he was twice as knowing!" was Lanty's

reflection, as he entered his own chamber.

CHAPTER IV. KERRY O'LEARY

Lanty Lawler was stirring the first in the house. The late sitting of the preceding evening, and the deep potations he had indulged in, left little trace of weariness on his well-accustomed frame. Few contracts were ratified in those days without the solemnity of a drinking bout, and the habits of the O'Donoghue household were none of the most abstemious. All was still and silent then as the horse-dealer descended the stairs, and took the path towards the stable, where he had left his hackney the night before.

It was Lanty's intention to take possession of his new purchase, and set out on his journey before the others were stirring; and with this object he wended his way across the weed-grown garden, and into the wide and dreary court-yard of the building.

Had he been disposed to moralize – assuredly an occupation he was little given to – he might have indulged the vein naturally enough, as he surveyed on every side the remains of long past greatness and present decay. Beautifully proportioned columns, with florid capitals, supplied the place of gate piers. Richly carved armorial bearings were seen upon the stones used to repair the breaches in the walls. Fragments of inscriptions and half obliterated dates appeared amid the moss-grown ruins; and the very, door of the stable had been a portal of dark oak, studded with large nails, its native strength having preserved it when even

the masonry was crumbling to decay. Lanty passed these with perfect indifference. Their voice awoke no echo within his breast; and even when he noticed them, it was to mutter some jeering allusion to their fallen estate, rather than with any feeling of reverence for what they once represented.

The deep bay of a hound now startled him, however. He turned suddenly round, and close beside him, but within the low wall of a ruined kennel-yard, lay a large foxhound, so old and feeble that, even roused by the approach of a stranger, he could not rise from the ground, but lay helplessly on the earth, and with uplifted throat sent forth a long wailing note. Lanty leaned upon the wall, and looked at him. The emotions which other objects failed to suggest, seemed to flock upon him now. That poor dog, the last of a once noble pack, whose melody used to ring through every glen and ravine of the wild mountains, was an appeal to his heart he could not withstand; and he stood with his gaze fixed upon him.

"Poor old fellow," said he compassionately, "it's a lonely thing for you to be there now, and all your old friends and companions dead and gone. Rory, my boy, don't you know me?"

The tones of his voice seemed to soothe the animal, for he responded in a low cadence indescribably melancholy.

"That's my boy. Sure I knew you didn't forget me;" and he stooped over and patted the poor beast upon the head.

"The top of the morning to you, Mister Lawler," cried out a voice straight over his head – and at the same instant a strange-

looking face was protruded from a little one-paned window of a hay loft – "'tis early you are to-day."

"Ah, Kerry, how are you, my man? I was taking a look at Rory here."

"Faix, he's a poor sight now," responded the other with a sigh; "but he wasn't so once. I mind the time he could lead the pack over Cubber-na-creena mountain, and not a dog but himself catch the scent, after a hard frost and a north wind. I never knew him wrong. His tongue was as true as the priest's – sorra he in it."

A low whine from the poor old beast seemed to acknowledge the praise bestowed upon him; and Kerry continued —

"It's truth I'm telling; and if it wasn't, it's just himself would contradict me. – Tallyho! Rory – tallyho! my ould boy;" and both man and dog joined in a deep-toned cry together.

The old walls sent back the echoes, and for some seconds the sounds floated through the still air of the morning.

Lanty listened with animated features and lit-up eyes to notes which so often had stirred the strongest cords of his heart, and then suddenly, as if recalling his thoughts to their former channel, cried out —

"Come down, Kerry, my man – come down here, and unlock the door of the stable. I must be early on the road this morning."

Kerry O'Leary – for so was he called, to distinguish him from those of the name in the adjoining county – soon made his appearance in the court-yard beneath. His toilet was a hasty one, consisting merely of a pair of worn corduroy small clothes and

an old blue frock, with faded scarlet collar and cuffs, which, for convenience, he wore on the present occasion buttoned at the neck, and without inserting his arms in the sleeves, leaving these appendages to float loosely at his side. His legs and feet were bare, as was his head, save what covering it derived from a thick fell of strong black hair that hung down on every side like an ill-made thatch.

Kerry was not remarkable for good looks. His brow was low, and shaded two piercing black eyes, set so closely together, that they seemed to present to the beholder one single continuous dark streak beneath his forehead: a short snubby nose, a wide thick-lipped mouth, and a heavy massive under-jaw, made up an assemblage of features, which, when at rest, indicated little of remarkable or striking; but when animated and excited, displayed the strangest possible union of deep cunning and simplicity, intense curiosity and apathetic indolence. His figure was short, almost to dwarfishness, and as his arms were enormously long, they contributed to give that air to his appearance. His legs were widely bowed, and his gait had that slouching, shambling motion, so indicative of an education cultivated among horses and stable-men. So it was, in fact, Kerry had begun life as a jockey. At thirteen he rode a winning race at the Curragh, and came in first on the back of Blue Blazes, the wickedest horse of the day in Ireland. From that hour he became a celebrity, and until too old to ride, was the crack jockey of his time. From jockey he grew into trainer – the usual transition of the

tadpole to the frog; and when the racing stud was given up by the O'Donoghue in exchange for the hunting field, Kerry led the pack to their glorious sport. As time wore on, and its course brought saddening fortunes to his master, Kerry's occupation was invaded; the horses were sold, the hounds given up, and the kennel fell to ruins. Of the large household that once filled the castle, a few were now retained; but among these was Kerry. It was not that he was useful, or that his services could minister to the comfort or convenience of the family; far from it, the commonest offices of in-door life he was ignorant of, and, even if he knew, would have shrunk from performing them, as being a degradation. His whole skill was limited to the stable-yard, and there, now, his functions were unneeded. It would seem as if he were kept as a kind of memento of their once condition, rather than any thing else. There was a pride in maintaining one who did nothing the whole day but lounge about the offices and the court-yard, in his old ragged suit of huntsman. And so, too, it impressed the country people, who seeing him, believed that at any moment the ancient splendour of the house might shine forth again, and Kerry, as of yore, ride out on his thoroughbred, to make the valleys ring with music. He was, as it were, a kind of staff, through which, at a day's notice, the whole regiment might be mustered. It was in this spirit he lived, and moved, and spoke. He was always going about looking after a "nice beast to carry the master," and a "real bit of blood for Master Mark," and he would send a gossoon to ask if Barry O'Brien of the bridge "heard tell

of a fox in the cover below the road." In fact, his preparations ever portended a speedy resumption of the habits in which his youth and manhood were spent.

Such was the character who now, in the easy deshabille described, descended into the court-yard with a great bunch of keys in his hand, and led the way towards the stable.

"I put the little mare into the hack-stable, Mr. Lawler," said he, "because the hunters is in training, and I didn't like to disturb them with a strange beast."

"Hunters in training!" replied Lanty in astonishment. "Why, I thought he had nothing but the grey mare with the black legs."

"And sure, if he hasn't," responded Kerry crankily, "couldn't he buy them when he wants them."

"Oh, that's it," said the other, laughing to himself. "No doubt of it Kerry. Money will do many a thing."

"Oh, it's wishing it I am for money! Bad luck to the peace or ease I ever seen since they became fond of money. I remember the time it was, 'Kerry go down and bring this, or take that,' and devil a more about it; and lashings of every thing there was. See now! if the horses could eat pease pudding, and drink punch, they'd got it for askin'; but now it's all for saving, and saving. And sure, what's the use of goold? God be good to us, as I heard Father Luke say, he'd do as much for fifteen shillings as for fifty pounds, av it was a poor boy wanted it."

"What nonsense are you talking, you old sinner, about saving. Why man, they haven't got as much as they could bless

themselves on, among them all. You needn't be angry, Kerry. It's not Lanty Lawler you can humbug that way. Is there an acre of the estate their own now? Not if every perch of it made four, it wouldn't pay the money they owe."

"And if they do," rejoined Kerry indignantly, "who has a better right, tell me that? Is it an O'Donoghue would be behind the rest of the country – begorra, ye're bould to come up here and tell us that."

"I'm not telling you any thing of the kind – I'm saying that if they are ruined entirely – "

"Arrah! don't provoke me. Take your baste and go, in God's name."

And so saying, Kerry, whose patience was fast ebbing, pushed wide the stable-door, and pointed to the stall where Lanty's hackney was standing.

"Bring out that grey mare, Master Kerry," said Lanty in a tone of easy insolence, purposely assumed to provoke the old huntsman's anger, "Bring her out here."

"And what for, would I bring her out?"

"May be I'll tell you afterwards," was the reply. "Just do as I say, now."

"The devil a one o' me will touch the beast at your bidding; and what's more, I'll not let yourself lay a finger on her."

"Be quiet, you old fool," said a deep voice behind him. He turned, and there stood Mark O'Donoghue himself, pale and haggard after his night's excess. "Be quiet, I say. The mare is his

– let him have her."

"Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed Kerry, "here's the hunting season beginning, and sorrow thing you'll have to put a saddle on, barrin' – barrin' – "

"Barring what?" interposed Lanty, with an insolent grin.

The young man flushed at the impertinence of the insinuation, but said not a word for a few minutes, then suddenly exclaimed —

"Lanty, I have changed my mind; I'll keep the mare."

The horse-dealer started, and stared him full in the face —

"Why Mr. Mark, surely you're not in earnest? The beast is paid for – the bargain all settled."

"I don't care for that. There's your money again. I'll keep the mare."

"Ay, but listen to reason. The mare is mine. She was so when you handed me the luck-penny, and if I don't wish to part with her, you cannot compel me."

"Can't I?" retorted Mark, with a jeering laugh; "can't I, faith? Will you tell me what's to prevent it? Will you take the law of me? Is that your threat?"

"Devil a one ever said I was that mean, before!" replied Lanty, with an air of deeply-offended pride. "I never demeaned myself to the law, and I'm fifteen years buying and selling horses in every county in Munster. No, Mr. Mark, it is not that; but I'll just tell you the truth, The mare is all as one as sold already; – there it is now, and that's the whole secret."

"Sold! What do you mean? – that you had sold that mare before you ever bought her?"

"To be sure I did," cried Lanty, assuming a forced look of easy assurance he was very far from feeling at the moment. "There's nothing more common in my trade. Not one of us buys a beast without knowing where the next owner is to be had."

"And do you mean, sir," said Mark, as he eyed him with a steady stare, "do you mean to tell me that you came down here, as you would to a petty fanner's cabin, with your bank-notes, ready to take whatever you may pitch your fancy on, sure and certain that our necessities must make us willing chapmen for all you care to deal in – do you dare to say that you have done this with *me?*"

For an instant Lanty was confounded. He could not utter a word, and looked around him in the vain hope of aid from any other quarter, but none was forthcoming. Kerry was the only unoccupied witness of the scene, and his face beamed with ineffable satisfaction at the turn matters had taken, and as he rubbed his hands he could scarcely control his desire to laugh outright, at the lamentable figure of his late antagonist.

"Let me say one word, Master Mark," said Lanty at length, and in a voice subdued to its very softest key – "just a single word in your own ear," and with that he led the young man outside the door of the stable, and whispered for some minutes, with the greatest earnestness, concluding in a voice loud enough to be heard by Kerry —

"And after that, I'm sure I need say no more."

Mark made no answer, but leaned his back against the wall, and folded his arms upon his breast.

"May I never if it is not the whole truth," said Lanty, with a most eager and impassioned gesture; "and now I leave it all to yourself."

"Is he to take the mare?" asked Kerry, in anxious dread lest his enemy might have carried the day.

"Yes," was the reply, in a deep hollow voice, as the speaker turned away and left the stable.

While Lanty was engaged in placing his saddle on his new purchase, an operation in which Kerry contrived not to afford him any assistance whatever, Mark O'Donoghue paced slowly to and fro in the courtyard, with his arms folded, and his head sunk upon his breast; nor was he aroused from his reverie until the step of the horse was heard on the pavement beside him.

"Poor Kittane," said he, looking up suddenly, "you were a great pet: I hope they'll be as kind to you as I was; and they'd better, too," added he, half-savagely, "for you've a drop of the Celt in your blood, and can revenge harsh treatment when you meet with it. Tell her owner that she is all gentleness, if not abused, but get her temper once up, and, by Jove, there's not a torrent on the mountain can leap as madly! She knows her name, too: I trust they'll not change that. She was bred beside Lough Kittane, and called after it. See how she can follow;" and with that, the youth sprang forward, and placing his hand on the top

bar of a gate, vaulted lightly over; but scarcely had he reached the ground, when the mare bounded after him, and stood with her head resting on his shoulder.

Mark turned an elated look on the others, and then surveyed the noble animal beside him with all the pride and admiration of a master regarding his handiwork. She was, indeed, a model of symmetry, and well worthy of all the praise bestowed on her.

For a moment or two the youth gazed on her, with a flashing eye and quivering lip, while the mare, catching excitement from the free air of the morning, and the spring she had made, stood with swelled veins and trembling limbs, his counterpart in eagerness. One spirit seemed to animate both. So Mark appeared to feel it, as with a bound he sprung into the saddle, and with a wild cheer dashed forward. With lightning's speed they went, and in a moment disappeared from view. Kerry jumped up on a broken gate-pier, and strained his eyes to catch them, while Lanty, muttering maledictions to himself, on the hair-brained boy, turned everywhere for a spot where he might view the scene.

"There he goes," shouted Kerry; "look at him now; he's coming to the furze ditch into the big field: see! see! she does not see the fence; her head's in the air. Whew – elegant, by the mortial – never touched a hoof to it! – murther! murther! how she gallops in the deep ground, and the wide gripe that's before her! Ah, he won't take it; he's turning away."

"I wish to the Lord he'd break a stirrup-leather," muttered Lanty.

"Oh, Joseph!" screamed Kerry, "there was a jump – twenty feet as sure as I'm living. Where is he now? – I don't see him."

"May you never," growled Lanty, whose indignant anger had burst all bounds: "that's not treatment for another man's horse."

"There he goes, the jewel; see him in the stubble field; sure it's a real picture to see him going along at his ease. Whurroo – he's over the wall. What the devil's the matter now? – they're away;" and so it was: the animal that an instant before was cantering perfectly in hand, had now set off at top speed, and at full stretch. "See the gate – mind the gate – Master Mark – tear-and-ages, mind the gate," shouted Kerry, as though his admonition could be heard half a mile away. "Oh! holy Mary! he's through it," and true enough – the wild and now affrighted beast dashed through the frail timbers, and held on her course, without stopping. "He's broke the gate to flitters."

"May I never, if I don't wish it was his neck," said Lanty, in open defiance.

"Do you, then?" called out Kerry. "Why, then, as sure as my name's Kerry O'Leary, if there's a hair of his head hurted, I'll – "

What the threat was intended for, cannot be known; for his eye once more caught sight of his idol, and he yelled out —

"Take care of the sheep. Bad luck to ye for sheep, ye're always in the way. That's the darling – 'twas myself taught you to have a light hand. Ah, Kittane, you're coming to rayson now."

"The mare won't be worth sixpence," muttered Lanty.

"Twas as good as a day's sport to me," said Kerry, wiping his

brow with the loose sleeve of his coat, and preparing to descend from the elevation, for the young man now entered the distant part of the lawn, and, at an easy canter, was returning to the stable-yard.

"There!" said Mark, as he flung himself from the saddle, "there Kittane, it's the last time you're likely to have a bold burst of it, or myself either, perhaps. She touched her counter on that gate, Lanty; but she's nothing the worse of it."

Lanty grumbled some indistinct mutterings, as he wiped a blood stain from the mare's chest, and looked sulkily at her heaving flanks and sides reeking with foam and sweat.

"Tis a darling you wor," said Kerry, patting her over from her mane to her hind quarters.

"Faix, that cut is ten pounds out of my pocket this morning, anyhow," said Lanty, as he pointed to the slight scratch from which a few drops of blood still flowed.

"Are you off the bargain, then," said Mark sternly, as he turned his head round; for he was already leaving the spot.

"I didn't say so," was the answer.

For a second or two Mark seemed uncertain what reply to make, and then, as if controlling his temper, he nodded carelessly, and with a "Good-by, Lanty," he sauntered slowly towards the house.

"Well, Mr. O'Leary," said Lanty, in a voice of affected politeness, Irishmen are occasionally very fond of employing when they intend great self-respect, "may I trouble you to bring

out that hack of mine."

"'Tis a pleasure, Mr. Lawler, and no trouble in life, av it helps to get rid of you," responded Kerry, as he waddled off on the errand.

Lanty made no reply; perhaps he felt the encounter unequal – perhaps he despised his antagonist; in any case, he waited patiently for Kerry's appearance, and then, passing his arm within the bridle of each horse, he slowly descended the avenue towards the high road.

CHAPTER V. IMPRESSIONS OF IRELAND

It was not without a feeling closely allied to disappointment, that Sir Marmaduke Travers found the advent to his Irish estates uncelebrated by any of those testimonies on the part of his tenantry, his agent, Captain Hemsworth, had often so graphically pictured before him. The post-horses were suffered to drag his carriage unmolested to its destination; there was no assemblage of people to welcome – not a bonfire to hail his arrival. True, he had come totally unexpectedly. The two servants sent forward to prepare the lodge for his reception, only reached there a single day before himself. But Sir Marmaduke had often taken his Yorkshire tenants as much by surprise, and, there, he always found a deputation, and a cortege of mounted yeomen. There were addresses, and triumphal arches, and newspaper paragraphs, and all the innumerable but well-known accompaniments of those patronizing acts of condescension, which consist in the visit of a rich man to his own home. Now, however, all was different. No cheering sounds broke the quiet stillness of the deep valley. No troops of people on horseback or on foot filled the glen. The sun set, calm and golden, behind the purple hills, unscared by the lurid glow of a single bonfire. Save from an appearance of increased bustle, and an air of

movement and stir around the lodge itself, there was nothing to mark his coming. There, indeed, servants were seen to pass and re-pass; workmen were employed upon the flower-garden and the shrubbery walks; and all the indications of care and attention to the villa and its grounds easily perceptible. Beyond these precincts, however, all was still and solitary as before. For miles the road could be seen without a single traveller. The mountains seemed destitute of inhabitants. The peaceful solemnity of the deep glen, along which the cloud shadows moved slowly in procession, increased the sense of loneliness, and Sir Marmaduke already began to suspect, that this last trial of a residence would scarcely prove more fortunate than the previous ones.

Age and wealth are uncomplying task-masters – habit and power endure restraint with an ill grace. The old baronet was half angry with himself for what he felt a mistake, and he could not forgive the country which was the cause of it. He had come expressly to see and pronounce for himself – to witness with his own eyes, to hear with his own ears – and yet he knew not how it was, nothing revealed itself before him. The very labourers who worked in the garden seemed uncommunicative and shy. Their great respect and reverence he understood as a cautious reserve. He must send for Hemsworth – there was nothing else for it. Hemsworth was used to them, and could explain the mode of dealing with them. Their very idioms required translating, and he could not advance without an interpreter.

Not so his daughter. To her the scene had all the charm of romance. The lone dwelling beside the blue lake, the tall and peaked mountains lost in the white clouds, the waving forest with its many a tangled path, the bright islands that, gem-like, spangled the calm surface of the water, realized many a poetic dream of her childhood, and she felt that visionary happiness which serenity of mind, united to the warm imagination of early life, alone can bestow.

It was a fairy existence to live thus secluded in that lonely valley, where the flowers seemed to blossom for them alone; for them, the summer birds sang their roundelays, and the fair moon shed her pale light over hill and stream, with none to mark her splendour save themselves, Not these thoughts alone filled her mind. Already had she noticed the artless habits of the humble peasantry – their gratitude for the slightest services, their affectionate greetings, the touching beauty of their expressions, teeming with an imagery she never heard before. All appealed to her mind with a very different force from what they addressed themselves with to her father's. Already she felt attracted by the figurative eloquence, so popular a gift among the people. The warm fervour of fancy she had believed the attribute of highly-wrought temperaments only, she found here amid poverty and privation; flashes of bright wit broke from the gloom of daily suffering; and the fire which gives life its energy, burned brightly amid the ashes of many an extinguished hope. These were features she was not prepared to meet among a peasantry

living in a wild unvisited district, and day by day they fascinated her more strongly.

It was not entirely to the difference between father and daughter that these varied impressions were owing. The people themselves assumed a tone quite distinctive to each. Sir Marmaduke they had always heard spoken of, as a stern-tempered man, whose severity towards his tenantry was, happily, tempered by the personal kindness of the agent. Captain Hemsworth constantly impressed them with the notion that all harsh measures originated with his principal – the favours came from himself only, the exactions of high rents, the rigorous prosecution of the law, he ever asserted were acts compulsory with him, but always repugnant to his own better feelings. Every little act of grace he accompanied by an assurance, that he "hoped Sir Marmaduke might not hear of it," as the consequences to himself might prove ruinous. In fact, he contrived to mislead both parties in their estimate of each other, and their first acquaintanceship, it could not be supposed, should dispel the illusion. The peasantry, however, were the first to discover the error: long before Sir Marmaduke had made any progress in deciphering the mystic symbols of *their* natures, they had read *his* from end to end. They scanned him with powers of observation no other people in Europe can compete with; and while *he* was philosophizing about the combined influence of their superstitions, their ignorance, and their apathy to suffering, *they* were accurately speculating on all the possible benefits

which might accrue from the residence amongst them, of so very kind-hearted, but such a *mere* simpleton of a man as himself.

They listened with sincere pleasure – for they love any appeal to themselves – to the precepts he so liberally bestowed regarding "industry" and "frugality;" nor did they ever make the reply, which was ready at every lip, that industry cannot be practised without an occupation, nor frugality be pushed beyond the very borders of starvation. No; they answered with a semblance of concurrence, – "True for you, sir; the devil a lie in it – your honour knows it well." Or, when pushed home by any argument against their improvidence, or recklessness, the ever-present reply was – "Sure, sir, it's the will of God;" a piece of fatalism, that rescued them from many a difficulty, when no other aid was near.

"They are a simple set of people," said Sir Marmaduke, as he sat at his breakfast; in the small parlour of the lodge, which looked out upon the glen, "Very ignorant, very barbarous, but easily led – I see through them clearly."

"I like them greatly," said his daughter; "their gratitude knows no bounds for the slightest services; they have a kind of native courtesy, so rare to find amongst a peasantry? how that poor fellow last night wished to climb the cliff, where the eagle's nest is, because I foolishly said I had never seen a young eagle."

"They are totally misunderstood," said Sir Marmaduke, sententiously, rather following out the train of his own reflections, than noticing the remark of his daughter, "all one

hears of their absurd reverence for the priest, or the devoted adherence they practise towards the old families of the country, is mere nonsense, You heard how Dan laughed this morning, when I joked with him about purgatory and the saints; and what a droll description they gave of that queer household – the chieftain – what is his name?

"The O'Donoghue."

"Yes; I never can remember it. No, no; they are not so bigoted; they are merely uninformed. We shall soon see many changes among them. I have written to Bradston about the plans for the cottages, and also the design for a school-house; and then, there's the chapel – that reminds me I have not returned the priest's visit; he was here the day before yesterday."

"If you like, we'll ride there; I have heard that the glen is beautiful higher up."

"I was just going to propose it; that mare seems quiet enough: Lawler says that she has been carrying a lady these last two years; will you try her?"

"I am longing to do so – I'm certain she is gentleness itself."

"Strange fellow that horse-dealer is, too," said the old gentleman in half soliloquy. "In no other country in the universe would such a mere simpleton have taken to the trade of a jockey; he actually did not know what price to ask for his horse; he left it all to ourselves. He'd soon finish his career in London, at that rate of going; but what have we got here – what in heaven's name is all this?" cried he aloud, as he suddenly rose from the table,

and approached a small glass door that opened upon the lawn.

The object which so excited his astonishment was an assemblage of something more than a hundred poor people of every sex and age – from infancy to dotage – seated on the grass, in a wide semicircle, and awaiting the moment when he should issue forth. Every phase of human misery, which want and wretchedness can bestow, was there. The cheeks of some were pale and haggard with recent sickness; others had but a few tattered rags to cover them; many were cripples, unable to move without assistance. There was wan and sickly childhood, and tremulous old age; yet the tone of their voices showed no touch of sadness; they laughed and talked with all the seeming of light-heartedness; and many a droll and merry saying broke from that medley mass of suffering and sorrow. The sudden appearance of Sir Marmaduke at the door instantaneously checked all merriment, and a solemn silence ensued, as he walked forth and stood in front of them.

"What do you want, my good people?" said he at length, as none seemed disposed to open the proceedings.

Had their tongues been unlocked by the spell of a magician, the effect could not have been more instantaneous – a perfect volley of speech followed, in which Sir Marmaduke in vain endeavoured to follow the words of any single speaker. Their rapid utterance, their vehement gesticulation, and a certain guttural mode of pronunciation, quite new to him, made them totally unintelligible, and he stood confused, perplexed, and

confounded for several minutes, staring around on every side.

"Do, in heaven's name, be quiet," cried he at last; "let one or two only talk at a time, and I shall learn what you mean."

A renewal of the clamour ensued; but this time it was a general effort to enforce silence – a process which eventuated in a far greater uproar than before.

"Who, or what are you?" cried Sir Marmaduke, at last losing all temper, at the continuance of a tumult there seemed no prospect of coming to an end.

"We're your honour's tenants, every one of us," shouted the crowd with one voice.

"*My* tenants!" reiterated he in horror and astonishment. "What! is it possible that you are tenants on my property? Where do you live, my poor old man?" said he, addressing a venerable old fellow, with a head as white as snow, and a beard like a patriarch's.

"He does not talk any English, your honour's worship – he has only Irish; he lives in the glen beyond," said a comely woman at his side.

"And you, where do you come from yourself?"

"I'm a poor widow, your honour, with six childer; and sorra bit I have, but the little garden, and the grass of a goat; and sure, fifteen shillings every half year is more nor I can pay, wid all the scrapin' in life."

Sir Marmaduke turned away his head, and as he did so, his eye fell upon a poor creature, whose bloated cheeks and swollen

figure denoted dropsy. The man interpreting the look into a compassionate inquiry, broke forth in a feeble voice – "I brought the nine shillings with me, yer honour; and though the captain refused to take it, I'm sure you won't turn me out of the little place, for being a trifle late. It's the watery dropsy – glory be to God! – I'm under; but they say I'm getting better."

While the poor creature spoke, a low muttering of pity burst from those around him, and many a compassionate look, and many a cheering word was expressed by those scarce less miserable than himself.

There was now a certain kind of order restored to the assembly; and as Sir Marmaduke moved along the line, each in turn addressed his supplication or complaint. One was threatened with a distress on his pig, because he owed two half-years' rent, and could only pay a portion of the debt; there was a failure in the potatoe crop, and a great famine the consequence. Another was only recovering from the "shaking ague," and begged for time, since if he thrashed his oats, now, they would bring nothing in the market. A third entreated liberty to cut his turf on a distant bog, as he was up to his knees in water, in the place allotted to him.

Some came with odd shillings due on the last rent-day, and anxious to get leave to send their children to the school without payment.

Every one had some favour to look for – some mere trifle to the granter; the whole world to him who asked – and, for these, many had come miles away from homes far in the mountains;

a glimmering hope of succour, the only encouragement to the weary journey.

As Sir Marmaduke listened with a feigned composure to narratives, at which his very heart bled, he chanced to observe a strange-looking figure, in an old scarlet uniform, and a paper cap, with a cock's feather stuck slantwise in the side of it. The wearer, a tall, bony youth, with yellow hair, carried a long wattle over his shoulder, as if it were a gun, and when the old baronet's eye fell upon him, he immediately stood bolt upright, and held the sapling to his breast, like a soldier presenting arms.

"Shoulder hoo!" he cried, and as the words were heard, a hearty burst of laughter ran through the crowd; every grief and sorrow was at once forgotten; the eyes wet with tears of sadness, were now moistened with those of mirth; and they laughed like those whose hearts had never known suffering.

"Who is this fellow?" said Sir Marmaduke, half doubting how far he might relish the jest like the others.

"Terry the Woods, your honour," replied a score of voices together.

"Terry the Woods!" repeated he, "and is Terry a tenant of mine?"

"Faix, I am proud to say I am not," said Terry, grounding his weapon, and advancing a step towards him, "divil a farthin' of rent I ever paid, nor ever will. I do have my health mighty well – glory be to God! – and sleep sound, and have good clothes, and do nothing for it; and they say I am a fool, but which of us is the

greatest fool after all."

Another outbreak of laughter was only quelled by Sir Marmaduke asking the reason of Terry's appearance there, that morning – if he had nothing to look for.

"I just came to pay my respects," said Terry composedly, "to wish you a welcome to the country. I thought that as you might be lading the same kind of life as myself, we wouldn't be bad companions, you see, neither of us having much on our hands; and then," continued he, as he took off his paper bonnet and made a deep reverence, "I wanted to see the young lady there, for they tould me she was a born beauty."

Miss Travers blushed. She was young enough to blush at a compliment from such a source, as her father said laughingly —

"Well, Terry, and have they been deceiving you?"

"No," said he, gravely, as with steady gaze he fixed his large blue eyes on the fair features before him. "No – she is a purty crayture – a taste sorrowful or so – but I like her all the better. I was the same myself when I was younger."

Terry's remark was true enough. The young girl had been a listener for some time to the stories of the people, and her face betrayed the sad emotions of her heart. Never before had such scenes of human suffering been revealed before her – the tortuous windings of the poor man's destiny, where want and sickness he in wait for those whose happiest hours are the struggles against poverty and its evils.

"I can show you the beautifullest places in the whole country,"

said Terry, approaching Miss Travers, and addressing her in a low voice, "I'll tell you where the white heath is growing, with big bells on it, like cups, to hould the dew. Were you ever up over Keim-an-eigh?"

"Never," said she, smiling at the eagerness of her questioner.

"I'll bring you, then, by a short-cut, and you can ride the whole way, and maybe we'll shoot an eagle – have you a gun in the house?"

"Yes, there are three or four," said she humouring him.

"And if I shoot him, I'll give you the wing-feathers – that's what they always gave their sweethearts long ago, but them times is gone by."

The girl blushed deeply, as she remembered the present of young O'Donoghue, on the evening they came up the glen. She called to mind the air of diffidence and constraint in which he made the proffer, and for some minutes paid no attention to Terry, who still, continued to talk as rapidly as before.

"There, they are filing off," said Terry – "orderly time," as he once more shouldered his sapling and stood erect. This observation was made with reference to the crowd of poor people, whose names and place of residence Sir Marmaduke having meanwhile written down, they were now returning to their homes with happy and comforted hearts. "There they go," cried Terry, "and an awkward squad they are."

"Were you ever a soldier, Terry?" said Miss Travers.

The poor youth grew deadly pale – the very blood forsook

his lips, as he muttered, “I was.” Sir Marmaduke came up at the instant, and Terry checked himself at once and said —

“Whenever you want me, leave word at Mary M’Kelly’s, in the glen below, and I’ll hear of it.”

“But don’t you think you had better remain here with us? you could help in the garden and the walks.”

“No; I never do be working at all – I hate work.”

“Yes, but easy work, Terry,” said Miss Travers, “among the flowers and shrubs here.”

“No – I’d be quite low and sorrowful if I was to be staying in one place, and maybe – maybe” – here he whispered so low, as only to be heard by her – “maybe they’d find me out.”

“No; there’s no fear of that,” said she, “we’ll take care no one shall trouble you – stay here, Terry.”

“Well, I believe I will,” said he, after a pause, “I may go away when I like.”

“To be sure, and now let us see how you are to be lodged,” said Sir Marmaduke, who already, interested by that inexplicable feeling which grows out of our pity for idiotcy, entered into his daughter’s schemes for poor Terry’s welfare.

A small cottage near the boat-house on the verge of the lake, inhabited by a labourer and his children, offered the wished-for asylum, and there Terry was at once installed, and recognised as a member of the household.

CHAPTER VI. THE BLACK VALLEY

Although deferred by the accidents of the morning, Sir Marmaduke's visit to the priest was not abandoned, and at length, he and his daughter set out on their excursion up the glen. Their road, after pursuing the highway for about two miles, diverged into a narrow valley, from which there was no exit save by the mode in which it was entered. Vast masses of granite rock, piled heap above heap, hung as it were suspended over their heads, the tangled honey-suckle falling in rich festoons from these, and the purple arbutus glowing like grape-clusters among the leaves. It was a mellow, autumnal day, when the warmth of colouring is sobered down by massive shadows – the impress of the clouds which moved slowly above. The air was hot and thick, and save when an occasional breeze came, wafted from the water, was even oppressive.

The silence of the glen was profound – not a bird was heard, nor was there in the vast expanse of air, a single wing seen floating. As they rode, they often stopped to wonder at the strange but beautiful effects of light that glided now slowly along the mountains – disappeared – then shone again; the giant shadows seeming to chase each other through the dreary valley. Thus, sauntering along they took no note of time, when at last

the long low cottage, where the priest lived, came in sight. It was an humble abode, but beautifully situated at the bottom of the glen; the whole valley lying expanded in front, with its bright rivulet and its bold sides of granite. The cottage itself was little better than that of a poor farmer; and save from the ornament of some creepers, which were trained against the walls, and formed into a deep porch at the entrance, differed in no respect from such. A few straggling patches of cultivation, of the very rudest kind, were seen, here and there, but all without any effort at fence or enclosure. Some wild fruit-trees were scattered over the little lawn in front, if the narrow strip of grass that flanked the river could be called such, and here, a small Kerry cow was grazing, the only living thing to be seen.

A little well, arched over with pieces of rock, and surmounted by a small wooden cross, stood close to the road-side, and the wild-thorn that overshadowed it was hung on every side with small patches of rags of every colour and texture that human dress ever consisted of; a sight new to the eyes of the travellers, who knew not, that the shrine was deemed holy, and the tree, the receptacle of the humble offering of those, whose sorrows of mind and body came there for alleviation and succour.

Sir Marmaduke dismounted and approached the door, which lay wide open; he knocked gently with his whip, and as no answer to his summons was returned, repeated it again and again. He now ventured to call aloud, but no one came, and at last, both father and daughter began to suspect there might be no one in

the house.

“This is most strange,” said he, after a long pause, and an effort to peep in through the windows, half hid with honey-suckle.

“The place seems totally deserted. Let us try at the back, however.”

As the old baronet wended his way to the rear of the cottage, he muttered a half upbraiding against his daughter for not complying with his desire to have a groom along with them – a want, which now increased the inconvenience of their position. She laughingly defended herself against the charge, and at the same moment sprang down from her saddle, to assist in the search.

“I certainly perceived some smoke from the chimney as we came up the glen and there must have been some one here lately, at least,” said she, looking eagerly around on every side.

“This is indeed solitude,” muttered her father, as he listened for some minutes, during which the stillness had an effect most appalling.

While he was speaking, Miss Travers had drawn near to a low latticed window which lay half open, and as she peeped in, immediately drew back, and beckoned with her hand for her father to approach, intimating by a cautious gesture that he should do so noiselessly. Sir Marmaduke came stealthily to her side, and, leaning over her shoulder, looked into the room. As both father and daughter exchanged glances, they seemed with difficulty to refrain from laughing, while astonishment was strongly depicted

on the countenance of each. As they continued to gaze, their first emotion gradually yielded to a look of intense interest at the scene before them.

Seated beside the large turf fire of the priest's kitchen, for such it was, was a youth of some fifteen or sixteen years. His figure, light and well proportioned, was clad in a fashion which denoted his belonging to the better class, though neglect and time had made many an inroad on the Costume. His brow was lofty and delicately formed – the temples marked with many a thin blue rein, which had given ft look of delicacy to the countenance, if the deep glow of health had not lit up his cheeks, and imparted a bright lustre to his eyes. He held before him an open volume, from which he declaimed rather than read aloud, as it seemed, for the special delight and amusement of a small ragged urchin of about nine years old – who, with bare legs and feet, was seated on a little pyramid of turf, right opposite to him.

Well might Sir Marmaduke and his daughter feel surprise; the volume was Homer, from which, with elevated voice and flashing eye, the boy was reading – the deep-toned syllables ringing through the low-vaulted chamber with a sweet but a solemn music. Contrasted with the fervid eloquence of the youth, was the mute wonder and rapt attention of the little fellow who listened. Astonishment, awe, and eager curiosity, blended together in that poor little face, every lineament of which trembled with excitement. If a high soaring imagination and elevated tone of thought were depicted in the one, the other,

not less forcibly realized the mute and trembling eagerness of impassioned interest.

The youth paused for a few seconds, and seemed to be reflecting over what he read, when the boy, in an accent broken with anxiety, cried out —

"Read it, again, Master Herbert. Oh, read it again. It's like the cry of the big stag-hound at Carrig-na-curra."

"It is the language of the gods, Mickey – finer and grander than ever man spoke," replied the youth with fervour. "Listen to this, here;" and then, with solemn cadence he declaimed some twenty lines, while, as if the words were those of an incantation, the little fellow sat spellbound, with clasped hands and staring eye-balls gazing before him.

"What does it mean, Master Herbert? – what is it?" said he, in panting eagerness.

"It's about a great hero, Mickey, that was preparing for battle. He was putting on his armour, a coat and a cap of steel, and he was belting on his sword."

"Yes, yes," broke in the little fellow, "and wasn't he saying how he'd murther and kill all before him?"

"Bight enough," said the youth, laughing. "You guessed it well."

"Ah, I knew it," said the boy. "I saw how you clenched your fist, and your eyes wor shinin' like sparks of fire, and I knew it was darin' them he was, in the book there. What did he do after, Master Herbert? Just tell me that, sir."

"He went out in his chariot – "

"Say it like himself first, sir, av it's plazin' to ye," said he, with a most imploring look of entreaty. "I do be glad to hear it out of the book."

The youth, thus entreated, resumed the volume, and read on for several minutes without stopping.

"Oh, that's grand!" said the boy, in a burst of enthusiasm. "'Tis for all the world the way the thunder comes down the glen – moanin' first, far off on the mountains, and then swellin' into a big roar, and afterwards going clap! clap! like a giant clapping his hands. Did he kill the inimy, master dear?"

"No, he was killed himself, and his body dragged over the battlefield."

"Wirra, wirra, wirra!" broke in the child, while he rung his hands, and burst forth into a torrent of tumultuous grief.

"He was killed, Mickey, and listen to the lament of his friends for his death."

Scarcely had the youth read a few lines, when Sir Marmaduke, advancing a little farther, his shadow fell across the chamber. The youth sprang up at once, and came towards them. The flush of surprise – it might be, too, of shame – was on his features; but there was less of awkwardness than many might have exhibited in the manner of his address, as he said —

"Father Luke is from home, sir. He has been sent for to Ballyvourney – "

"You are his relation, I presume?" said Sir Marmaduke,

without letting him finish his speech.

"I am his pupil," replied the youth, with a tone in which offended pride was clearly confessed.

"*I* ask pardon," said the baronet hastily. "It was merely that I might convey my respectful greetings to the worthy father that I asked the question. Perhaps you will allow me to trespass so far upon you, and say, that Sir Marmaduke Travers has been here."

"While Sir Marmaduke was speaking, the youth's eyes were fixed with a steadfast gaze on the features of the young girl, of whose presence till then he seemed unconscious. Fixed and earnest as his stare was, there was nothing in it of rudeness, still less of insult. It was the unequivocal expression of astonishment, the suddenly-awakened sense of admiration in one, on whom, till that very instant, beauty had shed no fascination. His eyes were bent upon her, as Sir Marmaduke thus finished speaking, and the old man smiled as he saw the wonder-struck admiration of the boy.

"You will please to say Sir Marmaduke Travers," repeated he once more, to recall the scattered senses of the youth.

"And his daughter?" murmured the other, as he still continued to stare at her.

"Yes, his daughter," replied Sir Marmaduke, smiling. "May I ask if there be no shorter road back to 'the Lodge,' than that yonder? for I perceive it is full two hours later than I suspected."

"None for those on horseback. The mountain path lies yonder, but even on foot it is not without danger."

"Come, then, Sybella; let us lose no time. We must ride briskly, to reach home by day-light. We are late enough already."

"Too late, if you ride not very fast," replied the youth. "The rain has fallen heavily on the mountains this afternoon. See that waterfall yonder. I crossed it dry-shod at day-break, and now, it is a cataract. This river rises rapidly, and in a single night's rain I have seen the valley all one lake."

"What are we to do then?" cried Miss Travers, eagerly, for now she felt self-reproach at her refusal to take a groom along with them, and was vexed with herself, as well as uneasy for her father.

"Keep the left of the valley till you reach the tall black rock they call 'the pulpit' – you know it, at least you must have seen it, as you came along – then cross the stream, it will be fordable enough by that time, and make the best of your way along under the cliffs, till you arrive at the broken bridge – the two buttresses, I mean. Re-cross the stream there, and gain the meadows, and in some hundred yards you are safe upon the high road. Away then; lose no more time, now; a minute is all the space between risk and safety;" and with these words he sprang forward, and lifted the young girl to her saddle, ere she had time or forethought to decline the service.

"May we not know the name of our kind adviser?" asked Sir Marmaduke, as he mounted his horse.

"Hark! there it comes!" said the youth, pointing upwards to the brow of a cliff, over which a leaping torrent had just bounded.

"The mountain lakes are flooded, when Derrybahn is spouting. Away! away! if you care for safety."

They turned their horses' heads as he spoke, and with a hasty "good bye" they spurred forwards. Short as the time had been since they travelled the same path, the scene was wonderfully changed; the placid stream that stole along, murmuring over its gravelly bed, now rushed onward with a yellow current streaked with white foam; the tiny rivulets that came in slender drops upon the road-side, were now become continuous streams of water, hurrying on to bear their tribute to the river. The sky itself was black and louring, resting midway on the mountains, or drifting past in heavy clouds, while no breeze was stirring below. The many torrents as they fell, filled the air with a low monotonous sound, like the noise of tree tops moved by a distant-storm.

"I thought I heard a voice calling to us," said Sir Marmaduke, as for the first time they slackened their pace, to clear several loose stones that obstructed the way – "did you hear it?"

"I half thought so, too," replied his daughter; "but I can see no one near. There it is again!"

They halted and listened; but the swelling uproar of the waterfalls drowned every sound, and they spurred forward once more, fearing to loiter longer; yet, both as they went, thought they could trace the words, "come back, come back;" but from some strange dread of communicating fears that might not be real, neither told the other.

"He said the left side of the valley; but surely he mistook: see

how the water has gained here, and the opposite bank seems dry."

"Let us follow the advice, father," cried Sybella, "we have no guidance save his; he could not – would not deceive us, Is it not grand! with all its danger, I can admire it."

As she spoke, a tremendous clap of thunder broke above their heads, and made the valley tremble with the sound, while, as if by the shock the charged clouds were rent open, and the rain descended in torrents. With the swooping gush of the ocean spray, storm-lashed and drifted, the rain came down, wrapping in misty darkness every object around them. And now, the swollen cataracts tore madly down the mountain sides, leaping from crag to crag, and rending the clayey soil in deep clefts and gashes. Again the thunder pealed out, and every echo sent hack the sound, till the whole glen vibrated with the deafening clamour. Still they sped onward. The terrified horses strained every limb, and dashing madly on – mid rock and rushing water they went, now, clearing at a bound the course of some gushing stream – now, breasting the beating rain with vigorous chest.

The storm increased; the howling wind joined with the deep-toned thunder into one long continuous roar, that seemed to shake the very air itself.

"Yonder!" said the father, as he pointed to the tall dark pinnacle of rock, known by the country people as "the Pulpit" – "yonder!"

Sybella strained her eye to see through the dense beating rain, and at last caught sight of the huge mass, around whose summit

the charged clouds were flying.

"We must cross the river in this place," said the old man, as he suddenly checked his horse, and looked with terrified gaze on the swollen stream that came boiling and foaming over to where they stood, with branches of trees and fragments of rock rolling onward in the tide. "The youth told us of this spot."

"Let us not hesitate, father," cried the young girl, with a tone of firm, resolute daring she had not used before – "remember what he said, a minute may save or ruin us. Great heaven! what is that?"

A terrific shriek followed her words, and she fell with her head upon her horse's mane; a broad flash of lightning had burst from a dark cloud, and came with vivid force upon her eyeballs.

"Father, dear father, my sight is gone," she screamed aloud, as lifting up her head she rubbed the orbs now paralyzed by the shock.

"My child, my child!" cried the old man, with the piercing shriek of a breaking heart; "look on me, look towards me. Oh, say that you can see me, now – my brain is turning."

"Oh God, I thank thee!" said the terrified girl, as once more her vision was restored, and, dimly, objects began to form themselves before her.

With bare head and upturned eyes, the aged man looked up, and poured forth his prayer of thankfulness to heaven. The raging storm beat on his brow unfelt; his thoughts were soaring to the Throne of Mercies, and knew not earth, nor all its sorrows.

A clap of thunder at the moment broke from the dense cloud above them, and then, in quick succession, like the pealing of artillery, came several more, while the forked lightning shot to and fro, and at last, as if the very earth was riven to its centre, a low booming sound was heard amid the clouds; the darkness grew thicker, and a crash followed that shook the ground beneath them, and splashed the wild waves on every side. The spray sprung madly up, while the roaring of the stream grew louder; the clouds swept past, and the tall Pulpit rock was gone! Struck by lightning, it had rolled from its centre, and fallen across the river, the gushing waters of which poured over it in floods, and fell in white sheets of foam and spray beyond it.

"God is near us, my child," said the old man with fervour; "let us onward."

Her streaming eyes turned on him one look of affection – the emblem of a heart's love – and she prepared to follow.

To return was now impossible, the river had already extended the whole way across the valley in the rear; the only chance of safety lay in front.

"Keep by my side, dearest," said the father, as he rode first into the stream, and tried to head the terrified animal against the current.

"I am near you, father, fear not for me," said she firmly, her hold heart nerved to the danger.

For some seconds the affrighted horses seemed rooted to the earth, and stood amid the boiling current as if spell-bound; a

fragment of a tree, however, in its course, struck the flank of the leading horse, and he sprung madly forward, followed by the other. Now, breasting the stream – now, sinking to the mane beneath it, the noble beasts struggled fiercely on till near the spot, where the Pulpit-rock had left a space between it and the opposite bank, and here, a vast volume of water now poured along unchecked by any barrier.

"To my side – near me, dearest – near me," cried the father, as his horse dashed into the seething flood and sunk above the crest beneath it.

"I cannot, father – I cannot," screamed the affrighted girl, as with a bound of terror her horse sprang back from the chasm, and refused to follow. The old man heard not the words – the current had swept him far down into the stream, amid the rent branches and the rolling rocks – "My child, my child," the only accents heard above the raging din.

Twice did the heroic girl try to face the current, but in vain – the horse plunged wildly up and threatened to fall back, when suddenly through the white foam a figure struggled on and grasped the bridle at the head; next moment, a man leaped forward and was breasting the surge before her —

"Head the stream – head the stream if you can," cried he, who still held on, while the wild waves washed over him; but the poor horse, rendered unmanageable through fear, had yielded to the current, and was now each moment nearing the cataract.

"Cling to me, now," cried the youth, as with the strength of

desperation he tore the girl from the saddle, while with the other hand he grasped an ash bough that hung drooping above his head. As he did so, the mare bounded forward – the waves closed over her, and she was carried over the precipice.

"Cling fast to me, and we are safe," cried the youth, and with vigorous grasp he held on the tree, and thus supported, breasted the stream and reached the bank. Exhausted and worn out, both mind and body powerless, they both fell senseless on the grass.

The last shriek of despair broke from the father's heart as the horse, bereft of rider, swept past him in the flood. The cry aroused the fainting girl; she half rose to her feet and called upon him. The next moment they were locked in each other's arms.

"It was he who saved me, father," said she in accents broken with joy and sorrow; "he risked his life for mine."

The youth recovered consciousness as the old man pressed him to his heart.

"Is she safe?" were the first words he said as he stared around him vaguely, and then, as if overcome, he fell heavily back upon the sward. A joyous cheer broke forth from several voices near, and at the instant, several country people were seen coming forward, with Terry at their head.

"Here we are – here we are, and in good time too," cried Terry; "and if it wasn't that you took a fool's advice, we'd have gone the other road. The carriage is in the glen, my lady," said he, kneeling down beside Sybella, who still remained clasped in her father's arms.

By this time, some of Sir Marmaduke's servants had reached the spot, and by them the old man and his daughter were assisted toward the high road, while two others carried the poor youth, by this time totally unable to make the least exertion.

"This brave boy – this noble fellow," said Sir Marmaduke, as he stooped to kiss the pale high forehead, from which the wet hair hung backwards – "Can no one tell me who he is?"

"He's the young O'Donoghue," replied a half dozen voices together; "a good warrant for courage or bravery any day."

"The O'Donoghue!" repeated Sir Marmaduke, vainly endeavouring in the confusion of the moment to recall the name, and where he had heard it.

"Ay, the O'Donoghue," shouted a coarse voice near him, as a new figure rode up on a small mountain pony. "It oughtn't to be a strange name in these parts. Rouse yourself, Master Herbert, rouse up, my child – sure it isn't a wettin' would cow you this way?"

"What! Kerry, is this you?" said the youth faintly, as he looked around him with half-closed eyelids. "Where's my father?"

"Faix, he's snug at the parlour fire, my darlin', where his son ought to be, if he wasn't turning guide on the mountains, to the enemy of his kith and kin."

These words were said in a whisper, but with an energy that made the boy start from the arms of those who bore him.

"Here's the pony, Master Herbert, get up on him, and be off at once; sure there isn't a blackguard there, with lace on his coat,

wouldn't be laughing at your old clothes when the light comes."

Sir Marmaduke and his daughter were a few paces in advance as these words were spoken, the old baronet giving directions for bestowing every care and attention on one he deemed his guest.

The boy, ashamed and offended both, yielded to the counsel, and suffered himself to be placed upon the saddle.

"Now, then, hould fast, and I'll guide him," said Kerry, as elbowing the crowd right and left, he sprung forward at a run, and in less than a minute had disappeared in the darkness.

Sir Marmaduke became distracted at the loss of his benefactor, and message after message was despatched to bring him back, but all in vain; Kerry and his pony had already gained so much in advance, none could overtake them.

"To-morrow then, my child," said Sir Marmaduke, "to-morrow will, I hope, enable me to speak my gratitude, though I shall not sleep well to-night – I never rested with so heavy a debt unpaid before."

And with these words they slowly wended their way homeward.

CHAPTER VII. SIR ARCHY'S TEMPER TRIED

It was strange that, although the old man and his tender daughter should have sustained no other ill results from their adventure, than the terror which even yet dwelt on their minds, the young and vigorous youth, well trained to every accident of flood or field, felt it most seriously.

The exertions he made to overtake Sir Marmaduke and his daughter, followed by the struggle in the swollen stream, had given such a shock to his frame, that ere day broke the following morning, he was in a fever. The mental excitement conspiring with fatigue and exhaustion, had brought on the symptoms of his malady with such rapidity, that it was evident, even to the unaccustomed observers around him, his state was precarious.

Sir Archibald was the first person at the sick youth's bed-side. The varied fortunes of a long life, not devoid of its own share of vicissitude, had taught him so much of medical skill, as can give warning of the approach of fever; and as he felt the strong and frequent pulse, and saw the flushed and almost swollen features before him, he recognized the commencement of severe and dangerous illness.

Vague and confused images of the previous night's adventure, or visions of the dark valley and the tempest, occupied all the

boy's thoughts; and though he endeavoured, when spoken to, to preserve coherency and memory, the struggle was unavailing; and the immediate impression of a question past, his mind wandered back to the theme which filled his brain.

"How was it then?" said Sir Archy, who, as he sat beside the sick bed, questioned the youth about his adventure. "You said something of a horse?"

"Yes; she was riding. Oh, how bravely she rode too! It was fine to see her as the spray fell over her like a veil, and she shook the drops from her hair."

"Whence came she? Who was the lady?"

"Take care – take care," said the youth in a solemn whisper, and with a steadfast look before him; "Derrybahn has given warning – the storm is coming. It is not for one so tender as you to tempt the river of the black valley."

"Be still, my boy," said the old man; "you must not speak thus; your head will ache if you take not rest – keep quiet."

"Yes; my head, my head," muttered he vaguely, repeating the words which clinked upon his mind. "She put her arm round my neck – There – there," cried he, starting up wildly in his bed, "catch it – seize it – my feet are slipping – the rock moves – I can hold no longer; there – there," and with a low moaning sigh he sunk back fainting on the pillow.

Sir Archibald applied all his efforts to enforce repose and rest; and having partially succeeded, hastened to the O'Donoghue's chamber, to confer with the boy's father on what steps should be

taken to procure medical aid.

It was yet some hours earlier than the accustomed time of his waking, as the old man saw the thin and haggard face of Sir Archy peering between the curtains of his bed.

"Well, what is it?" said he, in some alarm at the unexpected sight. "Has Gubbins issued the distress? Are the scoundrels going to sell us out?"

"No, no; it is another matter brings me here," replied M 'Nab, with a gravity even deeper than usual.

"That infernal bond! By God, I knew it; it never left my dreams these last three nights. Mark was too late, I suppose, or they wouldn't take the interest, and the poor fellow sold his mare to get the money."

"Dinna fash about these things now," said M'Nab with impatience, "It's that poor callant, Herbert – he's very ill – it's a fever he's caught. I'm thinking."

"Oh Herbert!" said O'Donoghue, with a tone of evident relief, that his misfortunes had taken any other shape than the much-dreaded one of money-calamity. "What of him?"

"He's in a fever; his mind is wandering already."

"Not a bit of it; it's a mere wetting – a common cold: the boy fell into the river last night at the old bridge there; Kerry told me something about it; and so, maybe, Mark may reach Cork in good time after all."

"I am no speaking of Mark just now," said M'Nab tartly, "but of the other lad, wha may be dangerously ill, if something be nae

done quickly."

"Then, send for Roach. Let one of the boys saddle a horse and ride over to Killarney. Oh! I was forgetting; let a fellow go off on foot, he'll get there before evening. It is confoundedly hard to have nothing in the stables, even to mount a messenger. I hope Mark may be able to manage matters in Cork. Poor fellow, he hates business as much as I do myself."

Sir Archy did not wait for the conclusion of this rambling reply. Long before it was over, he was half-way down stairs in search of a safe messenger to despatch to Killarney for Doctor Roach, muttering between his teeth as he went —

"We hae nae muckle chance of the docter if we canna send the siller to fetch him, as weel as the flunkie. Eh, sirs? – he's a cannie chiel, is auld Roach, and can smell a fee as soon as scent a fever," and with this sensible reflection he proceeded on his way.

Meanwhile the O'Donoghue himself had summoned energy enough to slip on an old and ragged dressing-gown, and a pair of very unlocomotive slippers, with which attired, he entered the sick boy's room.

"Well, Herbert, lad," said he, drawing the curtains back, and suffering the grey light to fall on the youth's features, "what is the matter? your uncle has been routing me up with a story about you."

He ceased suddenly, as his eyes beheld the change a few hours had wrought in the boy's appearance: "His eyes, deep-buried in their orbits, shone with an unnatural lustre – his cheeks were pale

and sunken, save where a bright patch of florid red marked the centre of each; his lips were dry and shrivelled, and had a slight tremulous motion, as if he were muttering to himself.

"Poor fellow," said the father, "how dreadfully ill he looks. Have you any pain, my boy?"

The boy knew the voice, and recognized the kindly accent, but could not hear or understand the words; and as his eyes glistened with delight, he stole his burning hand from beneath the bed-clothes, and held it out, all trembling, towards his father.

"How sudden this has been: you were quite well last night, Herbert."

"Last night!" echoed the boy, with a strange emphasis on the only words he had caught up.

"No, by the way, it was the night before I mean. I did not see you last night; but, cheer up, my dear boy; we've sent for Roach – he'll put you to rights at once. I hope Mark may reach home before the doctor goes. I'd like to have his advice about that strain in the back."

These last words were uttered in soliloquy, and seemed to flow from a train of thought very different from that arising from the object before him. Sunk in these reflections, he drew near the window, which looked out upon the old court-yard behind the house, and where now a very considerable crowd of beggars had assembled to collect the alms usually distributed each morning from the kitchen. Each was provided with an ample canvas bag, worn over the neck by a string, and capable

of containing a sufficiency of meal or potatoes, the habitual offering, to support the owner for a couple of days at least. They were all busily engaged in stowing away the provender of various sorts and kinds, as luck, or the preference of the cook, decided, laughing or grumbling over their portions, as it might be, when Sir Archibald M'Nab hurriedly presented himself in the midst of them – an appearance which seemed to create no peculiar satisfaction, if one were to judge from the increased alacrity of their movements, and the evident desire they exhibited to move off.

alt="079 “>

The ODonoghue laughed as he witnessed the discomfiture of the ragged mob, and let down the window-sash to watch the scene.

"“Tis going we are; God be good to us!”

“Ye needn't be cursing that way,” said an old hag, with a sack on her back, large enough to contain a child.

“Eyah! the Lord look down on the poor,” said a little fat fellow, with a flannel night-cap and stockings without any feet; “there's no pity now at all, at all.”

“The heavens be your bed, any way,” said a hard-featured little woman, with an accent that gave the blessing a very different signification from the mere words.

“Blessed Joseph! sure it isn't robbers and thieves we are, that ye need hunt us out of the place.”

Such were the exclamations on every side, intermingled with

an undergrowl of the "Scotch naygur" – "the ould scrape-gut," and other equally polite and nattering epithets.

"This is no a place for ye, ye auld beldames and blackguards; awa wi' ye – awa wi' ye at once."

"Them's the words ye'll hear in heaven yet, darlint," said an old fiend of a woman with one eye, and a mouth garnished by a single tooth. "Them's the very words St. Peter will spake to yourself."

"Begorra, he'll not be strange in the other place anyhow," muttered another. "'Tis there hell meet most of his countrymen."

This speech was the signal for a general outburst of laughter.

"Awa wi ye, ye ragged deevils; ye'r a disgrace to a Christian country.'

"Throth we wear breeches an us," said an old fellow on crutches; "and sure I hear that's more nor they do, in the parts your honour comes from."

Sir Archy's passion boiled over at this new indignity. He stormed and swore, with all the impetuous rage of one beside himself with passion; but the effect on his hearers was totally lost The only notice they took was an occasional exclamation of —

"There it is now! Oh, blessed father! hear what he says! Oh, holy mother! isn't he a terrible man?" – comments by no means judiciously adapted to calm his irritation. Meanwhile symptoms of evacuating the territory were sufficiently evident. Cripples were taken on the backs and shoulders of their respective friends; sacks and pouches were slung over the necks. Many a preparatory

shake of the rags showed that the wearer was getting ready for the road, when Sir Archy, suddenly checking himself in the full torrent of his wrath, cried out —

"Bide a wee – stay a minit, ye auld beasties – I hae a word to say to some amang ye."

The altered tone of voice in which he spoke seemed at once to have changed the whole current of popular feeling; for now they all chimed in with —

"Arrah, he's a good man after all; sure 'tis only a way he has" – sentiments which increased in fervency as Sir Archibald took a tolerably well-filled purse from his pocket, and drew out some silver into his hand, many exclaiming —

"'Tis the kind heart often has the hard word; and sure ye can see in his face he isn't cruel.'

"Hear till me," cried Sir Archy aloud, as he held up a shilling before their wistful eyes, "there's mony a ane among ye, able to earn siller. Which o' ye now will step down to Killarney, and tell the docter he's wanted up here wi a' despatch? Ye maun go fast and bring him, or send him here to-night; and if ye do, I'll gie ye this piece o' siller money when ye come back."

A general groan from that class whose age and infirmities placed them out of the reach of competitorship, met this speech, while from the more able section, a not less unequivocal expression of discontent broke forth.

"Down to Killarney," cried one; "begorra, I wonder ye didn't say Kenmare when ye war about it – the devil a less than ten

miles it is."

"Eyah! I'll like to see my own four bones going the same road; sorra a house the whole way where there's a drop of milk or a pratie."

"That's the charity to the poor, I suppose," said the fat fellow of the night-cap. "'Tis wishing it I am, the same charity."

"We wor to bring the doctor on our back, I hope," said a cripple in a bowl.

"Did ever man hear or see the like o' this?" exclaimed M'Nab, as with uplifted hands he stared in wonderment around him. "One wad na believe it."

"True for you, honey," joined in one of the group. "I'm fifty-three years on the road, and I never heerd of any one askin' us to do a hand's turn, afore."

"Out of my sight, ye worthless ne'er-do-weels; awa wi ye at once and for ever. I'll send twenty miles round the country, but I'll hae a mastiff here, 'ill worry the first o' ye that dares to come near the house."

"On my conscience, it will push you hard to find a wickeder baste nor yourself."

"Begorra, he won't be uglier any how."

And with these comments, and the hearty laughter that followed, the tattered and ragged group defiled out of the yard with all the honours of war, leaving Sir Archy alone, overwhelmed with astonishment and anger.

A low chuckling laugh, as the sash was closed over head, made

him look up, and he just caught a glimpse of O'Donoghue as he retired from the window; for in his amusement at the scene, the old man forgot the sick boy and all about him, and only thought of the ridiculous interview he had witnessed.

"His ain father – his ain father!" muttered Sir Archy, as with his brows contracted and his hands clasped behind his back, he ruminated in sadness on all he saw. "What brings ye back again, ye lazy scoundrels? How dare ye venture in here again?"

This not over-courteous interrogatory was addressed to poor Terry the Woods, who, followed by one of Sir Marmaduke's footmen, had at that instant entered the yard.

"What for, are ye come, I say? and what's the flunkie wanting beside ye?"

Terry stood thunderstruck at the sudden outbreak of temper, and turned at once to the responsible individual, to whom he merely acted as guide, to make a reply.

"And are ye tramping it too?" said M'Nab, with a sneering accent as he addressed the footman. "Methinks ye might hae a meal's meat out o' the goold lace on your hat, and look mair like a decent Christian afterwards. Ye'r out of place maybe."

These last words were delivered in an irony, to which a tone of incredulity gave all the sting; and these only were intelligible to the sleek and well-fed individual to whom they were addressed.

In all likelihood, had he been charged with felony or highway robbery, his self-respect might have sustained his equanimity; any common infraction of the statute-law might have been

alleged against him without exciting an undue indignation; but the contemptuous insinuation of being "out of place" – that domestic outlawry, was more than human endurance could stomach; nor was the insult more palatable coming from one he believed to be a servant himself. It was therefore with the true feeling of outraged dignity he replied —

"Not exactly out of place jest now, friend; though, if they don't treat you better than your looks show, I'd recommend you trying for a new situation."

Of a verity, Sir Archibald's temper was destined to sore trials that morning; but this was a home thrust, for which no forethought could have prepared him.

"I hope I am no' going to lose my senses," said he, as he pressed his hands on either side of his temples. "May the Lord keep me from that worst of a' human calamities."

This pious wish, uttered with real, unfeigned fervency, seemed to act like a charm upon the old man's temper, as though the very appeal had suggested a calmer and more patient frame of mind. It was, then, with all the dignity of his natural character, when unclouded by momentary flashes of passion, that he said —

"What may be your errand here this morning?"

Few and simple as the words were, there was that in their quiet, unassuming delivery, which in a second recalled the footman to a full consciousness of his impertinent mistake. He saw at once the immeasurable gulph, impassible to any effort of assumption or insolence, which separated them, and with the ready tact of his

calling, he respectfully took off his hat, and held forth a sealed letter, without one word of reply or apology.

Sir Archibald put on his spectacles, and having carefully read the superscription, turned back towards the house without speaking.

"Here is a letter for you, O'Donoghue," said he, as he entered the parlour where the chief was already seated at his breakfast, while Kerry O'Leary, a short distance behind his chair, was relating the circumstances of the last night's adventure.

"Is it from Mark?" said the old man eagerly; and then glancing at the writing, he threw it from him in disappointment, and added, "I am getting very uneasy about that lad."

"Had ye no' better read the letter; the messenger wha brought it seems to expect an answer," interposed M'Nab.

"Messenger! – eh – not by post? Is Hemsworth come back?" exclaimed O'Donoghue, with an evident degree of fear in his manner.

"No, sir," said Kerry, guessing to what topic his master's thoughts were turning; "the Captain is not coming, they say, for a month or six weeks yet."

"Thank God," muttered O'Donoghue; "that scoundrel never leaves me a night's rest, when I hear he's in the neighbourhood. Will you see what's in it, Archy? – my head is quite confused this morning; I got up three hours before my time."

Sir Archibald resumed his spectacles, and broke the seal. The contents were at some length it would seem, for as he perused

the letter to himself, several minutes elapsed.

"Go on, Kerry," said O'Donoghue; "I want to hear all about this business."

"Well, I believe your honour knows the most of it now; for when I came up to the glen, they were all safe over, barrin' the mare; poor Kittane, she was carried down the falls, and they took her up near a mile below the old bridge, stone dead; Master Mark will fret his heart out when he hears it."

"This is a very polite note," interposed Sir Archy, as he laid the letter open before him, "from Sir Marmaduke Travers, begging to know when he may be permitted to pay his personal respects to you, and express his deep and grateful sense – his own words – of your son's noble conduct in rescuing his daughter at the hazard of his life. It is written with much modesty and good sense, and the writer canna be other than a true gentleman."

"Travers – Travers," repeated O'Donoghue; "why that's the man himself. It was he bought the estate; he's Hemsworth's principal."

"And if he be," replied M'Nab, "canna an honest man ha'e a bad servant? There's nothing about Hemsworth here. It's a ceevil demand from one gentleman to anither."

"So it is, then, Sir Marmaduke, that has been staying at the lodge these some weeks past. That was Mark's secret – poor dear boy, he wouldn't tell me, fearing it would annoy me. Well, what is it he wants."

"To visit you, O'Donoghue."

"What nonsense; the mischiefs done already. The mortgage is forclosed; and as for Carrignacurra, they can do nothing before the next term; Swaby says so, at least."

"Can ye no' comprehend. It is no law document; but a ceevil way to make your acquaintance. Sir Marmaduke wad pay his respects to ye."

"Well, let him come," said O'Donoghue, laughing; "he's sure to find me at home. The sheriff takes care of that for him. Mark will be here to-morrow or next day; I hope he won't come before that."

"The answer must be a written one," said M'Nab; "it wad na be polite to gie the flunkie the response."

"With all my heart, Archy, so that I am not asked to indite it. Miles O'Donoghue are the only words I have written for many a year" – and he added, with a half bitter laugh – "it would have been as well for poor Mark, if I had forgotten even that same."

Sir Archibald retired to write the answer, with many a misgiving as to the substance of the epistle; for while deeply gratified at heart, that his favourite, Herbert, had acquitted himself so nobly, his own pride was mortified, as he thought over the impressions a visit to the O'Donoghue household might have on the mind of a "haughty Southern," for such in his soul he believed him.

There was no help for it, however; the advances were made in a spirit so very respectful, every line breathed such an evident desire, on the writer's part, to be well received, that a refusal, or

even a formal acceptance of the proffered visit, was out of the question. His reply, then, accepted the intended honour, with a profession of satisfaction; apologising for his omission in calling on Sir Marmaduke, on the score of ill health, and concluded by a few words about Herbert, for whom many inquiries were made in the letter. This, written in the clear, but quaint, old-fashioned characters of the writer's time, and signed, "O'Donoghue," was carefully folded, and enclosed in a large square envelope, and with it in his hand, M'Nab re-entered the breakfast room.

"Wad you like to hear the terms of the response, O'Donoghue, before I seal it up?" asked Sir Archy, with an air of importance.

"No, no; I am sure it's all right and proper. You mentioned, of course, that Mark was from home, but we were expecting him back every day."

"I didna make ony remark o' that kind. I said ye wad be happy to see him, and felt proud at the honour of making acquaintance wi' him."

"Damn me if I do, then, Archy," broke in the old man roughly. "For so great a stickler for truth as yourself, the words were somewhat out of place. I neither feel pride nor honour on the subject. Let it go, however, and there's an end to it."

"I've despatched a messenger for Roach to Killarney; that bit of a brainless body, Terry, is gone by the mountain road, and we may expect the docter here to-night;" and with these words, Sir Archy departed to send off his epistle; and the O'Donoghue leaned back in his easy chair, sorely wearied and worried by the

fatigues of the day.

CHAPTER VIII. THE HOUSE OF SICKNESS

How painfully is the sense of severe illness diffused through every part of a household. How solemn is the influence it sheds on every individual, and every object; the noiseless step, the whispered words, the closed curtains, the interruption to the ordinary avocations of life, or the performance of them in gloom and sadness. When wealth and its appliances exist, these things take all the features of extreme care and solicitude for the sufferer; all the agencies of kindness and skill are brought into active exertion, to minister to the rich man in sickness; but when poverty and its evils are present – when the struggle is against the pressure of want, as well as the sufferings of malady, the picture is indeed a dark one.

The many deficiencies in comfort, which daily habit has learned to overlook, the privations which in the active conflict with the world are forgotten, now, come forth in the solitude of the sick house, to affright and afflict us, and we sorrow over miseries long lost to memory till now.

Never since the fatal illness which left O'Donoghue a widower, had there been any thing like dangerous sickness in the house; and like most people who have long enjoyed the blessings of uninterrupted health, they had no thought for such a calamity,

nor deemed it among the contingencies of life. Now, however, the whole household felt the change. The riotous laughter of the kitchen was silenced, the loud speaking hushed, the doors banged by the wind, or the ruder violence of careless hands, were closed noiselessly – every thing betokened that sorrow was there. O'Donoghue himself paced to and fro in the chamber of the old tower, now, stopping to cast a glance down the glen, where he still hoped to see Mark approaching, now, resuming his melancholy walk in sadness of heart.

In the darkened sick-room, and by the bed, sat Sir Archibald, concealed by the curtain, but near enough to give assistance to the sick boy should he need it. He sat buried in his own gloomy thoughts, rendered gloomier, as he listened to the hurried breathings and low mutter-ings of the youth, whose fever continued to increase upon him. The old ill-tempered cook, whose tongue was the terror of the region she dwelt in, sat smoking by the fire, nor noticed the presence of the aged fox hound, who had followed Kerry into the kitchen, and now lay asleep before the fire. Kerry himself ceased to hum the snatches of songs and ballads, by which he was accustomed to beguile the weary day. There was a gloom on every thing, nor was the aspect without doors more cheering. The rain beat heavily in drifts against the windows; the wind shook the old trees violently, and tossed their gnarled limbs in wild confusion, sighing with mournful cadence along the deep glen, or pouring a long melancholy note through the narrow corridors of the old

house. The sound of the storm, made more audible by the dreary silence, seemed to weigh down every heart. Even the bare-legged little gossoon, Mickey, who had come over from Father Luke's with a message, sat mute and sad, and as he moved his naked foot among the white turf ashes, seemed to feel the mournful depression of the hour.

"'Tis a dreadful day of rain, glory be to God!" said Kerry, as he drew a fragment of an old much-soiled newspaper from his pocket, and took his seat beside the blazing fire. For some time he persevered in his occupation without interruption; but Mrs. Branaghan having apparently exhausted her own reflections, now turned upon him to supply a new batch.

"What's in the news, Kerry O'Leary? I think ye might as well read it out, as be mumbling it to yourself there," said she, in a tone seldom disputed in the realm she ruled.

"Musha then," said Kerry, scratching his head, "the little print bates me entirely; the letters do be so close, they hav'n't room to stir in, and my eyes is always going to the line above, and the line below, and can't keep straight in the furrow at all. Come here, Mickey, alanah! 'tis you ought to be a great scholar, living in the house with his reverence. They tell me," continued he, in a whisper to the cook – "they tell me, he can sarve mass already."

Mrs. Branaghan withdrew her dudeen at these words, and gazed at the little fellow with unmixed astonishment, who, in obedience to the summons, took his place beside Kerry's chair, and prepared to commence his task.

"Where will I begin, sir?"

"Begin at the news, av coorse," said Kerry, somewhat puzzled to decide what kind of intelligence he most desired. "What's this here with a large P in the first of it?"

"Prosperity of Ireland, sir," said the child.

"Ay, read about that, Mickey," said the cook, resuming her pipe.

With a sing-song intonation, which neither regarded paragraph nor period, but held on equably throughout a column, the little fellow began —

"The prospect of an abundant harvest is now very general throughout the country; and should we have a continuance off the heavenly weather for a week or so longer, we hope the corn will all be saved."

As the allusion made here by the journalist, was to a period of several years previous, the listeners might be excused for not feeling a perfect concurrence in the statement.'

"Heavenly weather, indeed!" grunted out the cook, as she turned her eyes towards the windows, against which the plashing rain was beating – Mike read on.

"Mr. Foran was stopped last night in Baggot-street, and robbed of his watch and clothes, by four villains who live in Stoney-batter; they are well known, and are advised to take care, as such depredations cannot go long unpunished. The two villains that broke into the house of the Archbishop of Dublin, and murdered the house-maid, will be turned off 'Lord Temple's

trap,' on Saturday next; this, will be a lesson to the people about the Cross-Poddle, that we hope may serve to their advantage."

"Sir Miles M'Shane begs to inform the person who found his shoe-buckle after the last levee, that he will receive one and eight pence reward for the same, by bringing it to No. 2, Ely-place; or if he prefer it, Sir Miles will toss up who keeps the pair. They are only paste, and not diamond, though mighty well imitated."

"Paste!" echoed Mrs. Branahan; "the lying thieves!" her notions on the score of that material being limited to patties and pie-crusts.

"The 'Bucks' are imitating the ladies in all the arts of beautifying the person. – Many were seen painted and patched at the duchess's last ball. We hope this effeminacy may not spread any farther. – It is Mr. Rigby, and not Mr. Harper, is to have the silk gown. Sir George Rose is to get the red ribbon for his services in North America."

"A silk gown and a red ribbon!" cried Mrs. Branaghan. "Bad luck to me, but they might be ashamed of themselves."

"Faix, I never believed what Darby Long said before," broke in Kerry. "He tould me he saw the bishop of Cork in a black silk petticoat like a famale. Is there no more murders, Mickey?"

"I don't know, sir, barrin' they're in the fashionable intelligence."

"Well, read on."

"Donald, the beast, who refused to leave his cell in Trim gaol at the last assizes, and was consequently fired at by a file of

infantry, had his leg amputated yesterday by Surgeon Huston of this town, and is doing remarkably well."

"Where's the sporting news?" said Kerry. "Is not this it, here?" as he pointed to a figure of a horse above a column.

"Mr. Connolly's horse, Gabriel, would have been in first, but he stopped to eat Whaley, the jockey, when he fell. The race is to be run again on Friday next. It was Mr. Daly, and not Mr. Crosbie, horse-whipped the attorney over the course last Tuesday. Mr. Crosbie spent the day with the Duke of Leinster, and is very angry at his name being mentioned in the wrong, particularly as he is bound over to keep the peace towards all members of the bar for three years."

"Captain Heavyside and Mr. Malone exchanged four shots each on the Bull this morning. The quarrel was about racing and politics, and miscellaneous matters."

"It is rumoured that if the Chief Justice be appointed from England, he will decline giving personal satisfaction to the Master of the Rolls; but we cannot credit the report – "

"The Carmelites have taken Banelagh-house for a nunnery."

"That's the only bit in the paper I'd give the snuff of my pipe for," said Mrs. Branaghan. "Read it again, acushla."

The boy re-read the passage.

"Well, well, I wonder if Miss Kate will ever come back again," said she, in a pause.

"To be sure she will," said Kerry; "what would hinder her? hasn't she a fine fortune out of the property? ten thousand, I

heerd the master say."

"Ayeh! sure it's all gone many a day ago; the sorra taste of a brass farthen's left for her or any one else. The master sould every stick an' stone in the place, barrin' the house that's over us, and sure that's all as one as sould too. Ah, then, Miss Kate was the purty child, and had the coaxing ways with her."

"'Tis a pity to make her a nun," said Kerry.

"A pity! why would it be a pity, Kerry O'Leary?" said the old lady, bristling up with anger. "Isn't the nuns happier, and dacenter, and higher nor other women, with rapscallions for husbands, and villians of all kinds for childher? Is it the likes of ye, or the crayture beside ye, that would teach a colleen the way to heaven? Musha, but they have the blessed times of it – fastin' and prayin', and doing all manner of penance, and talking over their sins with holy men."

"Whisht! what's that? there's the bell ringing above stairs," said Kerry, suddenly starting up and listening. "Ay, there it is again," and, so saying, he yawned and stretched himself, and after several interjectional grumblings over the disturbance, slowly mounted the stairs towards the parlour.

"Are ye sleepin' down there, ye lazy deevils?" cried Sir Archy from the landing of the stairs. "Did ye no hear the bell?"

"'Tis now I heerd it," said Kerry composedly, for he never vouchsafed the same degree of deference to Sir Archy, he yielded to the rest of the family.

"Go see if there be any lemon's in the house, and lose no time

about it."

"Faix, I needn't go far then to find out," whined Kerry; "the master had none for his punch these two nights; they put the little box into a damp corner, and, sure enough, they had beards on them like Jews, the same lemons, when they went to look for them."

"Go down then to the woman, M'Kelly's, in the glen, and see if she hae na some there."

"Oh murther! murther!" muttered Kerry to himself, as the whistling storm reminded him of the dreadful weather without doors. "'Tis no use in going without the money," said he slyly, hoping that by this home-thrust he might escape the errand. "Ye maun tell her to put it in the account, man." "'Tis in bad company she'd put it then," muttered Kerry below his breath, then added aloud – "Sorrow one she'd give, if I hadn't the sixpence in my hand."

"Canna ye say it's no' for yoursel', it's for the house – she wad na refuse that."

"No use in life," reiterated he solemnly; "she's a real naygur, and would, not trust Father Luke with a week's snuff, and he's dealt there for sneeshin these thirty years."

"A weel, a weel," said M'Nab in a low harsh voice; "the world's growing waur and waur. Ye maun e'en gie her a shilling, and mind ye get nae bad bawbees in change; she suld gie ye twelve for saxpence."

Kerry took the money without a word in reply; he was foiled

in the plan of his own devising, and with many a self-uttered sarcasm on the old Scotchman, he descended the stairs once more.

“Is Master Herbert worse?” said the cook, as the old huntsman entered the kitchen.

“Begorra he must be bad entirely, when ould Archy would give a shilling to cure him. See here, he’s sending me for lemons down to Mary’s.”

Kerry rung the coin upon the table as if to test its genuineness, and muttered to himself —

“‘Tis a good one, devil a lie in it.”

‘"There’s the bell again; musha, how he rings it.”

This time the voice of Sir Archy was heard in loud tones summoning Kerry to his assistance, for Herbert had become suddenly worse, and the old man was unable to prevent him rising from his bed and rushing from the room.

The wild and excited tones of the youth were mixed with the deeper utterings of the old man, who exerted all his efforts to calm and restrain him as Kerry reached the spot. By his aid the boy was conveyed back to his bed, where, exhausted by his own struggles, he lay without speaking or moving for some hours.

It was not difficult to perceive, however, that this state boded more unfavourably than the former one. The violent paroxysms of wild insanity betokened, while they lasted, a degree of vital energy and force, which now seemed totally to have given way; and although Kerry regarded the change as for the better, the

more practised and skilful mind of Sir Archibald drew a far different and more dispiriting augury.

Thus passed the weary hours, and at last the long day began to decline, but still no sign, nor sound, proclaimed the doctor's coming, and M'Nab's anxiety became hourly more intense.

"If he come na soon," said he, after a long and dreary silence, "he need na tak' the trouble to look at him."

"'Tis what I'm thinking too." said Kerry, with a sententious gravity almost revolting – "when the fingers does be going that way, it's a mighty bad sign. If I seen the hounds working with their toes, I never knew them recover."

CHAPTER IX. A DOCTOR'S VISIT

The night was far advanced as the doctor arrived at the O'Donoghue's house, drenched with rain, and fatigued by the badness of the roads, where his gig was often compelled to proceed for above a mile at a foot pace. Doctor Roach was not in the most bland of tempers as he reached his destination; and, of a verity, his was a nature that stood not in any need of increased acerbity. The doctor was a type of a race at one time very general, but now, it is hard to say wherefore, nearly extinct in Ireland. But so it is; the fruits of the earth change not in course of years more strikingly, than the fashions of men's minds. The habits, popular enough in one generation, survive as eccentricities in another, and are extinct in a third.

There was a pretty general impression in the world, some sixty or seventy years back, that a member of the medical profession, who had attained to any height in his art, had a perfect right to dispense with all the amenities and courtesies which regulate social life among less privileged persons. The concessions now only yielded to a cook, were then extended to a physician; and in accordance with the privilege by which he administered most nauseous doses to the body, he was suffered to extend his dominion, and apply scarcely more palatable remedies to the minds of his patients. As if the ill-flavoured draughts had tinctured the spirit that conceived them, the tone of his

thoughts usually smacked of bitters, until at last he seemed to have realized, in his own person, the conflicting agencies of the pharmacopoeia, and was at once acrid, and pungent, and soporific together.

The College of Physicians could never have reproached Doctor Roach with conceding a single iota of their privileges. Never was there one who more stoutly maintained, in his whole practice through life, the blessed immunity of "the Doctor." The magic word "Recipe," which headed his prescriptions, suggested a tone of command to all he said, and both his drugs and dicta were swallowed without remonstrance.

It may not be a flattering confession for humanity, but it is assuredly a true one, that the exercise of power, no matter how humble its sphere, or how limited its range, will eventually generate a tyrannical habit in him who wields it. Doctor Roach was certainly not the exception to this rule. The Czar himself was not more autocrat in the steppes of Russia, than was he in any house where sickness had found entrance. From that hour he planted his throne there. All the caprices of age, all the follies of childhood, the accustomed freedoms of home, the indulgences which grow up by habit in a household, had to give way before a monarch more potent than all, "the Doctor." Men bore the infliction with the same patient endurance they summoned to sustain the malady. They felt it to be grievous and miserable, but they looked forward to a period of relief, and panted for the arrival of the hour, when the disease and the doctor would take

their departure together.

If the delight they experienced at such a consummation was extreme, so to the physician it savoured of ingratitude. “I saved his life yesterday,” saith he, “and see how happy he is, to dismiss me to-day.” But who is ever grateful for the pangs of a toothache? – or what heart can find pleasure in the memory of sententiousness, senna, and low diet?

Never were the blessings of restored health felt with a more suitable thankfulness than by Doctor Roach’s patients. To be free once more from his creaking shoes, his little low dry cough, his harsh accents, his harsher words, his contradictions, his sneers, and his selfishness, shed a halo around recovery, which the friends of the patient could not properly appreciate.

Such was the individual whose rumbling and rattling vehicle now entered the court-yard of Carrig-na-curra, escorted by poor Terry, who had accompanied him the entire way on foot. The distance he had come, his more than doubts about the fee, the severity of the storm, were not the accessories likely to amend the infirmities of his temper; while a still greater source of irritation than all existed in the mutual feeling of dislike between him and Sir Archibald M’Nab. An occasional meeting at a little boarding-house in Killarney, which Sir Archy was in the habit of visiting each summer for a few days – the only recreation he permitted himself – had cultivated this sentiment to such a pitch, that they never met without disagreement, or parted without an actual quarrel. The doctor was a democrat, and a Romanist of the

first water; Sir Archy was a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church; and, whatever might have been his early leanings in politics, and in whatever companionship his active years were passed, experience had taught him the fallacy of many opinions, which owe any appearance of truth or stability they possess, to the fact, that they have never advanced beyond the stage of speculative notions, into the realms of actual and practical existence; – but, above all, the prudent Scotchman dreaded the prevalence of these doctrines among young and unsettled minds, ever ready to prefer the short and hazardous career of fortune, to the slow and patient drudgery of daily industry.

If the doctor anticipated but little enjoyment in the society of Sir Archy, neither did the latter hope for any pleasure to himself from Roach's company. However, as the case of poor Herbert became each hour more threatening, the old man resolved to bury in oblivion every topic of mutual disagreement, and, so long as the doctor remained in the house, to make every possible or impossible concession to conciliate the good-will of one, on whose services so much depended.

"Do ye hear?" cried Roach in a harsh voice to Kerry, who was summoned from the kitchen-fire to take charge of his horse; "let the pony have a mash of bran – a hot mash, and don't leave him till he's dry."

"Never fear, sir," replied Kerry, as he led the jaded and way-worn beast into the stable, "I'll take care of him as if he was a racer;" and then, as Roach disappeared, added – "I'd like to see

myself strapping the likes of him – an ould mountaineer. A mash of bran, indeed! Cock him up with bran! Begorra, 'tis thistles and docks he's most used to;" and, with this sage reflection on the beast's habits, he locked the stable door, and resumed his former place beside the blazing turf fire.

O'Donoghue's reception of the doctor was most cordial. He was glad to see him on several accounts. He was glad to see any one who could tell him what was doing in the world, from which all his intercourse was cut off; he was glad, because the supper was waiting an hour and a half beyond its usual time, and he was getting uncommonly hungry; and, lastly, he really felt anxious about Herbert, whenever by any chance his thoughts took that direction.

"How are you, Roach?" cried he, advancing to meet him with an extended hand. "This is a kind thing of you – you've had a dreadful day, I fear."

"D – n me, if I ever saw it otherwise in this confounded glen. I never set foot in it, that I wasn't wet through."

"We have our share of rain, indeed," replied the other, with a good-humoured laugh; "but if we have storm, we have shelter."

Intentionally misunderstanding the allusion, and applying to the ruined mansion the praise bestowed on the bold mountains, the doctor threw a despairing look around the room, and repeated the word "shelter" in a voice far from complimentary.

The O'Donoghue's blood was up in a moment. His brow contracted and his cheek flushed, as, in a low and deep tone, he

said —

"It is a crazy old concern. You are right enough – neither the walls nor the company within them, are like what they once were."

The look with which these words were given, recalled the doctor to a sense of his own impertinence; for, like certain tethered animals, who never become conscious of restraint till the check of the rope lays them on their back, nothing short of such a home-blow could have staggered his self-conceit.

"Ay, ay," muttered he, with a cackling apology for a laugh, "time is telling on us all. – But I'm keeping the supper waiting."

The duties of hospitality were always enough to make O'Donoghue forget any momentary chagrin, and he seated himself at the table with all his wonted good-humour and affability.

As the meal proceeded, the doctor inquired about the sick boy, and the circumstances attending his illness; the interest he bestowed on the narrative mainly depending on the mention of Sir Marmaduke Travers's name, whose presence in the country he was not aware of before, and from whose residence he began already to speculate on many benefits to himself.

"They told me," continued O'Donoghue, "that the lad behaved admirably. In fact, if the old weir-rapid be any thing like what I remember it, the danger was no common one. There used to be a current there strong enough to carry away a dozen horsemen."

"And how is the young lady? Is she nothing the worse from

the cold, and the drenching, and the shock of the accident?"

"Faith, I must confess it, I have not had the grace to ask after her. Living as I have been for some years back, has left me sadly in arrear with every demand of the world. Sir Marmaduke was polite enough to say he'd call on me; but there is a still greater favour he could bestow, which is, to leave me alone."

"There was a law-suit or dispute of some kind or other between you, was there not?"

"There is something of that kind," said O'Donoghue, with an air of annoyance at the question; "but these are matters gentlemen leave to their lawyers, and seek not to mix themselves up with."

"The strong purse is the sinew of war," muttered the inexorable doctor; "and they tell me he is one of the wealthiest men in England."

"He may be, for aught I know or care."

"Well, well," resumed the other, after a long deliberative pause, "there's no knowing how this little adventure may turn out. If your son saved the girl's life, I scarcely think he could press you so hard about – "

"Take care, sir," broke in O'Donoghue, and with the words he seized the doctor's wrist in his strong grasp; "take care how you venture to speak of affairs which no wise concern you;" then, seeing the terrified look his speech called up, he added – "I have been very irritable latterly, and never desire to talk on these subjects; so, if you please, we'll change the topic."

The door was cautiously opened at this moment, and Kerry presented himself, with a request from Sir Archibald, that, as soon as Doctor Roach found it convenient, he would be glad to see him in the sick-room.

"I am ready now," said the doctor, rising from his chair, and not by any means sorry at the opportunity of escaping a *tête-a-tête* he had contrived to render so unpalatable to both parties. As he mounted the stairs, he continued in broken phrases to inveigh against the house and the host in a half soliloquy – "A tumble-down old barrack it is – not fifty shillings worth of furniture under the roof – the ducks were as tough as soaked parchment – and where's the fee to come from – I wish I knew that – unless I take one of these old devils instead of it;" and he touched the frame of a large, damp, discoloured portrait of some long-buried ancestor, several of which figured on the walls of the stair-case.

"The boy is worse – far worse," whispered a low, but distinct voice beside him. "His head is now all astray – he knows no one."

Doctor Roach seemed vexed at the ceremony of salutation being forgotten in Sir Archibald's eagerness about the youth, and drily answered —

"I have the honour to see you well, sir, I hope."

"There is one here very far from well," resumed Sir Archy, neither caring for, nor considering the speech. "We have lost too much time already – I trust ye may na be too late now."

The doctor made no reply, but rudely taking the candle from his hand, walked towards the bed —

"Ay, ay," muttered he, as he beheld the lustrous eyes and widespread pupils – the rose-red cheek, and dry, cracked lips of the youth; "he has it sure enough."

"Has what? – what is it?"

"The fever – brain fever, and the worst kind of it too."

"And there is danger then?" whispered M'Nab.

"Danger, indeed! I wonder how many come through it. Pshaw! there's no use trying to count his pulse;" and he threw the hand rudely back upon the bed. "That's going as fast as ever his father went with the property." A harsh, low, cackling laugh followed this brutal speech, which demanded all Sir Archy's predetermined endurance to suffer unchecked.

"Do you know me?" said the doctor, in the loud voice used to awaken the dormant faculty of hearing. "Do you know me?"

"Yes," replied the boy, staring steadfastly at him.

"Well, who am I, then? Am I your father?"

A vacant gaze was all the answer.

"Tell me, am I your father?"

No reply followed.

"Am I your uncle, then?" said the doctor, still louder.

The word, "uncle," seemed to strike upon some new chord of his awakened sense: a faint smile played upon his parched lips, and his eyes wandered from the speaker, as if in search of some object, till they fell upon Sir Archy, as he stood at the foot of the bed, when suddenly his whole countenance was lighted up, and he repeated the word, "uncle," to himself in a voice indescribably

sweet and touching.

"He has na forgotten me," murmured M'Nab, in a tone of deep emotion. "My ain dear boy – he knows me yet."

"You agitate him too much," said Roach, whose nature had little sympathy with the feelings of either. "You must leave me alone here to examine him myself."

M'Nab said not a word, but, with noiseless step, stole from the room. The doctor looked after him as he went, and then followed to see that the door was closed behind. This done, he beckoned to Kerry, who still remained, to approach, and deliberately seated himself in a chair near the window.

"Tell me, my good fellow," said he, affecting an air of confidence as he spoke, "an't they all broke here? Isn't the whole thing smashed?"

"Broke – smashed!" repeated Kerry, as he held up both hands in feigned astonishment; "'tis a droll smash: begorra, I never see money as plenty this many a year. Sure av there wasn't lashings of it, would he be looking out for carriage-horses, and buying hunters, not to say putting the kennel in order."

"Is it truth you are telling?" said Roach, in astonishment.

"True as my name is Kerry O'Leary. We offered Lanty Lawler a hundred and twenty guineas on Friday last for a match wheeler, and we're not off of him yet; he's a big brown horse, with a star on his face; and the cob for the master cost forty pounds. He'll be here tomorrow, or next day, sure ye'll see him yourself."

"The place is falling to ruin – the roof will never last the

winter," broke in the doctor.

"Well, and whose fault is it, but that spalpeen Murphy's, that won't set the men to work till he gets oak timber from the Black Say – 'tis the finest wood in the world, they tell me, and lasts for ever and ever."

"But, don't they owe money every where in the country? There isn't a little shop in Killarney without an account of their's in it."

"Of course they do, and the same in Cork – ay, and in Tralee, for the matter of that. Would you have them not give encouragement to more places nor one? There's not one of those crayturs would send in their bill – no, though we do be asking for it, week after week. They're afraid of losing the custom; and I'll engage now, they do be telling you they can't get their money by hook or by crook; that's it – I knew it well."

The doctor meditated long on these strange revelations, so very opposite to all he had heard of the circumstances of the O'Donoghues; and while his own convictions were strongly against Kerry's narrative, that worthy man's look of simplicity and earnest truth puzzled him considerably, and made him hesitate which side to credit.

After a long pause, from which the incoherent ravings of the sick boy aroused him, he looked up at Kerry, and then, with a motion of his thumb towards the bed, he muttered —

"He's going fast."

"Going fast!" echoed Kerry, in a voice very different from his former accent. "Oh, wirra! there's nothing so bad as

death! Distress and poverty is hard enough, but that's the raal misfortune."

A dry sarcastic grin from the doctor seemed to say that poor Kerry's secret was discovered. The allusion to want of means came too naturally not to be suggested by present circumstances; and the readiness of Doctor Roach's apprehension clinched the discovery at once.

"We'll go down now," said the doctor; "I believe I know the whole state of the case;" and, with these words of ambiguous meaning he returned to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER X. AN EVENING AT "MARY" M'KELLY's

If sorrow had thrown its sombre shadow over the once-proud house of the O'Donoghue, within whose walls now noiseless footsteps stole along, and whispered words were spoken: a very different scene presented itself at the small hostel of Mary M'Kelly. There, before the ample fireplace, a quarter of a sheep was roasting – while various utensils of cookery, disposed upon and around the fire, diffused a savoury odour through the apartment. A table, covered with a snow-white napkin, and containing covers for a party of six, occupied the middle of the room; cups and drinking vessels of richly chased silver, silver forks and spoons, of handsome pattern, were there also – strange and singular spectacle beneath the humble thatch of a way-side cabin. Mary herself displayed in her toilet a more than usual care and attention, and wore in her becoming cap, with a deep lace border, a bouquet of tri-colored ribbons, coquettishly knotted, and with the ends falling loosely on her neck. While she busied herself in the preparation for the table, she maintained from time to time a running conversation with a person who sat smoking in the chimney corner. Although screened from the glare of the fire, the light which was diffused around showed enough of the dress and style of the wearer to recognize him at once for Lanty

Lawler, the horse-dealer. His attitude, as he lolled back on one chair, and supported his legs on another, bespoke the perfection of ease, while in the jaunty manner he held the long pipe-stick between his fingers, could be seen the affectation of one who wished to be thought at home, as well as to feel so.

"What hour did they mention, Mary?" said he, after a pause of some minutes, during which he puffed his pipe assiduously.

"The gossoon that came from Beerhaven, said it would be nine o'clock at any rate; but sure it's nigher to ten now. They were to come up on the flood tide. Whisht, what was that? – Wasn't that like the noise of wheels?"

"No; that's the wind, and a severe night it is too. I'm thinking, Mary, the storm may keep them back."

"Not a bit of it; there's a creek down there, they tell me, safer nor e'er a harbour in Ireland; and you'd never see a bit of a vessel till you were straight over her: and sure it's little they mind weather. That Captain Jack, as they call him, says there's no time for business like a gale of wind. The last night they were here there was two wrecks in the bay."

"I mind it well, Mary. Faix, I never felt a toast so hard to drink as the one they gave after supper."

"Don't be talking about it," said Mary, crossing herself devoutly; "they said it out of devilment, sorra more."

"Well, may be so," muttered he sententiously. "They're wild chaps any way, and they've a wild life of it."

"Troth, if I was a man, tis a life I'd like well," said Mary,

with a look of resolute determination, well becoming the speech. "Them's the fine times they have, going round the world for sport, and nothing to care for – as much goold as they'd ask – fine clothes – the best of eating and drinking; sure there's not one of them would drink out of less than silver."

"Faix, they may have iron round their ancles for it, after all, Mary."

"Sorra bit of it – the jail isn't built yet, that would howld them. What's that noise now? That's them. Oh, no; it's the water running down the mountain."

"Well, I wish they'd come any way," said Lanty; "for I must be off early to-morrow – I've an order from the ould banker here above, for six beasts, and I'd like to get a few hours' sleep before morning."

"'Tis making a nice penny you are there, Lanty," said Mary, with a quizzical look from the corner of her eye.

"A good stroke of business, sure enough, Mary," replied he, laughingly. "What d'ye think I did with him yesterday morning? I heerd here, ye know, what happened to the grey mare I bought from Mark O'Donoghue – that she was carried over the weir-gash and drowned. What does I do, but goes up to the Lodge and asks for Sir Marmaduke; and says I, 'I'm come, sir, to offer a hundred and fifty for the little mare I sould you the other day for a hundred; 'tis only now I found out her real value, and I can get two hundred for her in Cork, the day I bring her up; and sure your honour wouldn't prevent a poor man making a trifle

in the way of his trade.' 'You're an honest fellow, Lanty,' says he – divil a lie in it Mary, don't be laughing – 'you're an honest fellow; and although I cannot let you have your mare back again, for she was killed last night, you shall have your own price for the four carriage-horses and the two roadsters I ordered.' With that I began blubbering about the mare, and swore I was as fond of her as if she was my sister. I wish you'd seen his daughter then; upon my conscience it was as good as a play. 'They have so much feelin', says she to her father. 'For fun,' says I to myself. 'O murther, murther. Mary, and them's the people that rules us!'"

"Omadhauns they are, the devil a' more!" interposed Mary, whose hearty contempt for the Saxon originated in the facility by which he could be imposed upon.

"That's what I'm always saying," said Lanty. "I'd rather have the chaytin' than the bayting of John Bull, any day! You'll humbug him out of his shirt, and faix it's the easiest way to get it after all."

"It's a mane way, Lanty," interposed Mary, with a look of pride; "it's a dirty, mane way, and doesn't become an Irishman?"

"Wait till the time comes, Mary M'Kelly," said Lanty, half angrily, "and maybe I'd be as ready as another."

"I wish it was come," said Mary, sighing; "I wish to the Virgin it was; I'm tired heerin' of the preparations. Sorra one of me knows what more they want, if the stout heart was there. There's eight barrels of gunpowder in that rock there," said she, in a low whisper, "behind yer back – you needn't stir, Lanty. Begorra, if

a spark was in it, 'twould blow you and me, and the house that's over us, as high as Hungry mountain."

"The angels be near us!" said Lanty, making the sign of the cross.

"Ay," resumed Mary, "and muskets for a thousand min, and pikes for two more. There's saddles and bridles, eighteen hogsheads full."

"True enough," chimed in Lanty; "and I have an order for five hundred cavalry horses – the money to be paid out of the Bank of France. Musha, I wish it was some place nearer home."

"Is it doubting them ye are, Lanty Lawler?"

"No, not a bit; but it's always time enough to get the beasts, when we see the riders. I could mount two thousand men in a fortnight, any day, if there was money to the fore; ay, and mount them well, too: not the kind of devils I give the government, that won't stand three days of hard work. Musha, Mary, but it's getting very late; that mutton will be as dry as a stick."

"The French likes it best that way," said Mary, with a droll glance, as though to intimate she guessed the speaker's object. "Take a look down the road, Lanty, and try if you can hear any one coming."

Lanty arose from his comfortable corner with evident reluctance, and laid down his pipe with a half sigh, as he moved slowly towards the door of the cabin, which having unbarred he issued forth into the darkness.

"It's likely I'd hear any thing such a night as this," grumbled

he to himself, "with the trees snapping across, and the rocks tumbling down! It's a great storm entirely."

"Is there any sign of them, Lanty?" cried Mary, as she held the door ajar, and peeped out into the gloomy night.

"I couldn't see my hand fornint me."

"Do you hear nothing?"

"Faix I hear enough over my head; that was thunder! Is there any fear of it getting at the powder, Mary?"

"Divil a fear; don't be unasy about that," said the stout-hearted Mary. "Can you see nothing at all?"

"Sorra a thing, barrin' the lights up at Carrig-na-curra; they're moving about there, at a wonderful rate. What's O'Donoghue doing at all?"

"'Tis the young boy, Herbert, is sick," said Mary, as she opened the door to admit Lanty once more. "The poor child is in a fever. Kerry O'Leary was down here this evening for lemons for a drink for him. Poor Kerry! he was telling me, himself has a sore time of it, with that ould Scotchman that's up there; nothing ever was like him for scoulding, and barging, and abusing; and O'Donoghue now minds nothing inside or out, but sits all day long in the big chair, just as if he was asleep. Maybe he does take a nap sometimes, for he talks of bailiffs, and writs, and all them things. Poor ould man! it's a bad end, when the law comes with the grey hairs!"

"They've a big score with yourself, I'll be bound," said Lanty inquiringly.

"Troth, I'd like to see myself charge them with any thing," said she, indignantly. "It's to them and their's I owe the roof that's over me, and my father, and my father's father before me owes it. Musha, it would become me to take their money, for a trifle of wine and spirits, and tay and tobacco, as if I wasn't proud to see them send down here – the raal ould stock that's in it! Lanty, it must be very late by this. I'm afeard something's wrong up in the bay."

"'Tis that same I was thinking myself," said Lanty, with a sly look towards the roasted joint, whose savoury odour was becoming a temptation overmuch for resistance.

"You've a smart baste in the stable," said Mary; "he has eaten his corn by this time, and must be fresh enough; just put the saddle on him, Lanty dear, and ride down the road a mile or two – do, and good luck attend you."

There never was a proposition less acceptable to the individual to whom it was made; to leave a warm fire-side was bad enough, but to issue forth on a night it would have been inhumanity to expose a dog to, was far too much for his compliance; yet Lanty did not actually refuse; no, he had his own good reasons for keeping fair with Mary M'Kelly; so he commenced a system of diplomatic delay and discussion, by which time at least might be gained, in which it was possible the long-expected guests would arrive, or the project fall to the ground on its own merits.

"Which way will they come, Mary?" said he, rising from his seat.

"Up the glen, to be sure – what other way could they from the Bay. You'll hear them plain enough, for they shout and sing every step of the road, as if it was their own; wild devils they are."

"Sing is it? musha, now, do they sing?"

"Ay, faix, the drollest songs ever ye heerd; French and Roosian songs – sorra the likes of them going at all."

"Light hearts they have of their own."

"You may say that, Lanty Lawler; fair weather or foul, them's the boys never change; but come now be alive, and get out the baste."

"I'm going, I'm going; it's myself would like to hear them sing a Roosian song. Whisht! what's that? did ye hear a shout there?"

"Here they are; that's them," said Mary, springing towards the door, and withdrawing the bolt, while a smart knock was heard, and the same instant, a voice called out —

"Holloa! house ahoy!"

The door at the moment flew open, and a short, thick-set looking man, in a large boat cloak, entered, followed by a taller figure, equally muffled. The former dropping his heavy envelope, and throwing off an oil-skin cap from his head, held out his arms wide as, he said —

"*Marie, ma mie! embrasse moi*;" and then, not waiting for a compliance with the request, sprang forward, and clasped the buxom landlady in his arms, and kissed her on each cheek, with an air compounded of true feeling, and stage effect.

"Here's my friend and travelling companion, Henry Talbot,

come to share your hospitality, Mary," said he in English, to which the slightest foreign accent lent a tone of recitative. "One of us, Mary – one of us."

The individual alluded to had by this time dropped his cloak to the ground, and displayed the figure of a slight and very young man, whose features were singularly handsome, save for a look of great effeminacy; his complexion was fair as a girl's, and, flushed by exercise, the tint upon his cheek was of a pale rose colour; he was dressed in a riding coat, and top boots, which, in the fashion of the day, were worn short, and wrinkled around the leg; his hair he wore without powder, and long upon his neck; a heavy riding whip, ornamented with silver, the only weapon he carried, composed his costume – one as unlike his companion's as could be.

Captain Jacques Flahault was a stout-built, dark-complexioned fellow, of some four or five and forty; his face a grotesque union of insolence and drollery; the eyes black as jet, shaded by brows so arched, as to give always the idea of laughing to a countenance, the lower part of which, shrouded in beard and moustache, was intended to look stern and savage.

His dress was a short blue frock, beneath which he wore a jersey shirt, striped in various colours, across which a broad buff leather belt, loosely slung, supported four pistols and a dirk; jack boots reached about the middle of the thigh, and were attached to his waist by thongs of strong leather, no needless precaution apparently, as in their looseness the wearer might at any moment

have stepped freely from them; a black handkerchief, loosely knotted round his neck, displayed a throat brawny and massive as a bull's, and imparted to the whole head an appearance of great size – the first impression every stranger conceived regarding him.

"Ah! ah! Lawler, you here; how goes it, my old friend? Sit down here, and tell me all your rogueries since we parted. *Par St, Pierre*, Henry, this is the veriest *fripon* in the kingdom" – Talbot bowed, and with a sweetly courteous smile saluted Lanty, as if accepting the speech in the light of an introduction – "a fellow that in the way of his trade could cheat the Saint Père himself."

"Where's the others, Captain Jack?" said Mary, whose patience all this time endured a severe trial – "where's the rest?"

"*Place pour la potage! Ma Mie!*– soup before a story; you shall hear every thing by and by. Let us have the supper at once."

Lanty chimed in a willing assent to this proposition, and in a few moments the meat smoked upon the table, around which the whole party took their places with evident good-will.

"While Mary performed her attentions as hostess, by heaping up each plate, and ever supplying the deficiency caused by the appetite of the guests, the others eat on like hungry men. Captain Jacques alone intermingling with the duties of the table, a stray remark from time to time.

"*Ventre bleu!* how it blows; if it veers more to the southard, there will be a heavy strain on that cable. *Trinquons mon ami, Trinquons toujours; Ma belle Marie*, you eat nothing."

"'Tis unasy I am, Captain Jack, about what's become of the others," said Mrs. M'Kelly.

"Another bumper, *Ma Mie*, and I'm ready for the story – the more as it is a brief one. *Allons donc*– now for it. We left the bay about nine o'clock, or half-past, perhaps, intending to push forward to the glen at once, and weigh with the morning's tide, for it happens that this time our cargo is destined for a small creek, on the north-west coast; our only business here being to land my friend, Harry" – here Talbot bowed and smiled – "and to leave two hogsheads of Bourdeaux, for that very true-hearted, kind, *brave homme*, Hemsworth, at the Lodge there. You remember last winter we entered into a compact with him to stock his cellar, provided no information of our proceedings reached the revenue from any quarter. Well, the wine was safely stored in one of the caves on the coast, and we started with a light conscience; we had neither despatches nor run-brandy to trouble us – nothing to do but eat our supper; saluer madame" – here he turned round, and with an air of mock respect kissed Mary's hand – "and get afloat again. As we came near the 'Lodge,' I determined to make my visit a brief one; and so leaving all my party, Harry included, outside, I approached the house, which, to my surprise, showed lights from nearly every window. This made me cautious, and so I crept stealthily to a low window, across which the curtain was but loosely drawn, and *Mort de ma vie!* what did I behold, but the prettiest face in Europe. *Une ange de beauté*. She was leaning over a table copying a drawing, or a painting of some sort or

other. *Tête bleu!* here was a surprise. I had never seen her before, although I was with Hemsworth a dozen times."

"Go on – go on," said Lanty, whose curiosity was extreme to hear what happened next.

"*Eh bien*– I tried the sash, but it was fastened. I then went round the house, and examined the other windows, one after the other – all the same. *Que faire!* I thought of knocking boldly at the back-door, but then I should have no chance of a peep at *la belle* in that way."

"What did you want with a peep at her?" asked Mary, gruffly.

"*Diable!* what did I want? *Pour l'admirer, l'adorer*– or, at least to make my respects, as becomes a stranger, and a Frenchman. *Pursuivons*. There was no *entrée*, without some noise – so I preferred the room she was in, to any other, and gently disengaging my dirk, I slipped it between the two sashes, to lift up the latch that fastened them. *Mort bleu!* the weapon slipped, and came slap through the pane, with a tremendous fracas. She started up, and screamed – there was no use in any more delay. I put my foot through the window, and pushed open the sash at once – but before I was well in the room, bells were ringing in every quarter of the house, and men's voices calling aloud, and shouting to each other – when, suddenly, the door opened, and whiz went a pistol-ball close by my head, and shattered the shutter behind me. My fellows, outside, hearing the shot, unslung their pieces, and before I could get down to them, poured in a volley – why, wherefore, or upon whom, the devil himself, that

instigated them, can tell. The garrison mustered strong, however, and replied – that they did, by Jove, for one of ours, Emile de Louvois, is badly wounded. I sounded the retreat, but the scoundrels would not mind me – and before I was able to prevent it, *tête bleu!* they had got round to the farmyard, and set fire to the corn-stacks; in a second, the corn and hay blazed up, and enveloped house and all in smoke. I sounded the retreat once more, and off the villains scampered, with poor Emile, to the boat; and I, finding my worthy friend here an inactive spectator of the whole from a grove near the road, resolved not to give up my supper – and so, *me voici!*– but come, can none of you explain this affair? What is Hemsworth doing, with all this armed household, and this captive princess?"

"Is the 'Lodge' burned down?" said Lanty, whose interest in the inhabitants had a somewhat selfish origin.

"No, they got the fire tinder. I saw a wild-looking devil mount one of the ricks, with a great canvas sail all wetted, and drag it over the burning stack – and before I left the place, the Lodge was quite safe."

"I'm sorry for it," said Mary, with a savage determination. "I'm sorry to the heart's core. Luck nor grace never was in the glen, since the first stone of it was laid – nor will be again, till it is a ruin! Why didn't they lay it in ashes, when they were about it?"

"Faith, it seemed to me," said Talbot, in a low soft voice, "they would have asked nothing better. I never saw such bull-dogs in my life. It was all you could do, Flahault, to call them off."

"True enough," replied Jacques, laughing. "They enjoy a *brisée* like that with all their hearts."

"The English won't stay long here, after this night," was Lanty's sage reflection, but one which he did not utter aloud in the present company. And then, in accordance with Jacques' request, he proceeded to explain by what different tenants the Lodge became occupied since his last visit; and that an English baronet and his daughter, with a household of many servants, had replaced Hemsworth and his few domestics. At every stage of the recital, Flahault stopped the narrative, to give him time to laugh. To him the adventure was full of drollery. Even the recollection of his wounded comrade little damped his enjoyment of a scene, which might have been attended by the saddest results; and he chuckled a hundred times over what he suspected the Englishman must feel, on this, his first visit to Ireland. "I could rob the mail to-morrow, for the mere fun of reading his letters to his friends," said he. "*Mort bleu!* what a description of Irish rapparrees, five hundred in number, armed with pikes."

"I wish ye'd gave him the cause to do it," said Mary, bitterly – "what brings them here? who wants them? or looks for them?"

"You are right, Mary," said Talbot, mildly. "Ireland for the Irish!"

"Ay, Ireland for the Irish!" repeated Mary and Lanty; and the sentiment was drank with all the honours of a favoured toast.

For some time the party continued to discuss Flahault's story, and calculate on every possible turn the affair might give rise

to. All agreeing, finally, on one point, that Sir Marmaduke would scarcely venture to protract his stay in a country, where his visit had been signalized by such a reception. The tone of the conversation seemed little to accord with Captain Jacques' humour, whose convivial temperament found slight pleasure in protracted or argumentative discussions of any kind.

"*Que le diable l'importe*," cried he, at last. "This confounded talk has stopped the bottle this half-hour. Come, Talbot, let's have a song, my lad; never shake your head, *mon enfant,*– Well, then, here goes."

Thus saying, Flahault pushed back his chair a little from the table, and in a rich deep bass voice, which rung through the high rafters of the cabin, chanted out the following rude verses, to a French vaudeville air – giving the final *e* of the French words, at the end of each line, that peculiar accentuation of *a*– which made the word sound *contrabanda!*

Though this information as to Captain Jacques' performance seems of little moment, yet such was the fact, that any spirit the doggerel possessed could only be attributed to the manner of the singer, and the effect produced by the intonation we have mentioned.

LA CONTRABANDE

A bumper, "mes enfans," to swallow your care,

A full bumper, we pledge, “a L’Irlande;”
The land of “belles femmes” – le pays de bonne chere,
“Et toujours de la Contrabande.”

Some like to make love, and some like to make war,
Some of beauty obey “la commande;”
But what is a glance from an eye, “bleu,” or “noir,”
Except it be, “la Contrabande.”

When a prince takes the cash that a peasant can’t spare,
And lets him lie down “sur la lande;”
Call it, as you like – but the truth is, I swear,
“C’est bien pire que – la Contrabande.”

Stolen kisses are ever the sweetest, we’re told,
They sink like a “navire qui fende;”
And what’s true of a kiss, is the same, too, of gold,
They’re both, in their way, “Contrabande!”

When kings take your money, they won’t even say,
“Mon ami le Dieu vous le rende;”
While even the priest, for a blessing takes pay,
“C’est partout et toujours, Contrabande.”

The good things of life are not equal, I’m sure,
Then, how pleasant to make the “amende;”
To take from the wealthy, and give to the poor,
“Voila! que j’appelle, Contrabande.”

Yet, as matters go, one must not deem it strange,
That even "La France et L'Irlande,"
If good wishes and friendship they simply exchange,
There are folks who call that, "Contrabande."

"*Vive la Contrabande, mes amis*," shouted out Jacques, as he arose glass in hand, and made the room ring with the toast. And every voice repeated the words, in such imitations as they were able.

"'Tis an elegant song, any way," said Lanty, "if one only understood it all – and the tune's mighty like the 'Cruiskeen Lawn.'"

"Well, Harry," said Flahault, slapping his friend on the shoulder, "will the song persuade you to turn smuggler? I fear not. You'd rather practise your own 'Contrabande' among the bright eyes and dark locks of the capital. Well, there are worse 'metiers.' I have had a turn at it these fifteen years, and whether on the waters of Ontario, or Champlain, or scudding along under the fog-banks of the Scheldt, I never grew weary of it. But, now for a little business talk – where is the *Padre?* where's Father Luke? was he not to have been here to-night?"

Mary whispered the answer in the captain's ear.

"*Ah! parbleu*," exclaimed he aloud – "is it so? Practising a little 'Contrebande' of his own – trying to see a poor fellow safe over the frontier, into the next world."

"Fie for shame, Captain Jacques," said Mary, with pious horror. "That's not the way to talk of the holy offices."

"I wish I had old Maurice Dulang here, the priest of Trois Rivières, he's the boy could despatch them without trouble."

Neither Lanty nor Mary gave any encouragement to Flahault's new turn of the conversation, and so, addressing himself to Talbot, he went on —

"We were dining together one day, at the little inn at Trois Rivières, when a messenger came from Lachégon, for the Père to administer the last rites to a 'mourant.' Maurice promised to be there in half-an-hour, but never stirred – and though three other messengers came for him, the answer was all the same – until, at last came word, '*Cest trop tard, il est mort*.'

"'*Trop tard!*' said Maurice, 'not a bit of it; give me a pen and ink, and some paper.' With that he folded a piece, note fashion, and wrote —

"'Mon cher Pierre – Fais ton petit possible pour cet pauvre diable, qui s'est glissé hors du monde sans mes soins. Apparement il était bien pressé; mais tu l'arrangera pour le mieux.

"'Ton viel ami.'

"'Maurice Dulang. "'St. Pierre, à la Conciergerie au Paradis.'

"'Put that in his mouth,' said Maurice, 'and there's no fear of him.'"

"'Twas a blessed gospel he gave him," said Mary, who did not comprehend the French portion of the story, "and sure it's as good as any thing."

"We all thought so, Mary. Poor Maurice related the story at

Lyons, when he was led out to the guillotine – but though the Commissaire laughed heartily, and enjoyed it much, they had found a breviary in his portmanteau, and they couldn't let him off. Pauvre bête! To travel about the world with the 'pièce de conviction' in his possession. What, Harry, no more wine?"

"I thank you, no more for me, although that claret is a temptation."

"A bouquet, every glass of it! What say you, Master Lawler – does it suit your palate?"

"I begin to think it a taste cold, or so, by this time," said Lanty; "I'm not genteel enough for wine, God help me – but it's time to turn in, any how – and there's Mary asleep already."

"I don't stir till I finish the flask," said Jacques, firmly; "and if you won't drink, you needn't grudge me your company. It's hard to say when we meet again. You go northward, Talbot, isn't that so?

"Yes, and that's the point I wish to come to – where and how shall I find a mount? – I depended on this priest you spoke of to meet me, but he has not made his appearance."

"You never fell upon your legs more fortunately – here's your man for a horse, all Ireland over. Eh, Lanty, what's to be had now?"

"Devil a thing can be got for love or money," said Lanty. "If the gentleman only told me yesterday – "

"Yesterday, Master Lanty, we were riding white horses in the Western Ocean – but that's gone by – let us talk of to-day."

"My own hackney is here in the stable. If his honour likes him, I'll sell him; but he's a fancy beast, and must have a fancy price."

"Has he strength and speed for a fast ride," said Talbot, "and will his condition bear it?"

"I'll answer for it – you may push on to Cork in a hand gallop, if you give him ten minutes' rest, and a glass of whiskey at Macroom."

"That's enough – what's his price?"

"Take a look at him first," replied Lanty, "for if you are judge of a beast, you'll not refuse what I ask you." With these words he lighted a candle, and placed it in an old iron lantern, which hung against the wall, and opening a small door at the back of the cabin, proceeded, by a narrow passage cut in the rock, towards the stable, followed by Talbot, Flahault remaining where he was, as if sunk in meditation. Scarcely, however, had the two figures disappeared in the distance, when he shook Mary violently by the shoulder, and whispered in a quick, but collected tone —

"Mary – Mary, I say – is that fellow all safe?"

"Ay is he safe," said she, resuming her wonted calmness in a second. "Why do you ask now?"

"I'll tell you why – for myself I care not a sous – I'm here to-day, away to-morrow – but Talbot's deep in the business – his neck's in the halter – can we trust Lawler on his account – a man of rank and large fortune as he is, cannot be spared – what say you?"

"You may trust him, Captain," said Mary, "he knows his life

would not be his own two hours if he turned informer – and then this Mr. Talbot, he's a great man you tell me?"

"He's a near kinsman of a great peer, and has a heavy stake in the game – that's all I know, Mary – and, indeed, the present voyage was more to bring him over, than any thing else – but hush, here they come."

"You shall have your money – you've no objection to French gold, I hope – for several years I have seen no other," said Talbot entering.

"I know it well," said Lanty, "and would just as soon take it, as if it had King George on it."

"You said forty pounds, fifty Louis is not far off – will that do?" said the youth, as he emptied a heavily filled purse of gold, upon the table, and pushed fifty pieces towards the horse-dealer.

"As well as the best, sir," said Lanty, as he stored the money in his long leathern pocket-book, and placed it within his breast pocket.

"Will Mrs. M'Kelly accept this small token, as a keepsake," said the youth, while he took from around his neck a fine gold chain of Venetian work, and threw it gallantly over Mary's; "this is the first shelter I have found, after a long exile from my native land; and you, my old comrade, I have left you the pistols you took a fancy too, they are in the lugger – and so, now good-bye, all, I must take to the road at once – I should like to have met the priest, but all chance of that seems over."

Many and affectionate were the parting salutations between

the young man and the others; for, although he had mingled but little in the evening's conversation, his mild and modest demeanour, added to the charm of his good looks, had won their favourable opinions; besides that he was pledged to a cause which had all their sympathies.

While the last good-bye was being spoken, Lanty had saddled and bridled the hackney, and led him to the door. The storm was still raging fiercely, and the night dark as ever.

"You'd better go a little ways up the glen, Lanty, beside him," said Mary, as she looked out into the wild and dreary night.

"'Tis what I mean to do," said Lanty, "I'll show him as far as the turn of the road."

Though the stranger declined the proffered civility, Lanty was firm in his resolution, and the young man, vaulting lightly into the saddle, called out a last farewell: to the others, and rode on beside his guide.

Mary had scarcely time to remove the remains of the supper, when Lanty re-entered the cabin.

"He's the noble-hearted fellow, any way," said he, "and never took a shilling off the first price I asked him;" and with that he put his hand into his breast pocket to examine, once more, the strange coin of France. With a start, a tremendous oath broke from him – "My money – my pocket-book is lost," exclaimed he, in wild excitement, while he ransacked pocket after pocket of his dress. "Bad luck to that glen, I dropt it out there, and with the torrent of water that's falling, it will never be found – och,

murther, this is too bad."

In vain the others endeavoured to comfort and console him – all their assurances of its safety, and the certainty of its being discovered the next morning, were in vain. Lanty re-lighted the lantern, and muttering maledictions on the weather, the road, and his? own politeness, he issued forth to search after his treasure, an occupation which, with all his perseverance, was unsuccessful; for when day was breaking, he was still groping along the road, cursing his hard fate, and every thing which had any share in inflicting it.

"The money is not the worst of it," said Lanty, as he threw himself down, exhausted and worn out, on his bed. "The money's not the worst of it – there was papers in that book, I wouldn't have seen for double the amount."

Long after the old smuggler was standing out to sea the next day, Lanty Lawler wandered backwards and forwards in the glen, now searching among the wet leaves that lay in heaps by the way side, or, equally in vain, sounding every rivulet and water-course which swept past. His search, was fruitless; and well it might be – the road was strewn with fragments of rocks and tree-tops for miles – while even yet the swollen stream tore wildly past, cutting up the causeway in its passage, and foaming on amid the wreck of the hurricane.

Yet the entire of that day did he persevere, regardless of the beating rain, and the cold, drifting wind, to pace to and fro, his heart bent upon recovering what he had lost.

"Yer sowl is set upon money; devil a doubt of it, Lanty," said Mary, as dripping with wet,# and shaking with cold, he at last re-entered the cabin; "sorra one of me would go rooting there, for a crock of goold, if I was sure to find it."

"It is not the money, Mary, I tould you before – it's something else was in the pocket-book," said he, half angrily, while he sat down to brood in silence over his misfortune.

"'Tis a letter from your sweetheart, then," said she, with a spice of jealous malice in her manner, for Lanty had more than once paid his addresses to Mary, whose wealth was reported to be something considerable.

"May be it is, and may be it is not," was the cranky reply.

"Well, she'll have a saving husband, any way," said Mary, tartly, "and one that knows how to keep a good grip of the money."

The horse-dealer made no answer to this enconium on his economy, but with eyes fixed on the ground, pondered on his loss; meanwhile Mrs. M'Kelly's curiosity, piqued by her ineffectual efforts to obtain information, grew each instant stronger, and at last became irrepressible.

"Can't you say what it is you've lost? sure there's many a one goes by, here, of a Saturday to market – and if you leave the token – "

"There's no use in it – sorra bit," said he, despondingly.

"You know your own saycrets best," said Mary, foiled at every effort; "and they must be the dhroll saycrets too, when you're so

much afraid of their being found out."

"Troth then," said Lanty, as a ray of his old gallantry shot across his mind; "troth then, there isn't one I'd tell a saycrct too as soon as yourself, Mary M'Kelly; you know the most of my heart already, and Why wouldn't you know it all?"

"Faix it's little I care to hear about it," said Mary, with an affectation of indifference, the most finished coquetry could not have surpassed. "Ye may tell it, or no, just as ye plaze."

"That's it now," cried Lanty – "that's the way of women, the whole world over; keep never minding them, and bad luck to peace or case you get; and then try and plaze them, and see what thanks you have. I was going to tell you all about it."

"And why don't you?" interrupted she, half fearing lest she might have pulled the cord over-tight already; "why don't you tell it, Lanty dear?"

These last words settled the matter. Like the feather that broke the camel's back, these few and slight syllables were all that was wanting to overcome the horse-dealer's resistance.

"Well, here it is now," said he, casting, as he spoke, a cautious glance around, lest any chance listener should overhear him. "There was in that pocket-book, a letter, sealed with three big seals, that Father Luke gave me yesterday morning, and said to me, 'Lanty Lawler, I'm going over to Ballyvourney, and after that, I'm going on to Cork, and it's mighty likely I'll go as far as Dublin, for the Bishop may be there, and if he is, I must follow him; and here's a letter,' says he, 'that you must give the O'Donoghue with

your own hands' – them was the words – 'with your own hands, Lanty; and now swear you'll not leave it to any one else, but do as I tell you;' and, faix, I took my oath of it, and see, now, it's lost; may I never, but I don't know how I'll ever face him again; and sure God knows what was in it." "And there was three seals on it," said Mary, musingly, as if such extraordinary measures of secrecy could bode nothing good.

"Each of them as big as a half-crown – and it was thick inside too; musha 'twas the evil day I ever set eyes on it!" and with this allusion to the lost money, which, by an adroitness of superstition, he coupled with the bad luck the letter had brought him, Lanty took his farewell of Mary, and, with a heavy heart, set out on his journey.

CHAPTER XI. MISTAKES ON ALL SIDES

The occurrence so briefly mentioned by Flahault, of the night attack on the "Lodge." was not so easily treated by the residents; and so many different versions of the affair were in circulation, that Miss Travers, the only one whose information could have thrown any light upon it, was confused by the many marvels she heard, and totally unable to recall to mind what had really taken place. Sir Marmaduke himself examined. the servants, and compared their testimony; but fear and exaggeration conspired to make the evidence valueless. Some asserting that there were at least a hundred assailants surrounding the house at one time – others, that they wore a kind of uniform, and had their faces blackened – some again had seen parties prowling about the premises during the day, and could positively swear to one man, "a tall fellow in a ragged blue coat, and without shoes or stockings" – no uncommon phenomena in those parts. But the butler negatived all these assertions, and stoutly maintained that there had been neither attack nor assailants – that the whole affair was a device of Terry's, to display his zeal and bravery; and, in short, that he had set fire to the rick in the haggard, and "got up" the affray for his own benefit.

In proportion as any fact occurred to throw discredit on the

testimony of each, he who proffered it became a thousand times more firm and resolute in his assertion – circumstances dubious a moment before, were then suddenly remembered and sworn to, with numerous little aids to corroboration newly recalled to mind. To one point, however, all the evidence more or less converged, and that was, to accuse Terry of being the cause, or at least an accomplice in the transaction. Poor fellow – his own devotedness had made enemies for him every where – the alacrity with which he mounted the burning stack was an offence not soon to be forgotten by those who neither risked life nor limb; nor were the taunts he lavished on their sluggish backwardness to be forgiven now. Unhappily, too, Terry was not a favourite among the servants: he had never learnt how much deference is due from the ragged man to the pampered menial of a rich household; he had not been trained to that subserviency of demeanour which should mark the intercourse of a poor, houseless, friendless creature like himself, with the tagged and lace-covered servants of a wealthy master. Terry, by some strange blunder of his nature, imagined that, in his freedom and independence, he was the better man of the two; he knew that to do nothing, was the prerogative of the great; and as he fulfilled that condition to a considerable extent, he fancied he should enjoy its privileges also. For this reason he had ever regarded the whole class of servants as greatly his inferiors; and although he was ready and willing to peril his life at any moment for Sir Marmaduke or his daughter, the merest common-place services he would refuse to the others,

without a moment's hesitation. Neither intimidation could awe, nor bribery bend him – his nature knew not what fear was in any shape, save one – that of being apprehended and shot for a deserter – and as to any prospect of buying his good offices, that was totally out of the question.

In an Irish household Terry's character would have been appreciated at once. The respect which is never refused to any bereavement, but, in particular, to that greatest of all afflictions, would have secured for him, there, both forgiveness and affection – his waywardness and caprice would have been a law to the least good-tempered servant of the family; but Sir Marmaduke's retainers were all English, and had about as much knowledge of, or sympathy with, such a creature, as he himself possessed of London life and manners.

As his contempt was not measured by any scale of prudence, but coolly evinced on every occasion of their intercourse, they, one and all, detested him beyond bounds – most, asserting that he was a thoroughpaced knave, whose folly was a garb assumed to secure a life of idleness – and all, regarding him in the light of a spy, ever ready to betray them to their master.

When, therefore, one after another, the servants persisted in either openly accusing or insinuating suggestions against Terry, Sir Marmaduke became sorely puzzled. It was true, he himself had witnessed his conduct the night before; but if their version was correct, all his daring, energy, and boldness were so many proofs against him. He was, indeed, reluctant to think so badly

of the poor fellow – but how discredit the evidence of his entire household? His butler had been in his service for years – and oh! what a claim for all the exercise of evil influence – for all the petty tyranny of the low-minded and the base-born – tracking its way through eaves-dropping, and insinuating its venom in moments of unguarded freedom. His footman too – but why go on? His daughter alone rejected the notion with indignation; but in her eager vindication of the poor fellow's honour, her excitement militated against success – for age thus ever pronounces upon youth, and too readily confounds a high-spirited denunciation of wrong, with a mistaken, ill-directed enthusiasm. He listened, it is true, to all she said of Terry's devotedness and courage – of his artless, simple nature – of his single-minded, gentle character; but by a fatal tendency, too frequent as we advance in years, the scales of doubt ever lean against, and not to the side favourable to human nature, and as he shook his head mournfully, he said —

"I wish I did not suspect him."

"Send for him at least," said his daughter, as with an effort she restrained the emotion that agitated her; "speak to him yourself."

"To what end, my child, if he really is innocent?"

"Oh! yes, indeed – indeed he is," she exclaimed, as the tears at length fell fast upon heir cheek.

"Well then, be it so," said Sir Marmaduke, as he rung the bell, and ordered Terry to be sent for.

While Miss Travers sat with her head buried in her hands,

her father paced slowly up and down the room; and so absorbed was he in his thoughts, that he had not noticed Terry, who had meanwhile entered the room, and now stood respectfully beside, the door. When the old man's eyes did fall on him, he started back, with horror and astonishment. The poor fellow's clothes were actually reduced to a mass of burned rags – one sleeve was completely gone, and, there, could be seen his bare arm scorched and blackened by the fire – a bandage of coarse linen wrapping the hand and fingers – a deep cut marked his brow – and his hair was still matted and clotted with the blood – awhile his face was of the colour of death itself.

"Can you doubt him now, father," whispered the young girl, as she gazed on the poor fellow, whose wandering eyes roamed over the ornaments of the chamber, in total unconsciousness of himself and his sufferings.

"Well, Terry," said Sir Marmaduke after a pause, "what account do you give of last night's business?"

"That's a picture of Keim-an-Eigh," said Terry, as he fixed his large eyes, open to their widest extent, on a framed drawing on the wall. "There's the Eagle's Cliff, and that's Murrow Waterfall – and there's the lake – ay, and see if there isn't a boat on it. Well, well, but it's beautiful – one could walk up the shepherd's path there, where the goat is – ay, there's a fellow going up – musha, that's me – I'm going over to Cubber-na-creena, by the short cut."

"Tell me all you know of what happened last night, Terry," repeated Sir Marmaduke.

“It was a great fire, devil a doubt of it,” said Terry, eagerly; “the blaze from the big stack was twice as high as the roof; but when I put the wet sail of the boat on it, it all went into black smoke; it nearly choked me.”

“How did it catch fire first, Terry? can you tell us that?”

“They put a piece of tindir in it; I gave them an ould rag, and they rubbed it over with powder, and set it burning.’

“Who were they that did this?”

“The fellows that threw me down – what fine pistols they had, with silver all over them! They said that they would not beat me at all, and they didn’t either. When I gave them the rag, they said, ‘Now, my lad, we’ll show you a fine fire;’ and, true for them, I never seen a grander.”

In this vague, rambling strain, did Terry reply to every question put to him, his thoughts ever travelling in one narrow circle. Who they were that fired the haggard, how many, and what kind of appearance they wore, he knew nothing of whatever; for in addition to his natural imbecility of mind, the shock of the adventure, and the fever of his wounds and bruises, had utterly routed the small remnant of understanding which usually served to guide him.

To one question only did his manner evince hesitation and doubt in the answer, and that was, when Sir Marmaduke asked him, how it happened that he should have been up at the Lodge at so late an hour, since the doors were all locked and barred a considerable time previous.

Terry's face flushed scarlet at the question, and he made no reply; he stole a sharp, quick glance towards Miss Travers, beneath his eyelids, but as rapidly withdrew it again, when his colour grew deeper and deeper.

The old man marked the embarrassment, and all his suspicions were revived at once. "You must tell me this, Terry," said he, in a voice of some impatience; "I insist upon knowing it."

"Yes, Terry, speak it out freely; you can have no cause for concealment," said Sybella, encouragingly.

"I'll not tell it!" said he, after a pause of some seconds, during which he seemed to have been agitating within himself all the reasons on either side – "I'll not tell it."

"Come, sir," said Sir Marmaduke angrily, "I must and will know this; your hesitation has a cause, and it shall be known."

The boy started at the tones so unusual to his ears, and stared at the speaker in mute astonishment.

"I am not displeased with you, Terry – at least I shall not be, if you speak freely and openly to me. Now, then, answer my question – What brought you about the Lodge at so late an hour?"

"I'll not tell," said the youth resolutely.

"For shame, Terry," said Sybella, in a low, soothing voice, as she drew near him; "how can you speak thus to my father. You would not have *me* displeased with you?"

The boy's face grew pale as death, and his lips quivered with agitation, while his eyes, glazed with heavy tears, were turned downwards; still he never spoke a word.

"Well, what think you of him, now?" said Sir Marmaduke in a whisper to his daughter.

"That he is innocent – perfectly innocent," replied she, triumphantly. "The poor fellow has his own reasons – shallow enough, doubtless – for his silence; but they have no spot or stain of guilt about them, Let me try if I cannot unfathom this business – I'll go down to the boat-house."

The generous girl delayed not a moment, but hastened from the room as she spoke, leaving Sir Marmaduke and Terry silently confronting each other. The moment of his daughter's departure, Sir Marmaduke felt relieved from the interference her good opinion of Terry suggested, and, at once altering his whole demeanour, he walked close up to him, and said —

"I shall but give you one chance more, sir. Answer my question now, or never."

"Never, then!" rejoined Terry, in a tone of open defiance.

The words, and the look by which they were accompanied, overcame the old man's temper in a moment, and he said —

"I thought as much. I guessed how deeply gratitude had sunk in such a heart. Away! Let me see you no more."

The boy turned his eyes from the speaker till they fell upon his own seared and burned limb, and the hand swathed in its rude bandage. That mute appeal was all he made, and then burst into a flood of tears. The old man turned away to hide his own emotions, and when he looked round, Terry was gone. The hall door lay open. He had passed out and gained the lawn – no sight

of him could be seen.

“I know it, father, I know it all now,” said Sybella, as she came running up the slope from the lake.

“It is too late, my child; he has gone – left us for ever, I fear,” said Sir Marmaduke, as in shame and sorrow he rested his head upon her shoulder.

For some seconds she could not comprehend his words; and, when at last she did so, she burst forth —

“And, oh, father, think how we have wronged him. It was in his care and devotion to us, the poor fellow incurred’ our doubts. His habit was to sit beneath the window each night, so long as lights gleamed within. Till they were extinguished, he never sought his rest. The boatman tells me this, and says, his notion was, that God watches over the dark hours only, and that man’s precautions were needed up to that time.”

With sincere and heartfelt sorrow Sir Marmaduke turned away. Servants were despatched on foot and horseback to recover the idiot boy, and persuade him to return; but his path lay across a wild and mountain region, where few could follow; and at nightfall the messengers returned unsuccessful in their search.

If there was real sorrow over his departure in the parlour, the very opposite feeling pervaded the kitchen. There, each in turn exulted in his share of what had occurred, and took pains to exaggerate his claims to gratitude, for having banished one so unpopular and unfriended.

Alarm at the attack of the previous night, and sorrow for the

unjust treatment of poor Terry, were not Sir Marmaduke's only emotions on this sad morning. His messenger had just returned from Carrig-na-curra with very dispiriting tidings of Herbert O'Donoghue. Respect for the feelings of the family under the circumstances of severe illness, had induced him to defer his intended visit to a more suitable opportunity; but his anxiety for the youth's recovery was unceasing, and he awaited the return of each servant sent to inquire after him, with the most painful impatience. In this frame of mind was he as evening drew near, and he wandered down his avenue to the road-side to learn some minutes earlier the last intelligence of the boy. It was a calm and peaceful hour; not a leaf moved in the still air; and all in the glen seemed bathed in the tranquil influence of the mellow sunset. The contrast to the terrific storm which so lately swept through the mountain-pass was most striking, and appealed to the old man's heart, as reflecting back the image of human life, so varying in its aspect, so changeful of good and evil. He stood and meditated on the passages of his own life, whose tenor had, till now, been so equable, but whose fortunes seemed already to participate in the eventful fate of a distracted country. He regretted, deeply regretted, that he had ever come to Ireland. He began to learn how little power there is to guide the helm of human fortune, when once engaged in the stormy current, and he saw himself already the sport of a destiny he had never anticipated.

If he was puzzled at the aspect of a peasantry, highly gifted

with intelligence, yet barbarously ignorant – active and energetic, yet indolent and fatalist – the few hints he had gathered of his neighbour, the O'Donoghue, amazed him still more; and by no effort of his imagination could he conceive the alliance between family pride and poverty – between the reverence for ancestry, and an utter indifference to the present. He could not understand such an anomaly as pretension without wealth; and the only satisfactory explanation he could arrive at, to himself, was, that in a wild and secluded tract, even so much superiority as this old chieftain possessed, attracted towards him the respect of all humbler and more lowly than himself, and made even his rude state seem affluence and power. If in his advances to the O' Donoghue he had observed all the forms of a measured respect, it was because he felt so deeply his debtor for a service, that he would omit nothing in the repayment: his gratitude was sincere and heartfelt, and he would not admit any obstacle in the way of acknowledging it.

Reflecting thus, he was suddenly startled by the sound of wheels coming up the glen – he listened, and now heard the low trot of a horse, and the admonitions of a man's voice, delivered in tones of anger and impatience. The moment after, an old-fashioned gig, drawn by a small miserable pony, appeared, from which a man had dismounted to ascend the hill.

"A fine evening, sir," said Sir Marmaduke, as the stranger, whose dress bespoke one of the rank of gentleman, drew near.

The other stopped suddenly, and surveyed the baronet without

speak ing; then, throwing down the collar of his great coat, which he wore high round his face, he made a respectful salute, and said —

"A lovely evening, sir. I have the honour to see Sir Marmaduke Travers, I believe? May I introduce myself, Doctor Roach, of Killarney?"

"Ah, indeed! Then you are probably come from Mr. O'Donoghue's house? Is the young gentleman better this evening?"

Roach shook his head dubiously, but made no reply.

"I hope, sir, you don't apprehend danger to his life?" asked Sir Marmaduke, with an effort to appear calm as he spoke.

"Indeed I do, then," said Roach, firmly; "the mischiefs done already."

"He's not dead?" said Sir Marmaduke, almost breathless in his terror.

"Not dead; but the same as dead: effusion will carry him off some time to-morrow."

"And can you leave him in this state? Is there nothing to be done? Nothing you could suggest?" cried the old man, scarcely able to repress his indignant feeling at the heartless manner of the doctor.

"There's many a thing one might try," said Roach, not noticing the temper of the question, "for the boy is young; but for the sake of a chance, how am I to stay away from my practice and my other patients? And indeed slight a prospect as he has of recovery, my

own of a fee is slighter still. I think I've all the corn in Egypt in my pocket this minute," said he, slapping his hand on his purse: "one of the late king's guineas, wherever they had it lying by till now."

"I am overjoyed to have met you, sir," said Sir Marmaduke hastily, and by a great exertion concealing the disgust this speech suggested. "I wish for an opinion about my daughter's health – a cold, I fancy – but to-morrow will do better. Could you return to Mr. O'Donoghue's tonight? I have not a bed to offer you here. This arrangement may serve both parties, as I fervently hope something may yet be done for the youth."

"I'll visit Miss Travers in the morning with pleasure."

"Don't leave him, sir, I entreat you, till I send over; it will be quite time enough when you hear from me: let the youth be your first care, doctor; in the mean while accept this slight retainer, for I beg you to consider your time as given to me now," and with that he pressed several guineas into the willing palm of the doctor.

As Roach surveyed the shining gold, his quick cunning divined the old baronet's intentions, and with a readiness long habit had perfected, he said —

"The case of danger before all others, any day. I'll turn about at once and see what can be done for the lad."

Sir Marmaduke leaned towards him, and said some words hastily in a low whispering voice.

"Never fear – never fear, Sir Marmaduke," was the reply, as he mounted to the seat of his vehicle, and turned the pony's head

once more down the glen.

"Lose no time, I beseech you," cried the old man, waving his hand in token of adieu; nor was the direction unheeded, for, using his whip with redoubled energy, the doctor sped along the road at a canter, which threatened annihilation to the frail vehicle at every bound of the animal.

"Five hundred!" muttered Sir Marmaduke to himself, as he looked after him. "I'd give half my fortune to see him safe through it."

Meanwhile Roach proceeded on his way, speculating on all the gain this fortunate meeting might bring to him, and then meditating what reasons he should allege to the O'Donoghue for his speedy return.

"I'll tell him a lucky thought struck me in the glen," muttered he; "or, what! if I said I forgot something – a pocket-book, or case of instruments – any thing will do;" and, with this comfortable reflection, he urged his beast onward.

The night was falling as he once more ascended the steep and narrow causeway, which led to the old keep; and here, now, Kerry O'Leary was closing the heavy but time-worn gate, and fastening it with many a bolt and bar, as though aught within could merit so much precaution. The sound of wheels seemed suddenly to have caught the huntsman's ear, for he hastily shut down the massive hasp that secured the bar of the gate, and as quickly opened a little latched window, which, barred with iron, resembled the grated aperture of a convent door.

"You're late this time, any how," cried Kerry. "Tramp back again, friend, the way you came; and be thankful it's myself seen you; for, by the blessed Father, if it was Master Mark was here, you'd carry away more lead in your skirts than you'd like."

"What, Kerry? – what's that you're saying?" said the astonished doctor; "don't you know me, man?"

"Kerry's my name, sure enough; but artful as you are, you'll just keep the other side of the door. Be off now, in God's name. 'Tis a fair warning I give you; and faix if you won't listen to my son, you might hear worse;" and as he spoke, that ominous sound, the click of a gun-cock, was heard, and the muzzle of a carbine peeped between the iron bars.

"Tear-and-ounds! ye scoundrel! you're not going to fire a bullet at me?"

"'Tis slugs they are," was the reply, as Kerry adjusted the piece, and seemed to take as good an aim as the darkness permitted; "divil a more nor slugs, as you'll know soon. I'll count three, now, and may I never wear boots, if I don't blaze, if you're not gone before it's over. Here's one," shouted he, in a louder key.

"The saints protect me, but I'll be murdered," muttered old Roach, blessing himself, but unable from terror to speak aloud, or stir frozen the spot.

"Here's two!" cried Kerry, still louder.

"I'm going! – I'm going! give me time to leave this blasted place; bad luck to the day and the hour I ever saw it."

"It's too late," shouted Kerry. "Here's three!" and as he spoke

bang went the piece, and a shower of slugs and duck-shot came peppering over the head and counter of the old pony; for in his fright, Roach had fallen on his knees to pray. The wretched quadruped, thus rudely saluted, gave a plunge and a kick, and then wheeled about with an alacrity long forgotten, and scampered down the causeway with the old gig at his heels, rattling as if it were coming in pieces. Kerry broke into a roar of laughter, and screamed out —

"I'll give you another yet, begorra! that's only a true copy; but you'll get the original now, you ould varmint!"

A heavy groan from the wretched doctor, as he sank in a faint, was the only response; for in his fear he thought the contents of the piece were in his body.

"Musha, I hope he isn't dead," said Kerry, as he opened the wicket cautiously, and peeped out with a lantern. "Mister Cassidy – Mister James, get up now – it's only joking I was. – Holy Joseph! is he kilt?" and overcome by a sudden dread of having committed murder, Kerry stepped out, and approached the motionless figure before him. "By all that's good, I've done for the sheriff," said he, as he stood over the body. "Oh! wirra, wirra! who'd think a few grains of shot would kill him."

"What's the matter here? who fired that shot?" said a deep voice, as Mark O'Donoghue appeared at Kerry's side, and snatching the lantern, held it down till the light fell upon the pale features of the doctor.

"I'm murdered! I'm murdered!" was the faint exclamation of

old Roach. “Hear me, these are my dying words, Kerry O’Leary murdered me.”

“Where are you wounded? where’s the ball?” cried Mark, tearing open the coat and waistcoat in eager anxiety..

“I don’t know, I don’t know; it’s inside bleeding I feel.”

“Nonsense, man, you have neither bruise nor scar about you; you’re frightened, that’s all. Come, Kerry, give a hand, and we’ll help him in.”

But Kerry had fled; the idea of the gallows had just shot across his mind, and he never waited for any further disclosures about his victim; but deep in the recesses of a hay-loft he lay cowering in terror, and endeavouring to pray. Meanwhile Mark had taken the half lifeless body on his shoulder, and with the ease and indifference he would have bestowed upon an inanimate burden, coolly earned him into the parlour, and threw him upon a sofa.

CHAPTER XII. THE GLEN AT MIDNIGHT

"What have you got there, Mark?" called out the O'Donoghue, as the young man threw the still insensible figure of the Doctor upon the sofa.

"Old Roach, of Killarney," answered Mark sullenly. "That confounded fool, Kerry, must have been listening at the door there, to what we were saying, and took him for Cassidy, the sub-sheriff; he fired a charge of slugs at him – that's certain; but I don't think there's much mischief done." As he spoke, he filled a goblet with wine, and without any waste of ceremony, poured it down the Doctor's throat. "You're nothing the worse, man," added he, roughly; "you've given many a more dangerous dose yourself, I'll be bound, and people have survived it too."

"I'm better now," said Roach, in a faint voice; "I feel something better; but may I never leave this spot if I don't prosecute that scoundrel, O'Leary. It was all malice – I can swear to that."

"Not a bit of it, Roach; Mark says the fellow mistook you for Cassidy."

"No, no – don't tell me that: he knew me well; but I foresaw it all. He filled my pony with water; I might as well be rolling a barrel before me, as try to drive him this morning. The rascal

had a spite against me for giving him nothing; but he shall hang for it."

"Come, come, Roach, don't be angry; it's all past and over now; the fellow did it for the best."

"Did it for the best! Fired a loaded blunderbuss into a fellow-creature for the best!"

"To be sure he did," broke in Mark, with an imperious look and tone. "There's no harm done, and you need not make such a work about it."

"Where's the pony and the gig, then?" called out Roach, suddenly remembering the last sight he had of them.

"I heard the old beast clattering down the glen, as if he had fifty kettles at his tail. They'll stop him at last; and if they shouldn't, I don't suppose it matters much: the whole yoke wasn't worth a five pound note – no, even giving the owner into the bargain," muttered he, as he turned away.

The indignity of this speech acted like a charm upon Roach; as if galvanised by the insult, he sat bolt upright on the sofa, and thrust his hands down to the deepest recesses of his breeches pockets, his invariable signal for close action. "What, sir, do you tell me that my conveniency, with the pony, harness and all – "

"Have patience, Roach," interposed the old man; "Mark was but jesting. Come over and join us here." At the same instant the door was flung suddenly wide, and Sir Archy rushed in, with a speed very unlike his ordinary gait. "There's a change for the better," cried he, joyfully; "the boy has made a rally, and if we

could overtake that d – d auld beestie, Roach, and bring him back again, we might save the lad."

"The d – d auld beestie," exclaimed Roach, as he sprung from the sofa and stood before him, "is very much honoured by your flattering mention of him." Then turning towards the O'Donoghue, he added – "Take your turn out of me now, when you have me; for, by the Father of Physic, you'll never see Denis Roach under this roof again."

The O'Donoghue laughed till his face streamed with the emotion, and he rocked in his chair like one in a convulsion. "Look, Archy," cried he – "see now! – hear me, Roach," were the only words he could utter between the paroxysms, while M'Nab, the very picture of shame and confusion, stood overwhelmed with his blunder, and unable to say a word.

"Let us not stand fooling here," said Mark, gruffly, as he took the Doctor's arm; "come and see my brother, and try what can be done for him."

With an under-growl of menace and rage, old Roach suffered himself to be led away by the young man, Sir Archy following slowly, as they mounted the stairs.

Although alone, the O'Donoghue continued to laugh over the scene he had just witnessed; nor did he know which to enjoy more – the stifled rage of the Doctor, or the mingled shame and distress of M'Nab. It was, indeed, a rare thing to obtain such an occasion for triumph over Sir Archy, whose studied observance of all the courtesies and proprieties of life, formed so strong a

contrast with his own careless and indifferent habits.

"Archy will never get over it – that's certain, and begad he shan't do so for want of a reminder. The d – d auld beestie!" and with the words came back his laughter, which had not ceased as Mark re-entered the room. "Well, lad," he cried, "have they made it up – what has Sir Archy done with him?"

"Herbert's better," said the youth, in a low deep voice, and with a look that sternly rebuked the heartless forgetfulness of his father.

"Ah! better, is he? Well, that is good news, Mark; and Roach thinks he may recover?"

"He has a chance now; a few hours will decide it. Roach will sit up with him till four o'clock, and then, I shall take the remainder of the night, for my uncle seems quite worn out with watching."

"No, Mark, my boy, you must not lose your night's rest; you've had a long and tiresome ride to-day."

"I'm not tired, and I'll do it," replied he, in the determined tone of his self-willed habit – one, which his father had never sought to control, from infancy upwards. There was a long pause after this, which Mark broke, at length, by saying – "So, it is pretty clear now that our game is up – the mortgage is foreclosed. Hemsworth has noticed the Ballyvourney tenants not to pay us the rents, and the ejectment goes on."

"What of Callaghan?" asked the O'Donoghue, in a sinking voice.

"Refused – flatly refused to renew the bills. If we give him

five hundred down," said the youth, with a bitter laugh, "he says, he'd strain a point."

"You told him how we were circumstanced, Mark? Did you mention about Kate's money?"

"No," said Mark, sternly, as his brows met in a savage frown. "No, sir, I never said a word of it. She shall not be made a beggar of, for our faults. I told you before, and I tell you now, I'll not suffer it."

"But hear me, Mark. It is only a question of time. I'll repay – "

"Repay!" was the scornful echo of the young man, as he turned a withering glance at his father.

"Then there's nothing but ruin before us," said the O'Donoghue, in a solemn tone – "nothing!"

The old man's head fell forward on his bosom, and, as his hands dropped listlessly down at either side, he sat the very impersonation of overwhelming affliction, while Mark, with heavy step and slow, walked up and down the roomy chamber.

"Hemsworth's clerk hinted something about this old banker's intention of building here," resumed he, after a long interval of silence.

"Building where? – over at 'the Lodge?'"

"No, here – at Carrig-na-curra – throwing down this old place, I suppose, and erecting a modern villa instead."

"What!" exclaimed the O'Donoghue, with a look of fiery indignation. "Are they going to grub us out, root and branch? Is it not enough to banish the old lords of the soil, but they must

remove their very landmarks also?”

“It is for that he’s come here, I’ve no doubt,” resumed Mark; “he only waited to have the whole estate in his possession, which this term will give him.”

“I wish he had waited a little longer – a year, or at most, two, would have been enough,” said the old man, in a voice of great dejection, then added, with a sickly smile – “You have little affection for the old walls, Mark.”

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, купив полную легальную версию на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.