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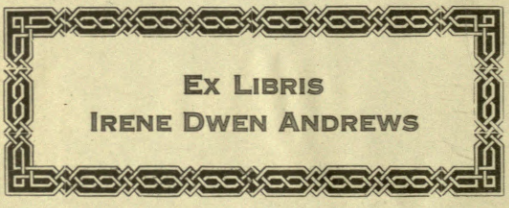
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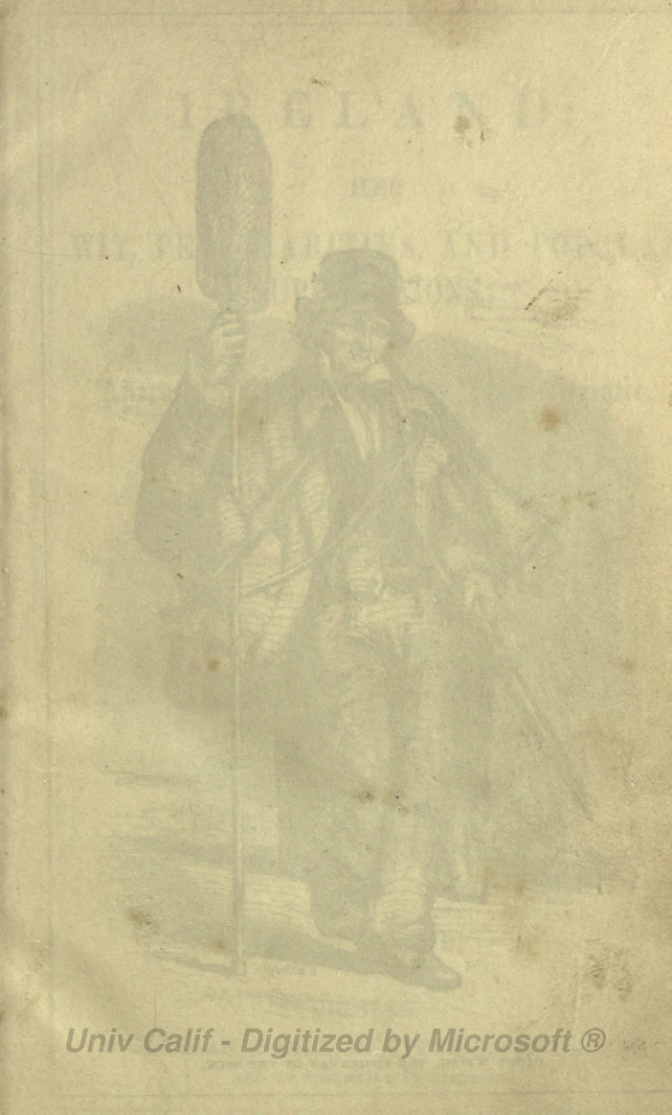
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PADDY WELSH, THE FISHERMAN OF THE SUCK.

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IRELAND:

HER

WIT, PECULIARITIES, AND POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS:

WITH

Anecdotes, Legendary and Characteristic.

BY

DISTINGUISHED IRISH WRITERS.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE "DUBLIN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE."



Illustrated.

DUBLIN:

McGLASHAN & GILL, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-ST.

AND AT THE RAILWAY STATIONS.

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PREFACE.

HAD not Shakespere embalmed in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" the Popular Superstitions and Fairy lore current in England at the time of Elizabeth, the present generation could form but a very faint idea of the ancient belief of our forefathers in the witcheries of their sylvan deities and household gods. In this utilitarian age it would be superfluous to discuss, or even to enumerate, the causes which have combined to obliterate this poetry of the people in England; suffice it to say, that it has gradually vanished before the spread of education, and the rapid growth of towns and manufactories.

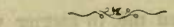
A wild and daring spirit of adventure—a love of legendary romance—a deep-rooted belief in the supernatural—an unconquerable reverence for ancient customs, and an extensive superstitious creed has, from the earliest times, belonged to the Celtic race. We cannot, therefore, wonder that among the but partially civilized, because neglected and uneducated, yet withal chivalrous inhabitants of a large portion of Ireland, a belief in the marvellous should linger even to the present day. It is, however—and chiefly from the causes enumerated in the first chapter of this little work—rapidly becoming obliterated; never to return. When now I enquire after the old farmer who conducted me, in former years, to the ruined Castle or Abbey, and told me the story of its early history and inhabitants, I hear that he died during the famine. On asking for the peasant who used to sit with me in the ancient

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Rath, and recite the Fairy legends of the locality, the answer is: "He is gone to America;" and the old woman who took me to the Blessed Well, and gave me an account of its wondrous cures and charms—"Where is she?"——"Living in the Workhouse."

These legendary tales and Popular Superstitions have now become the history of the past—a portion of the traits and characteristics of other days. Will their recital revive their practice? No! Nothing contributes more to uproot superstitious rites and forms than to print them; to make them known to the many instead of leaving them hidden among, and secretly practised by the few.

These tales form part of a large collection made for my amusement many years ago, or which were remembered since my boyhood, and they have been written as a relaxation from severer toil. Several of them have already appeared in the "Dublin University Magazine." They are now collected and presented to the public in their present form, chiefly in the hope of eliciting information from those who may be further acquainted with such matters; for which purpose I have here subjoined a list of Queries, on which I should like to have answers from my country readers. I have also added a copious index of both names and subjects, which will, I trust, likewise assist in bringing forth new matter. Should this little volume be acceptable, it will be followed by another when time permits.



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QUERIES.

Popular Superstitions Generally.

Popular Belief among the Peasantry as to the Existence of Fairies, Fairy Legends, Fairy-Stricken People and Cattle; with Charms and Cures against such; Elf-darts, Crystals.

Fairy Lore, Enchantment, Witchcraft, the Evil Eye, and Fairy Abduction.

Herb Cures and Fairy Doctors, Love Charms.

Ancient Customs, Traditions, Folk's Lore, and Proverbs Relating to Superstitious Practices.

Popular Games and Pastimes, with the Rhymes and Recitations used thereat.

Legends Relating to Ancient Forts and Raths, Crosses, Bawns, Blessed Wells, and Old Burial Places.

The Non-Religious Rites and Ceremonies Relating to Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

Ceremonials Used with a Corpse, and the Forms, Plays, Rhymes, and Keens, employed at Wakes; Ceremonies used at Funerals and in Grave Yards.

Popular Cures for Diseases, particularly Madness, Bite of a Mad Dog, the King's Evil, Falling Sickness, Fever, Jaundice, Wild-fire, Warts, Childbed, Chincough, and Ague, &c.

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The Moon;—Rhymes, Superstitions, and Proverbs, relating to.

Prophecies, Curses and Maledictions.

Ceremonies and Popular Usages Respecting Land, and the Preservation of Crops as well as Cattle, Milk, and Butter.

Legends and Superstitions Relating to Lakes and Rivers, with the fabulous Animals said to inhabit them.

Charms Employed against Various Disasters, Sudden Death, Drowning, &c.

Opinions with Regard to Fetches, Ghosts, and Spirits, Supernatural Appearances.

Ideas, Proverbs, and Rhymes current among the Peasantry respecting Different Animals, especially Hares, Weasels, Cats, Rooks, Wildgeese, Cocks, Wrens, Starlings, the Magpie, Raven, Waterwagtail, the Cuckoo, Robin, Dordeel, Mankeeper, Cricket, &c.

Charms appertaining to the Dead Man's Hand.

Rites and Ceremonies used at the following Festivals:—New Year's Day, Twelfth Night, Candlemas and St. Bridget's, Shrovetide, St. Valentine's Day, Easter, Whitsuntide, May Day, St. John's Eve, Garlic or Garland Sunday, Palm Sunday, Lady Day, Holy Eve, St. Martin's, Michaelmas, Christmas, St. Stephen's Day, &c., &c.



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IRISH POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

CHAPTER I.

DISCURSIVE INTRODUCTION, WRITTEN IN 1849, AND TO BE SKIPPED BY THOSE WHO FEEL NO PRESENT INTEREST IN IRELAND.

Revolution in Irish Peasant's Life: its Causes and Effects—Obliteration of Superstitions—Introduction of Darby Doolin—Loss of the Gentry—the Irish Pantheon—Tenant's Rights and Taxes—Demolition of the Popular and Rural Pastimes—The Ordnance Survey—Effect of the Potato Failure on the Popular Mind—Emigration and Patriotism—Who is to be the Buyer?—What we are, What we may be, and What we ought to be—The Way to Learn English—How to Prove a Man Mad—Quacks—The Last of the Superstitions.

By the sarcasm of his Don Quixote, Cervantes, it is said, first threw ridicule upon the followers of Amadis de Gaul, checked the spirit of knight-errantry, and in fact sneered away the chivalry of Spain. No doubt the effect produced by that work was sudden and decisive; the period, however, was propitious; light was beginning to shine out from the surrounding darkness, and the people to whom the work was addressed were learned enough to read, and had sufficient wisdom and common sense to appreciate its value, and also wit quick and ready to perceive its point. Rapid as, it is said, was the spread of this revolution of opinion in the Peninsula, and, indeed, throughout civilized Europe generally, it was nothing, in comparison to that which has taken place, and is still going forward, in matters of belief, and popular prejudice, and national opinion, in Ireland.

The great convulsion which society of all grades here has lately experienced, the failure of the potato crop, pestilence, famine, and a most unparalleled extent of emigration, together

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with bankrupt landlords, pauperizing poor-laws, grinding officials, and decimating workhouses, have broken up the very foundations of social intercourse, have swept away the established theories of political economists, and uprooted many of our long-cherished opinions. In some places, all the domestic usages of life have been outraged; the tenderest bonds of kindred have been severed, some of the noblest and holiest feelings of human nature have been blotted from the heart, and many of the finest, yet firmest links which united the various classes in the community have been rudely burst asunder. Even the ceremonial of religion has been neglected, and the very rites of sepulture, the most sacred and enduring of all the tributes of affection or respect, have been neglected or forgotten; the dead body has rotted where it fell, or formed a scanty meal for the famished dogs of the vicinity, or has been thrown, without prayer or mourning, into the adjoining ditch. The hum of the spinning-wheel has long since ceased to form an accompaniment to the colleen's song; and that song itself, so sweet and fresh in cabin, field, or byre, has scarcely left an echo in our glens, or among the hamlets of our land. The Shannaghie and the Callegh in the chimney corner, tell no more the tales and legends of other days. Unwaked, *unkeened*, the dead are buried, where Christian burial has at all been observed; and the ear no longer catches the mournful cadence of the wild Irish cry, wailing on the blast, rising up to us from the valleys, or floating along the winding river, when

> "The skies, the fountains, every region near,
> Seemed all one mutual cry."

The fire on the peasant's hearth was quenched, and its comforts banished, even before his roof-tree fell, while the remnant of the hardiest and most stalwart of the people crawl about, listless spectres, unable or unwilling to rise out of their despair. In this state of things, with depopulation the most terrific which any country ever experienced, on the one hand, and the spread of education, and the introduction of railroads, colleges, industrial and other educational schools, on the other,—together with the rapid decay of the Irish vernacular, in which most of our

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legends, romantic tales, ballads, and bardic annals, the vestiges of Pagan rites, and the relics of fairy charms were preserved,—can superstition, or if superstitious belief, can superstitious practices continue to exist?

But these matters of popular belief and folks'-lore, these rites and legends, and superstitions, were after all, *the poetry of the people*, the bond that knit the peasant to the soil, and cheered and solaced many a cottier's fireside. Without these, on the one side, and without proper education and well-directed means of partaking of and enjoying its blessings, on the other, and without rational amusement besides, he will, and must, and has in many instances, already become a perfect brute. The rath which he revered has been, to our knowledge, ploughed up, the ancient thorn which he reverenced has been cut down, and the sacred well polluted, merely in order to uproot his prejudices, and efface his superstition. Has he been improved by such desecration of the landmarks of the past, objects which, independent of their natural beauty, are often the surest footprints of history? We fear not.

"Troth, sir," said Darby Doolin, an old Connaughtman of our acquaintance, when lately conversing upon the subject, "what betune them national boords, and godless colleges, and other sorts of larnin', and the loss of the pratey, and the sickness, and all the people that's goin' to 'Merica, and the crathurs that's forced to go into the workhouse, or is dyin' off in the ditches, and the clargy settin' their faces agin them, and tellin' the people not to give *in* to the likes, sarra wan of the *Gintry* (cross about us!) 'ill be found in the counthry, nor a word about them or their doin's in no time."

The reader must not from this suppose that our friend Darby in any way commiserated or sympathized with the bankrupt landed gentry, or felt "sore or sorry" that the landlord and the noble were, *en masse*, reduced to the same condition that the merchant, the trader, or the professional man, are, from day to day. Oh, no! These were not the people honest Darby alluded to. Small blame to him if he had but little personal acquaintance with such gentry; for "few of them ever stood in the street, or darkened the doors" of the cottages

of his native village of Kilmucafaudeen. Darby Dooliu's gentry were, a short time ago at least, *resident*, and transacted their own business without either attorney, money-broker, agent, keeper, driver, or pound-keeper; they seldom visited London, and much more rarely Paris, or the Brunnens of Nassau; and though reputedly *lucky*, were scarcely ever known to frequent the gambling-table or the horse-race, but lived "in pace and quietness at home, in the ould ancient habitations of the counthry," riding by night up and down upon the moonbeams, changing their residences or localities with the whirlwind; creeping into the russet acorn shells; sleeping in summer in the purple pendent bells of the foxglove or the wild campanula; quaffing the Maydew from the gossamer threads of the early morning, and living a merry, social life, singing, dancing, and playing, with wild Eolian music, by the streamlet's bank, upon the green hill side, or round the grassy fort. And though they neither canted nor dispossessed, never took nor demanded "male or malt," head-rent, quit-rent, crown-rent, dues or duties, county-cess, parish-cess, tithes, priest's dues, poor rates, rates in aid, driverage, poundage, nor murder-money;* employed neither sheriffs, magistrates, barony constables, bailiffs, keepers, drivers, auctioneers, tax-collectors, process-servers, guagers, spies, potteen-hussars, police, nor standing army; passed no promissory notes, and served neither notices to quit, ejectments, nor civil bills, they exacted from the people a reverence and a respect such as few potentates, civil, military, or ecclesiastical, could ever boast of.

In most of the leases made in the county of Galway, even twenty years ago,—and we believe the practice was common in other parts of Ireland also,—there was, besides the ordinary rent, a covenant for so many pullets, geese and turkeys, so many days' work in spring and harvest, and so many pounds of grey yarn thread. These remnants of the feudal system were termed "duties." The agent, the tithe-proctor, the driver also, and the pound-keeper, had each his dues. Independent of the ordinary

* It is but too fully established that in most instances of agrarian murder, the whole townland was compelled to contribute to the price paid for the bloody deed, or heavily taxed to support the murderer, or pay his passage to America.

legal fees of the latter functionary, there were others which he obtained in this wise. If a man's cow was in pound, and his family in want of its support, he went to the pound-keeper to get it back, until the day of the *cant;* instead of leaving it starving, and up to its middle in mud in the pound for a fortnight, he paid the fee. The cattle-jailer took out a piece of paper, the leaf of a book, or the back of a letter—anything, in fact, having printed or written characters upon it—laid it down on the road, and the owner of the beast taking it up, pledged himself upon it to deliver up the animal within the appointed time. Rarely, indeed, was the pledge ever known to be broken, although many a serious riot and attempt at rescue had been made on the first capture of the beast.

"True for you," says Darby, "they are going fast, that *gentle* race (the Lord be with them!) but sure you wouldn't have them wait, them that were always an *out-door* population, to be taken by the scruff of the neck and sent by the guardians and commissioners just to try their feet on the flure of the poor-house,* or be shot down like thrushes, as the boys at Ballingarry were. The *good people* are leaving us fast: nobody ever hears now the tic-tac of the *leprechaun*, or finds the cute little chap with his Frenchman's hat and yellow breeches, sated on a boochalaun bwee of a summer's morning, with lab-stone on knee, and hammer in hand, tick-tack, tick-tack, welting soles and lasting brogues for his elfin brethren. God be with the time when Donall-na-Trusslog (Daniel of the leaps), met the leprechaun one morning on Rahona bog, with the *adhaster buidhe* (golden bridle, which, whenever shaken, was found with the yellow steed attached to it) in the one hand, and the *sporran-na-skillinge* (the purse that was never without a shilling) in the other. He laid hold of him, and swore that he should never part him till he had given up these treasures. 'Yarrah,' said the little fellow, 'what good is it for you to get them, when that fellow behind you will immediately take them from you?'

* We lately expostulated with one of our old beggars as to why she did not go into the poor-house—"Arrah, sure agra, I wouldn't be alive a week in it; I that's ate up with the rheumatics; troth, I went there the other day, jist to try my feet on the flure, and I wouldn't be alive in it a week," was the graphic reply.

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Daniel gave one of his sudden circuitous leaps, but on his turning again to the little fellow, he found, to his eternal grief, that he had scampered off, and was grinning at him from the spray of a bucky briar in the neighbouring hedgerow.

"Sure the children wouldn't know anything about the *pooca* but for the story of the blackberries after Michaelmas.* The warning voice of the *banshee* is mute; for there are but few of the 'rale ould stock' to mourn for now; the *sheogue* and the *thivish* are every year becoming scarcer; and even the harmless *linane shie* † is not talked about now-a-days, and does not hold discourse with e'er a fairy woman in the whole barony,—them that were as plenty as lumpers afore the yallow male came amongst us, and made us as wake and as small as a north country rushlight, or a ha'penny herring.‡ No lie to say the times are altered; sure the snow and the frost itself is lavin' us." Darby Doolin writes us word (for he is a mighty knowledgeable man, and fit to plade with a barrister,§ that all the stories about the fairies and the pishogues are going fast, and will soon be lost to us and our heirs for ever.

The old forms and customs, too, are becoming obliterated; the festivals are unobserved, and the rustic festivities neglected or forgotten; the bowlings, the cakes and the prinkums‖ (the

* It is a popular belief—kept up probably to prevent children eating them when over ripe—that the *pooca*, as he rides over the country, defiles the blackberries at Michaelmas and Holly-eve.

† These various personages, and the ideas attached to them, will be explained during the course of these papers. The representation of the "The Lianhan Shee," as given by Carleton, in his "Traits and Stories," does not hold good in the west, where that familiar spirit is looked upon as a much more innoxious attendant of the fairy woman. The leprechaun, or clurichaun, as he is termed in Munster, and the banshee and phooka, or pooca, the Puck of Shakspeare, are already known, even to English readers. The sheeogue is the true fairy; thivishes or thoushas (shadowy apparitions) are literally ghosts; and pisherogues, or pishogues, a term used both in the Irish manuscripts and in the vernacular, means properly witchcraft or enchantment.

‡ The *laffeen scuddaun*, or halfpenny herring, is often used as a term of insignificance.

§ By the term "barrister," the Irishman does not mean a lawyer generally, but the county assistant barrister, who is held in great veneration. In Ireland we have the lawyer, the councillor, and the barrister.

‖ In Connaught, in former times, when a dance was held on a Sunday evening at a cross-roads, or any public place of resort, a large cake, like what is called a

peasants' balls and routs), do not often take place when starvation and pestilence stalk over a country, many parts of which appear as if a destroying army had but recently passed through it. Such is the desolation which whole districts, of Connaught at least, at this moment present; entire villages being levelled to the ground, the fences broken, the land untilled and often unstocked, and miles of country lying idle and unproductive, without the face of a human being to be seen upon it. The hare has made its form on the hearth, and the lapwing wheels over the ruined cabin. The faction-fights, the hurlings, and the mains of cocks that used to be fought at Shrovetide and Easter, with such other innocent amusements, are past and gone these twenty years, and the mummers and May-boys left off when we were a gossoon no bigger than a pitcher. It was only, however, within those three years that the *waits* ceased to go their rounds upon the cold frosty mornings in our native village at Christmas; and although the "wran boys" still gather a few halfpence on St. Stephen's Day, we understand there wasn't a candle blessed in the chapel, nor a *breedogue** seen in the barony where Kilmucafauden stands, last Candlemas Day; no, nor even a cock killed in every fifth house, in honour of St. Martin; and you'd step over the *brosnach*† of a bonfire that the childer lighted last St. John's Eve.

barnbrack, with a variety of apocryphal birds, fabulous fishes, and outlandish quadrupeds, such as are only known in heraldic zoology, raised in bold relief on its upper crust, was placed on the top of a churn-dash, and tied over with a clean white cloth; the staff of the churn-dash was then planted outside the door as a sign of the fun and amusement going on within. When they had danced and drank their fill, the *likeliest* boy took the prettiest colleen, and led her out to the cake, and placed it in her hands as Queen of the Feast; it was then divided among the guests, and the festivities continued. The word *prinkum* is sometimes used in the county Galway, to express a great rout or merry-making, in which dancing, courting, coshering, whisky-drinking, card-playing, fighting, and sometimes a little ribbonism, form the chief diversions.

* The *breedogue* was an image of St. Bridget, generally styled by the country girls "Miss Biddy." It was carried about on the 1st of February. As one of the objects of this little work is to record the "humours" and ceremonials of this and other like festivals, formerly observed in Ireland, it is unnecessary to enter further into their description in the notes to the present chapter.

† The term *brosnach* is generally applied to an armful or an apronful of sticks used for firing; it literally means a bundle of rotten sticks for firing. A brusna of furze is carried on the back.

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The native humour of the people is not so rich and racy as in days of yore; the full round laugh does not now bubble up from the heart of the Irish girl when making her toilet at the wayside pool, nor the joke pass from the pedlar or bagman to the pig-driver as they trudge alongside of one another to fair or market. Well, honoured be the name of Theobald Mathew —but, after all, a power of fun went away with the whiskey. The spirits of the people isn't what they were when a man could get drunk for three halfpence, and find a sod on a kippeen * over the door of every second cabin in the parish, from Balloughoiage bridge to the town of Glan. The pilgrimages formerly undertaken to holy wells and sacred shrines for cures and penances have been strenuously interdicted; the wells themselves neglected, the festival days of their saints passed by, and their virtues forgotten; their legends, too, often of great interest to the topographer and historian, and many of which were recounted by the bards and annalists of earlier times, are untold; and the very sites of many of these localities are at present unknown. The fairies, the whole pantheon of Irish demigods are retiring, one by one, from the habitations of man to the distant islands where the wild waves of the Atlantic raise their foaming crests, to render their fastnesses inaccessible to the schoolmaster and the railroad engineer; or they have fled to the mountain passes, and have taken up their abodes in those wild romantic glens—lurking in the gorgeous yellow furze and purple heath, amidst the savage disruptured rocks, or creeping beneath the warrior's grave, learnedly, but erroneously, called the Druid Crumlegh—where the legend preserved by the antiquary, or the name transmitted by the topographer, alone marks their present habitation. When the peasant passes through these situations now he forgets to murmur the prayer which was known to preserve from harm those who trod the paths of the "good people," and, by thrusting his thumb between his fore and middle finger, to make the sign of the cross—indeed, he scarcely remembers to cross himself at all; and in a few years to come the localities of the fairies will be

* A sod of turf stuck on a sally switch or kippeen, and placed in the thatch of an Irish cabin, is the sign of "good liquor within."

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altogether forgotten. The wild strains of aërial music which floated round the ancient rath, and sung the matin and the vesper of the shepherd boy, who kept his flocks hard by, are heard no more, and the romance of elfin life is no longer recited to amuse or warn the rising peasant generation. To the log-house by the broad waters of the Ohio or the Missisippi, to the wild monotonous Australian prairie, or even to the golden soil of California, the emigrant has carried the fairy lore of the mother country; so that, to the charming descriptions of our countrywoman, Mrs. Hall—to the traits and stories of William Carleton—the happy illustration of Irish manners by Banim and Gerald Griffin—the pencillings of Lady Chatterton, or the graphic sketches of Cæsar Otway and Samuel Lover—but, above all, to the Munster legends, embalmed by Crofton Croker, must the enquirer after fairy lore refer, who would seek for information on such matters in Ireland twenty years to come.*

Would that the Irish emigrant carried with him his superstitions only. But no. In the rankling hatred towards the English rule in Ireland—increased by the very circumstances under which so many of our countrymen now quit our shores, fostered and transmitted unalloyed for generations to a foreign soil—has future England more to fear from future America in case of national war, than all the rebellions and agitations which puny Ireland could possibly excite, now or hereafter.

The ordnance survey, of which we feel so justly proud, is a

* The best of all our fairy tales are, perhaps, the "Superstitions of the Irish Peasantry," in the volumes of the "London and Dublin Magazine," published from 1825 to 1828. "The Newry Magazine," and "Bolster's Cork Magazine," also contain much interesting information on this subject.

One of our most learned and observant Roman Catholic friends has just written to us, in answer to some queries relative to superstitions—"The tone of society in Ireland is becoming more and more '*Protestant*' every year; the literature is a Protestant one, and even the priests are becoming more Protestant in their conversation and manners. They have condemned all the holy wells and resorts of pilgrims, with the single exception of Lough Derg, and of this they are ashamed: for, whenever a Protestant goes upon the Island, the ceremonies are stopped! Among all the affectionate mentions of his dearly-beloved father made by John O'Connell, he had not the courage to say '*the Lord rest his soule.*' I have watched these changes with great interest."

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case in point. It was commenced in 1825, and finished a few years ago. Eminent scholars, well acquainted with the language and habits of the people, and educated up to the point required, traversed the country in all directions, talked with, and lived among the people, for the purpose of fixing ancient boundaries, testing the accuracy and value of ancient documents, and collecting that great amount of traditional, antiquarian, and topographical information which our ordnance records at present embody; while another class of men were occupied at home in arranging, collating, testing with ancient Gaelic manuscripts, and finally preserving the information transmitted to them by the former. Could the materials then obtained be collected now? No. We may confidently appeal to Larcom, Petrie, O'Donovan, Curry, and other eminent men employed upon that great national work, for the truth of this assertion.

The dynasties of Europe have been shaken; many of the most ancient governments overthrown; and the whole of the continent convulsed with internal strife, or shaken by sudden change as the late tempest of revolution swept along its plains and leaped over its mountain tops. The very Pope himself, the head of the most widely-spread and numerous sect of Christians in the world, has been rudely driven from the seat of St. Peter, a wanderer and an exile, though assisted by the contributions of the "*starving Irish!*" and in all probability his temporal power has been much abridged or even annihilated: but what are these revolutions to that which has been and is now effecting in Ireland by the failure of a single article of diet? All these countries will settle down, more or less, into the condition in which they were before 1848. Some change emperors —young ones for old—though, as in the case of Aladdin's lamp, the change may not be for the better; others discard kings, and, under the name of republicanism, enjoy presidents or dictators; parliaments appear to be the panacea with one set of people, and a scoffing disregard of excommunication the chief delight and boast of another; but in the end it will be found that they will nearly all shake down with a very little more or very little less of liberty than they had in the beginning of the

year 1848.* The German will twist his moustache, smoke, and live on his beer and sour krout; and the Frenchman drink his wine at three sous a bottle, shrug his shoulders, and enjoy his *fête* as before. Not so the Irishman; all his habits and modes of life, his very nature, position, and standing in the social scale of creation, will and must be altered by the loss of his potato. Ay, even more than if he was suddenly compelled to turn Mahommedan,—changing all his chapels, churches, and meeting-houses into mosques,—or had a parliament going round with the judge of assize, and sitting in every county town in Ireland twice a-year.

"I was n't asey in myself," says our old friend Darby, "till I wrote to tell you all the doins that 's gettin' on with in the counthry, and how, if times does n't mind, I 'll sell the two little slips †—them that was bonoveens on last Lady-day—and gather in the trifle of money that 's due me out of the *gombeen*‡ these two years; and when I 've made *baton*§ of the meddin, and dishposed of the cabin and the little garden to Phaurie Brannach, I 'll be after takin' myself and the ould woman to the place they 're diggin' up the goold as thick as poorens ‖ used to be in harvest. Besides, I 'm noways contínted at stayin' here at this present writin', and I 'm tould Colonel Browne is watching me like a tarrier after a weasel. Whisht! sure avourneen, I was out in the 'ruction in '98; and I walked all the ways to see Dan (the heavens be his bed this night!) at Tara, and bring home a sod from off the grave of the boys we planted there the night afore I ran back into Connaught—just to the ould spud,

* This assertion was printed in the "Dublin University Magazine" for May, 1849. Subsequent events have proved its truth.

† *Slip* is the term applied to a young pig, of from six months to one year old; while bonov, or bonoveen, means a piggin-riggin, or sucking-pig, or one much younger than a slip.

‡ *Gombeen* means lending out money or provisions upon an exorbitant and most usurious rate of interest; by it, however, has commenced the foundation of many a considerable fortune. A gombeen man is among the country people what the bill-broker and money-lender is among the higher classes.

§ *Baton*—skinning the land and burning it, in order to extract its utmost value as manure. Various acts of parliament are in force against this most injurious practice; but it is still had recourse to, particularly in Monaghan, to the detriment of both land and landlord.

‖ *Poreens*—small potatoes.

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where your own four bones were bred and born, a one side of Rawcroghan."

If ever there was a nation that clung to the soil, and earned patriotism by the love of the very ground they walk on, it is (or we may now write was) the Irish peasantry. The Jew carries about with him from land to land a portion of the soil of Palestine, that it may mingle with his grave. Lately, when the author of the "Pleasures of Hope" was interred, a deputation of the Poles of London cast into his tomb—an offering to his genius—some earth from the grave of Kosciusko. Not many years ago, we stood upon the custom-house quays of Dublin, watching a large emigrant ship, bound for St. John's, getting under weigh. The wind and tide were favourable; the captain was impatient, and the names of the passengers having been called over, it was found that one was missing, a stout labourer from Kilkenny, a great favourite with his neighbours and fellow-passengers. The captain swore, as captains will on such occasions, that he would not wait a moment for the rascal, who, he supposed, was "getting drunk" in some of the neighbouring public-houses.* The prayers and entreaties of his fellow-passengers were in vain; the last plank was about to be hauled on board, when the missing passenger rushed breathless through the crowd towards the ship, carrying in his hands a green sod, about as large as that used to "estate" a lark, which he had just cut from one of the neighbouring fields. "Well," said he, as he gained the deck, amidst the shouts of his friends, "with the blessing of God, I'll have this over me in the new country." Was not this patriotism?

There is at present a spring tide of emigration from Ireland, and great is the rejoicing of those who imagine we are to be benefited by it;—the Malthusian who feared for the consequences of over-population (although we are inclined to believe the country was not much over-populated as a whole, although it certainly was most unequally populated); the rate-payer, who is now paying twenty-five shillings and sixpence in

* The facetious, witty, and sarcastic Brennan was once asked at dinner, whether he did not like to be drunk?—"No, ma'am," was his reply, "but I like to be *getting* drunk."

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the pound! and the landlord who is buying up the small holdings for three or five pounds each, from those who "cumber the ground." Every one who can muster three pounds ten by the pledge of his crop, or for the good-will of his holding, or by "making-off" with the rent, or by any means within his power; all the able-bodied among the people, from the snug yeoman and frieze-coated cottier to the top-booted buckeen, are on the move for America, leaving us the idle and ill-conditioned, the weakly, the decrepid, the aged and the orphan, to be supported in our workhouses, or to drag out a miserable existence begging from door to door,—so that it may well be said, the heart of Ireland now beats in America. The sums of money that are returned to this country from the western continent daily, for the purpose of taking out emigrants, are quite astonishing. Not only that, but the feelings with which they leave are becoming altered. There is scarcely an observer of Irish manners, or who has mixed much among the people, that has not witnessed many heart-rending scenes at the parting of emigrants for some years past. It was not amidst the noise and bustle of the crowded quay that these outpourings of the heart could always be seen; but by the canal's banks, when the "whole country side" came to bless and bid adieu to the travellers, and crowded round at every lock and station for miles along the road, raising at times the wild Irish cry, and often forcing their way upon deck to have another last embrace. We remember many such scenes ten or twelve years ago. There was one instance, in particular, which struck us not only as characteristic of a mother's love, but of the ideas which the Irish peasantry possessed on the subject of the new continent, and of the complete earthly severing which took place when friends and relations parted on the Bog of Allen. The Royal Canal packet-boat, dragged by a pair of lazy garrauns at the rate of three miles an hour, had taken in a cargo of emigrants, principally labourers from the county of Longford. Their friends followed for a considerable distance, many, brimful of whisky as well as grief, crowding upon the bridges, and sometimes pulling the boat to the brink by the tow-rope, for the purpose of sending a message to one of their transatlantic friends,—to the great terror

and no small danger of the non-emigrating passengers. All gradually fell back, except one very old woman, who, with her grey elf-locks streaming in the wind, her petticoat tucked above the knees, and her old red cloak floating free from her shoulders, still, with unabated energy, ran after the vessel which contained her only son. He was a red-headed freckled-faced *codger* of about twenty years of age, rather diminutive in size, but what is called *set* in his build, clad in a huge whitish frieze *coatha more*, corduroy smalls open at the knees, a Killamanka waistcoat, and a grinder round his neck, and with sullen looks, trembling lips, and swollen eyes, sat upon his *chist*, with his legs hanging over the side of the vessel. Whenever our speed slackened, or we came to a lock, or any impediment stopped our way, the poor woman knelt down and offered up a fervent prayer for the child she was parting with for ever, and occasionally gave him some advice as to his future conduct. At last, having invoked, with all the eloquence of frantic grief, a blessing upon his head, she cried out, "Orah, Thomasseen, don't forget to say your prayers, and never change your voice nor your colour when you go among the blacks." *

What a difference has ten years made in the feelings of the Irish peasant! He now no longer looks forward to better or happier times in his father-land; seed-time and harvest, the price of pigs or the rise of grain, enter not into his calculations; but he turns with a longing eye to his far-distant destination in the west, and he starves, and grinds, and toils, not for the good of the land which gave him birth, but to amass and husband the means which are to transport him for ever from his once-loved Erin. The friends who now accompany the band

* Even in the northern, and more independent and comfortable, because more educated and industrious counties, a certain season, usually in spring, was set apart for emigrating, and it was always one of mourning and lamentation. In the west, during the emigrating season, of late years, the canal company were obliged to employ police to travel with the packet-boat, in order to keep back and preserve order among the crowds which rushed on board whenever the vessel approached a landing-place. About five years ago, a frightful accident occurred upon the Royal Canal, near Dublin; the boat was overpowered by numbers both of emigrants and their friends, and sinking with great rapidity, upwards of fourteen persons were drowned.

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of emigrants to the railway terminus part as if they were but going into the next county—"Well, Jim, God be with you, and a safe journey to you; take care of the woman that owns you, and remember me to Biddy Sullivan. Tell her I'll be after you agin Aesther." The bell rings, the shrill whistle of the engine gives the warning note, and the parting is over.*

Take care, landlords, gentlemen, and governors of Ireland. The clearing system, if not carried too far, has been, at least, carried on too rapidly. Had you improved the condition of the peasantry, or even attempted to do so, some twenty years ago, you might not have to support them in the poor-house now, nor receive their dying malediction. You may want the labourer yet; the English farmer also may require the aid of the *spalpeen* before harvest is over. We will not press this subject further, at a time when almost every hand and every pen is raised against the landed proprietors indiscriminately, and when, perhaps, one of our next essays may be upon the *paleontology* of the Connaught estated gentry, as well as those who reside in the butter-cups and among the raths and mounds erected by our ancestors. [This, it must be recollected, was written in the Spring of 1849. How truly it has turned out, the past year proves.]

At our request, however, Darby has remained to see what the end of all agitation,—if such a thing is possible in Ireland,—and the next harvest may do for the country. Perhaps we have been somewhat selfish in this respect, for, as he has long been considered the knowingest man in the whole country, and could tell more stories about the ould times and the "good people," and knew more about cures and charms than "all the

* Considerable surprise has been excited, not only at the quantity of money transmitted to their friends in this country by emigrants, but at the very short time which elapsed between the period of their landing in America and the arrival of the money-order in Ireland. It must not, however, be supposed that the money has been all earned by the emigrant within that short space. To raise the sum required for bringing out one or more of his family, the peasant or the artizan—but principally the former—mortgages his labour for a certain time to a farmer, or other employer, who, glad to procure a good workman for a certain stipulated rate of wages, advances the necessary supply.

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books that were ever shut and opened," and was up to the genealogy of all the ancient families, and had been at every bawne and coort* in Connaught as often as he had fingers and toes, we desired to preserve some of his curious lore before he crossed the Atlantic in his old age.

If, however, we cannot hope much for the future, let us for the present, at least, live in the memory of the past.

We are now in the transition state, passing through the fiery ordeal from which it is hoped we are to arise purified from laziness and inactivity, an honest, truth-telling, hard-working, industrious, murder-hating, business-minding, rent-paying, self-relying, well-clad, sober, cooking, healthy, thriving, peaceable, loyal, independent, Saxon-loving people; engaged all day long, and every day except Sundays (though Archbishop Whately, more power to him! would back us at a hurling on that same), in sowing and mowing, tilling and reaping, raising flax, fattening bullocks, and salting pork, or fishing and mending our nets and lobster-pots; instead of being a poor, dependent, untruthful, idle, ignorant, dirty, slinging, *sleeven*, cringing, begging set; governed by the bayonet or the bribe; generally misunderstood; always *sould* by the agitator at home, and the mimber abroad; ground down by the pauper absentee or his tyrannical agent; bullied by the petty sessions magistrates; alternately insulted and cajoled by the minister of the day, misrepresented and scandalized as Whig and Tory prevailed; bullied by the Browns and Beresfords to-day, worshiping O'Connell to-morrow; vilified by the London press, and demoralized by charity jobbing. In fact, the most ill-used, and, to adopt the phraseology of Mr. Doolin, "the most jury-packing, road-jobbing, paper-reading, buckeen-breeding, sea-bathing, car-driving, cockle-eating, cup-tossing, tea-and-whisky-drinking, ribbon-lodging, orange-lodging, fighting, shouting, landlord-shooting, pig-jobbingest, potato-lovingest, good-for-nothingest nation on the face of the universal globe." All this is to be set aside, and all the good we have described, and more to boot is, it is said, to be brought about, and we hope to

* *Bawne:* an inclosed keep—an ancient castle. A modern noble residence is frequently called a coort, or court.

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live to see the day it may come to pass, though we don't know exactly how it is to be effected.

Repeal is dead; its ghost was last seen at Ballingarry, but vanished in smoke and a flash of fire; some say it is hid in a cave in Slievenamon; but I don't give in to that. O'Connellism was kilt by the young Irelanders, who blew themselves up with the infernal machine with which they had arranged to shoot Dan and the sodjers. Education, emigration, Queen's colleges, Cashel synods, stopping the Maynooth grant, discriminating rates, rates in aid, and other variations in the poor-laws; soil analysis, green crops, agricultural missionaries, model-farms, manufactories, rotatory parliaments, quakers, fisheries, suspension of the habeas corpus, ecclesiastical titles bills, waste land improvements, paying the priests and putting down the establishment, arming the Orangemen, and "Peel" plantations, with a thousand other speculations, schemes, and propositions, have each their advocates. One thing, however, is certain, the great bulk of the land in the west and south must change owners; sooner or later it must come into the market either in wholesale or retail, and now the sooner the better. But who will be the buyers? Oh! Englishmen—English capital, that is what we want. "Just wait a bit;" we have been planted, replanted, and transplanted by the English and Scotch on several occasions, and in various ways; we are, it may now be said, undergoing the process of subsoil ploughing; the great bulk of the old population in the south and west is being put *under the sod*, and we sincerely trust the noxious weeds may be got rid of in the process. Let it, however, be remembered what the country gained by these various plantations: the "mere Irish" were driven like wolves into the wilds and fastnesses of Donegal and Connaught, without their condition being one iota improved in two centuries. The Cromwellian soldier has, in some instances, become the Tipperary murderer. At the Boyne this country changed masters, and the land its owners—the native Irish gentleman, the adherent of the Stuarts, was replaced by the victorious English captain or lieutenant, whose descendants are now some of the first to "go to the wall," although these persons obtained the fee of

their estates merely on condition of their driving out the Celts; and as to the hired Scotch agriculturists, they never effected a single improvement outside their employer's demesne, or bettered the condition of the Irish farmer in any respect.

Well, no matter what comes, we'll lose the *gintry*, so we have made arrangement with Darby and some of our old Connaught acquaintances, aided by friends in the other provinces, to furnish us, from time to time, with a few particulars about the old customs and social antiquities of Ireland, especially such as have not already appeared, at any length, in print. It is possible, however, that we may frequently be found quoting inadvertently without acknowledgment, as the old newspapers and magazines constantly recorded instances of superstition; and the local histories also mention many such. It would be impossible, indeed, to say how often we are making use of, without acknowledgment, the numerous contributions afforded us by our country friends.

This is, as our readers, who have been able to follow us thus far, have already perceived, rather a discursive chapter, but so is our subject, which has been taken up like the sybil's leaves, disarranged, in rags and patches, as time, opportunity, or the immediate matter in hand invited. We have already alluded to the decay of the Irish language as one of the means by which our legends and superstitions are becoming obliterated. It is scarcely possible to conceive the rapidity with which this is being effected, or the means taken to bring it about. We may relate the following incident as characteristic of the love of learning, and the spread of education among the peasantry in the west of Ireland, as well as the means forcibly employed to expunge the Gaelic as a spoken language. Some years ago we were benighted on a summer evening by the shores of Loch Ina, near the foot of those picturesque mountains, called the twelve pins of Benna-Beola, in Connemara. Our guide conducted us to a neighbouring village, where we were received for the night with that hospitality which has for ever been the characteristic of those wild mountaineers. While supper was preparing, and the potatoes laughing and steaming in the

skieh,* the children gathered round to have a look at the stranger, and one of them, a little boy about eight years of age, addressed a short sentence in Irish to his sister, but meeting the father's eye, he immediately cowered back, having, to all appearance, committed some heinous fault. The man called the child to him, said nothing, but drawing forth from its dress a little stick, commonly called a scoreen or tally, which was suspended by a string round the neck, put an additional notch in it with his penknife. Upon our inquiring into the cause of this proceeding, we were told that it was done to prevent the child speaking Irish; for every time he attempted to do so a new nick was put in his tally, and when these amounted to a certain number, summary punishment was inflicted upon him by the schoolmaster. Every child in the village was similarly circumstanced, and whoever heard one of them speak a word of Irish was authorized to insert the fatal nick. We asked the father if he did not love the Irish language—indeed the man scarcely spoke any other; "I do," said he, his eye kindling with enthusiasm; "sure it is the talk of the ould country, and the ould times, the language of my father and all that's gone before me—the speech of these mountains, and lakes, and these glens, where I was bred and born; but you know," he continued, "the children must have larnin', and, as they tache no Irish in the National School, we must have recourse to this to instigate them to talk English" Upon further inquiry we found that the school alluded to was upwards of three miles distant, and that one of the able-bodied villagers escorted the children there each day, summer and winter, occasionally carrying the weak, and conducting the party with safety across the fords, and through some difficult passes which intervened. We have known a young man, who had assumed a very *fine* English accent, twitted with the circumstance of his having once carried the "*score*," by being told, "Arrah, leave off your English, 'tisn't so long since the beam was round your neck."

The fairy legends and traditions of the south of Ireland—the Cluricaune, the Merrow, the Duhallane, and the O'Donohues, &c., have been already faithfully described by Crofton

* *Skiehogue, skiô, skieh*, the oval basket in which potatoes are strained.

Croker; but the subject is by no means exhausted, even in Munster; while a new set of elves, spirits, and goblin influences, with somewhat different ideas attached to each, pervade the west, particularly the counties of Mayo and Galway, and the isles which speckle the wild Atlantic along their shores—the group of Arran, Turk, Boffin, Innis Shark, Clare Island, Achill, and from Innis-Beagle to the far-famed Innis-Murray, opposite to the Sligo coast. Even when the legend common to the south or north is retained in these localities, it is in a new dress, with new dramatis personæ, and entirely new scenery, machinery, decorations, and processions; thus, the story of Daniel O'Rourke is told upon a winter's night, by the laussogue's blaze,* in the Islands of Shark and Boffin, under the name of Terence O'Flaherty, as a warning to the stayers out late, by people who never heard of the "Munster Legends," to which we have alluded.† The phraseology of our Connaught story-teller is also different in many respects from that of the northern or Munsterman, as may be gleaned from this chapter.

But it is not in the west, or among what is termed the true Celtic population alone, that superstitions and mystic rites are still practised. We have fortune-tellers within the Circular-road of Dublin! and fairy doctors, of repute, living but a few miles from the metropolis. Not six months ago a man was transported for ten years for so far practising upon the credulity of a comfortable family in the county of Longford, as to obtain sums of money, by making them believe he was their deceased father, who was not dead, but only among the *good people*, and permitted to return occasionally to visit his friends. While we write, a country newspaper informs us of the body of a child having been disinterred at Oran, in the County Roscommon, and its arms cut off, to be employed in the performance of certain mystic rites. About a year ago a man in the county of Kerry roasted his child to death, under the impression that it was a fairy. He was not brought to trial, as the crown prosecutor mercifully looked upon him as insane.

* *Fassogue*, *Lassogue*, or *sup*—a piece of dry bog-deal used as a torch.

† The story of Daniel O'Rourke appeared many years before the publication of the Munster Legends, in a periodical called the "Dundee Repository."

Madness has either been assumed, or sworn to, as a means of getting off prisoners, on more than one occasion, to our own knowledge. We remember sitting, some years ago, beside a celebrated veteran prisoner's counsel, in a county town in Connaught, who was defending a man on his trial for murder, committed apparently without provocation, in the open day, and before a number of witnesses; the prisoner having, with a heavy spade, clove through the skull of his unresisting victim. The defence intended to be set up was, as usual, an alibi. Numbers of people were ready to come forward and swear he was not, and could not be, at the place specified in the indictment at all. As the trial proceeded, however, the sagacious lawyer, entrusted with the defence, at once saw that he had not a leg to stand on, and, turning abruptly to the prisoner's attorney, swore with an oath bigger than that taken by any of the witnesses, "He'll be hanged. Could you not prove him mad?"

"Oh! yes; 'mad as a March hare.' I'll get plenty of people to prove that," was the solicitor's ready reply.

"But did you ever know of his doing anything out of the way? Now, did you ever hear of his eating his shoes, or the likes of that?"

"Shoes? I'll get you a man that will swear he eat a new pair of brogues, nails and all."

"Well, then," said the barrister, "put him up; and let us get our dinner."

The attorney retired to look after his witnesses, while a prolonged cross-examination of one of the prosecutors then upon the table, enabled the "sharp practitioner" to alter his tactics and prepare for the defence. Accordingly, the very first witness produced for the defence swore to the insanity of the prisoner; and the intelligent jury believing in the truth of the brogue-eating, including the digestion of tips, heel-taps, sole-nails, squares, tacks, sprigs, hangups, pavours and sparables, acquitted the prisoner! He was about to be discharged from the dock, when the judge committed him to a lunatic asylum.

During a recent assizes, in one of the southern counties, a witness, who prevaricated not a little, was rather roughly interrogated in her cross-examination, as to the nature of an oath,

and the awful consequences of breaking it. "Do you know, my *good* girl," thundered the crown lawyer, "what would happen to you if you perjured yourself?"

"Troth, I do well, sir," said she; "I wouldn't get my expinses."

There are certain types of superstition common to almost all countries in similar states of progress or civilization, and others which abound in nearly every condition of society; and strange to say, what was science—written, ackowledged, and accepted science—not more than two centuries ago, is now pronounced vulgar error and popular superstition. It would, no doubt, form a subject of great interest to trace back our traditional antiquities, and to compare them one with another—the German and Scandinavian with the Irish, Scotch, or English—those of the western and eastern continents generally, with the rites and ceremonies, or opinions, of which vestiges still exist among ourselves; when, indeed, strange affinities and similarities would be found to obtain among the North American Indians, and the Burmese and other Orientals, with those even yet practised in the Irish highlands and islands; but this would be a laborious task, and unsuited to the pages of our work, or to the popular elucidation of our fairy lore.

Of all superstitions, the medical lingers longest, perhaps, because the incentive to its existence must remain, while disease, real or imaginary—either that capable of relief, or totally incurable—continues to afflict mankind, and, therefore, in every country, no matter how civilized, the quack, the mountebank, the charm-worker, and the medico-religious impostor and nostrum-vendor, will find a gullable, *payable* public to prey upon. The only difference between the water-doctor living in his schloss, the mesmeriser practising in the lordly hall, or the cancer and the consumption curer of the count or duchess, spending five thousand a-year in advertisements, paid into the queen's exchequer, who drives his carriage and lives in Soho-square, and the "medicine man" of the Indian, or the "knowledgeable woman" of the half-savage islander, residing in a hut cut out of the side of a bog-hole, or formed in the cleft of a granite rock, is, that the former are almost invariably

wilful impostors, and the latter frequently believe firmly in the efficacy of their art, and often refuse payment for its exercise.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAY-DAY FESTIVAL IN IRELAND.

> No doubt they rose up early, to observe
> The rite of May; and hearing our intent,
> Came here in grace of our solemnity.
>
> MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Remembrances of Old May Day; a Dream of the Past—The Floralia and La Beal-Teine—The Ancient Irish Year—Bael Worship—Ancient Irish Authorities thereon—Bonfires—The May Day Fire in Dublin; a Scene in the Coombe—Bonfire Ceremonial—May Eve Festivities—The Snail Charm and the Yarrow—The Well Ceremonies upon May Morning—Cattle Charms—Nettling—The Hare Witch—Churning—The Butter Witchcraft—May Dew—The May Bush and May Pole—Finglas Sports and Dublin Revels—May Boys and Morris-Dancers—May Rhymes—Saura-Linn—Sonnoughing Sunday—May Day Legends.

WINTER and spring are over; the harsh east winds of March,—the sirocco of the British Isles,—have passed to other climes, and fitful April, now warm and witching, anon rough and gusty, or mild and melting, bright and gloomy, as alternate clouds and sunshine struggle for the mastery—like the face of angry, but forgiving woman, with pouting lip but dimpled cheek, ever smiling through her tears—charming April, the sweet, blue-eyed harbinger of summer, has breathed upon us once again—changing the russet mantle of seed-time into the verdant garment of May. "The middle summer's spring" has come, first budding in mottled green among our sheltered hedges and cultured gardens, then spreading with almost visible pace from shrub to tree, and tree again to lawn; while, as the leaves expand, and young shoots twine as if to screen and shelter from the vulgar gaze the loves of feathered warblers, the birds are mating in every bush, and welcoming the hour with joyous notes of passion or of praise. The summer is bursting upon us. Even the rooks, that balance on the tops of

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the still grey and unleaved ash, have assumed a softened, cawing note, and the sharp call of the chaffinch assumes a melody in our ears, because we hail it as the season's chime. The timid, retiring primrose, peeps up from among the rib-grass and violets, and raises to the light its modest, sulphur-coloured face; the graceful cowslip, with the crimson star brightening in its calyx, now droops its modest head in the upland, daisy-spangled meadows; and the saucy yellow buttercup and golden Mayflower flaunts it in the deep pastures beside the streamlet's brink, inviting to their honey-cups the bee that now, warmed by the genial season, has shuffled off its lethargy, and is booming over glade and valley. The thorns are putting forth their white clusters, or are already bursting into flower and fragrance, as the sloe, the pear, and the apple are nodding beneath the shower, and strewing the ground with their silvery petals.

Do not our spirits attune with the seasons—springing and expanding with the early summer, but folding up within us as the bleak November blast, cold and cheerless, bursts upon us? Does not the heart gush, the eye brighten, the step become elastic, as we inhale the exhilarating spring breeze in our early country excursions; and again become languid as we seek the summer shade, or bask in the calm repose of autumn? Yes, all nature, marsh and meadow, hill and hollow, land, and sea, and sky, forest monarchs and nodding blue-bell'd florets, beasts and feathered fowls, and winged insects, the tiny myriads of creation—all hail the Sabbath of the year, and sing the matin of the dawn of summer. Let us then, also, hail the season, and for a while throw off the cares of life, as we do the dust of the city, and away to the greenwood shade—there to enjoy the bounteous blessings which nature pours around us; and at the same time revive the recollections of past days and ceremonies, such as our ancestors, simple-hearted, good-natured, superstitious folks, observed of yore upon the bridal of the year.

"Yes! the summer is returning,
Warmer, brighter beams are burning;
Golden mornings, purple evenings,
Come to glad the world once more.

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Nature, from her long sojourning
In the winter house of mourning,
With the light of hope outpeeping,
From those eyes that late were weeping,
Cometh dancing o'er the waters,
To our distant shore."*

Now then, fair and gentle, rude and rustic readers—country swains and city dames—boys of the Liberty, from Blackpits to Mullinahack, from the banks of the Dodder to the heights of Ballynascorney—girls of Finglas and bucks of Fingal, how have you spent your May Eve?—how did you welcome May Morning, and how do you purpose to celebrate the birth-day of summer? Have you danced to the elfin pipers that played under the thorns of the Phœnix last night? Did you leap through the bonfires that blazed upon Tallaght and Harold's-cross Green? Were you out yester-eve to welcome the "Young May Moon?" or up before sunrise this morning to gather the maiden dew from the sparkling gossamer, to keep the freckles off your pretty faces?—or have you been—

——————— "seeking
A spell in the young year's flowers.
The magical May-dew is weeping
It's charms o'er the summer bow'rs."

Have you found the name of your true love smeared by the snail you set between the plates last evening? and have you chosen a Queen of the May, whose path you'll strew with pasture flowers, as you lead her round the garlanded pole of the Tolka? Are your doors and windows decorated with primroses and cowslips, and May-flowers gathered by the meadows and green inches of your lovely Anna Liffey? Butchers of Patrick's Market and Bull Alley, and boys of the Coombe and the Poddle, are you ready, as of yore, to "cut de bosh, spite of de Devil and de Polis?" Up, weavers of Newmarket and Meath Street, and join with the Ormond boys; will you suffer the white-coated boddaghs of Meath to carry off the prizes at Finglas, and steal the May-dew from the rosy-lipped girls of Glasnevin?

* Mac Carthy's "Bridal of the Year."

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Alas! what are we dreaming about—things that were, not are—memories of other, of better and happier times—of ancient customs sneered away by modern utilitarianism—of ceremonies almost forgotten, and healthful rustic sports and pastimes, now prohibited by law, put down by force—starved out of our light-hearted people, or carried beyond the blue waves of the broad Atlantic? Politics have of late years occupied the place of pantomimes—our Finglas sports were interdicted by a special act of the Privy Council—fairy lore has given place to a newspaper political religion—the new police banished the bonfires: and where is the piper or fiddler would enliven the gardens of the "Grinding Young"* after hearing a temperance band, all dressed like Jack Puddings and drum majors coming down the road from Kimmage or Dolphin's Barn?

All gone, dead and gone, save a few dirty urchins in the suburbs, who, with the twigs of a second-hand broom, decked with stinking daffydowndillies, annoy the passengers by asking "a hay'penny to honour the May."

Burgesses and 'prentice boys of Atha-Clea, kings of Dalkey and Mud Island, sweeps of Kevin's Port and the Cabbage Garden,† and coal-porters of Ringsend and Wood Quay, you have either voluntarily surrendered, or been deprived of your ancient sports and pastimes, your festal days, and civic shows. But, "every dog will have his day." Little thought the fat corporators that the hours of the *Fringes*‡ were numbered, and that it would require an I O U from the Lord Mayor to bring out the glass coach on a Candlemas Day.§ Well, have you not had your revenge? The times of Viceregal pageants have passed by; processions, barring a stray funeral up Granby Row, are at an end; Ulster King-at-Arms has become as fabu-

* *Grinding Young.* One of the last old Dublin signs, and one of the best executed, too—formerly swinging from a pole, but now nailed to the wall of an almost deserted "public" at Harold's-cross Bridge. In its old *tea-garden* may still be seen several decayed swing-swongs and merry-go-rounds, now too crazy to make the annual excursion to "the Brook"—Donnybrook Fair.

† *Cabbage Garden.* The Capuchin's garden—an old burial ground opposite the Meath Hospital.

‡ *Fringes.* Alluding to the old Corporation custom of Riding the Franchises.

§ Written in April, 1850.

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lous a personage as Fin-Ma-Coul, and his tabard and sword have gone with those of the Athlone Herald, to be hung up among the dresses and ornaments of the ancient Celts at the Royal Irish Academy. Guard mountings are mere matters of history; Levees and Drawing-rooms will soon have become stories wherewith to amuse our children, and the shamrock-dressed lady has, perhaps, danced her last in St. Patrick's Hall, and kissed the knocker of Dublin Castle, as she called a sixpenny covered car to carry her home from the wake of our Patron Saint.

Well, happy were the days in Merry England, when blithe King Hal, with Katherine, his Queen, went out a-Maying, and the people walked "into the sweete meadowes and greene woodes, there to rejoice their spirites with the beauty and savour of sweete flowers, and with the harmony of birds"—when royal pageants, with Maid Marians and Morris-dancers, Robin Hoods and Friar Tucks, were considered more wholesome for the people than ale-house polemics; and rustic sports and village pastimes cheered and solaced the poor man's holiday, and all who met, like Hermia and Lysander of old in the Athenian grove—

"To do observance to a morn of May."

We sat down, however, to describe Irish, not English sports and ceremonies, and therefore must to our subject at once; for materials abound on every hand upon the May Day customs of the English, and there have been few poets of note in that happy land who have not sung the praises of this blithesome, merry season, when

"Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity;
And with a heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday."

Except in some cursory allusion or incidental notice, May Day in Ireland has not been described by any of the writers with whose works we are familiar. In laying down for ourselves the plan of these popular superstitions of the Irish peasantry, and the humble classes who are still simple-hearted enough to adhere to the old customs of their forefathers, we

originally intended to devote a few chapters to the several festivals, as St. John's Eve, Lady Day, Garland Sunday, St. Martin's Day, Holly Eve, Christmas, Twelfth Night, Candlemas, &c.; and it seems fitting to commence the series with the May festival, May Eve, and May Day, as formerly kept by the Irish, or still, in part, observed by the present generation. But as cows, milk, and butter are supposed to be affected by fairy influences and witchcraft, &c., at that time more particularly than at any other period of the year, we shall now detail so much of the cattle charms from our notes and manuscripts as have immediate reference to the season of the May festival; and reserve for a future period the tales and legends still living in the mouths of the people, and which, better than any description of ours, serve to illustrate the popular opinions as to the causes which produce the various mischances daily occurring to horned cattle, and their produce.

In treating the subject of a festival where a multiplicity and a great variety and diversity of topics must necessarily be introduced, it is not possible to weave it, as in our subsequent chapters, into the form of a tale or legend, expressive of the opinions, as well as descriptive of the phraseology and national character of the people or the scenery of the country.

Many of our May Day customs, sports, and games, are of English origin, and were, no doubt, introduced by the Anglo-Saxons. These pastimes are not, however, confined to the British Isles; many of them are common to all Europe, and several of them have descended to us from the Roman Floralia, or feast of Flora, the goddess of fruits and flowers, which was celebrated of old with great festivity, and sometimes with excessive licentiousness, during the last few days of April and few first of May, when the sun entered the summer solstice. From such customs came down to us the maypoles, and garlands, and floral decorations, the last traditional institution of the summer's welcome; while from our Scandinavian and Celtic great ancestors, we may fairly trace the bonfires—the lucky, or propitiatory, fires which were formerly, and are still in some places, lighted on La-Beal-teine; the Beltin of Scotland, the day of the Beal fire, the Gaelic name by which the period is still called.

The English ceremonial of May Day has been fully and graphically described by the industrious Brande, and by Sir Henry Ellis, in his modern edition of the work of that author, in Hone's "Every-day Book," in Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes of the People," and in several minor works and periodicals. But in describing the Irish observances of this institution, we shall only make use of these and other authorities where they serve to illustrate, by their more ample details, our now almost forgotten Irish customs. It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that a superstitious creed, and certain mystic rites derived from the remotest times, attach to almost every nation in a certain state of society, and are not peculiar to either race or creed; that some of these are of almost universal acceptation; that others belong to peculiar localities, and that their geographical distribution is a source of interesting investigation both to the historian and to the ethnologist. In many countries these rites and practices are still prevalent; in others more advanced in civilization, or the society of which has suffered some sudden and violent disruption, they are merely preserved in the ancient ballad, the bardic legend, or the traditional romance; or dimly appear referred to in the sayings and proverbs of the old people, or have been preserved like lingering shadows amongst the amusements and customs of modern times. In describing any peculiar rite or custom, we shall give it in as full and ample a manner as we have ever heard or known it to be observed or enacted. But as many of these usages are now obsolete, others only partially preserved—some being very local, one custom being confined to the north, another being peculiar to the west, and several only seen in the south, or in the adjacent parts of Leinster—our country readers are not to suppose that, because only a mere vestige of the rite or type of the ceremonial exists in their neighbourhood, we have in any way enlarged these descriptions by fancy or conjecture.

This little work is not intended for antiquarian purposes. We have neither the leisure nor the research necessary to render it learned in an archæological point of view, but it is our earnest desire, as far as our knowledge enables us, not to pro-

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pagate, even in a popular legend, the usual historic fallacies, conjectural etymologies, and far-fetched and often inapplicable and unmeaning analogies to Egyptian, Hindoo, and Persian mythologies—high sounding names often used to cloak the ignorance of writers or to mystify the simplicity and credulity of readers,—which obtained credit with Irish readers some years ago; and it is our wish, as far as possible, to correct those opinions which the simplicity or ignorance of our forefathers disseminated.

It is more than probable that the ancient pagan Irish worshipped the Sun, but whether under the name of *Beal*, or with what symbolic idols, is as yet undetermined; we also know that the first great division of the year* was into summer and winter, *Samradh* and *Geimhredh;* the former beginning in May, or *Bealtine:* and the latter in November, or *Samhfhuim*, Summer-end. Now most credible authorities are agreed that the first great Druid feast, or fire-offering of Beal, *Bel* or *Baal*, was originally kept on the first of May, though afterwards altered, it is said, by the early Christian missionaries† to mid-summer, when it celebrates the Eve of St. John the Baptist's Day (the 24th of June), under which head we purpose describing this very ancient pagan custom, with all the Irish rites attending it more particularly on another occasion. But we have still stronger proof than either that derived from learned writings, or the very name itself, in the fact that bonfires are still lighted in some places in Ireland on the last evening in April, and in others on the 1st of May. We have seen them but a very few years ago in the county of Wicklow, and in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and several used to be lighted in the

* See "O'Donovan's Introduction to the *Laebhar na g-Ceart*, or Book of Rights," published by the Irish Celtic Society, "On the Division of the Year among the Ancient Irish," p. xlviii. Other divisions into quarters, or *ratha*, as *Samh-ratha*, *Foghmhar-ratha*, *Geimh-ratha*, and *Iar-ratha*, or *Earrach*, corresponding to our summer, autumn, winter, and spring (see Dr. O'Conor's "Rerum Hib. Scrip. Epistola Nuncupatoria," lxxi.) were also made; but these do not concern our present purpose.

† We do not know when this actually occurred, or through whose instrumentality. The country people attribute it to St. Patrick, but we know not from what source. Can any of our readers enlighten us upon this point. Do the Bollandists allude to it?

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back streets and lanes, particularly in the Liberties of this city, until the establishment of the present admirable police force. Vallancey—whose opinions, though deserving of little weight, when questions of history or the discussion of theories relative to antiquities and etymologies are concerned, is fully worthy of credence when mere matters of fact, or circumstances passing beneath his own knowledge, are under review—says speaking of the Scottish Beltin:—"The Irish still preserve this custom, for the fire is to this day lighted in the milking yards; the men, women, and children, for the same reason, pass through, or leap over, the sacred fires, and the cattle are driven through the flames of the burning straw on the 1st of May."* A correspondent to "Hone's Every-day Book" (vol. ii., p. 595) thus describes the Dublin bonfire so late as 1825. A portion of the collection made by the May-boys was "expended in the purchase of a heap of turf sufficient for a large fire, and, if the funds would allow, an old tar-barrel. Formerly it was not considered complete without having a horse's skull and other bones to burn in the fire. The depots for these bones were the tanners' yards, in a part of the suburbs called Kilmainham,† and on May morning groups of boys dragged loads of bones to their several destinations." This practice has given rise to the threat still made use of, "I will drag you like a horse's head to a bonfire." The great Dublin bonfire, which used in former times to blaze in the open space leading from St. Patrick's Cathedral to the Coombe, upon May Eve, is still within the recollection of the old inhabitants. And up to this very time the May-bush in the neighbourhood of Swords and other places is, at dusk, decorated with a number of lighted candles, like the *Heilege-nacht-Baum*, the good, or holy, or lucky tree of Christmas in Germany. May bonfires are not common in Connaught or Ulster, but they still maintain in Cork, and in parts of Kilkenny, Limerick and Kerry. Now, it is remarkable that while the May bonfires are always lighted upon the evening of the 30th

* See Vallancey's "Enquiry into the First Inhabitants of Ireland," vol. ii. of the "Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis," p. 64.

† There are but few tan-yards in this or any other part of Dublin now, and the value of bones is too well known at present to permit of their ever being used for mere matter of amusement.

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of April or the 1st of May, the midsummer fire is, in many places, repeated twelve days after the 21st of June, that period marking the difference between the Old and New Style, a fact which goes a good way to prove that the institution of the midsummer fire is of comparatively modern date. The 29th of June—St. Peter and St. Paul's Day—has also of late years been in some places honoured with a bonfire; so that soon the people will have altogether forgotten the original institution of the bonfire, and, perhaps, have given it up altogether. Some old persons, still alive, tell us of the cattle having been driven through the half-extinguished bonfire, as a preservative against witchcraft, and people used to leap through it, and carry off a coal from it, as at the fire of St. John's Eve; and the ceremonial observed in Scotland, up to a very recent date indeed, of which accounts have been preserved by Campbell * and others, afford us ample food for speculation and conjecture (even had we no Irish authorities to consult) as to the pagan rites originally enacted at this festival, which, it would appear, in times of remote antiquity, evidently partook of the nature of a sacrifice, or propitiatory offering to the sun.

Mr. W. Grant Stewart, in his "Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlands of Scotland," (1823), has given an account of several curious rites performed even in modern days in that country. "At Belton Eve," he says, "messengers are dispatched to the woods for cargoes of the blessed rowan-tree, the virtues of which are well known. Being formed into the shape of a cross, by means of a red-thread, the virtues of which, too, are very eminent, those crosses are, with all due solemnity, inserted in the different door-lintels in the town, and protect those premises from the cantrips of the most diabolical witch in the universe. Care should also be taken to insert one of them in the midden, which has at all times been a favourite site of *rendezvous* with the black sisterhood. This cheaply-purchased precaution once observed, the people of those

* See "Journey to Edinburgh." Consult, also, Dalzell's "Darker Superstitions of Scotland," pp. 167 and 177. George Cruikshank has given a graphic illustration of the May-dew dancers at Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh, in "Hone's Every-day Book," vol. ii., p. 610. See also Martin's Description of the Western Islands of Scotland p. 7.

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countries will now go to bed as unconcernedly, and sleep as soundly, as on any other night.

"While those necessary precautions are in preparation, the matron or housekeeper is employed in a not less interesting avocation to the juvenile generation, *i. e.*, baking the Belton bannocks. Next morning the children are presented each with a bannock, with as much joy as an heir to an estate his title-deeds; and having their pockets well lined with cheese and eggs, to render the entertainment still more sumptuous, they hasten to the place of assignation, to meet the little band assembled on the brow of some sloping hill, to reel their bannocks and learn their future fate. With hearty greetings they meet, and with their knives make the signs of life and death on their bannocks. These signs are a cross, or the sign of life, on the one side; and a cypher, or the sign of death, on the other. This being done, the bannocks are all arranged in a line, and on their edges let down the hill. This process is repeated three times, and if the cross most frequently present itself, the owner will live to celebrate another Belton day; but if the cypher is oftenest uppermost, he is doomed to die, of course. This sure prophecy of short life, however, seldom spoils the appetites of the unfortunate short-livers, who will handle their knives with as little sign of death as their more fortunate companions. Assembling around a rousing fire of collected heath and brush-wood, the ill-fated bannocks are soon demolished, amidst the cheering and jollity of the youthful association."

The Gaelic appellation *Bealtaine*, the *Beal-fire*, has given rise to many conjectures, and would, at first sight, appear to be strongly corroborative of the Syrian or Phœnician origin of the Irish, from the circumstance of the name of the chief deity of the two nations being the same, and from the fact of fire being considered propitiatory in both countries. It remains, however, to be proved that the Irish had a god called Baal or Beal, unless it can be shown that they worshipped the sun under that title or name. It is asserted that if the Pagan Irish worshipped Baal, there would be more places called so in ancient topographical descriptions, or preserved in modern names; but it is not so. Thus, to our inquiry on this head, Mr.

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O'Donovan writes:—"There are no places called *Baal* in Ireland. I met some places called *Bealtaine*, from May-fires having been lighted there. The *Balls* in Achill Island, in the county of Mayo, are portions of land allotted to individuals, as Conor Patten's *Ball*, Denis Toland's *Ball*, &c. In this sense, the word ball denotes a SPOT (of land). *Ball*, the village in Mayo, is from BALLA, a *wall*. The *Ballys* are from baile, Villa, πολις, *ville*; and the *Bellas*, from *Bel-atha*, *i. e.*, mouth of a ford, *os vadi*." But it may be said, on the other hand, that there are not places called after any other Irish Pagan deities either.

The references to the Belteine period are scarce in the Irish annals. In "The Restrictions and Prerogatives of the Kings of Eire," given in the recently published "Book of Rights," to the learned introduction to which we referred in a previous note (p. 38), all the authorities are cited. In the text of that work we read that the monarch was not "to go in a ship upon the water the Monday after Bealltaine (May Day)." Again, in the poetic description, we find, among the restrictions of the Ultonian monarch, that he was not "to bathe on May Day eastwards in the bright and beautiful Loch Feabhail;" probably from some such superstitious fear like that which the present inhabitants of England, as well as Ireland have with respect to going near water on Whit Monday.

In an ancient Irish manuscript, in Trinity College Library, we find this reference to the Summer-Advent fire:—

"*Beltine, i.e., Biltine, i.e.*, lucky fire (bon-fire), *i.e.*, two fires which used to be made by the lawgivers, or Druids, with great incantations, and they used to drive the cattle between them (to guard) against the diseases of each year. Or Bel-dine: Bel was the name of an idol god. It was on it (*i.e.*, that day) that the firstlings of every kind of cattle used to be exhibited as in the possession of Bel; *vide* Beldine."*

In "Cormac's Glossary," we read the following explanation of Bealtaine, as well as the form of purification of the cattle, which was observed at this great Pagan ceremonial:—

* See Dr. Petrie's learned "Essay on Tara," p. 84; and Professor O'Donovan's "Introdnction to the Book of Rights," p. 43.

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"*Belltaine, i.e., Bill-tene, i.e.*, tene-bil, *i.e.*, goodly fire (bon, or bonus fire), *i.e.*, two lucky fires the Druids used to make with great incantations over them, and they used to drive the cattle between them (to preserve them) against the diseases of each year."

In another part of the "Glossary," however, Cormac explains *Bel* as an *idol* or *false god.*

Keating has the following notice of the fire lighted at Uisneach, close to Ballymore, in Westmeath, in the reign of Tuathal Teachtmhar:—

"He (Tuathal) erected the second palace in that part of Meath which was taken from Connaught, viz., at Uisneach, where was held a general meeting of the men of Erin, called the meeting of Uisneach. This fair, or assembly, was held on the first day of the month of May; and they were wont to exchange and barter their cattle, jewels, and other property there. They were also accustomed to make offerings to the chief god which they worshipped, named *Bel;* and it was a custom with them to make *two fires* in honour of this Bel in every cantred of Ireland, and to drive a couple of every kind of cattle in the cantred between the two fires, as a preservation, to protect them against every disease during that year. And it was from this fire, made in honour of *Bel*, that the noble festival of Phillip and James (*i.e.*, the 1st of May) is called *Beiltеine, i.e.*, the fire of *Bel.*"

"I never could discover," writes Mr. O'Donovan, in answer to a query of ours on the subject, "where Keating found authority for lighting this fire at Uisneach; and I have been long of opinion that this fire was lighted at Tlachtgha, a hill near Athboy, in East Meath, where the same King Tuathal is said to have erected another palace. I ground this opinion upon a passage in a MS. in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, which runs thus:—

"The fair of Tlachtgha (which belongs to that part of Meath taken from the province of Munster) was celebrated by the youths of Munster; and a fire was lighted thereat, from which all the fires lighted in Erin were kindled, which were purchased from them (the youths of Munster); and a *screpall* of gold was

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paid them out of every territory in Erin for the fire, and a sack of wheat, and a hog from every chief hearth in Erin, were given to the Comharba of Meath, *i.e.*, O'Kindellan, for this fire."—H. 3, 17, p. 732.

Bon, not bone-fires (ᵹeine ꝛomṁeᵭ), are evidently synonymous, if not identical, with Beal-fires; but if Bel, Belus, or Beal, was really a god worshipped here, there is no reason why the name of the festival and the rite should not have been derived from his name; but except in Keating, and the hint in Cormac Mac Cullinan's Dictionary, there are, we understand, no other Irish authorities for it. The virtues of fire as a disinfectant of the atmosphere, and a preventive to the spread of contagious diseases, is a very popular and widely-spread belief among the Irish peasantry; and it is remarkable that, on the first approach of cholera here, in 1831, a sacred purifying fire —by some wise heads supposed to be of a political nature— went the round of the island, under the name of The Blessed Turf. It was carried from house to house with such rapidity, that it traversed the whole island in a single night. A remnant of the people still believe in the efficacy of fire as a preservative against pestilence, and sew up a piece of charmed turf in their dress for that purpose.

In early scripture history, we read that the people not only passed their cattle, but their children, through the idolatrous fires of Baal and Moloch. In that most charming work, "Martin's Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," (1703), which is, perhaps, the best account extant of the superstitions, manners, customs, and popular opinions of the Celtic people, we have the following account of *La Bealtaine* in the Hebrides:—

"Another god of the Britains was Belus, or Belinus, which seems to have been the Assyrian god Bel or Belus; and, probably, from this pagan deity comes the Scots' term of Beltin, the first day of May, having its first rise from the custom practised by the Druids, in the isles, of extinguishing all the fires in the parish until the tithes were paid; and upon payment of them, the fires were kindled in each family, and never till then. In those days malefactors were burnt between two fires; hence,

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when they would express a man to be in a great strait, they say, 'He is between two fires of Bell.'" And again, in another place, he says, "The inhabitants here did also make use of a fire called Tin-Egin, *i.e.*, a forced fire, or fire of necessity, which they used as an antidote against the plague, or murrain, in cattle; and it was performed thus: all the fires in the parish were extinguished, and then eighty-one married men, being thought the necessary number for effecting this design, took two great planks of wood, and nine of them were employed by turns, who, by their repeated efforts, rubbed one of the planks against the other until the heat thereof produced fire; and from this forced fire each family is supplied with new fire, which is no sooner kindled, than a potful of water is quickly set on it, and afterwards sprinkled upon the people infected with the plague, or upon the cattle that have the murrain, and this they all say they find successful by experience. It was practised in the main land opposite to the South of Skie, within these thirty years."

There is but one other inquiry connected with *Bealtaine*, which here claims our notice. The ingenious and learned Dr. O'Conor, of Ballinagar, supposed that the fire which was lighted on Tara Hill, by the Druids of King Laeghaire, upon the night of St. Patrick's encampment at Slane, was the Bealtaine, or Fire-Feast of *Samhrath;* but if the earliest and most authentic biographers of Patrick are to be credited, that night was Easter-eve, or Holy Saturday, the 21st March, A.D. 433, and not May Day; and the Stowe librarian has not, it appears, sustained his position by arguments sufficient to convince our modern investigators, Dr. Petrie and Professor O'Donovan, the latter of whom writes:—"The probability then is, that the fire lighted at Teamhair on Easter Eve, A.D. 433, was not the *Bealtaine*, but some other fire; and it is stated in the second life of St. Patrick, published by Colgan, that it was the Feis Teamhrach, or Feast of Teamhrach, that Laeghaire and his Satraps were celebrating on the occasion; while the author of the Life of St. Patrick, in the 'Book of Lismore,' asserts that Laeghaire was then celebrating the festival of his own nativity, which appears to have been the truth; and if so, it was not the regu-

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lar septennial Feis which met after Samhain, but one convened to celebrate the king's birthday. From these notices, it is quite clear that O'Conor's inference, that the *Bealtaine* was lighted on the 21st of March, by the pagan Irish, is not sustained. In the accounts given of the *Bealtaine*, in 'Cormack's Glossary,' and in H. 3, 18, p. 596, as quoted in 'Petrie's Antiquities of Tara Hill,' *no time is specified* for the lighting of it, nor could we be able from them, or from any other written evidence yet discovered, to decide at what season it was lighted, were it not that the first of May is still universally called in Irish *La Bealtaine*. But Dr. O'Conor argues that this name was applied in pagan times to the 21st of March, and that it was transferred to the 1st of May by the early Christians, to agree with a Christian festival. This, however, is contrary to the tradition which still prevails in many parts of Ireland, namely, that the fires lighted in pagan times, on the 1st of May, were transferred by St. Patrick to the 24th of June, in honour of St. John the Baptist, on the eve of whose festival they still light bonfires in every county in Ireland."*

Many ancient ceremonies, as well as bonfires, attached to Midsummer Eve in England, up to a comparatively recent period; but, with the exception of the rites performed in connexion with the fire itself, we know of no Irish usages peculiar to the Christian festival of St. John's Eve; while numberless were the ancient customs observed either on the vigil of the summer quarter, or on May Day, in Ireland, vestiges of which still linger among the people—facts strongly corroborative of the supposition that the Midsummer fire is but the ingrafting of an ancient *pagan* rite upon a comparatively modern *Christian* festival. Let those who daily boast of adult conversions from one creed to another look well to the fact, that notwithstanding all the efforts of a most powerful Church, and all the influence of the Irish clergy, of every denomination, the May Day bonfire, the pagan fire which Cormac Cullinan told us was lighted in honour of the god Bel, in his time, still exists in many parts of

* O'Donovan's "Introduction to the Leabhar na g-Ceart," p. 50. See also Petrie's "Essay upon Tara," in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, p. 84.

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the country, and still lingers in the remembrance of all our old people, now after fourteen hundred years of so-called conversion to Christianity.

We might reserve the details of the Midsummer fire until we came to describe that festival more particularly; but any account of the ceremonial attending the fire lighted upon St. John's Eve is much more applicable to the May fire; and much of the ceremonial of the former is still retained wherever the *Bealtaine* is even partially observed. The preparations for the May Day sports and ceremonial in Dublin, commenced about the middle of April, and even earlier, and a rivalry, which often led to the most fearful riots was incited, particularly between the "Liberty boys" upon the south, and the "Ormond boys" upon the north side of the river; and even among themselves, as to which street or district would exhibit the best dressed and handsomest May bush, or could boast the largest and hottest bonfire. Upon one of the popular outbreaks resulting from the abduction of a May bush, was written the song, in old Dublin slang, of—

"De nite afore de fust of Magay,"

so spiritedly described in that graphic record of the past, "Sketches of Ireland Sixty Years Ago," now republished as a part of this series. For weeks before, a parcel of idle scamps, male and female, devoted themselves to the task of "collecting for the May;" and parties, decorated with ribbons, and carrying green boughs, and sometimes escorted by itinerant musicians, went from house to house soliciting contributions of ribbons, handkerchiefs, and pieces of gaudy silk—materials then manufactured, and consequently more common in the Liberty than now—to adorn the May bush. Turf, coals, old bones, particularly *slugs* of cows' horns from the tan-yards, and horses' heads from the knackers, logs of wood, &c., were also collected, to which some of the merchants generally added a few pitch and tar-barrels. Money was solicited to "moisten the clay" of the revellers; for, whether from liking, or from fear, or considering it unlucky, few ventured to refuse to contribute "something toste de May bush." The ignitable materials were

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formed in depots, in back-yards, and the cellars of old houses, long before the approaching festival; and several *sorties* were made by opposing factions to gain possession of these hordes, and lives have been lost in the skirmishes which ensued. In Dublin the bonfires were always lighted upon the evening of May Day, and generally in the vicinity of the May bush. The great fire was, as we already mentioned, at the lower end of the Coombe; but there were also fires in the centre and at the top of that classic locality. The weavers had their fire in Weaver's Square; the hatters and pipemakers in the upper end of James's Street; and the neighbourhood of St. John's Well, near Kilmainham, beside Bully's Acre, generally exhibited a towering blaze. Upon the north side of the city, the best fire blazed in Smithfield. With the exception of one ancient rite —that of throwing into it the May bush—there were but few Pagan ceremonies observed at the metropolitan fires. A vast crowd collected, whiskey was distributed *galore* both to those who had, and had not, gathered the morning's dew. The entire population of the district collected round the bush and the fire; the elder portion, men and women, bringing with them chairs or stools, to sit out the wake of the winter and spring, according to the olden usage. The best singers in the crowd lilted up, "The Night before Larry was Stretched," or "Hie for de Sweet Libertie;" but the then popular air of "The Baiting of Lord Altham's Bull," and "De May bush;" and another local song of triumphful commemoration of a victory over the Ormond-market men, a verse of which we remember:—

"Begone, ye cowardly scoundrels,
Do ye remember de day,
Dat yes came down to Newmarket,
And stole de sweet May bush away?"

were the "most popular and deservedly admired," from their allusions to the season and the locality. Fiddlers and pipers plied their fingers and elbows; and dancing, shouting, revelry, and debauchery of every description succeeded, till, at an advanced hour of the night, the scene partook more of the nature of the ancient Saturnalia, than anything we can at present liken it to, except that which a London mob *now* exhibits the

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night preceding an execution in the Old Bailey or at Horsemonger Lane Gaol.

In country parts, however, besides the ordinary expressions of delight, generated by the amusement of the bonfire, the ancient Druidical custom of leaping through the flames, was practised at May as well as upon Midsummer Eve, as of old at the Roman Palilia—

> "Moxque per ardentes stipulæ crepitantis acervos,
> Tiajicias celeri strenua membra pede."

With some, particularly the younger portion, this was a mere diversion, to which they attached no particular meaning. Yet others performed it with a deeper intention, and evidently as a religious rite. Thus, many of the old people might be seen *circumambulating* the fire, and repeating to themselves certain prayers. If a man was about to perform a long journey, he leaped backwards and forwards three times through the fire, to give him success in his undertaking. If about to wed he did it to purify himself for the marriage state. If going to undertake some hazardous enterprise, he passed through the fire to render himself invulnerable. As the fire sunk low, the girls tript across it to procure good husbands; women great with child might be seen stepping through it to ensure a happy delivery, and children were also carried across the smouldering ashes, as of old among the Canaanites. When the fire has nearly expired, and the dancing, singing, and carousing are over, each individual present provides himself with a *braune*, or ember of the fire, to carry home with him, which, if it becomes extinguished before he reaches his house, it is an omen of impending misfortune. The new fire is kindled with this spark. They also throw some of these lighted coals, or ashes, into the cornfields, or among the potato crops, or the flax, to preserve them from witchcraft, and to ensure a good return. Portions of the extinguished fire are generally retained in each family, and often sewed into the dress of an individual about to cross the sea.* Hecker, in his description of the Epidemics of the

* In addition to the references and quotations given in the foregoing notices of *Bealtaine*, the following works may be consulted:—Wood's "Inquiry concerning the Primitive Inhabitants of Ireland," p. 170; "The Penny Magazine;" "Notices of May Day and Midsummer;" "The Philosophical Survey of the

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Middle Ages, relates many curious usages formerly resorted to upon the kindling of the "Nadfyr" on St. John's Day (when the dancing mania first commenced in Germany), which are equally applicable to the May festival.

As at the Midsummer festival so at the May fires, the boys of an adjoining bonfire often made a sudden descent, and endeavoured to carry off some of the fuel from a neighbouring bonfire, and serious consequences have resulted therefrom. When all was over, it was no uncommon practice, in Connaught at least, at the Midsummer fire, to drive the cattle through the *greeshagh*, or warm ashes, as a form of purification and a preservative against witchcraft, fairies, murrain, blackleg, loss of milk, and other misfortunes or diseases. Even the ashes which remain bear a charm or virtue, and were sprinkled about like the red and yellow powders at the Hindoo festival of *Hoolie*. In former times some used to be collected and mixed with water; and this liquor, after some days, when the ashes had precipitated, was poured off, and used as a wash for sores of different descriptions. To this day the annual, or half-yearly rent paid by the farmers in the south of Ireland in May, is called *Cios na Bealtaine*, or the rent of Baal's fire.

Do not the following lines from Barnabe Googe's translation of Neogeorgus' quaint old poem,* descriptive of the Midsummer

South of Ireland," p. 233; Crantz' "History of Greenland," Vol. II.; "The Mount of Dromore," in Stott's "Songs of Dearded;" Moore's "History of Ireland" (Cab. Cyclo.), Vol. I, pp. 22, 24, 205, 216; "Transactions of Royal Irish Academy," Vol. I., Antiq. pp. 4 and 7; Vol. II., p. 78, giving an account of the "Hobby Horse," now obsolete; Vol. XX.; Petrie's "Round Towers;" Croker's "Researches in the South of Ireland;" Train's "Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man;" Sir Wm. Betham's "Gael and Cimbri," p. 222; Vallancey's "Collectanea," Vol. II., p. 286; Duffy's "Irish Catholic Magazine;" Vol. I., p. 12, &c. In the "Dublin University Magazine," for Oct. 1849, see "Song of the Ramoan Peasantry on May Eve;" Betham's "Etruria Celtica;" Pennant's "Tour in Scotland, 1769," p. 110; "The Newry Magazine;" O'Halloran's "History of Ireland;" "Rees' Cyclopædia," Art. *Beltine;* Borlase, p. 134; Higgins's "Celtic Druids," p. 150; "Archæologia," Vol. VII., p. 102, X., 181; Toland's "Druids;" Campbell's "Ireland." See also the German works of Grim. The discussion of the opinions of these various authors, or even an enumeration of the subjects relating to May Day customs contained in their works, would occupy more space than we could here devote to this matter.

* Translated in 1750, and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. See Brand's "Popular Antiquities," and Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes."

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Eve festival, appear to describe some of our May Day rites, particularly that of looking through the flower-decorated bush into the bonfire :—

" When bonfires great with loftie flame in every towne doe burne,
And young men round about with maides doe dance in every streete,
With garlands wrought of mother-wort, or else with virvaine sweete,
And many other flowres faire, with violets in their handes ;
Whereas they all doe fondly thinke that whosoever standes,
And, throw the flowres, beholdes the flame, his eyes shall feel no paine;
When thus till night they daunced have, they through the fire amaine
With stormy wordes doe runne, and all their hearbes they cast therein,
And then with words devout and prayers they solemnly begin,
Desiring God that all their ills may there consumed bee,
Whereby they thinke through all that yeare from agues to be free."

We have never heard of any floral accompaniments to the St. John's Eve fire in Ireland.

Cattle are carefully watched about May time, but particularly upon May Eve and May Day. In the South and West they are invariably housed or confined in an inclosed paddock, and carefully watched during the night, particularly milch cows, calves, and heifers; for, if any one was to milk three titfuls in the name of the devil, or even go through the form of milking the spancel, or *langling*, as it is called in some of the counties of Leinster, there would be but a Flemish account of the butter for the next twelvemonth.

The *Nech-na Bealltaine*, or May Eve, has been from time immemorial a season of rejoicing and festivity, although we are not aware of any games or pastimes peculiar to it; but the advent of the first day of summer is always hailed with delight by the peasantry, who then meet in the evening upon village-greens, or at cross-roads, and such other assembling places of the people. The May bush, though seldom decorated, was always erected then; and, if the weather was fine, dancing and music gladdened the hearts of the old crones and shanaghies that gathered round the neighbouring doors, or leaned against the adjoining ditches, and compared the present with the former times, when they, too, could *fut it* to " Morgan Ratler " or " Planxty Conor," or listen to the Irish song of " Summer is coming." If there is any one scene in the Irish peasant's life

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which approaches the description of the dance given in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," it is that observed upon May Eve. At this time, also, small-plays and various rural games are resorted to, as "dance in the ring," and "threading my grandmother's needle;" in which latter the boys and the girls join hands and dance a sort of serpentine figure up and down the roads, sometimes for a mile in extent*—the men generally carrying green boughs, or sprigs of sloe and white-thorn, then in blossom, and the girls decked with *posies*, wreaths of *noneens* (daisies), and garlands of May-flowers and buttercups.

As the evening advances, and the assembly breaks up into small parties, lovers seeking the greenwood shade, and crones retiring to the hob, a few solitary individuals may be seen walking out in the gloaming, courting the moonlight by the ancient rath, or wandering into the lone fairy-peopled valley, or the dreary fell, in hopes of hearing the mystic pipers of the *sheogues*, which on that night, more than any other, are said to be on the alert, and to favour mortals with their melodies. Great is the agility and grace believed to be conferred on those who are fortunate enough to trip it to the music of the fairy pipes; so great that it has become a proverb in Connaught, upon seeing a good dancer, to say, "Troth, *ma bouchel*, you listened to the piper on May Eve."

The hearth is always carefully swept on May Eve, and then lightly sprinkled over with some of the turf-ashes; if, in the morning, the print of a foot is seen on it pointing towards the door, it is fully expected that some one will die before that day twelvemonth.

The snail charm, described by Gay in the "Shepherd's Week," though probably of English extraction, is even yet very general in Ireland, but is chiefly performed by the girls. The

* For a particular account of this dance, see the third chapter of "Jenny Ramsay," lately published by Mr. Francis Davis, in the "Belfast Man's Journal" for January 26th, 1850. To the talented and enthusiastic author and editor of that work, we are much indebted for valuable information upon the northern superstitions. We have seen this dance performed on the Aræopagus of Athens by the Greeks upon Easter Sunday. Dancing in a circle and performing other similar evolutions, like the *Le Bal* of the people of Brittany, though resorted to merely as an amusement now, is evidently the relic of the ancient mystic dance of Druidism.

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little animal pressed into the service on this occasion is not the box-snail (or *shellemidah*), but what is commonly called the *Drutheen*, or slug, and should be discovered accidentally, not sought for; when found, it is either placed between two pewter plates, or upon a table previously sprinkled with ashes or flour, and covered with a *mias*, or wooden bowl; and in the morning the anxious maid seeks to discover in the slimy track left by the snail's nocturnal peregrinations, the initial of her secret lover's name:—

"Slow crawl'd the snail, and if I right can spell,
In the soft ashes marked a curious L;
Oh, may the wondrous omen lucky prove!
For L is found in Lubberkin and Love."*

In the North, particularly in Raherty Island, several May Day superstitions, resembling those usually performed at Hollandtide, still remain. If a young woman wishes to know who is to be her future spouse, she goes, late on May Eve, to a black sally-tree, and plucks therefrom nine sprigs, the last of which she throws over her right shoulder, and puts the remaining eight into the foot of her right stocking. She then, on her knees, reads the third verse of the 17th chapter of Job; and on going to bed she places the stocking, with its contents, under her head. These rites duly performed, and her faith being strong, she will, in a dream during the night, be treated to a sight of her future husband.

Another mode of obtaining the same knowledge consists in going, after sunset on May Eve, to a bank on which the yarrow (*ahirhallune*) is growing plentifully, and gathering therefrom nine sprigs of the plant, while she repeats the following words:—

"Good morrow, good morrow, fair yarrow;
And thrice good morrow to thee;
Come tell me before to-morrow
Who my true love shall be."

The yarrow is brought home, put into the right-foot stocking, placed under the pillow, and the mystic dream is confidently

* Were the snails so employed under mesmeric influence, like those lately described by a learned Scotch professor?

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expected. But if the girl opens her lips to speak after she has pulled the yarrow, the charm is broken.

In another mode of consulting the oracle of love, often resorted to in the South, the maiden seeks a neighbouring well and dropping a noggin into it, while she repeats the name of the object of her affection, leaves it there for the night, but returns to the spot by daybreak next morning. Should the vessel be found floating on the surface, she may fairly hope for the consummation of her heart's ambition; but if it has sunk she despairs of such a happiness, "for that offer, anyhow."

Wells, whether blessed by saint, or consecrated by pilgrim's "rounds," or merely furnishing the healthful spring, are objects of especial care and attention at May time; and, in former years, were frequently watched all night, particularly in pastoral districts, to ensure them against being "skimmed" with a wooden dish, or *cuppaun*, by some butter-abducting hag, as the sun rose on May morning. This was called "taking the flower of the well;" and the words, "Come butter, come," were then repeated.

Farmers drive their flocks by daybreak to the wells, that they may drink there before those of their neighbours, and the greatest rivalry prevails amongst the servant-girls and milk-maids, as to who should first draw water from the spring-well upon May morning.

When potatoes were plenty, and before Free Trade had smashed the cattle-feeding small farmer, it was customary for every member of the family to go out to these well-gatherings for syllabubs early in the morning, each with a small vessel in his hand, containing a drop of whiskey, on which the cow was milked; but cattle and farmer, whiskey and noggin, servants and all—are gone.

"My grandfather," writes one of our correspondents, "once came upon an old woman mixing a small piece of what appeared to be butter, on a May morning, and muttering strange words over it. She was sticking it against the door of a cow-house; and when she found that he perceived her, she suddenly fled, leaving the piece of butter behind, stuck like putty to the jamb of the door. He took it home, and found it

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to be not butter, but a mixture of flour and other things, which he believed was intended by her as a charm. He also caught an old woman, on a May-morning, at a spring well, cutting the tops of water-cresses with a pair of scissors, muttering strange words, and the names of certain persons who had cows; and also the words, ᵹᵲ ḷiom-ra leaṫ bo ċoba-ra,—*i.e. half thine is mine.* She repeated these words as often as she cut a sprig of water-cress with the scissors, which sprig personated the individual whom she intended to rob of his milk and butter. After listening to her for some time he rushed from his place of concealment, and making towards the well, cried out, ᵹᵲ ḷiom-ra leaṫ bo ċoba-ra; but the affrighted *cailleach* fled, leaving behind a lump of butter, a *baurach*, or cow spancel, and other things which I now forget."

On no account would either fire or water—but, above all things, a coal of fire, even the kindling of a pipe—be given, for love or money, out of a house during the entire of May Day. The piece of lighted turf used to kindle another fire is styled the *seed* of the fire; and this people endeavoured to procure from the bonfire of the previous night, and to keep it alive in the ashes to light the fire on May morning; but a large fire should not be "made down" early on May morning, as it is believed that witches and fairies, whom they desire to propitiate, have great horror to the first smoke.

Milch cows, heifers, and calves, are the objects of peculiar care at May time, from the very popular and widely-spread belief in their being then, more than at any other time, susceptible of evil influences, and when not housed early upon May Eve, are driven into an inclosed paddock, the four corners of which, as well as the cattle themselves, used in former times to be sprinkled with holy water, and in some places, every angle of the land, and every four-footed beast belonging to the farm was subject to the like purifying process, particularly with the water blessed upon Easter Sunday. The more superstitious among the people, and those who adhered to the remnants of the Pagan customs of their Celtic ancestors, put a *soogaun* of straw round the neck of each cow upon May Eve, in order to preserve it from ill luck or the *good people*; and should the

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cattle be kept in a confined yard or field, every precaution was taken to prevent their breaking the bounds of their inclosure during the night. We have known each head of cattle to be slightly singed with lighted straw upon May Eve, or to have a lighted coal passed round their bodies, as is customary after calving; and it was not unusual, some fifteen or twenty years ago, to bleed a whole herd of cattle upon a May morning, and then to dry and burn the blood. We have more than once, when a boy, seen the entire of the great Fort of Rathcroghan, then the centre of one of the most extensive and fertile grazing districts of Connaught, literally reddened with the blood thus drawn upon a May morning. Bleeding the cattle at this period of the year was evidently done with a sanitary intention, as some of the older medical works recommended in the human subject; but choosing that particular day, and subsequently burning the blood, were evidently the vestiges of some Heathen rite. In some districts, and particularly during hard times, some of the blood thus drawn used to be mixed with meal, boiled into a posset, and eaten by the herds and the poor people. But many of these ceremonies, having been either laughed at or positively interdicted by the more educated Roman Catholic clergy, are fast falling into disuse. Not only is it considered unlucky to permit fire to be removed from the house until after the meridian at least, but many people would not give away, even in charity, a drop of milk, or a bit of bread or butter, on May Day, or lend churn, churndash, or any of the apparatus or furniture used in churning. "They take any one for a witch," we read in Camden, "that comes to fetch fire on May Day, and therefore refuse to give any, unless the party asking it be sick; and then it is with an imprecation, believing that all their butter will be stolen the following summer by this woman. On May Day, likewise, if they can find a hare among their herd, they endeavour to kill her, out of a notion that it is some old witch that has a design upon their butter." * This legend about the hare is still universally believed throughout Ireland, and must be based on some ancient general superstition. The tale goes that witches have then the power of transforming themselves into

* See also Laurence Echart's "Exact Description of Ireland." London, 1691.

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hares, with the intention of more secretly and securely milking or sucking the cows; which, if they can effect, they become possessed of the power of having in their own churn, during the next twelve months, the butter of all the cows so circumstanced. You will still be told, with various readings, in almost every county in Ireland, with all the accurate recital of the names of persons and localities, how such and such an hare was once hunted, and so closely pressed by the dogs, that she was wounded in the thigh, but eventually escaped by leaping into the window of a small cabin "hard by the bog;" and how, that upon the hunters coming up and entering the hovel, lo! no hare was to be seen, but an old hag smoking her *dudeen* sat by the fire, or was rolled up in the bed-clothes, who, when examined, exhibited a recent wound, still bleeding, in identically the same part on which it had been inflicted on the hare. This legend is detailed circumstantially in Anthony Bruodine's old work, "Œeodomia Minoriticæ Scholæ Salamonis," Pragæ, 8vo, 1663. Has not the adage, "I'll make a hare of you," arisen from the belief of hares being occasionally bewitched? The *Graunogue*, or hedgehog, is worried by idle, mischievous boys, chiefly on account of the belief that it milks the cows.

Every one who can, wishes to churn before sunrise upon May morning, and those who possess the means commence their lacteal operations at an early hour; but as churning is a ceremony always attended with a certain degree of risk, whether owing to the evil influences of fairyism, or witchcraft, or, as some of our modern philosophers would have us to believe, arising from certain defects in the manipulation of this chemical process, or some deleterious qualities in the fodder or pasture of the cow, it here matters little. The fact is believed, and the precautions are taken accordingly. The cabin door is always closed, and should any person enter inadvertently, whether a stranger, or one of the family, they are at once invited to "take the dash," if only for a few minutes. To refuse would be considered, in one of the upper ranks, not only unpolite, but unlucky, and in one of the poor people, the height of witchcraft. Curious and many are the means taken by the peasants' and farmers' wives to ensure success, and to gather a plentiful

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mischaun of butter, when the milk cracks and the boiling water is added; such as putting a coal of fire and some salt under the churn, inserting a piece of charmed writing between the hoops, nailing an old ass's shoe to the bottom of the churn-dash, &c. —superstitious rites which appertain more particularly to milk and butter cures and charms, to be detailed hereafter. But the great means of averting the threatened danger resides in the employment of the mountain-ash, or rowan-tree (the *crankeeran*), for which purpose a branch or sapling of that sacred tree is procured at May Eve, and bound round the churn before the churning is commenced; and every vessel containing milk or butter, or in any way connected with the dairy, is also encircled with carefully peeled gads or switches of the same material. This rite, which is not confined to the Roman Catholics, or the lower orders, is still practised, even by the educated. Among the English settlers, who still retain the old Saxon legend of Robin Goodfellow, it is feared that he may

> ——"fright the maidens of the villagery;
> Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,
> And bootless make the breathless housewife churn."

Some of the people, if asked for a reason for not permitting fire to leave the house on May Day, tell you that it is to prevent the fairies taking possession; and assign as a reason for not giving away milk, that if it was used to boil herbs, or for any charm-working purpose, particularly against the *gentry*, the cow would assuredly be taken as a substitute for the person relieved by the charm.

Do not all these observances with respect to cows, and all these precautions relating to butter and milk, go some way to establish the fact of the primitive Irish being a pastoral and cattle-feeding people?

If a person has been unwell, particularly of any chronic disease, for any length of time, "the man of the house," upon May Eve, breaks the spindle of a woollen wheel over the head of the invalid, and death or recovery is confidently anticipated therefrom within three days.

In Cork there is a custom amongst the children, especially the girls, both on May Eve and May Day, of *running a muck*

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with bunches of nettles, stinging every one they meet, Fortunately this is a very local amusement.

The May dew, as everyone knows, possesses peculiar virtues. If an old woman be seen gathering it in a sheet, or with a sieve, or with her hands, upon a May morning, nothing will persuade the people that she is not performing a charm by which she can steal the butter of all the cows that graze upon that pasture from which she selects it. There is only one other more efficacious mode of butter-stealing (always excepting the dead man's hand, which we shall describe another time), and that is to follow the milch-cow, as she walks either field, or road, or *boreen*, and pick up the tracks made in the soft earth by the four feet of the animal, or gather the bits of *clauber* that stick between the clefts of the feet. Should a set of these be thus acquired, the farmer may expect but a poor return of butter for the next twelve months: but if procured by the owner of the beast, she is henceforth invulnerable.

The girls rise early on the first of May, and kneeling down over the glittering gossamer,

"Brush the light dew-drops from the spangled lawn."

and bathe their necks and faces therewith to keep off the freckles and beautify their skin, like Mr. Pepys's his wife, who went to Woolwich, in olden time, for "a little ayre, and to gather May dew." It is not alone for its cosmetic power, however, that the Irish girls employ it, as Sam. Lover has touchingly described in his "Song of the May-dew," but as a bond of peculiar power among lovers.

Cutting the May bush, upon May Eve, is one of the longest established ceremonies connected with this festival. A full-grown thorn was, in former times, generally selected; often months before the day, and no matter where it might grow, it was considered the property of the May, and to be procured at all risks, even of limb or life. Much as the people venerated, at all other times and seasons, their indigenous thorns, especially when growing on some of the ancient raths, they paid no respect to the sanctity of their character or position if marked for the May bush. In fact, in some places, the ancient thorn of what is called a fairy rath was considered more applicable

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than any other. Upon May Eve a crowd of persons, often numbering several hundreds, resorted to the spot previously arranged, with saws, hatchets, ropes, cars, horses, and all the necessary tackle for cutting and carrying home the May bush, and were generally escorted by fifers and fiddlers. Serious rencontres very often ensued upon these occasions, particularly in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where the authorities had frequently to interfere to prevent some lawn or demesne being despoiled of its wide-spreading thorn. The trophy was, however, generally carried off in triumph, amidst the shouts and rejoicings of the people, and erected in its allotted station, and upon its branches were fixed a number of small candles, which at night-fall were lighted, and afforded a brilliant illumination for the dancers, who tripped it round this emblem of the vernal light, as is still practised in Germany on Christmas Eve. In some parts, particularly in Monaghan, the May bush used to be erected several days before the festival, and was illuminated every night; and in addition, pyramids of "penny dips," fixed in lumps of yellow clay, used to be erected in the neighbourhood of the bush, which always stood upon some green or common, or at the cross-roads, or in the market-place of the town or village. Early upon May morning the bush was decorated with flowers, ribbons, and pieces of silk of the most gaudy colours; and at the conclusion of the festivities the bush was consigned to the flames of the expiring bonfire. In former days the Liberty bush was cut in Cullen's Wood. Efforts were often made, particularly in the city of Dublin, to steal away the May bush, to avert which a guard of stout fellows was set to keep watch and ward nightly, from the time of its erection until after the festival. The abduction of the Smithfield May bush gave rise to the old slang song to which we have already alluded at page 47, when Bill Durham, with the fishwomen of Pill Lane, sallied forth to recover the palladium of Ormondtown,—

"From de lane came each lass in her holiday gown,
Riggidi ri dum dee;
Do de haddocks was up, and de lot was knocked down,
Dey doused all dere sieves till dey riz de half crown,
Ri riggidi ri dum dee."

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Besides the grand May bush of the locality, each house, especially in the rural districts, had its little bush, generally a branch of thorn, decorated with flowers, and most usually placed on the dunghill, so high that any passing witch could not easily leap over it. "April showers bring May flowers" is an old saying; and their welcome has grown into the sweet proverb of "you're as welcome as the flowers in May," so charmingly harmonized by our own dear Slingsby.

The custom which has remained longest and most perfect amongst us is the floral decoration of the doors and windows, chiefly with May flowers, then found in full blow in deep meadows and moist places. This gay plant, the marsh-marigold (Catha palustris), called in Irish the shrub of Beltine, *Bearnan Bealtaine*, or the *Lus-ubrich Bealtaine*, always forms the chief ornament of the garlands and other floral decorations, and is generally strewn plentifully before the doors and on the threshold; but when such can be procured, wild flowers, white or yellow (butter or milk colour), and those that grow in meadows and pastures, are ever preferred to garden flowers, to place in the cottage windows, scatter round the doors, or adorn the May bush and May pole.

The May pole never appears to have been in general use in Ireland, and is evidently of English introduction. In Connaught it is unknown; and even those places where it obtained most repute in other parts of the country were generally English settlements, as in Westmeath, where it was constantly to be found as described by Sir H. Peirs, in "Vallancy's Collectanea."

The only authorized pole now standing which we know of is at Hollywood, near Belfast, where it is used to bear the orange-and-blue flags and streamers on the twelfth of July, equally with the flower-decked hoops and green garlands of the first of May. When we last saw it, it was decorated with miniature ships, emblematic of the calling of the villagers. There formerly existed one at Mountmellick, which was applied to a similar purpose; but that which stood upon the mall at Downpatrick, some thirty years ago, was one of the most celebrated in Ireland. Among the rites and cere-

monies which attached to this latter was one somewhat similar to the privilege assumed, if not granted, under the Christmas mistletoe in England. Whenever a lady appeared in the vicinity of the May pole, or went to visit the revels upon Downpatrick mall on May Day, she was liable to be asked by any of the tradesmen present to take a turn round the pole, and, at the end of the dance, if her partner was so inclined, they concluded with a kiss. The omission of the latter part of the ceremony was often purchased with a bribe. A milk offering used, in former times, to be made at the foot of the May pole.*

The two Dublin May poles were erected outside the city. One of these stood in the centre of Harold's-cross Green, and existed within the memory of some of the present generation. After its decay, an old withered poplar supplied its place for many years; and so recently as the year 1836, the publicans of the village erected a May pole, decorated it, and gave a number of prizes, in order to collect an assemblage of the people, by restoring the ancient festivities. The chief May pole of Dublin, however, was erected at the pretty suburban village of Finglas, to the north of the city, near the Glasnevin Botanic Gardens, a spot which combines the most delicious sylvan scenery with the charm of the associations connected with the names of Swift, Addison, Tickel, Delany, and in our own day of our distinguished fellow-citizen Doctor Walsh. Here it stood until within the last few years;—a very tall, smooth pole, like the mast of a vessel, and upon every Easter Monday it was painted white and encircled with a red and blue spiral stripe like a barber's pole. In latter years, at least, it was not decorated with floral hoops and garlands like the usual English May pole, but was well soaped from top to bottom in order to render it the more difficult to climb; and to its top were attached, in succession, the different prizes, consisting generally of a pair of leather breeches, a hat, or an old pinchbeck watch. Whoever climed the pole, and touched the prize, became its possessor. "All Dublin" turned out to Finglas upon May Day to witness the sports and revels of the

* "Strutt's Sports and Pastimes" may be consulted with advantage by those who would wish to know more of the May Day customs in England.

people, and the streets of the little village, and the adjoining roads were thronged with carriages, hackney-cars, jingles, and noddies, filled with the better class of citizens. There were also a gaudily-dressed king and queen of the May, chosen from among the villagers, but they were the least attractive portion of the assembly. The revels consisted of climbing the pole; running after a pig with a shaved and well-soaped tail, which was let loose in the middle of the throng; grinning through horse-collars for tobacco; leaping and running in sacks; foot races for men and women; dancing reels, jigs, and hornpipes; ass races, in which each person rode or drove his neighbour's beast, the last being declared the winner; blindfolded men trying to catch a bell-ringer; and also wrestling, hopping, and leaping. An adjoining field was selected for the celebration of the majority of these sports. Stewards were appointed to keep the course, and see fair play, and twenty or thirty pounds' worth of prizes, consisting of shawls, hats, frieze-coats, handkerchiefs, and women's gowns and bonnets, were often distributed among the winners. Tents were erected, and bands of music paraded through the assembly; and even shows and booths were to be seen scattered throughout the village. In the evening the crowds collected round the May pole, where the boys and girls danced in a ring until a late hour, before the king and queen, who, attended by a man dressed as a Highlander, sat on a raised platform. Some thirty years ago, the Finglas sports were rendered particularly attractive by the exertions of three celebrated characters—Watty Cox, the notorious seditious libeller; Bryan Maguire, the celebrated duellist; and Michael Farrell, the well-known police-officer, who all lived in the neighbourhood. The May sports, however, had been gradually declining till about the year 1826, when a number of the traders and citizens of Dublin, chiefly those who had country houses in the vicinity of the village, formed themselves into a social society, at first called the "Tolka Club;" but afterwards they assumed to themselves the title of the "Corporation of Finglas," and elected a lord mayor, recorder, member of Parliament, sheriff, aldermen, and other officers, as well as a chaplain, with the title of Bishop of Fin-

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gal.* These jolly companions dined at one another's houses weekly during the summer months, and generally "made a night of it." The chief object of the institution, however, was to keep alive the May Day sports, and the "*humours*" of Finglas. More than one application was made to the government to interdict the Finglas amusements, by some of the gentry residing in the neighbourhood; and the subject was even considered grave enough to be referred to the Privy Council; but what official interference was unable to put down—first, the cholera panic, in 1833, and then teetotalism, completely abolished. The "Tolka Club" was broken up, Finglas became deserted, cold water damped the ardour of the revellers, the king and queen of the May were threatened with the watch-house; the festivities ceased when the prizes were omitted, and the May pole was neglected, when it, like Brian O'Lynn, "had no breeches to wear," and the old song, of which we recollect but the following verse, is now scarcely remembered:—

"Ye lads and lasses all, to-day,
To Finglas let us haste away;
With hearts so light and dresses gay,
To dance around the May pole."

The May boys and morris-dancers went their rounds, particularly in Connaught and Munster, even so late as within the last twenty years. They consisted of a dozen or two of the "cleanest and most likely" boys in the vicinity, who took off their coats, and decorated themselves with garlands, ribbons, and silk handkerchiefs of the brightest colours, generally furnished them by their sweethearts, who vied with each other in dressing their lovers to the greatest advantage. One of the most effeminate of the number was dressed in female attire as queen of the May (in the country parts we never heard of a girl having acted the part); a king or captain was appointed, as also a spokesman, who repeated the rhymes; a treasurer carried the money-box, and a fool or devil, (like that

* One of the last remaining members of the "Tolka Club" is Mr. Ross Cox, the South American traveller, to whom we are indebted for a most interesting account of this Society. The bishop was a worthy and facetious Roman Catholic clergyman, still living.

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of the wren-boys and mummers at Christmas), a sort of "Lord of Misrule," cleared the way, frightened the children, bespattered the crowd, uttered the broad rustic jokes current among the people at that time, and capered for the general amusement. This person wore a sort of loose garment covered with many-coloured shreds and patches of cloth and rags tacked to it; a large, brimless hat, with the front of it formed into a hideous mask, came down over his head; a row of projecting pieces of stick made to resemble teeth surrounded the mouth; a piece of goat-skin formed the beard, and the eye-holes were surrounded by circles of red cloth. To the back of it was fastened a dried hare's skin. In his hand he carried a long wattle, to which an inflated bladder was attached, and a very formidable weapon it was, particularly against the women and children.

In the south, we understand, the May boys used to sport a female fool—a sort of Audrey for their Touchstone. Thus attired, and accompanied by fiddlers, fifers, and tambourine players, and escorted by a great concourse of idlers, the May boys used to perambulate the country for a week together at May time, visiting the different gentlemen's seats, where they danced, repeated their rhymes, and were generally entertained with true Irish hospitality. They always got a bottle of whiskey and some money, with which they made merry at their resting-place in the evening. Some parties carried a May bush before them, and sometimes they managed to seat the piper on the bush, when they commenced their rhymes. In the county of Clare, about fifty years ago, the May boys used to mount their captain or king of the May on horseback, who carried in his hand a long pole decked with ribbons and flowers, and bearing a garland at the top.

The May Day rhymes of the Irish peasantry are almost forgotten, and, in a few years hence, it is more than probable that a single verse of them will not live in the recollection of the people. They were often repeated in Irish; but the following scraps of a long, rude doggerel, which we possess, was the most general English version employed in Connaught, particularly in the counties of Roscommon and Galway:—

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"This morning as the sun did rise,
We dressed the pole you to surprise;
With our fiddle and our pipes so gay,
To bring you good cheer on the first of May."

Several of the verses are but a paraphrase of the mummers and wren-boy rhymes. After describing "the treat" they expected, and hinting that—

"If it is but of the small,
It wont agree with the boys at all."

They added—

"'Tis then we'll dance and drink away,
And our pole and May bush thus display,
Until his fine lady to us will say,
Boys, 'tis time for you to go away;

"Then we'll take off our hats and give three cheers,
Praying she may live these fifty years,
And off we'll go without delay,
Playing the tune called 'The First of May.'"

The sweet old air of "The Summer is Coming," to which Moore has written the song of "Rich and rare were the gems she wore," is what was generally repeated, but we can only procure a single verse of it:—

Samhnad, ramhnad, bainne na nzamhna
Tugamhan fein au ramhnad linn,
Ag ramhnad buide 'ran noinin glegeal
Is tugamain fein au ramhnad linn.

Summer! Summer! the milk of the heifers,
Ourselves brought the summer with us,
The yellow summer and the white daisy,
And ourselves brought the summer with us.

We remember a half-witted, purblind creature, known by the soubriquet of *Saura Llynn*, walking through the town of Castlerea upon May morning, playing on an old, rude bagpipe, with May flowers round his hat, and chanting this song, of which we have given above a verse in the original, the burden of which was:—

"Saura! Saura! bonne na Gauna,
Hugamur fain au Saura linn."

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The summer was coming;—as soon as this half fool appeared, it was the general signal for all the idle boys and all the May bushers to flock round him like swallows after a hawk, so that by the time he had reached the centre of the village, he presented in his train a motley crowd. When last we heard of this poor fellow, who generally came to us from the extreme west, the only portion of his pipes which remained was the chanter, with his mouth applied to which, he used to blow a terrific squeal, then flourish it above his head, leap forwards in maniacal excitement and shout a few disjointed verses of the well-known song.

We find but slight traces of pantomime or theatrical representation among our May sports. In the south, the Mayers of former times had the hobby-horse as part of the procession; but that part of the ceremony was evidently an English importation, which has long since been lost. From Monaghan we have a graphic account of a somewhat similar proceeding; there the girls dressed up a churn-dash as a "May babby," like the *Breedeogue* at Candlemas—and the men, a pitchfork, with a mask, horse's tail, a turnip head, and ragged old clothes, as a "May boy;" but these customs have, we believe, long since become quite obsolete, as well as the following, described by Vallancy, in his "Inquiry into the First Inhabitants of Ireland:"—"In some parts, as the counties of Waterford and Kilkenny, the brides married since the last May Day are compelled to furnish the young people with a ball covered with gold lace, and another with silver lace, finely adorned with tassels; the price of these sometimes amounts to two guineas." These balls were, he says, "suspended in a hoop ornamented with flowers."

In the county of Meath, and throughout Fingal, it is customary for several boys and girls to go forth in gangs to seek for service on May morning, and particularly on the Sunday following, called there *Sonnoughing Sunday*, each one carrying some emblem of their peculiar calling; the girls always holding in their hands peeled switches or white wands; the men having something indicative of their employment—a carter a whip, a ploughboy a goad, a thresher a flail, or *boulteen*, and a herd a wattle, with

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a knob or crook on the end of it; or a hazel or round-tree rod, its extremity burned in the May bonfire, as a lucky staff wherewith to drive the cattle.

Certain legends relating to May Day attach to particular localities, as that of O'Donoghoe at Killarney, thus described by Crofton Croker: "On the first of May, in the morning, when the sun is approaching the summer solstice, the Irish hero, O'Donoghue, under whose dominion the golden age formerly reigned upon earth, ascends, with his shining elves, from the depths of the Lake of Killarney, and with the utmost gaiety and magnificence, seated on a milk-white steed, leads the festive train along the water. His appearance announces a blessing to the land, and happy is the man who beholds him."* "The Motty's Stone"† comes down from the Connery mountain every May morning to bathe in the Meeting of the Waters. Our good friend, Mr. R. Dowden, R. of Cork, informs us that he even saw some of the peasant children in Kerry enact the marriage of Cupid and Psyche as a part of the May Day pastime.

In addition to the foregoing may be added the following memoranda of the ancient rites and customs peculiar to May Day.

Herbs gathered on May Day are boiled with some hair from the cow's tail, and carefully preserved in a covered vessel. A small portion of this charm is put into the churn before churning, and is also smeared upon the inside of the pails before the milk is "set."

Certain herbs known only to the initiated, but including yarrow, speedwell, and a plant famous for all cattle-charms,

* "Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland," part iii., p. 92.

† The Motty's Stone.—"It is said that this huge mass (which one is perplexed to know how it came to occupy its place except during the Deluge) descends every May morning to perform an ablution at the 'Meeting of the Waters,' and then pays its respects to a smaller stone, beneath a tree beside the stream. There is a peculiar virtue, or healing power, in the river at that time; for any persons who are so fortunate as to observe the descent of the stately gentleman, and subsequently plunge with him into the waters, will infallibly be cured of whatever disease afflicts them."—*Alric De Lisle; a Poem, with Notes.* By Rev. J. G. Angley. Dublin: 1842. Page 17.

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which, translated into English, means "the herb of the seven cures," are boiled together, and the water given to cows with calf as a preservation against ill luck and the fairies.

Rods of mountain-ash are placed, at May Eve, in the four corners of the corn-fields, which are also sprinkled with Easter holy water. Balls of tough yellow clay, inclosing three grains of corn, used to be placed by malicious persons in the corners of their neighbours' fields, in order to blight their crops.

A stock of brooms must be laid in before May Day, as it would be unlucky to make any at May time. In case of necessity, a sheaf of straw is used instead of a broom.

In the counties of Kilkenny and Waterford, it was customary for the neighbours to go from house to house, light their pipes at the morning's fire, smoke a blast, and pass out, extinguishing them as they crossed the threshold.*

We learn that, about seventy years ago, it was customary for the people in the same locality to assemble from different baronies and parishes, in order to try their strength and agility in kicking towards their respective houses a sort of monster foot-ball, prepared with thread or wool, and several feet in circumference. To whichever side it was carried the luck of the other was believed to be transferred.

In seeking for the snail or slug alluded to at page 53, its colour is taken into account, the white being considered the most fortunate; but the hue of the little animal is said to indicate the lover's complexion.

The long dance, referred to at page 52, was in times past performed with great spirit in the county Kilkenny, at the celebrated moat of Tibberoughny, near Piltown. The assemblage—consisting of the bearers of the May bush, the dancers, musicians, and spectators—entered the moat at the south-western gap, circumambulated the outer entrenchment several times, ascended the lofty mound by the north-east path, placed the emblem of summer on the summit, and commenced the revels. The May bush, or May pole, was here adorned with those golden balls provided by the beauties married in the

* For these, and many other ancient rites and legends, we are indebted to an intelligent friend.

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neighbourhood at the preceding Shrovetide, as related by Sir John Peirs, and referred to at page 67 of this work. A renowned fairy man, with a large key in his hand, led the van, and having apportioned his prescribed rounds, entered the moat, and then, taking off his hat, called in a loud sonorous voice three times, "Brien O'Shea—he—hi—ho!" Not receiving an answer, he tried another gap or door of the enchanted fort; but his second and third efforts having likewise proved unsuccessful, he, falling back upon the subterfuge of more modern conjurers and Mesmerists, said it was the wrong key he had, or that there was some mistake about the day—it was not the "raal right ould May Day." The great summer bonfire was afterwards lighted in the centre of this fort or rath.

The *Glas Gaivlen*, the sacred or fairy milk-white cow with the green spots, so famed in Irish story, and from which so many localities derive their names and legends, was generally seen on May Day, and fortunate was the farmer among whose flocks she then appeared. We intend to take up the subject of this celebrated animal at another time, and would therefore be glad to receive local information thereon.

Some of the first milking is always poured on the ground as an offering to the *good people* on May Day. It is also considered very dangerous to sleep in the open air on May Day, or any time during the month of May. Several of the diseases to which the Irish peasantry are liable are attributed to "sleeping out."

For further particulars respecting the celebration of May, Brady's "Clavis Calendaria" may be consulted.

Should any of our readers observe other rites or customs, or be acquainted with any circumstances or superstitions in addition to those which we have thrown together in the foregoing details, we entreat their corrections and amendments.

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CHAPTER III.

REMINISCENCES OF THE WEST.—THE WELSHES.—THE THIVISH OR FETCH.

"In Ireland a Fetch is the supernatural fac-simile of some individual which comes to insure to its original a happy longevity or immediate dissolution; if seen in the morning, the one event is predicted; if in the evening, the other."—BANIM.

Hell or Connaught—The West—Its present and former condition; Hopes for its future—Poor-houses and Depopulation—The Right Honourable and Tim Muldoon—Secret Societies—The Ribbonmen—Peelers and Barony Constables—A Militia Major—Paddy Welsh the Fisherman, his Life, Doings, and Death—The blood of the Welshes—The Third Dream—Treasure-seeking—Ballintober Castle, its capture in 1786 - The History of Cathel Crove-derg—Sandy O'Conor—The Widow's Son and the Fetches—Roscommon in 1825—A Gladiatorial Exhibition—The Gallows—Lady Betty, a Female Executioner—The last recorded Gibbeting—The civilizing effects of whipcord and lead.

"To Hell or Connaught!" was a malediction well known and often expressed in the North and East fifty years ago; the choice of localities being generally left to the person entrusted with the mission. We have not ventured to explore the former, for although the way thither is clearly defined by the ministers of all religious sects in this country, the return is not so easy. Connaught, however, as the other alternative, we have tried, having been, as the Yankees say, "raised in that province," and are now to the fore to offer some reason for its supposed contiguity to a more tropical region.

What the country west of the Shannon has been heretofore, may be conjectured by observing, even cursorily, what it is at the present moment; and the estimate, of a portion of it at least, has been tolerably well defined in the late bidding for the Connemara estates,* when, despite the puff preliminary in the friendly invitation of a Viceroy, the puff collusive in the speech of a London Lord Mayor, and the puff direct in the eloquent "setting up" of the first auctioneer of the day, before an auditory almost choking with a plethora of wealth—little more than half their intrinsic value was offered. The *Quarterly* knew better than any of them, and was just out in time to save the London millionaire from risking his fifty or sixty thousand pounds in the dillisk, sloak, and carrigeen moss on

* This chapter was written in the autumn of 1849, shortly after the events alluded to in the text had occurred.

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the rocks and cliffs, from Roundstone to Slimehead, or in growing flax upon the serpentine and granite of the twelve pins of Bennabola. But what's the use in going over the same story, and ringing the famine and fever, and poor-law desolation in your ears, good Christians, again;—Sure I told you how it was with all Ireland when I discoursed you before on the same subject as the present; and if you want to know how Connaught is now, I can tell you that it is ten times worse—only that the people (and more is the wonder) are honester, more peaceable, and although given a trifle to lying, bear starvation with less grumbling than in any other part of the world where human beings are subjected to like misery, and have so long suffered from the same demoralizing influences.

No one will buy in Connaught now;—it is said they cannot. Why? Certainly English capitalists, some of them of great name, who have lately visited this country, have assured us that it was not the ill-conditioned state of the peasantry—nor the desolate appearance of the country—nor the debts due by the landlords, no—nor the want of title, or the defect of drainage—nor of means of access—nor even the low price of corn—nor the danger to life or property:—all these could be calculated upon; their probable losses and profits summed up; and when a "view" was made of the whole, it would be found to be just worth, like any other property, so many years' purchase, and would bring its proper price in the market; but it was the taxation which they dreaded, the poor-law taxation of which they could form no estimate, even for the next couple of years,—a taxation which, it is feared, may soon increase to such an extent as to exceed the fee-simple of the land. Well, this is all very true; but this taxation is to feed the people,—will it not increase as the population increases? Yes, but the population *will not, cannot increase under the present circumstances.* Already it has been thinned to an extent almost unparalleled under any condition of the country, as will be proved when the next census is taken.* We now speak of the

* The results of the late census have fully verified this opinion. The loss in Connemara has been 16,493: in the barony of Ballynahinch, 9119; and 7374 in that of Moycullen.

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West, with which we have been long familiar, and we venture to assert that, within two years from the present, the numbers which will have taken advantage of poor-law relief, and who must consequently be a burden upon the land, will have reached, if not passed, the maximum; and as the numbers requiring relief, either within doors or without, shall be thinned and decreased, so ought the taxation to lessen also.

We lately made a tour of the West, after an absence of twelve years. What have we seen—what was the impression made upon us in passing through districts with which we have been long familiar? This—that until the late potato failure and consequent famine, there must have been immense agricultural improvement going forward even in Connaught; for, although we passed over miles of country without meeting the face of a human being, and seldom that of a four-footed beast, and though we came, in some places, hot upon the smoking ruins of a recently unroofed village, with the late miserable inmates huddled together and burrowing for shelter among the crushed rafters of their cabins; and although there were large tracts of land untilled and untenanted—still, with the traces of cultivation, far beyond what we remember in former times, passing under our eyes; with improved drainage—in many places rendering the former swamp a meadow; with the dark patches of green crops creeping up the sides of the valleys; with the turnip, the cabbage, and the parsnip surrounding the cottage, where alone the potato had a footing previously; and, with large tracts of bog reclaimed wherever there was an improving, and, consequently, a wise and humane as well as thriving landlord*—we could not but feel that the appearance of the country, generally, had improved since 1837. But, to the subject of the depopulation,—

Thousands of the peasantry have died annually since 1846,

* No better proof of this could be adduced than the present condition of the tongue of land—part of the Barnah property, in Connemara, running in from Ballinakille bay to the shores of Kylemore Lake, and now in the possession of Mr. Graham; on one side of it is the Ballynahinch estate, and on the other the Renville—both worse off than they were ten years ago—while this tract, which we remember red bog and heathy moor, is now growing corn and green crops, and has several snug homesteads upon it.

Only Cairt - Digitized by Microsoft ®

over and above the usual standard of mortality, which, in Ireland, according to the only data yet accessible, did not, upon an average, exceed two per cent. at the utmost. Thousands upon thousands of the best and most productive of the population have emigrated; and among those who remain, and who have eked out a most miserable existence without the walls of the poor-house, the births, as a natural consequence of the unhappy condition in which the country has been, have been lessened to an extent scarcely credible; and marriages—as the priests know to their cost—have fallen off beyond the remembrance of any former time. The few still standing out among the peasantry, clinging with delusive hope to the potato, and still holding on, in chronic starvation, to two acres and a-half of ill-tilled land, with that longing for liberty—but, alas! not for independence—which made the Irish peasant rather die than quit his native hearth; those supported upon public works, where such exist, or who have been receiving from the, as yet, unpauperized landlord five-pence a-day, "without mate or drink," for the few months of spring or harvest, will all have been driven into the poor-house before the beginning of 1853; while those who can muster the price of their passage to New York, either by honest accumulation or by robbing their landlords of the crops, will likewise have emigrated.

Let us go into the poor-houses, and walk through the day-wards, and yards, and workshops. We see there two classes: the worn-down peasantry, with broken constitutions, spectres of men and women, listlessly stalking about—moody, unoccupied, brooding over miseries past, without hope for the future; fit recipients, mentally and corporeally, for all the contagious influences necessarily attendant upon the accumulation of such a crowd of human beings: we feel assured, upon looking at them, that the great majority will never number another year. For the other section of this class—the boys and girls, and young men and women—many of them intelligent and with good constitutions, now growing up in the work-houses, and acclimatised to them: we feel that something must be done by legislative enactment, either to provide for them in the colonies, or to transplant them again throughout the unpopulated

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districts, or to hire them out as farm-servants—their legitimate and proper calling—before two years elapse; or the land must be taken by the poor-law authorities on which to employ them. And the day will come, and it is not far distant, when, unless Ireland be converted into one great grass-farm, the farmer must go to the workhouse to seek labourers for his harvest.

But there is another portion of the poor-house which we have yet to visit—the hospital. Here, whether it be a temporary shed, or the ordinary ward accommodation, as we pass down the long room, between the rows of beds, and cast our eyes on the thirty or forty human beings arranged on each side of us, a glance practised to disease assures us, that ere to-morrow's sun has set, many of the miserable beings through whom we have passed will have ceased to feel the burning fever or the wasting dysentery: their corpses will lie in the dead-house. The doctor who accompanies us will confirm our remarks. The wards are almost always full; some recent cases from without, others occurring among the broken-down paupers in the house, rapidly filling up the vacancies which every four-and-twenty hours produce. In truth, the mortality which has taken place during the last three or four years, and which is still going forward, to a certain extent, in the poor-houses of Ireland, is beyond belief. We have no desire that it should now be made known. No doubt it will be published at the proper time, and in the proper place. It is not for the sake of exciting angry feelings against these institutions that we write: we believe that, under the circumstances, the mortality has not been greater there than might have been expected; but we have made these statements because we have witnessed what we relate, and because the sum of our inquiries and observations assures us, that the number of persons requiring poor-law relief will begin to decrease, after a very few years, to an extent of which no idea can, at present, be formed. And then taxation will not fall as heavily, nor with that uncertainty which the Irishman who sells, or the Englishman who would buy land, now imagines.

Why the rulers of the West, if they have not earned for it

the adage, "To Hell or Connaught," have, at least, assisted to keep up, and, in part, to deserve, the malediction, may be gleaned from the sequel to the following tale, which, while it serves to illustrate a peculiar Irish superstition, details an historical fact, known at this very hour to hundreds where the circumstances occurred, and the proofs of which—in all save the supernatural appearances, probably the result of an excited imagination—are undeniable, and could be produced.

The reader acquainted with Irish local history may form some idea of the state of Connaught at the period to which this tale refers, and the barbarous condition of the country at the time, when we tell him, that it was many years after some of the gentry—not the "good people," but the landed proprietors, the so-called gentlemen—of Mayo, having overpowered the guards, broke into the jail of Castlebar, and attempted to assassinate one of the prisoners, whom they left for dead.* And it occurred a few years before one of the members for the county of Galway, a magistrate and a deputy-lieutenant, was tried, sentenced, and imprisoned several months, for heading a riotous armed mob; marching off with them many miles through a neighbouring town, and taking illegal and forcible possession of an acre of bog, whereby several persons were severely injured, and the peace of the realm disturbed † And it was about this time, or shortly after it, that a gentleman, then residing not far from the town of Roscommon, abducted a drove of pigs from a neighbouring magistrate with whom he happened to be dining: for which crime he was transported for life—a life he, after a long space of time, forfeited to the

* See the trial of the celebrated George Robert Fitzgerald, in 1786; and "of Timothy Brecknock, James Fulton, and others, for the procurement of, and for the murder of Patrick Randal M'Donnell and Charles Hickson; and also the trial of John Gallagher and others, for an assault on George Robert Fitzgerald, in the Gaol of Castlebar." Dublin: printed by P. Byrne. See also "The Life of George Robert Fitzgerald." in the Dublin University Magazine, for July, August, and September, 1840, and lately republished as one of this series of popular works.

† The Battle of the Bog occurred in 1837, at Oughterard, between some of the tribe of the "Ferocious O'Flaherties," of H-Iar Connaught, and the retainers of Ballynahinch; Thomas Martin, Esq., M.P. and J.P., the last male descendant of "Nimble Dick," having led the van, against a friend and relative of my own.

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offended laws of a penal colony. Not many years ago, his son —who had been a cabin-boy at the battle of Navarino—proved in the public court-house of Leitrim, that he was the rightful heir to the estates of a man who had then but recently filled the office of high sheriff of the county, but whom a jury believed to be a supposititious child, the son of a pipe-maker.* We well remember, when a boy, seeing a lady's white satin dress bedabbled with the blood of a dying game-cock, as she stood in the pit of a cock-fight, which formed part of the amusements got up to do honour to the coming of age of a nobleman, who was afterwards murdered in England.

Of the state of Mayo, even thirty years ago, some idea may be formed from the knowledge of the fact, that no sooner had the judges of the land left the county-town after each assizes, than a certain very celebrated character, who figures in the conclusion of this tale, went to the jail and re-ruled the books, imposing severer punishments on some, and remitting those already awarded to others by the constituted authorities. Lord Chancellor Plunket once went the Connaught circuit as judge. The redoubted ruler of Mayo sat beside him on the bench. There was a general jail delivery at the conclusion of the assizes, and all the untried prisoners were put forward in the dock to be discharged, in the usual manner, by proclamation. *The Right Honourable*, for by such appellation he was known, seeing rather an obnoxious character among them, turned to the presiding judge and said :—

"Surely, my Lord, you are not going to let Tim Muldoon, that ill-looking fellow in the corner there, loose on the world."

"Pray, Mr. B——, what accusation can you bring against him; for the crime for which he was imprisoned appears to be so slight, that the law officers of the crown have not thought it necessary to prosecute him, or put the country to the expense of a trial."

"Oh, he is the greatest vagabond in the whole country; he is a noted ribbonman and cock-fighter; he plays the fiddle at all the wakes and dances; he is, moreover, a most determi-

* See the trials of Keon v. Keon, in Roscommon, Leitrim, and Galway, from 1828 to 1833.

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nate poacher; he would not leave a hare in the county, and he is always engaged in illicit distillation. If you let him out, no man would be safe in the kingdom."

"But, Mr. B——, I don't find any distinct charge or indictment against him, so I must discharge him with the others."

The Right Honourable having gained a few minutes delay descended to the dock, and after holding a short conference with the prisoner returned to the bench, and gravely informed the judge that he had arranged matters with Tim Muldoon, who, he said, "has consented to plead guilty without trial to any indictment that may be extemporaneously preferred against him—provided your lordship undertakes not to transport him for longer than seven years."

The judge rose up, and with all that dignity of manner and solemnity of accent which few could exhibit with greater effect, desired Tim to be put forward, and then told him he was discharged. Great was the poor culprit's amazement after the bargain he had so recently concluded with the uncompromising western ruler.

"Whe, then, your worship's raverence;—me lady, I mane;—och your lordship; but you're an illigent gintleman all out, and its much wantin' ye were to these parts; but might I make bould jist to ax yer honor wan favor afore I go."

"Yes, my man," said Plunket, "if it is anything the law or the court can do for you, you may demand it."

"Oh, thin, 'tis you are the laughey and the asey spoken gintleman entirely. I'll tell you what it is thin. Just keep the Right Honourable where he is sittin' there beside you, fare and asey for the next twinty minutes, till I get clear of the town of Castlebar; for if you did n't, be me soukins, he'd have me be the scruff of the neck, and he'd ram me into the stone jug afore you'd say Jack Robison."

And so he would, for such were his notions of "law and order" at the time to which we refer.

Tim Muldoon vaulted out of the dock, and was never heard of since; but from that hour the power and the terror of "the big man" over the people of Mayo waned, and was never again

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in the ascendant. Verily, we have been a peculiar people in Connaught; and, shall we not add, zealous of bad works. These little, but truthful memorabilia may, however, serve to remind some of our friends of whom, and of what times, we write.

Connaught generally, and Roscommon in particular, was the scene of one of those paroxysms of outrage, the result of secret association, that in different localities, and at divers times, have affected the Irish peasantry, sometimes for one object, sometimes for another; a war against tithes, or, more properly speaking, tithe proctors, or against landlords and agents, or on account of con-acre, or to aid in getting emancipation or repeal to tenant right—often without any cause that even the people themselves could assign. Hence arose the Hearts-of-Steel, Caravats, and Shanavests, the Croppies, Defenders, Chalkers, Houghers, White Boys, Right Boys, Peep-o'-Day Boys, Carders,* Hacklers, Trashers, Rockites, Ribbonmen, Terry-Alts, and Molly Maguires.

Some idle malcontent, labouring under the smart of a real or supposed grievance, some pot-house agitating demagogue, some mere pecuniary speculator or tatterdemallion, obliged, for crimes of his own, to be "on the run," and seek shelter in a different county, has frequently stirred up a hitherto peaceable peasantry to band themselves into a secret society, to meet in ribbon lodges, to assume certain nicknames, to organize and arm, to have secret signs and passwords, by which the initiated might be recognized at fair or market, when a grip of the hand, or a nudge of the elbow, the way in which a man carried the tail or skirts of his *big coat*, hitched up the waistband of his breeches, lifted his glass, or knocked his quart upon the public-house table when he wanted more drink; the manner in which he cocked his hat, or handled his blackthorn; or some casual or apparently unimportant word thrown out in passing the way, as "God save you," or "the time of day," or the ordinary salutation among the lower orders, were all used as means of recognition.

* One of the cards, or hackles, with spikes on it an inch and a half long, which used to be hammered into the back, and then dragged down along the spine, is still in the collection of antiquities of a gentleman in Mullingar.

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There is a freemasonry—a craft, or mystery, in all this, which, quite independent of other objects, possesses a charm for the human mind; and this alone will gain proselytes at all times, and among all classes, descending from the magi and heathen priests of old through the illuminati of later days, down to the various secret societies, or bodies possessing secret signs, symbols, or passwords, among the educated classes at present, either recognized by the law, or connived at by the officers of justice. We repeat it, there is a charm in this state of things which has lured many a young and innocent peasant into the snare of designing men. Besides these, there are the evil disposed at all times—the revengeful of the lower classes, the timid, and the wavering, who will each, for their respective motives, join any illegal society which may start up in their vicinity. Where and when we allude to, murder, and crimes of such debasing nature, formed no part of the ribbon system. Agrarian outrage was not known. There was no famine, the people were well fed and comfortably clothed, there were no harsh evictions, such as were lately recorded daily, neither had the clearing system then come into full operation; drunkenness was not rife, but too frequently the cruel and unmeaning practice of houghing cattle marked the progress of the epidemic. Some Manchester delegate generally commenced the work, the village schoolmaster wrote out and copied the regulations, oaths were administered, the peaceable and well-disposed were compelled, under fearful penalties, to join, the people assembled on some neighbouring hill, or on a lonesome road, at dead of night, an old pensioner drilled, marched, and counter-marched the corps; and yet, though the system of military training has been so long resorted to by Irish insurgents, we cannot record an instance in which it has been of the slightest use to those so trained.

The peasantry now became cautious, reserved, and gloomy. Faction fights ceased at fairs and markets, men drank in the backs of tents, and in the upper rooms of public-houses, and conversed in low tones, and generally in Irish. Ill-spelled Rockite notices, signed "Liftinint Starlite," or "Corporlar Moonbame," were posted on public places. Abducting horses,

and riding them in the "cavalry," during the entire night, upon some embassy, to a distant part of the country, and then leaving them in a pound, with a notice to the owner of their whereabouts, was continually resorted to. But the grand feature of the ribbonism of that day was of a dramatic nature. Decorations and processions chiefly characterized the Connaught disturbances about the years 1823 and 1825. The men wore white shirts outside their clothes, or displayed scarfs or shawls of some kind, and invariably had white bands on their hats, and were otherwise adorned with ribbons of as many colours as could be procured, tied upon their hats and arms, like the Spanish contrabandista—as if to form the better mark for the soldiers with whom they might come in contact—and all dressed in their best attire for these nightly promenades.

It was really a sort of melo-dramatic exhibition. Those who wore cut paper round their hats, as wren-boys, when they grew up to be young men decorated themselves with ribbons and white shirts to act the May-boys—and, as mummers, painted their faces, and went through the Christmas pantomime with old rusty swords. These were the mechanists, stage-managers, wardrobe-keepers, dressers, scene-shifters, and "property" manufacturers of the Roscommon ribbonmen. There was a frolic, and a spirit of rude enterprise and adventure in meeting, thus attired, with an old gun, or a yeoman's rusty halbert, of a November night, and marching, by moonlight, to the sound of the fiddle or bagpipes, though what end was to be obtained thereby, the great majority of them neither knew nor cared. The people had long been taught that there was no law or justice for the poor man, unless his master was a magistrate, or, what would be still better, had an "ould family grudge" with an opposing magistrate, or that the priest would interfere in his behalf. That Irishmen were ill-treated, and got no fair play, was well known; that it was right to do something for O'Connell and the Emancipation, was firmly impressed on all; and to put down the tithe-proctors, was believed to be a most meritorious act, and for "the good of the country." But what was to be ultimately obtained by these organisations, either by themselves or others, I say again, they

had no very distinct idea;—the people were, generally, the dupes of others; for what purpose we have no desire now to discuss.

Unfortunately there was, and still is, but little work for the Irish cottager or small farmer from the beginning of November till the end of February; and what little might be done, partly from ignorance and partly from apathy, he does not do; so that except when he went to the fair or the market, or was compelled to go to the bog for a *clieve* of turf, or had occasion to *put a face** on a pit of potatoes, he slept most of his days, and went out with "the boys" at night.

To oppose this state of things there were the local magistrates, and in the larger towns the military; but except when brought for some special purpose, or to attack a large collection of the people, these latter were of little use in subduing insurrection. The usual class of spies and informers soon began to ply their trade, and one of the first acts of the magistrates was to prevent or disperse all merry-makings and amusements of the people. Tents and *standings*† were pulled down at an early hour, public-houses cleared, and all assemblies dispersed; hurlings and football playing, which generally took place on Sundays or holidays, were strictly interdicted, but the ire of the authorities was chiefly directed against *cakes*‡ and dances. When information was obtained with respect to the locality of one of these, thither the magistrate, with his *posse comitatus*, repaired, broke into the assembly, dispersed the merry-makers, spilled the whisky, danced on the fiddle, and carried off to the

* "To put a face" on anything means to begin, or broach; as, for instance, to commence the removal of a ridge of potatoes, or a stack of hay, or a clamp of turf.

† "Standings," the covered booths or open-air shops, in which "soft goods" are exhibited at fairs and markets. Every method of displaying merchandise, even that of a basket or a stall, was styled a standing,—from the ass-cart, propt with a barrel, and covered over with a patch-work quilt stretched on bent rods, underneath which sat, on hunkers, the owner, surrounded with her wares—skallions, tin porringers, remnants of checks, and "ready-me-daisys"—to the regularly boarded shop, covered over with canvas or sail-cloth, in which corduroys, book-muslins, and fancy prints were displayed. Many a splendid fortune has been commenced in one of these.

‡ Cakes, the peasants' balls and suppers. See page 14.

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nearest blackhole, or guard-room, the owners of the house.* Really the only available, or permitted amusements, were wakes and funerals—on which account some of the latter were mock. The only available force were the old barony constables —generally superannuated pensioners from the yeomanry or militia; always Protestants, and most of them foresters, *cleevins*, old servants, or hangers-on of the magistrate—who dressed in long blue surtout coats, with scarlet collars, buckskin breeches, and rusty top-boots. Each of these old men was mounted, and carried a heavy cavalry sword, his only weapon, for he was seldom fit to be entrusted with any other. Two or three of these *fogies* might be seen at fairs, patterns, and markets, riding up and down to keep the peace, which, as soon as the superintending magistrate had gone to dinner, they generally broke by getting gloriously drunk. This the people usually bore, however, with good humour, seldom injuring the constable, but affording themselves much amusement by *welting* with shillelaghs and blackthorns their crusty nags, which, knowing perfectly what was about taking place, immediately commenced *lashing*, as if aware that the time was come for the farce, although during the previous portion of the day they remained as sober as their masters.

So daring had the ribbonmen become, that although several had already been transported from the dock, and others had been whipped at carts'-tails, large bodies of the insurgents

* We have just received the following from a distinguished member of the Connaught bar:—"Bryan Kyne was a justice of the peace for three counties. He was tried before Baron Smith, in Roscommon, at the summer assizes of 1830; and the case against him was, that he went to the cabin of an old man, who lived by fiddling for the country people as they danced, and who had a crowd of them assembled, and engaged at that amusement, on a Sunday evening, which Kyne thought he should disperse. On his entering the cabin, he seized the fiddle, and desired the dancers to disperse, which they did at once without a murmur. He had a gun in his hand; and when, by their voices, as they moved away from the cabin, he judged that they were yet within shot, he levelled his gun in the direction they were taking towards their homes, and injured several of them. The principal witness was a very decent-looking youth, about twenty. He took off his shirt, and showed his back to the judge and jury, as he stood on the table in the public court; and although it was nearly six months after the transaction, it exhibited a shocking appearance of scars and cicatrices. Kyne was convicted, and transported for life."

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approached the small towns in the night time, committing several petty outrages: pulling down pound gates, and letting out the cattle, beating drivers, and warning process-servers; so that the quiet and loyal inhabitants had to form themselves into corps, which appointed watches, and had patroles guarding their houses. Just then Peel's Act came into force; the first Peelers, under the command of the redoubted Major ——, entered Connaught, and here our story commences.

The Major, who took no inconsiderable part in the fearful drama which shortly after followed, had originally belonged to a celebrated militia regiment, of one of the midland counties, that was the first to run out of Castlebar on the approach of the French, but having stopped to take breath at Hollymount, and the men having refreshed themselves with some of the claret purloined from the cellars of the neighbouring gentry, they became suddenly seized with a fit of *nationality!* and, turning their coats inside out, they erected, in the demesne of Lehinch, a pole, crowned with a cap of liberty, round which they drank, danced, and sang till morning's dawn, when many of those who were able to march, or even to stagger, retraced their steps to join Humbert. These renegades made, however, but a bad business of it afterwards at Ballinamuck, and their subsequent *liberality* provoked the parody upon the well-known air of "Croppies lie down;" so spirited a quick step, that we greatly regret it is still remembered as a party tune.

"Oh! the Longford militia walked into Athlone,
And the first tune they play'd was let croppies alone;
Croppies get up, for you're long enough down,
We'll thrash all those orange dogs out of the town.
Down, down, Orange lie down."

Paddy Welsh was a roving blade—peculiar in everything—in habits, in temper, in thought, in appearance, in expression, but especially in gait—one of the class known only to those well acquainted with the peasantry of this country—thoroughly and peculiarly Irish. By trade—oh! Paddy had no trade—he was not a tradesman, if by that term is meant a sober mechanic,

following his special calling from week's end to week's end—Sundays, holidays, whole Mondays, and half Saturdays excepted—in pulling wax-ends, thickening hats, or stitching frieze, turning hacks and pearns, or in building walls, plaining planks, hooping churns, or shoeing horses. No, he could, it is true, perform each and all of these feats at a pinch just as well as many, and better than some of those that had served their time to the trade; but he had no genius for such common, continuous, everyday avocations. Neither was he an agriculturist; he held land it is undeniable, and had a snug house upon it, built by his own two hands, but that was for the wife and children, and the farm was generally tilled by "the woman of the house," "the little boy," and an occasional hired servant, with a lift now and then from a neighbour or two at the sowing and digging of the potatoes. Neither was he a trader or a dealer, at least as a legitimate calling. Sometimes when pigs were "looking up," he jobbed upon a few slips from market to market, and may be turned a pound into a thirty-shilling note thereby; but pig-jobber he was not.

If Paudeen Brannagh (Anglice, Patrick Welsh) had any special calling more than another, he was a hackler, as was his father before him, from whom he inherited (all the poor man had to leave) the best-tempered pair of hackles in the country. With these Paddy, in his younger days, when flax was much grown in Connaught, and before he became an adept at another line of life, might be seen traversing the country, his little hackle-boxes, resembling creepy stools, slung across his shoulders, one hanging behind and another before, and seeking occupation wherever there was "flax a-breaking." *

* After the flax had been steeped in the bog-hole, and bleached on the *anough*, it was taken home, kiln-dried, and in process of time broken, preparatory to being hackled, scutched, and spun into yarn; all which processes were the result of household manufactory. The flax was generally broken by men; a large stool, such as that used for a table in the peasant's cabin, was everted and laid flat on the floor. The operator sat down behind it, with a leg across each end; placed the sheaf of dried flax along the stool, holding it into the fork of the legs, and with a long stout beetle broke up the outer husk or cuticle of the fibre, preparatory to its removal, by being drawn through the hackle pins. As several persons were generally engaged in the operation at a time, the noise produced thereby was quite deafening, and hence the common expression in Connaught, indicative of great uproar—it was like "flax a-breaking."

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Though Paddy was not a tradesman, nor a labourer, nor a dealer, nor any great scholar either, he was an artist—a thing, by the way, he never heard of—uneducated brute! He knew nothing of the "holiness of art," nor the purifying effects of art, nor the religious influence of art, nor mediëval ages and illuminated missals—the likes were never heard of in Connaught in those days. There was no definition of such in the old whitey-brown-papered Tommy-and-Harry-illustrated, rough-cast-covered Universal Spelling Book, nor in "The Genteel Letter-writer and Young Gentleman's True Principles of Politeness," sewed up into the back of it. Where would he hear of it? His special trade of hackling he had by hereditary descent from his father; his readings were confined to "Raymond the Fox," "The Irish Rogues and Rapparees," "Moll Flanders," "The History of Freney the Robber," and "The Battle of Aughrim,"—the latter a play of some merit, and not only much read, and frequently committed to memory, by the more intelligent of the peasantry, but also at times enacted in barns and unoccupied houses in the small towns and villages. He was an artist, nevertheless,—a fisherman,—the best we ever met; and that is a great saying. For knowing where to find trout, when and how to get them, what to rise them with, and how to play and kill them, we never met his equal. He had other accomplishments, to be sure: he was a good shot, and could creep upon a flock of grey plover, driving an old cow or a horse before him to screen him from the wary birds, with any other man in the barony. He was n't a bad fiddler either, particularly at a *rousin'* tune—"Moll in the Wad," "Rattle the Hasp," "The Grinder," or any of the classic, but now almost forgotten, airs of Connaught. He could feed, and clip, and spur, and "hand" a cock with any man that ever stood in the pit of an Easter Monday. There was n't a *pile* nor a *stag* in the three parishes but he knew its whole seed, breed, parentage, and education. Barring Pat Magreevy, he was the greatest authority on such matters from "the Barony" * to

* The Barony of Athlone is always styled, in Roscommon, *The Barney*, and contra-distinguished from the rich plains, which are called *The Maghery*. The county Roscommon was famed for cock-fighting in former days, particularly upon Easter week; and in the locality alluded to, it is not yet quite extinct.

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Sliebe Bawn, and no *main* was ever fought without his presence; but latterly he did n't like to have the subject *evened* to him, by reason of a false accusation made against him by an enemy, some years before, of having stolen, out of the county Sligo, a game chicken that had been hatched in a scald-crow's nest;—but enough of that.

Among the many popular superstitions attendant upon the breeding and rearing of game fowl, it was believed that if an egg was extracted from a hawk's or raven's, or a hooded crow's nest, and a game egg placed therein, that nothing could beat the bird so reared,—that it always partook of the carnivorous propensity and indomitable courage of its nurse and the foster family with which it had been brought up.

Like St. Patrick's aunt, Misther Welsh "undherstud dishtillin'," though he seldom undertook the office of illicit distiller; but whenever anything went wrong with the ordinary manufacturer, when the burnt beer had too great a tack, or the wash rose into the still-head, or ran through the worm, he knew what to do with it, and could keep it down with a dead chicken, or something worse; and he was famed for making the best *lurrogue*, or luteing, to keep in the liquor in an old leaky still, of any other person in the seven parishes; but, we repeat, he was not by trade a distiller.

Paddy was great at a wake, where his arrival was hailed as would be that of Strauss or Lanner in a folks-ball at the Sperl or Goldenen Piern at Vienna, for nobody knew the humours of that festival beyond Paudeen Brannagh. He could tell them how to slap,* and play forfeits, and shuffle the brogue, and rehearse "the waits;" or he could sing the "Black Stripper,"†

There was a *main* fought at Boyle last year. Carlow was also celebrated for cock-fighting. About forty years ago, the following attractive notice might be seen in a cutler's window in London—"Carlow spurs sold here."

* Among the humours of a wake, the *small play* of slapping was one of the most popular. The person who was doomed, as a forfeit, to the infliction, had to stand with the back of his hand laid upon the small of his back, while each person in the game gave it the severest blow with the palm which they were able. We shall take up the subject of the wake games when considering the ceremonials attendant upon death, and would, in the meantime, be glad to receive from our friends some information upon the subject.

† Allegories were not confined to the learned in Ireland. The "Bleeding

and "Nell Flaherty's Drake," or repeat a rhan beyond compare. The young, and those unconcerned in the mournful spectacle, welcomed him with loud applause; even those in grief would smile through their tears, and the nearest relative of the deceased would exclaim:—

"Oh, thin, musha Paddy, you *summahawn*, bad cess to you, is it here you're coming with your tricks, and we in grief and sorrow this night?"

"Hould your whist, sthore ma chree, sure it's for that I stept over, just to keep ye from thinking, and to anose the colleens. Never mind till you see how I'll dress the garlands, and curl the paper for you coming on morning." For this was one of Pat's accomplishments. He could assist the women to lay out the corpse; but in case of the death of a young unmarried person, he could peel, and dress with cut paper, the sally wands to be carried at the funeral, and could shape the white-paper gloves which were to hang on the hoops—the principal decoration of the garland that was to be placed in the middle of the grave. Full of fun and frolic as he was, he was always doing a good turn, and everybody said—"There is no harm in life in him."

Paddy stood five feet nothing in his stocking-feet—no, not that either—in his barefoot; first, because he never had feet to his stockings, and secondly, because, if he put both feet to the ground, he would be nearly six inches lower than the standard we have assigned to him; for, owing to some natural defect, his left leg was by so much shorter than his right. To commence with his lower extremities, which were the most remarkable feature about him, we must inform our readers that he wore neither brogues, pumps, shoes, galouches, nor boots, neither Hessians, tops, nor Wellingtons; but a pair of short-

Iphiginia," or the "History of Cyprus," or the beautiful expressive song of the "Wild Geese," which were intended and adapted for the reading population, had their types among the lower orders in such songs as the "Black Stripper," which signified a potteen still. This song was made by a poor poet near Elphin, upon the celebrated St. Lawrence, the gauger, of Strokestown, the most noted still-hunter in Connaught for many years. It was for a long time the most popular ballad throughout Roscommon and Leitrim, and you heard it as frequently wherever there was an assemblage of the people, as but a little while ago our ears were assailed with "Rory O'More."

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laced buskins, made by a brogue-maker, which caused all the difference to the wearer in the matter of economy.*

He was vain (who is not ?), and consequently never attempted the *knees* and long stockings, but clad his nether man in corduroys, or *borrogue*, a sort of coarse, home-made twilled linen, formed of tow-yarn. His only other garment—at least the only other one which we could discover that he wore for many years—was an old whitish, drab-coloured, double-caped greatcoat, the long skirts of which, first rolled into a sort of twisted rope, were then tucked up below the small of his back, where they formed a sort of male bustle, which, with his fiddle stuck under it, and the acquired set of an eager and habitual fisherman, gave him an extraordinary angular appearance. A sharp, shrewd countenance, prominent nose and cheek-bones—small, keen grey eyes, expressive of naturally great, as well as long-practised observation—a face which would have exhibited as many freckles as a turkey's egg, but that it was, particularly in summer time, too much tanned and sunburnt to let them be seen, exhibited at once hardihood and cunning. The peculiar chestnut hue of his face—the result of constant exposure to wind and sun—descended, like a gorget, to about the middle of his chest, over a remarkably prominent throat, in which, if Paddy inherited his peculiarity of a remarkably projecting larynx from mother Eve, more than half of the apple must have stuck in her throat.† Whiskers he had none, but scanty beard, and scarcely a vestige of eyebrow. To make up, however, for the want of hair upon this portion of his face, he possessed a peculiar power over the part whereon it should

* The difference between a brogue and a shoe does not altogether consist in the strength of the material. Like a brogue, a shoe may be made very strong, and be unbound; but the former is generally made of what is called *kip*, a sort of thin cow-hide, and is always unbound and unlined. The grand difference between it and a shoe consists in the sole and welt being sown together with a thong of leather instead of a wax-end. The two trades were quite distinct a few years ago.

† There is a popular impression that the peculiar prominence on the front of the throat which some persons, particularly those of red or sandy hair, exhibit, is a remnant of a deformity transmitted to us from Eden; as it is believed that a piece of the apple stuck in Eve's throat, where it ever after remained, an eye-sore and a curse. In some localities, it is said the bit stuck, not in Eve's, but in Adam's throat.

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have grown; for he could elevate it, particularly toward the outward side, half way up his forehead and temples, and again depress it so as almost completely to obscure his eye. Although his face was thus devoid of hair, he possessed a plentiful head of tow-like wool, of a yellow, sandy colour, which was generally surmounted by an old glazed hat, rather battered in the sides, and invariably encircled, during the fishing season, with casting-lines and trout flies. Oh! what a business it was for some of the young tyros to engage Paddy in conversation about the effects of the last flood, or whether there was too much rain overhead, or how long the dry weather would last, or when the green-drake would be out, or to get him to tell the story of the otter that seized the trout he was playing under the bridge of Balloughoyague, while the others, creeping carefully round, examined what hackles and foxes, or fiery-browns and hares' ears, he had last been fishing with. The genteel part of Paddy was his hand. No lady of gentle blood, or pure aristocratic descent, ever possessed a more delicate finger, or a finer touch. Signs on him, he was the boy that could mount a Limerick hook on a stout bristle, and mix the colour, strip a hackle, or divide a wing with e'er an angler in Connaught. The real wonder about Paddy was his extraordinary powers of progression. Although a *baccough*, no one could beat him "at the long run" on the road; and as to crossing a country, we could never tell how he got over the fences, or passed the drains, but he was always as soon as his companions.

Some folks accused Paddy of being a poacher; but this we stoutly deny. He would go any distance to destroy a net, or inform upon the owner of one; but wherever manual dexterity or adroitness were called in question, he had no qualms as to the means employed. Thus, if Paddy was sauntering by the river of a hot, bright, calm summer's day, when no trout in its senses would rise, and that he saw a good lump of a fish standing, or balancing itself in a still pool, or lying in the shade of a weed or rock, he at once set off after a neighbouring cow, which he soon inveigled into a ditch, or pinned in a corner, that he might pull a lock of hair from her tail, with which, fastened upon the end of a long switch, he soon formed a snare,

slipped it adroitly over the gills of the unsuspecting fish, and in an instant lifted it out of its native element; or, if that was not attainable, he would walk into the stream, even to his middle, in the hope of *tickling* the trout under a stone.

Paddy's residence was on the banks of the Suck, in the gentle fords and long deep retches of which, between Ballymoe and Castlecoote, through the deep alluvial pastures of Roscommon, he plied his skilful angle between spring and summer, and in winter he shot great quantities of duck, teal, and widgeon. His house was approached by a deep narrow *boreen*, generally so wet and muddy that one had to walk on the top of the ditch on either side more frequently, than traverse the gully beneath. The mansion being placed on the side of a hill, required but three walls, the back being dug out of the bank. This, however, made but little difference in the material, for the remaining walls were formed of tempered yellow clay, generally called *daub*, mixed with chopped straw. It was comfortably thatched, and the ridge fastened down with a sort of backbone, about four inches thick and a foot broad, of the same material as the walls. Out of this rose the wicker framework of the chimney, well plastered, both within and without. Upon the hip of the roof, to the right of the doorway, grew a luxuriant plant of house-leek, to preserve the house from fire, and the inmates from sore eyes. Upon the threshold was nailed an ass's shoe, to keep off the fairies, and preserve the milk; and on the lintel was cut a double triangle, like what the freemasons have adopted for one of their mystic signs, in order to guard the children from the evil eye; for Paddy adhered with great pertinacity to the customs of the good old times, when it was difficult to say how much of our religion was Christian and how much Pagan.

Having crossed the causeway which led over the sink or dung-pit which stood in front, and entered the cabin, the visitor would find a much neater and more comfortable residence than outward appearance would lead him to expect. Out of the back wall was dug a small shallow excavation, crossed by shelves, which served for a dresser, in which some white-staved noggins, and divers jugs, bottles, and pieces of old-

fashioned crockery were displayed. To the right of the door was the domicile of the pig, with above it the roost, and a couple of odd-looking mat-work bags, with apertures in the sides for the hens to lay in. The watling couples and rafters of the roof were of a varnished jet, from long exposure to the turf smoke, setting off to advantage the wheaten straw crosses of St. Bridget* stuck here and there throughout it.

"St. Bridget's cross hung over door,
Which did the house from fire secure."

Around the bed, which was a fixture, was hung from the roof a thick straw matting, with a small aperture in it to gain access to the interior, over which hung a phial of holy water, and a bit of blessed palm. This was Paddy's own couch, and within it was hung his gun, and the most valuable of his fishing gear. *The room*, which was separated by the chimney and a low partition from the rest of the house, we need not enter, for all was darkness there. Throughout the small but snug dwelling were to be seen various articles expressive of the owner's more especial calling—rods, landing-nets, fish-baskets, and night-lines stowed carefully away in the roof.

Besides the "man of the house," the inmates consisted of, first, his wife, a tall, dark, strapping, "two-handed" woman, pushing for forty, or, as some said, upon the wrong side of it; but having become a mother at eighteen, she showed the wear and tear of married life more, and took less pains to conceal it, than many a spinster of fifty. It was looked upon as an event fraught with benefit to the human race, and to their immediate neighbourhood in particular, when Paddy carried off his bride; for Peggy was a Welsh too, and as a family might fairly be expected, and everybody knows that the blood of the Welshes, as well as that of the Keoghs and Cahills, beats anything living,

* Upon St. Bridget's Night, 2d February, a small cross, made of wheaten or oaten straw, of a peculiar form, which it would be impossible to describe without some pictorial representation, is made by the peasantry, and stuck somewhere in the roof, particularly in the angles and over the door. These resemble somewhat the Maltese cross. As a new *crussogue* is set up every anniversary of St. Bridget, and as they are carefully preserved, they act as an almanac to tell the age of the house. The lines we have quoted are from the old poem of "Hesperi Neso-Graphia," printed in 1791.

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except that of a black cat's tail or his lug, for the cure of the wild-fire, the gossips hoped that a Welsh, by father and mother, would soon be able to eradicate the disease from the whole country side.*

The result of this marriage was a son and a daughter, the former of whom, partaking of the dark complexion, and tall, slight figure of the mother, was now a handsome youth, just stretching into manhood; the latter, who took after the father, was a year younger than her brother. As Paddy was not much at home, but lived chiefly by the river side, or among the houses of the neighbouring gentry, his son Michael—or Michauleen,† as he used to be called when a boy—generally looked after the affairs of the little farm, but occasionally accompanied the father upon his piscatorial excursions, particularly when the May-fly was out in early summer, and Paddy required an assistant at the cross-line.‡ The boy was of rather a romantic turn—quiet, taciturn, and thoughtful—much given to fairy lore, of which both father and mother possessed not only a plentiful stock, but peculiar powers of narration. There was not a rath nor forth in the whole country side but Michael knew the legend of it. He believed in the good people, and the leprehauns, and pookas, and banshees, and thivishes or fetches, with as unwavering a faith as he did in Father Crump's power to turn a man's hair grey, or twist his head on his shoulders, or old Friar Geoghegan's ability to wallop the devil out of a madman with

* This is one of the most widely-spread superstitions in Ireland. Cutaneous erysipelas is known to the people under the various names of the rose, wildfire, St. Anthony's fire, *tene fiadh*, the sacred fire, or *tinne Diadh*, God's fire, the *sacer ignis* of ancient authors; and is believed to be cured by the means specified in the text, or by having the part rubbed with a wedding-ring, or even a gold ring of any description. There is another form of this malady, of a more fatal nature, which is believed to be the result of a blast, and is called the *fiolun*, or *fellon*, for the cure of which some extraordinary practices are still in vogue. These we shall describe on another occasion.

† Michel, Micheleen, or Michauleen, Mickey, Myke, and Michaul, are all synonyms for Michael.

‡ This method of fishing is used with a natural fly, the *libellula*, or green drake, with murderous effect, upon the flat, calm pools in the Suck. There are two rods employed, one on each bank, the wheel line joined in the centre; and from this depends one or more casting-lines, or droppers, about five feet long. To these are attached the flies, which, by the cross-line being kept *taut*, can be dropped with unerring precision wherever a trout is seen to rise.

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a blackthorn.* Then, he knew the history of Ballintober Castle, and the story of the Well of Oran, and how, if a man lifted the sacred stone which stands beside it, all Ireland would be "drownded" in no time.

His father, though no great scholar himself, determined to have learning for his child; and many a half-crown, which Paddy got for a *bodough* trout at some of the neighbouring houses, went to Tim Dunlavy for a quarter's schooling for the little boy, who could soon not only read and write tolerably well, but had gone through the "*coorse o' Voster*" as far as "Tret and Tare;" and there is no knowing to what pitch of learning he might have arrived, nor for what sacred office he might have been prepared, had his mother had her will, and his father been more agriculturally inclined; but, as neither of these benign influences beamed upon him, he was soon obliged to relinquish such pursuits for the more profitable ones of setting potatoes and footing turf. Still his literary predilections remained, and these he indulged whenever he had an opportunity. It was one of the great inducements to young Welsh to accompany his father a-fishing, that during the dull hours of the day, from twelve till two, when "the rise" had gone off the trout, and Paddy was taking a smoke, or lying asleep on the grass till a "curl" would come on the calm waters, that he could learn off the "Battle of Aughrim, or the Fall of St. Ruth," or the "Battle of Ventry Harbour," out of one of his father's fly-books.

Young Michael was an object of special respect among the people, from the happy circumstance of his descent and birthright. A Welsh by both father and mother was not to be found everywhere, and of this the boy was rather proud; and, when even yet a child, never wineed under the operation of having his thumb bound tightly with a woollen thread, and the point pricked with a needle, to extract the blood with which the afflicted person was touched.

What between the produce of the little farm, Peggy's in-

* Friar Geoghegan, whose feats in necromancy, the laying of spirits, beating of devils, and casting of charms, and other mysteries of the black art, are still well remembered in the counties of Mayo and Roscommon, was a degraded Franciscan.

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dustry, and the matter of eggs and chickens, and Paddy's earnings, which, though very irregular, were often considerable, the family were well enough to live, and might, people said, have made more of themselves if all that was told of Paddy's doings was truth. It was said he had found a crock of gold in one of the towers of the old bawne of Ballintober, which was not more than a mile and a half distant from his cabin, and where Paddy and his son were often seen in the twilight, looking, they said, for moths and wall-flies among the old ivy, or bats and starlings to manufacture fishing materials; at least, so they said, but the people thought otherwise. We often endeavoured to worm the story out of the cunning angler; but, drunk or sober, he was always on his guard, and generally passed it off with a joke, or—

"Sure, Master Willie, you don't give into the likes—'tis only ould women's talk. It's myself that would be glad to own to it if I got the goold, and not be slaving myself, summer and winter, by the river's brink, as I am."

"Yes; but, Paddy, they say you made the attempt, at all events. Cannot you tell us what happened to you?"

"Oh, then, it's only all *gollymoschought*. But that's mighty fine parlimint * your honour has in the little flask; 'tis a pity it doesn't hould more, and the devil a tail we are rising to keep up our spirits."

"Come now, Paddy, since you know very well it will be quite too bright and dull these two hours to stir even a roach, let alone a trout—don't you perceive there isn't a cloud in the sky, and I can see the bottom as plain as my hand: look, even the cows have left off feeding, and are standing in the ford switching their tails to keep off the clags?—just stick the rods, and lie on your face in the grass there, and tell me all about the night you went to look after the money in the old bawne. Do, and you'll see I'll squeeze another mouthful out of the cruiskeen."

"Well, but you're mighty 'cute and disquisitive after ould stories and pishogues. I suppose I may as well be after telling it to you while the breeze is getting up; but keep an eye to the river, awourneen, and try could you see e'er a rise; and be sure

* *Parlimint*, used in contradistinction to *potteen*, or illicit whiskey.

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you don't miss a gray *coughlin* or a *merrow*, if e'er a one flies past you; we'll want them coming on evening. But don't be tellin' on me, nor let on at the *big house* * that I told you the likes at all. Sure the mistress 'ud never forgive me for putting such things in your head; and maybe it's Father Crump she'd be after repatein' it to the next Sunday he dines in Dundearmot; and if she did, troth I wouldn't face him for a month of Sundays. Maybe it's to St. Ball or to St. John's Well he'd send me for my night walkin'."

"Oh, never fear, I'll keep your secret."

"Well, then, awourneen, to make a long story short, I dhramed one night that I was walking about in the *bawne*, when I looked into the old tower that's in the left hand corner, after you pass the gate, and there I saw, sure enough, a little crock, about the bigness of the bottom of a pitcher, and it full up of all kinds of money, goold, silver, and brass. When I woke next morning, I said nothin' about it, but in a few nights after I had the same dhrame over agin, ony I thought I was lookin' down from the top of the tower, and that all the flures were taken away. Peggy knew be me that I had a dhrame, for I wasn't quite asey in myself; so I ups and tells her the whole of it, when the childer had gone out. 'Well, Paddy,' says she, 'who knows but it would come thrue, and be the making of us yet; but you must wait till the dhrame comes afore you the third time, and then, sure, it can do no harm to try, anyways.' It wasn't long till I had the third dhrame, and as the moon was in the last quarter, and the nights mighty dark, Peggy put down the *grisset*,† and made a lock of

* The big house, or *Teach more*, is the term applied by the people to the residences of the gentry, except when they are of great extent or beauty, and then "the coort" is the word made use of. Old castles or ancient inclosures are styled *bawnes*.

† *Grisset*, a small narrow metal pan on three legs, used for melting grease, and dipping rushes in. Sometimes a fragment of an old pot is employed for the same purpose. The tongs are made red hot, and if there is no kitchen stuff at hand, a bit of fat of any kind is squeezed between the hot blades of the tongs into the grisset or its substitute, and the rushes, peeled of their outer green bark, all except one narrow stripe, are drawn through the melted grease, and laid across the stool to set. In order to permit the grease to exude with greater freedom, all the old-fashioned country pairs of tongs were made with holes in the flat of the

candles; and so, throwin' the *loy* * over my showlder, and giving Michauleen the shovel, we set out about twelve o'clock, and when we got to the castle, it was as dark that you wouldn't see your hand before you; and there wasn't a stir in the ould place, barrin' the owls that wor snorin' in the chimley. To work we went just in the middle of the flure, and cleared away the stones and the rubbish, for nearly the course of an hour, with the candles stuck in patatics, resting on some of the big stones a wan side of us. Of coorse, sorra word we said all the while, but dug and shovelled away as hard as hatters, and a mighty tough job it was to lift the flure of the same buildin'. Well, at last the loy struck on a big flag, and my heart riz within me, for I often heard tell that the crock was always covered with a flag, and so I pulled away for the bare life, and at last I got it cleared, and was just lifting the edge of it, when —— was that a trout I heard lep there abroad?"

"No, Paddy, you know very well it wasn't. Go on with your story. Didn't you see a big goat with four horns and terrible red eyes, sitting on the flag, and guarding the gold. Now tell the truth."

"Oh, what's the use in tellin' you anything about it; sure, I know by your eye you don't believe a word I am sayin'. The dickens a goat was sitting on the flag; but when both of us were trying to lift the stone, my foot slipped, and the clay and rubbish began to give way under us. 'Lord betune us and harm,' says the gossoon; and then, in the clapping of your hand, there wuz a wonderful wind rushed in through the dureway, and quinched the lights, and pitched us both down into the hole; and of all the noises you ever heard, it was about us in a minute. *M'anum san Deowl!* but I thought it was all over with us, and sorra wan of me ever thought of as much as crossin' myself; but I made out as fast as I could, and the gossoon after me, and we never stopped running 'till we stumbled over the

blades. The dipt rushes were generally kept in a piece of badger's skin, hung to the roof. Rushlights are now scarcely known, nor the sconces in which they were fixed. Pieces of tow dipped in resin are used instead.

* The *loy* was the long, narrow, one-sided spade, with an unwieldy ash handle or *feck*, the only agricultural instrument known to the bulk of the western peasants twenty years ago.

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wall of the big intrance, and it was well we didn't go clane into the moat. Troth, you wouldn't give three haypence for me when I was standin' in the road—the *bouchal* itself was stouter—with the wakeness that came over me. *Och, millia murdher!* I wasn't the same man for many a long day; but that was nawthin' to the turmintin' I got from every body about findin' the goold, for the shovel that we left after us was dish-covered, and there used to be daelers and gintlemin from Dublin,—antitrarians, I think they call them,—comin' to the house continually, and axin' Peggy for some of the coins we found in the ould castle.

"There now, you have the whole of it—wet the landin'-net agra, and run after that beautiful green-drake that's just gone over us, while I see whether there is anything left in the bottle."

The popular opinions with respect to hidden treasure are, that they are generally under the guardianship of spirits, who assume various hideous shapes to affright mortals who seek to discover them. Sometimes the good people interfere, and some of their special favourites are, under their guidance and permission, enabled to obtain possession of the hidden gold; but it is strictly imposed upon those to whom the secret is revealed, either in the form of a dream or as a direct revelation, that they must seek the treasure at a particular time, not utter a word during the search, and keep the secret of its discovery for seven years after. Several of the great lake serpents and water-cows of our Irish Fairy Mythology are supposed to guard treasures; in some instances black cats are similarly employed.

The ruins of Ballintober Castle are amongst the most magnificent in Connaught, and are memorable as the last stronghold of the O'Conors. The castle, which stands on an elevated ridge by the road-side, above the little village of Ballintober, four miles from the town of Castlebar, consists of a quadrangular inclosure, 270 feet in length, and 230 feet in breadth,* with

* See an account of this castle in "Weld's Statistical Survey of the County Roscommon;" also views of it in the book styled "Grose's Antiquities;" consult

four flanking towers, and one upon each side of the great entrance, the whole surrounded by a deep fosse, portions of which still retain water. Mr. Weld has remarked upon the strong resemblance which the towers of this castle bear to some of those in Wales. "No one tower, it is true," he says, "is comparable to the Eagle Tower at Caernarvon. Nevertheless, the south-west tower at Ballintober is a superb piece of architecture, and, for its general effect, amongst the most imposing remains of antiquity that I can call to recollection in Ireland." There are two localities of this name in Connaught—Baile-an-tobhair-Phaidraig, the town of the Well of St. Patrick, in Mayo, and Baile-an-tobhair-Brighde, that of St. Bridget, now under consideration. This place is, among other things, memorable as the birth-place of the celebrated Cathal Crovederg, or "Charles the Red-Handed," the illegitimate son of Turlough-More O'Conor, the brother of Roderick, and last of the Irish monarchs. About this prince, who was born in the latter end of the twelfth century,—and who, says the Ulster Annals, was "the best Irishman, from the time of Brien Boroma, for gentility and honour; the upholder, mighty and puissant, of the country; keeper of peace; rich and excellent,"—there are many romantic tales and superstitious legends, still lingering with the people in the vicinity, which, were they woven into a novel, would far surpass most modern works of fiction. When we have a novelist not only acquainted with Irish history and antiquities, but possessing the power of fusing the ancient legend with the drama of modern life and impulse; making the feelings that influence the lover or the hero subservient to the chronicle; picturing the past, through the knowledge of the human heart at the present—then, and then only will Irish history be known and appreciated. Cathal of the Red Hand was the son of a beautiful girl of very small stature, named Gearrog Ny-Moran, of the Muhall territory. When the queen heard what had occurred, she, like Sarah of old, commenced a bitter perse-

"The Annals of the Four Masters," A.D. 1312, *et seq.* It is said to have been erected in the time of King John. The north-western tower was repaired or rebuilt in 1684. The south-western tower, that alluded to in the text, is in a state of great dilapidation; but the present proprietor, H. Packenham Mahon, Esq., is, at the instance of the author, about to have it repaired.

cution against the king's mistress, and had, as was customary at the time, recourse to witchcraft and sorcery to prolong the sufferings of the unhappy maiden. Like Juno, before the birth of Hercules, she, with the assistance of a noted witch, set a charm, consisting of a bundle of elder rods, tied with a magic string, knotted with nine knots. This she hung up in her chamber, and watched with great care. Stratagem, however, achieved what humanity could not induce. The queen, while walking on the terrace, was accosted by a female (the midwife disguised), who entreated alms for a poor woman who had just been confined in the neighbouring village. On hearing who it was, she was so enraged, that she instantly rushed to her apartment, and cut the charm into pieces. The spell was broken, and the bond-woman's child was born. For several years after, Gearrog and her son were protected from the jealous fury of the queen by the people; and both were long harboured in the monasteries of Connaught. As time wore on, however, the Church was insufficient against the wrath of the offended queen, and Cathal * was obliged to fly to a distant province, where, in the garb of a peasant, he supported himself by manual labour. At length the King of Connaught died; and the people declared they would have no monarch but his son, Cathal Crovederg, if he could be found. Heralds were sent forth, and proclamations issued, according to the fashion of the times, yet still no tidings of the elected king. One day, as harvest was drawing to its close, a *Bollscaire*, or herald, from the Court of Ballintober, entered a field in Leinster, where some of the peasantry were at work reaping rye, and told the oft-repeated tale of the missing monarch of Connaught. Cathal, who was among the reapers, heard the story, and stood for some minutes lost in reverie. He then, removing the cover with which he always concealed the mark, held up the red hand, and throwing down the reaping-hook, exclaimed—"*Slan leath a corrain anois do'n cloideam*"—*i. e.*, Farewell, sickle; now for the sword! The Bollscaire recognizing him, both he, and the men who were along with him in the field, prostrated themselves before him, and proclaimed him

* For the cause of his cognomen of Red Hand, see "The Annals of the Four Masters," A.D. 1224.

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King of Connaught. He was afterwards crowned at Carnfree, near Tulsk, by the chieftains and the coorbs of Sil-Murray, and "Cathal's Farewell to the Rye" is a proverb and an air still well known in Roscommon and Galway.*

In the southern wall, which is only divided by a moat from the adjoining road, there are a number of large oval apertures, which, from their being nearly closed with ivy of immense growth, look, at first view, like windows. Such, however, they were not. Their history is well known to a few of the old people in the neighbourhood, and is connected with a circumstance so little known that we cannot forbear relating it here.

About the end of last century, the family of O'Conor *Donn*, or *Dun*, the lineal descendants of the Connaught monarchs, consisted of Dominick O'Conor, of Clonalis, who lived in princely style, and his brothers Thomas and Alexander, besides some females. In the year 1786, a will, said to have been made by Hugh O'Connor, an ancestor of this line, was discovered accidentally between the leaves of a card-table, which had been screwed together for a great number of years, and had lain among the effects of the late Lord Athenry. This document, from which it appeared that the castle and estate of Ballintober, which had long before passed from the O'Conor family, had not been included in the original confiscation of their estates, by some means found its way into the hands of Alexander O'Conor, a man of very eccentric habits, and not over-strong mental capacity, who resided in a poor cabin at a village called Creglaghan, who was till the day of his death, which took place at a very advanced age, called by the people "Masther Sandy." This man, though dressed little better than a peasant, and living in the fashion which we have described, was looked up to by the people as a prince of the

* Among the curious memorabilia of Connaught is a book styled "Recollections of Skiffington Gibbon, from 1796 to the present year, 1829," in which most of the scandal and gossip of the county Roscommon is set forth. This man was originally a "shop boy" in Castlerea, and afterwards traversed the country and levied black mail on all the nobility and gentry around; threatening to expose to light the skeleton in each family who did not contribute to his support. The tale of "Garnege Nevoran" is therein repeated as we often heard it when a boy at Ballintober Castle.

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royal line of Roderick, the last monarch of Ireland, and he was certainly descended from Cathal Crovederg, his son. Sandy determined to profit by the circumstance of the will; and taking advantage of the lawless and disturbed condition of the country at the time, and his remote position from the seat of government and power, collected in a few days an army—if such a term can be applied to an undisciplined armed mob—and took possession of Ballintober Castle, which he commenced to fortify, and even procured one or two cannon, which he placed at the entrance. They drove the neighbouring cattle within the inclosure, set up a still-house, gave the "hoight of good living" to all the pipers and fiddlers that came to them, and ate, drank, danced, and caroused, for some weeks, until the attention of the government was directed to the circumstance by the matter being discussed in the Irish House of Commons, when troops and a park of artillery were sent down to dislodge the insurgent chief. Upon the news of their approach, O'Conor and his followers immediately fled; but the army having arrived within cannon shot of the castle, and seeing it deserted, fired some shots at it from the neighbouring eminence of Ballyfinnegan hill. It was these shots which made the apertures to which we have alluded.*

The spring of 1823 had passed by, and with the early summer appeared a partial outbreak of the Irish fever, which annually bursts into a flame about May or June. Paddy Welsh was one of its first victims. He went out, as usual, to wet his rod in one of the neighbouring brooks, then swollen with a recent night's rain; but he soon had to return, with a shivering and a pain in his back, which he well knew foreboded "the sickness." For a few days he endeavoured to shake it off; but without effect. Cures of various kinds were had recourse to, to avert the impending fever. One of his neighbours, a mighty knowledgable woman, scraped some clay

* The writer of this article remembers, when a child, hearing Alexander O'Conor give an account of his seizure of Ballintober, and has often conversed with persons who witnessed the progress of the rebel army from Creglaghan to the old castle. See the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February 1786, and the Journals of the Irish House of Commons of that date. See also an account of the transaction in the *Dublin University Magazine* for July 1840, p. 9.

from the floor just within the threshold, because it was hallowed by the frequently repeated "*Go mannee Dia in Sho*," "God save all here," pronounced over it, as the foot of the stranger trod it on entering the house; and heating it in a skillet, she put it into the leg of a coarse worsted stocking, and applied it to the small of his back. It was of no avail: he had to take to his bed, from which he never arose. The fifteenth day saw him a corpse—his wife a widow—his children orphans. He was waked and buried with all due honour and solemnity; and, more than that, he was lamented by ourselves and others many a long day. Peace to his ashes! He was one of the quaintest companions, and the most astute fisherman that frequented the banks of the Suck for many a long year; and should any of our angling friends ever visit the locality we have described, and inquire after *Paudeen Brannagh*, they will hear a recital of fishing wonders and exploits such as modern scepticism might be unwilling to receive. During our own boyhood, when watching his practised hand throwing a red-tackle, or a black-and-orange, over the very nose of a trout, under an impending bank on the opposite brink of the river, with his light whip-rod springing from the very wheel, and at least five-and-thirty yards of line out—or listening with gaping avidity to the doctrines he enunciated, as he stood upon his longer leg, supporting himself with the handle of the landing-net, complacently viewing our efforts to imitate his casting—or when leaning over the back of the chair whereon he sat, with his feathers and silks, and various-coloured dubbings, and bits of skins, and the numerous *materiel* for manufacturing his flies, on the little table before him, in the door-way of his snug cabin, and heard him descant upon their several virtues, and how each was obtained, we regarded him with reverence approaching to awe. As he took up each bit of dressing he descanted on its virtues, and told how he scaled a high demesne-wall, at the risk of his neck, to get the topping of that golden pheasant, and took a hackling excursion all the ways to Carlow, to get that jay's wing—robbed a church-steeple of its community of starlings for their feathers—how he stole that bit of macau out of the tail of a showman's bird while he kept

him engaged in conversation—how he learned the secret of dying pig's-down from a travelling tinker, and of tempering hooks, by shaking them in a leather bag over the fire, like the Limerick O'Shaughnessy—all this we say, together with the inexhaustible fund of legend, song, and superstition, which he possessed, made us, from a very early period, look up to him with admiration; and we greatly fear that the remembrance of these days would induce us to linger in the company of our old friend and preceptor longer than our readers—if not brothers of the gentle craft—might be willing to listen to us.

The summer had glided imperceptibly into autumn, and the great bulk of the crop having been gathered in, and the long nights and short days of early winter approaching with unusual rapidity, the time was propitious for those who stir up rebellion among the people to ply their special craft; and ribbonism, such as that we have alluded to in the commencement of this chapter, soon sank deep and spread wide throughout the peasant and small-farmer class of the hitherto peaceful barony of Ballintober. Those who took no part in the night-walkings, or secret meetings, were compelled to contribute a sort of black mail for the furtherance of "the cause;" and wherever a gun, or any description of fire-arms, or any sort of weapon, was known to exist, thither a nocturnal visit was made, and the inmates of the houses were compelled to deliver it up, and got soundly thrashed if they did not do so with alacrity.

Hitherto the ribbonmen and their captains had, partly in remembrance of the many kindly offices rendered to them by our former acquaintance, the fisherman—the lively planxties he had played at their weddings, or the droll humour he had shown at their mothers' wakes, with what effect he repeated the rosary as their fathers' corpses were carried three times round the grave-yard of Baslick, and what a world of money he had gathered at the gentlemen's houses when he acted Beelzebub in the Christmas mummers, and how many a hook he

had mounted for them when they went, of a Sunday morning, a-fishing for perch in the deep still pools of the Lara; or, perhaps, respecting the grief of the wife and orphans—they had left the Widow Welsh's house undisturbed, although it was well known that the old French fusee, with the velvet-and-silver-mounted cheek-piece, "to make it kick asey," was still in the cabin, and that Michael was now of age to take part in the councils as well as the standing army of the country. But as the disturbance and the disaffection spread wider in the neighbouring districts of Mayo and Galway, men appeared at the lodges and marshalled the people, who were strangers to the feelings we have alluded to, and paid no respect to either "widdies or orphants."

After his father's death, young Welsh's natural thoughtfulness and reserve seemed rather to increase. He appeared more wrapt within himself, was more than ever given to reading, and to wandering alone by the old forts, through the ruined castles, and by the ancient grave-yards in the neighbourhood. Still, this in no wise interfered with his daily work. He had clamped the turf, and pitted the potatoes, and stacked the lock of corn, and was mending the thatch with as much, if not greater, energy than before. Neither were his family affections in any degree weakened by his peculiar state of mind. He was as dutiful to his mother and as affectionate to his sister Biddy as ever, but still it was evident that he was not as hearty as in days gone by. Men of such like temperament feel any sudden mental shock, or any great violence done to the affections, more than persons of greater vivacity of disposition; for, although they do not exhibit the same active show of grief, it invariably sinks deeper in their souls, and remains longer graven into their memory, while they want that power of resilience within themselves to shake off their despondency; and, being from habit unaccustomed to society, they are consequently unable to take advantage of that influence which it, along with the soothing effects of time, generally exerts in assuaging sorrow.

The death of his parent had evidently preyed on the young man; his favourite haunts, during the long summer evenings

just past, had been among the ruins of the old bawne, where he so often went in earlier times, with his father, to catch moths and look out for wall-flies; or he lingered by the river's banks (although he never fished) to watch the large evening trout, as, with deep sullen plunge, it roved through the still deep pools in quest of prey, and to listen to the well-known sound of the heavy fish, as, without splash and scarcely with any noise, it sucked down the gnats and night-flies from the surface, in the dark shadows of the overhanging bushes, while the wide-spreading circles from the broken water spread out, and intersected each other in all directions, as if oil had been dropped upon the limpid bosom of the stream. Here he would sit or walk during the still calm hours before moonlight, after the light laughing gulls (*gula ridens*) had skimmed gently and gracefully over the meadows—when the bat wheeled and circled over his head, and the corn-craik had commenced its nightly serenade—long after the cuckoo had got hoarse with mocking, and the only discordant sound was the night owl's shriek, as it flapped its light feathery wings in noiseless flight along the hedgerows. The not unfragrant smell of the *baton*, or burning land in the distance, mingled with the perfume of the meadow-sweet; and, now and then, the sharp, interrupted bark of the colley in the far off village, came echoless upon the ear over the broad flat pastures of the surrounding country. What his musings were we know not—companions he had but few—friends, such friends as one opens their heart to in these balmy hours of witching eve, he had none. With the exception of his mother and sister, he was alone—yes, alone in the world; but he knew it not, he felt it not; it was the result of the peculiar temper of the mind within him—the circumstances in which he was placed—all the external surroundings of the man.

If he passed the cross roads during the dance of a Sunday evening, he rested without any shyness for a while among the crowd, and kindly, if not cordially, returned the greetings of his neighbours; and if some sprightly lass stepped up to him, and, curtseying before him, said, "Michel, agra, I am dancin' to you," the pale, dark-haired youth did not refuse the offered hand; he danced, and did it well, and gave the piper a penny,

and his partner, if she were willing, a *goithera*,* and share of a naggin. But the moment he got an opportunity he slipped away, and the people said, "Poor boy, he takes on wonderfully since his father's death; but sure he was always in the lonesomes, and fonder of discoorsing himself than any body else."

November had come; the mornings sharp and foggy, the days bright and sunny, and the evenings cold and raw, but the middle and later hours of night so bright, that "you'd pick pins in the stubbles," when the ground became crisp with the light hoar frost. The month wore on. It was Saturday, and Mick, having finished putting the last *scollop* in the patches of thatch with which he was mending the roof, and the last *bobbin* in the *rigging*, got down off the ladder, and, about three o'clock in the afternoon, sauntered over to the bawne of Ballintober, and climbed (a favourite amusement of his) to the top of one of the highest towers of that beautiful ruin. From thence he enjoyed a most extensive prospect, over a gently undulating, but generally flat country, chiefly grass lands, with tracts of bog intervening, particularly towards the river. The landscape was interspersed with snug villages, with their long, low, drab-coloured, mud-built cabins, surrounded, however, with well-stocked haggards; and, here and there, extensive plantations of young firs and larch, distinguished by their dark green and bright yellow hues, stretching along the hill-sides from the groves of fine old timber in the adjoining valleys, marked the progress of improvement, and pointed out the residences of the wealthy country gentleman—the old English settlers, high in birth—some of the ancient Milesian stock—and the monster graziers of Roscommon; all happy compared with present times—the landlord rich, the peasant comfortable. What would we see now if we looked over the same scene? Not one

* *Goithera*, a local name for a sort of soft, flat cake, made without barm, not unlike the Ulster *bap*. It is hawked about by the gingerbread seller, and itinerant confectioner, who, with a knife dipped in a mug of treacle, gives the cake an upper varnish of the sweet fluid as soon as it is purchased.

of those mansions tenanted; whole acres of that patriarchal timber felled, to supply those necessaries to the owners which they in former times dealt with liberality to their dependants, their tenants, and to the neighbouring poor; many of those houses roofless, some of them converted into poor-houses; the villages recognized only by the foundations of the cabins, and the few alder and whitethorn bushes that linger by their sites, and seem like spirits presiding over the reigning desolation; the population dead, starved, uprooted, or swept off by the pestilence; its remnant lingering away its sickly existence in the workhouse, or planted by the waters of the Ohio and the Mississippi. But, contemplating the present aspect of the place, we are ourselves falling into the reverie in which we left the fisherman's son.

Droves of long-horned, reddish-coloured bullocks, the largest and fattest in Ireland, cropt in huge mouthfuls the deep, rank aftergrass, as if conscious that the day was passing, and that the hour of evening meal, before they were driven into the inclosure of some old castle or bare paddock for the night, was drawing near. Large flocks of fat wethers quickly nibbled the short herbage that intervened between the recently-formed sandpits and irregular patches of dark green furze, or whins, that studded over the vast tracts of upland. Now and then the sharp report of the fowling-piece from the margin of the bog started the snipe, which, as it rose, to change its resting-place or feeding-ground, emitted a quick, shrill cry, as of distress. Long forked trains of wild geese, high over-head, telling by their distant whistling note their great elevation, presaged a severe winter; the large grey gulls quietly sailed across in noiseless course from the Suck, to rest for the night in some of the blue *flashes* or *closhes* of water with which the country was interspersed, or to take their evening meal at the great Turlough of Carrowkeel. The golden plover uttered its shrill whistle as it coursed in low and rapid flight along the loose stone fences, and the lapwing turned up its silver under-wing to the parting daylight, as it rose in confused gambols into the still calm ether; and enormous clouds of fieldfares and starlings, almost darkening the air, appeared in the horizon, and careered, and

wheeled, and rose and fell, separated and gathered together again, as if directed by the trumpet note of some presiding general, who regulated their movements before they encamped for the night; while here and there might be seen a solitary heron, wending its noiseless way with broad expanded pinions and outstretched legs, to roost for the night in some of the tall fir trees in the neighbouring demesnes.

The pale, but well-defined moon, looking almost translucid in the remaining daylight, was high in the washy sky; the sun was settling towards the west, bright but watery; long slanting rays of golden light shot down through broken apertures in the sluggish, muddy clouds, like angels' faces peeping through the leaden curtain that veiled the heavens, and lighting up with peculiar brightness the patches of red bog, or russet potato field, on which they fell. The pale, reddish-yellow streaking of the west, was blurred and dappled with the vapours that exhaled from the over-saturated *curraghs** and swamps that stretched away towards the confines of Mayo and Galway. The lengthened shadows of the old towers, and even of the long curtain walls of the castle, had crossed the still and stagnant moat, and the branching ivy, as it rustled and waved to and fro with the evening wind, threw fantastic shadows on the greensward of the common which surrounded the ruin.

It was getting cold and gloomy. Michael slowly descended by the old winding staircase, looking out from the windows of each story as he passed down; and when he stood in the great court, or inclosure of the castle, the gloom there appeared the greater, from his having so lately enjoyed an extensive prospect from his elevated position. The cold grey light paled in through the long irregular apertures in the massive walls, and the stillness was most startling. As he walked slowly and meditatively across the court, towards the entrance leading to his home, he suddenly stopped opposite one of the embrasures, put his hand to his face, quickly passed it over his eyes, and the cold drops burst forth, and stood in dew upon his face; his heart ceased for a few moments to act, and then beat with

* *Curragh*, unreclaimed land—a sedgy, tufted, and quagmirish marsh.

quick, rapid, and irregular, but audible motion. He quailed in every member, a slight shivering passed over his frame; his lips remained apart as his jaw fell, and a choking feeling of want of air seized him by the throat—it was with difficulty he could maintain his standing. Still, there he gazed—his eyes set, but riveted on the fringed opening in the wall. He took off his hat, raised his right hand, and devoutly crossed himself on the forehead, shoulders, and breast. His lips moved, but he uttered no audible sound as he inwardly repeated the usual invocation to the Trinity; he approached the situation of the object of his terror, and walked again slowly backwards, still keeping his eyes fixed on the spot. At last the noise of some sheep clattering over a loose part of the wall, diverted his attention; and when he looked again, his breath came more freely. The sight of the shepherd and his dog, now following the sheep, seemed to nerve him sufficiently to leave the spot, and he hurried homeward, downcast and unstrung.

Evidently something appeared to him, either in reality or in imagination, which had given no ordinary shock to his nervous system. His face was ghastly pale, and its expression was that of one who had suffered intense pain; and the suffering, though but for a few minutes, had left its traces still deeply lined into his countenance. The lips—those uncontrollable dial-plates of the mind—yet quivered, though they were compressed until the blood had almost left them. The lip's emotion is unmanageable—no actor can imitate it. The angles of the mouth were drawn slightly downward; the forehead deeply seamed; the eyes were wild, and did not appear to move in unison; the voice, as he returned the salutation of a neighbour in crossing the moat, was hollow and slightly tremulous; and his limbs moved quickly, but rather irregularly. Every now and then he gulped, as if swallowing large draughts of air; and as he proceeded homewards, sometimes slowly, and then almost at a run, he occasionally turned sharply round, as if to see whether there was not some one following him. At each angle of the road, at every tree, he stopped to examine; and he carefully tried to avoid the few persons that happened to be in his path, until he got to the *boreen* leading to his house. Here, at

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the end of the lane, he rested, and leaning his back against the ditch, endeavoured to compose himself, and arrange his features for the meeting with his family, for he was himself conscious that some great change must have passed over him; and as he walked up the lane a deep sigh escaped him, and he exclaimed aloud—"Oh, Queen of Heaven! what will become of my poor mother and Biddy?"

It was almost dark as young Welsh "drew over" a stool, and sat moodily looking into the fire at his mother's hearth. She plied her wheel without remark, and his sister was busily engaged in straining the potatoes on the *skeib* for their evening meal. Neither of them remarked anything unusual in his manners or appearance, and his custom of passing in and out without exchanging a word had nothing novel in it. "The little girl" placed the table opposite the fire, and put a rushlight in the long wooden sconce beside it, and then laid down the *murpheys* and the drop of milk in the noggin,—for it is not unusual for all the members of a small Irish peasant family to drink out of the same vessel, although each apportions a certain part of the brim to their special use. The mother pushed her wheel to one side, drew near the table, and looking at the haggard face of her son, uttered a suppressed scream, and exclaimed:—

"Saints in Heaven! Michauleen, jewel, what's come over you at all at all? Does anything ail you, *ma lannou bocht?* You look as if you'd seen what was n't right."

"Troth, then, mother dear, you are not far from it; I'll never be the same man again—it's all over with me."

Peggy threw her arms round her brother, and, while the big sobs burst from her, she entreated him to tell them what had happened to him, or whether anybody had vexed him.

"Oh, no, the sorra vex. I 'm neither sick, sore, nor sorry, for the matter of that; but I know I 'm done for, anyhow,—and 'tis n't for my own sake I care, but to be after lavin' you and my mother all alone, and without any one to look after ye. Mother," said he, gazing steadily upon the pale anxious face that was bent upon him, "I've seen the *thivish*. I stud

face to face with my fetch this blessed evening, straight forninst me in the bawne of Ballintober. There it was in the gap in the ould wall, as like me as if I stud before a lookin'-glass. Whatever I did, it did the same; and I thought it might be one of the boys making game of me, till I blessed myself—but it never riz a hand, and then I knew it was the *thivish*. It was well I did n't *fall out of my standing*. Mother, I 'm a gone man, and I thought as much this many a day." And the swimming eyes refused longer to hold the scalding fluid which now ran down his care-worn cheeks.

The family were silent for some minutes, awe-struck by the sad warning, in which they all more or less believed. At last the mother said:—

"Michauleen, *sthore ma chree* that you were, never mind it; don't give in to the likes. I often heard tell of people that saw fetches, and never a hurt came on them."

"Thrue for you, mother, but that was in the morning; or maybe it was some one else's fetch they saw."

Still, though she endeavoured to calm his fears, it was evident, from the anxious countenance with which she frequently regarded him, that the loving mother's mind was not at rest upon the subject; but she struggled to suppress, if she could not quite conceal her agitation, and strove to direct his attention to other matters. At length she persuaded him to take a drop of sperrits in a warm drink, and to go to bed, as she was sure some sickness was over him.

The night fell dark and windy; the stars were but transitorily revealed as the dark masses of clouds passed under them; and by ten or eleven o'clock the whole country seemed locked in deep repose—the dogs being carefully housed, and the lights extinguished in every homestead. To suppose, however, from this that tranquillity prevailed, would be a great mistake.

So long as the peace of the country rested with the magistrates, barony constables, and local civil corps, there was no

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general rising of the ribbonmen; but the new police, or Peelers, had just entered Connaught, and a party of six and a sergeant having been then located in the village of Ballintober, it was considered an aggression on the liberty of the subject, with which the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act could bear no comparison. It was accordingly arranged, in ribbon conclave, that the police-barrack should be attacked upon this very night, and its inmates put to the pike or the fire. For this purpose, reinforcements from the ribbonmen of distant parts of the neighbouring counties were to meet those of the vicinity in a field called the Stone Park, not far from the old castle. One of these parties—that from the county Galway—passing over the ford of the Suck, just opposite Welsh's cabin, and not being influenced by any feelings of sympathy towards the widow and her melancholy son, knocked at the door, and awaking up the inmates, not only took possession of the old fusee, but peremptorily demanded the attendance of Michael upon their midnight excursion.

As we advance towards the climax and catastrophe of this tale, the simple truth presses stronger upon us than any imaginative description we could give, although "founded upon fact." We have, therefore, no desire to linger at this part of our narrative for the purpose of describing the mother's entreaties and the sister's agony, as this poor young man was hurried from his quiet home by lawless ruffians, with whose faces none of the inmates of that sequestered spot were acquainted. It is unnecessary to recite the deep blasphemous execrations, the harsh menace, the rough usage, or coarse ribald jokes with which the females were assailed, as Michael Welsh was forcibly decorated with the insignia of a ribbonman on his own floor.

Upon the spot specified were collected several hundred ribbonmen, armed with every description of missile or weapon that was possible to procure—old rusty fire-arms, several of which would not go off, and if they did, it would be with greater danger to the person who held them than to those against whom they were pointed—bayonets on the tops of poles, scythe-blades fastened into stout sticks, pitchforks, a few old swords and halberts, and a trifle of pikes remaining over

since '98. Even those who could not procure such weapons had armed themselves with stout alpeens, and all bore more or less about them the badges of that lawless society. Some oaths were administered to the hitherto uninitiated; but the direct purpose of their assembling was known only to the leaders. The wavering, the young, and the timid—and among these Michael Welsh—were placed in the centre; and the party moved on silently towards the neighbouring village.

The police, as is generally the case on all such occasions, had timely intimation of their intended visit. The barrack was a thatched cabin, and, consequently, not tenable for a moment after it was set on fire. The police-serjeant, an old Waterloo man, named Greenfield, who was afterwards an officer in the London police, was not long in coming to a decision as to the course he should pursue for the safety of himself and his men. To remain where he was, was death—to retreat into some of the neighbouring towns he thought dishonourable: so he at once evacuated his barrack, and, during the darkness of the night, retreated into the neighbouring ruin—the old bawne of Ballintober. Here he distributed his six men in two of the apertures which we have described in the south-western wall of the old castle. The night was particularly dark, and the great depth of the wall, as well as the surrounding ivy, would have completely concealed them, even had the night been one of bright moonlight. The road leading toward the barrack lay along this wall, but separated from it by the castle moat, a deep trench with water at least four feet deep. When they had remained here about two hours, their attention was attracted to the irregular tread of the approaching multitude. On they came in silence; their white shirts and ribboned hats visible even through the darkness. When about a third of the party had passed, the police fired into the throng from their place of concealment. It was unnecessary to repeat the volley: a panic seized the multitude, who, throwing aside their arms, rushed in tumultuous terror wherever a means of escape opened. In a very few minutes the road was as quiet and as unoccupied as it had been half-an-hour before. Several groans were heard from the wounded or the dying, who were carried off by their

friends. The police remained still within their entrenched fort; and two of the party were sent off across the fields into the neighbouring town of Castlerea, for the large police force stationed there at that time.

The grey of the morning gave sufficient light to distinguish the surrounding objects, as the magistrates and a large body of police arrived on the spot. Upon the road lay on its back the dead body of a young man, cold and stiff; the upturned face calm as that of those whose death has been sudden and immediate; the white shirt, which was worn outside the clothes, dabbled with blood, and soiled with the heavy foot-marks of the mob who must have passed over the body in their flight. Upon examination it was found that two balls had entered the chest. The body was that of Michael Welsh. Around it lay, scattered on all sides, the weapons which had been thrown down. More than a dozen decorated hats, and several shoes, also lay about; and traces of blood were discernible in several places besides that occupied by the corpse. A low wall, which formed the road boundary on the side opposite to the moat, was levelled for about twenty yards, such was the impetuosity with which the multitude had rushed headlong on every side, in escaping from the deadly fire.*

During the day the body of the unfortunate man was placed in a cart, along with the ribbon insignia found upon the road, and carried to the county town, where a meeting of magistrates was immediately held, under the direction of the malitia major to whom we have already alluded, and who then commanded the district.

There was but a small gathering at the chapel of Ballintober upon that Sunday; the great majority of the peasantry had either fled or were in concealment. A panic and a gloom seemed to have entered into the hearts of all; and good old Father Crump's exhortation from the altar, after mass, upon the virtues of peace and quietness—for he was too mild and too

* More persons than Michael Welsh were shot that night; two died of their wounds subsequently. A medical man, a near relative of the writer's, attended some of the wounded; they were not natives of the vicinity, but had come from a great distance in the County Galway.

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good to denounce any one—was addressed to women and the few old people from the immediate vicinity.

* * * * * * *

The old gaol of Roscommon stood, and, although now converted to other purposes, still stands, in the market-place, in the centre of the town. It is an exceedingly high, dark, gloomy-looking building, with a castellated top, like one of the ancient fortresses that tower above the houses in many of the continental cities. It can be discerned at a great distance; and, taken in connexion with the extensive ruins of O'Conor's Castle, in the suburbs, and the beautiful abbey upon the other side of the town, seems to partake of the character of the middle-age architecture. The fatal drop was, perhaps, the highest in Ireland. It consisted of a small doorway in the front of the third story, with a simple iron beam and pulley above, and the *lapboard* merely a horizontal door hinged to the wall beneath, and raised or let fall by means of a sliding-bolt, which shot from the wall when there was occasion to put the apparatus of death in requisition.

Fearful as this elevated gallows appeared, and unique in its character, it was not more so than the finisher of the law who then generally officiated upon it. No decrepid wretch, no crime-hardened ruffian, no secret and mysterious personage, who was produced occasionally disguised and masked, plied his dreadful trade here. Who, think you, *gentle* reader—who now, perhaps, recoils from these unpleasant but truthful minutiæ—officiated upon this gallows high?—a female!—a middle-aged, stout-made, dark-eyed, swarthy-complexioned, but by no means forbidding-looking woman—the celebrated Lady Betty—the finisheress of the law—the unflinching priestess of the executive for the Connaught circuit, and Roscommon in particular, for many years. Few children, born or reared in that county thirty, or even five-and-twenty, years ago, who were not occasionally frightened into "being good," and going to sleep, and not crying when left alone in the dark, by *huggath a' Pooka*, or, "here's Lady Betty."

The only fragment of her history which we have been able to collect is, that she was a person of violent temper, though in

manners rather above the common, and possessing some education. It was said that she was a native of the County Kerry, and that by her harsh usage she drove her only son from her at an early age. He enlisted; but, in course of years, returned with some money in his pocket, the result of his campaigning. He knocked at his father's door, and asked a night's lodging, determined to see for himself whether the brutal mother he had left had in any way repented, or was softened in her disposition before he would reveal himself. He was admitted, but not recognized. The mother, discovering that he possessed some money, murdered him during the night. The crime was discovered, and the wretched woman sentenced to be hanged, along with the usual dockful of sheep-stealers, whiteboys, shop-lifters, and cattle-houghers, who, to the amount of seven or eight at a time, were invariably "turned off" within four-and-twenty hours after their sentences at each assizes. No executioner being at hand, time pressing, and the sheriff and his deputy being men of refinement, education, humanity, and sensibility, who could not be expected to fulfil the office which they had undertaken,—and for which one of them, at least, was paid,—this wretched woman, being the only person in the gaol who could be found to perform the office, consented; and under the name of Lady Betty, officiated, unmasked and undisguised, as *hangwoman* for a great number of years after; and she used also to flog publicly in the streets, as a part of her trade.* Numerous are the tales related of her exploits, which we have now no desire to dwell upon. We may, however, mention one extraordinary trait of her character. She was in the habit of drawing, with a burnt stick, upon the walls of her apartment, portraits of all the persons she executed.

Before daybreak, upon the Monday morning after Michael Welsh was shot, several labourers, surrounded by a guard of police, might be seen erecting two tall scaffolding poles in the market-square, opposite the gaol. When this was completed, the cart containing the body of the fisherman's son, with the redoubted Lady Betty sitting in it, emerged from the back

* This history of Lady Betty we have received from persons who were perfectly acquainted with her during her long residence in Roscommon.

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entrance of the gaol; and, having reached the gibbet, the body, with the assistance of some of the gaol officials, was hoisted by her ladyship to the top of the poles, which stood about six or eight feet apart; and from these the body was suspended by the hands, in that attitude which nations are accustomed to adore!! Upon the head was tied one of the decorated hats, on which was pasted a placard with the word "RIBBONMAN" written upon it. The breast was bare—the wounds exposed. When the day broke, the inhabitants of Roscommon had this horrid spectacle before their eyes, placed there by order of the governor of the district.

The rain soon came down in torrents, and continued to pour all day. Every spout and eave-course gave forth its rill; the dirty streets ran seas of mud which flashed in long undulations over the flag-way or pavement when set in motion by the passing vehicle; several of the shops remained closed, and few of the respectable classes were to be seen in the streets; old ladies took to their beds, and young ones made preparations for a hasty departure to the metropolis; reports of the most exaggerated description were circulated upon all sides, and large bodies of military arriving from Athlone and Galway, strengthened the apprehensions of the timid, and confirmed the reports of the alarmists. The magistrates met in conclave all day, and it was expected that something wonderful was to take place next morning.

Around the gibbet stood a guard of military and police, and upon one of the kerb-stones of the adjoining street sat two females, who occasionally uttered the wildest strains of grief that the Irish cry, particularly when uttered by those in the position of the mother and sister of the gibbeted corpse, is capable of expressing.

During the night the rain cleared off; towards morning a smart frost set in, and after it, the sun rose large, red, and blushing through the misty air; but soon the fog cleared off, and the same brightness which shines equally on the just and the unjust lit up the old castles, and gaols, and abbeys, and houses, and threw its slanting rays through the open doorways of the long, low cabins, and evoked a reeking steam from all the

dunghills in the dirty lanes of Roscommon. Hundreds of the peasantry might be seen approaching the town from all directions. Magistrates and country gentlemen, armed to the teeth, with the light frost hanging in whitish spray upon their hair and whiskers, and clouds of vapour steaming from every mouth and nostril, arrived in gigs and tax-carts. Some great spectacle, of which a rumour had gone abroad, was evidently expected. Towards noon the town was thronged with people; every window was occupied; many climbed to the house-tops; wherever footing or elevation was to be obtained, thither crowded some of the anxious throng. There was no ribald jesting—even neighbours scarcely exchanged a greeting; sullen anger, fierce determination, savage revenge, brooded over the mass, and was fearfully depicted in every face. If we said that from twenty to thirty thousand people filled the streets of Roscommon that day we should not exaggerate. That beautiful regiment of dragoons, "The Green Horse," with their bright helmets and flourishing horsetails, paraded the streets, and parties of foot soldiers and police took up positions in different parts of the town, the sun glancing brightly from their polished firelocks.

About noon, the gibbeted body was taken down, placed in a sitting position in a cart, the arms extended, and tied to pitchforks, the back supported by a plank; around the body were arranged, as in an arm-trophy, the various guns, and pikes, and scythes, and other weapons, which had been taken from the ribbonmen for some time past; and on several of those were placed the hats picked up on the battle-field of Ballintober. This sad spectacle led the procession; after it, advanced slowly three horses and cars, and to the tail-board of each cart was bound a man, naked to the waist, who had been sentenced to be flogged three times through the towns of Roscommon, Strokestown, and Castlerea, but the execution of whose sentence had, until then, been deferred, in the hope that the country would have remained quiet. Lady Betty, for some reason, did not officiate upon this occasion. One of the men was flogged by a Sicilian boy—the others, by drummers belonging to regiments then in the province.

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The military lined the streets; the procession moved through the long straggling town. The rere was brought up by a cavalcade of magistrates, chiefly on horseback; in the centre of this part of the procession rolled slowly on, to "flogging pace," an open chariot, in which sat the Major, who ordered and directed the proceedings—we have no desire to describe him—and by his side lolled a large, unwieldy person, with bloated face and slavering lip—the ruler of Connaught, the sheriff at George Robert Fitzgerald's execution—the great gauger-maker of the west—*The* Right Honourable.

Let us drop the curtain. If this was not Connaught, it was Hell.

We have only to remark that the scene, with all its horrors, would have been repeated in two of the other towns of the county, but for petitions to government from some of their inhabitants.

Well—it was a frightful spectacle, horrifying and demoralizing, but perhaps applicable to the time and circumstances; at all events, it completely put an end to ribbonism in that district for many a year.

CHAPTER IV.

"We let mischievous witches with their charms,
We let hobgoblins, fairies, whose sense we see not,
Fray us into things that be not."

SPENCER.

FAIRY ARCHÆOLOGY AND MEDICO-RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

The Blast—Story of John Fitzjames—Cleena and the Fairy-Woman—The Dedication—The Meal Cure—The Fallen Angels—Mac Coise's Swan—Mary Kelly's Abduction—The Grave Watchers, a Legend of Fin Varrah, and Knockmah—The Fairy Nurse: a Tale of Innis-Shark.

THE fairies, or "good people"—the *dhoine shee* of the northerns—are looked upon by us from beyond the Shannon, as the great agents and prime movers in all accidents, diseases, and death, in "man or baste;" causing the healthfulness and fertility of seasons, persons, cattle, and localities; blighting

crops, abstracting infants or young people, spiriting away women after their accouchements, raising whirlwinds and storms, and often beating people most unmercifully. In fact, in former times, and even yet, in the islands of the extreme west, except from sheer old age, or some very ostensible cause, no one is ever believed to "die all out." True it is, that all the outward and visible signs of death are there—speech, motion, respiration, and sensation have ceased; the fountains of life are stopped, and heat has fled; the man is "cowld as a corpse; but what of that?—isn't it well known he got a *blast?* Sure 'tis no later than the day before yesterday week he was up and hearty, the likeliest boy in the parish, and there he is to-day as stiff as a peeler's ramrod. Didn't I see him with my two livin' eyes at Cormac Maguire's funeral, and he riding home fair and asey, the quitest baste that ever was crassed, without as much as a *deligeen bristoh** on him—and he, I may say, all as one as *black fasting;* † as he only tuck share of three half-pints at Tubberna-Skollig—when the mare boulted at a wisp of straws that was *furlin* (whirling) at the cross-roads, and off she set, gallopin', gallopin', ever ever, till he fell on his head in the *shuch*‡ forninst his own door, and when they lifted him up he was speechless, and never tasted a bit of the world's bread from that day to this. The priest said an office for him, and the doctor said he was fractured; but sure everybody knows the good people had a hand in it."

Decomposition may indeed afford the physiologist proof positive that the vital spark has fled, but that avails little with a people who firmly believe that he is "with the fairies on the hill of Raweroghan (Rath Croghan),§ or the Fort of Mullagha-

* *Deligeen bristoh:* A spur; literally "the thorn that incites."

† *Black fasting*, in the religious sense of the word, means total abstinence from meat and drink; but it is an expression not unfrequently applied in Connaught, to abstaining from whiskey. It is, however, generally used in a bantering sense.

‡ *Shuch*, the sink or stagnant pool of dirty water that is to be found opposite the entrance of the Irish cabin.

§ For a topographical and antiquarian description of the ancient palace of Rathcrogan, the Tara of the west, in the parish of Kilcorkey, near Ballynagar, county Roscommon, see Dr. O'Donovan's edition of the "Annals of the Four Masters," A.D. 1223, pp, 204, 205.

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dooey,* where there's plenty of the neighbours gone afore him." So rooted is this belief, that we have known food of different kinds, bread, meat, and whiskey to be brought by the relatives of deceased persons, and laid for weeks after in these places for their comforts. Fairy-women are often employed to "set a charm," and bargain for their release with the king and queen of the *gentry*. Years may elapse, yet will the friends and relatives still cling with desperate tenacity to the delusive hope that the fairy-stricken will return; and they listen with avidity to the various legends which tell how such and such of their neighbours or friends in former times were seen in the court of Fin Varra, or down in the Well of Oran, and sent home messages to their friends to be no ways uneasy about them, for that they would return one day or another. But when the death is very sudden, and no apparent cause can be assigned for it, nothing will persuade the lower orders—and, during the last century, not only the peasantry, but the middle and upper classes—that the person has not been spirited away by supernatural agency. The following historic Munster tale will illustrate this opinion better than any other which we can at present remember:—

"In the year 1736, John, the son and heir of James Fitzgerald, was affianced to a young lady near Fermoy. Munster did not produce in that day a man more noble in person, or with more accomplished manners, or who more excelled in arms and rural sports, than John Fitzjames. His betrothal and expected wedding were the pleasing theme of conversation through the country roads for weeks before the latter occurred, and heavy and substantial were the presents and the contributions to the festivities, sent in by the numerous and powerful friends of the affianced parties, who themselves were to be guests on the happy occasion. The wedding-day arrived, the knot was tied, the feast concluded, and the music and dancing had commenced. The new-married couple were, as is usual, sent down

* Mullaghadooey, *mullach a dumha, i.e.*, the summit, or hill of the tumulus, or sepulchral mound; a very remarkable conical hill, in the parish of Baslick, and barony of Ballintobber, near my native village of Castlerea, county Roscommon.

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first in the country dance, and never, perhaps, in Munster, nor Ireland itself, did chanter and bow give forth a merrier strain, or timed the dance of a nobler pair than John Fitzjames and his blooming bride; and so thought all who had the happiness to witness them. In the height of his pride and joy, and in the heat of the dance, when he had gone down the middle and up again, changed sides and turned his partner with five-and-forty couple, John Fitzjames clasped his beautiful bride in his arms, impressed a burning kiss upon her lips, and as if struck by a thunderbolt, dropped dead at her feet! The consternation and horror which seized all present were indescribable; every means was adopted to restore animation; but John Fitzjames arose no more. For months and years after, the most reputed fairy-men and women throughout Munster were retained by his own and his virgin bride's friends, in the fruitless endeavour to bring him back from fairyland, whither it was universally believed he had been carried."

Our esteemed friend, Mr. Eugene Curry, to whom we are indebted for this and other tales, has kindly afforded us the following additional notice:—

"There are many mournful elegies in the Irish language still extant, which were written on John Fitzjames at the time of his decease, the best of which is that by James Fitzgerald. Among the many persons who repaired to Glinn to make battle with the fairies, were *Caitileen Dubh Keating*, and her daughter, *Caitileen Oge*, from Killclocher, near Loophead, in the county Clare. Caitileen Dubh and her daughter repaired from Glinn to Carrig Cliodhna* (Cleena's Rock), near Fermoy, where Cleena, the fairy queen of south Munster, was said to reside in her invisible palace. Here Caitileen, who *tarred* her clothes and rolled herself in feathers of various colours, met the queen face to face, and reproaching her with the abduction of John Fitzjames, demanded his restoration. Her majesty acknowledged the soft impeachment, but peremptorily refused to restore so noble a prize to any mere creature

* *Carrig-Cleena* is in the parish of Kelshannick, barony of Duhallow, county Cork. There is another Carrig-Cleena near the loud surge of Cleena's wave, in the vicinity of Glandore. See "Annals of the Four Masters," A.D. 1557, p. 1549.

of earth. A long argumentation then ensued between them on the matter, which ended, however, in the defeat of Caitileen and her daughter by the superior power of Cleena, who is one of the Tuatha de Dannan race, and whose history is preserved in the Book of Lismore, one of the ancient Irish manuscripts in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy. The whole of the argument between the queen and Caitileen was by Fitzgerald cast into a very curious and amusing Irish poem, which is still preserved in the county of Limerick, and of which I possess a fragment. The following rough, but literal translation, is a specimen of one of the stanzas :—

" 'O Cleena, Christ himself salute thee!
Long is the journey I have made to thee,
From Cill Cluhar of the ripe berries,
And from Shannon's bank, where sail the swift ships:
Look down, and quickly inform me
What is the state of John Fitzjames?
Or has he parted with Isabel Butler?
Or has he married the maid with the flowing hair?' "

To this Cleena answers

" 'To marry or wed I shall not allow him:
I prefer, even tho' dead, to have him myself,
Than married to any beauteous maid of Erin;
And here now, Caitileen, is thy information.' "

We remember a lady of wealth and high respectability in Connaught, who, having lost several of her children in succession, dedicated her next born son to the Virgin, and dressed him completely in white from top to toe, hat, shoes, and all, for the first seven years of his life. He was not allowed even to mount a dark-coloured horse, but had a milk-white pony for his own use. In this instance, however, the people's prediction, that there was "no use in going agin the *good people*," literally occurred; for when he grew up to manhood, he met a sudden death—having died from the effects of a fall from his horse..

Whenever the slightest accident takes place, as when one falls, or even trips in walking, or sneezes,* it is attributed to the fairy influences by which the person is at that moment

* Sneezes. For some curious authorities respecting the superstitious belief about sneezing, see the "Irish Nennius," p. 145, note z.

supposed to be surrounded, and therefore it is expedient immediately to cross one's-self, and invoke a benediction. It would be considered not only disrespectful, but very unlucky, if the bystander did not say, "God bless you," or "God between you and all harm," or spit on you in such a case. *

It would be a difficult task to reduce to precise terms all the popular ideas on Irish pantheology, and as they can only be gleaned and sifted from the tale, the rite, or legend, they are best expressed by the same means. The general belief, however, is, that the "good people" or the "wee folk," as they are termed in Ulster, are fallen angels, and that their present habitations in the air, in the water, on dry land, or under ground, were determined by the position which they took up when first cast from heaven's battlements. These are almost the very words used by the peasantry when you can get one of them to discourse upon this forbidden subject. They believe that God will admit the fairies into his palace on the day of judgment, and were it not for this that they would strike or enchant men and cattle much more frequently. They sometimes annoy the departed souls of men who are "putting their pains of purgatory *over them*" on the earth.† The idea of their being *fallen angels*, came in with Christianity. In the "Book of Armagh" they are called "*the gods of the earth*"; and in the "Book of Lismore" they are described as the spirits or rather the immortal bodies and souls of the Tuatha de Dananns. The popular impression is, that the great majority of them are old, ugly, and decrepit, but have a power of taking on many forms, and that they generally assume a very diminutive size. It is also believed that they can at will personify or take on the shape of men or animals when they reveal themselves to human beings. The latter is not now, however, so generally believed as in former times, but there are still well-established visitations of both good and bad

* Spitting forms the most general, the most popular, and most revered superstition now remaining in Ireland. It is the great preservation against the Evil Eye, and the cure by the "fasting spittle" is one of the most widely-spread of all our popular antiquities; therefore it shall in due course have a chapter devoted to its consideration.

† See the Life of Cairbre Crom, in Colgan.

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people in the shape of black cats, which constantly appear to the faithful in this description of folk's lore.

It is a fact strange, but nevertheless true, that, according as the people are forgetting how to talk Irish, and have taken to reading Bibles and learning English, and thus losing the poetic fictions of other times, so have the animals which used in former days to be excessively communicative, given over holding any discourse with human beings. We must, therefore, go back to the ancient records for any well-authenticated instance of this description, and no better can be got than the following: In the "Wonders of Ireland," according to the Book of Glendalough, it is related, that "on a certain day the poet Mac Coise was at the Boyne, where he perceived a flock of swans, whereupon he threw a stone at them, and it struck one of the swans on the wing. He quickly ran to catch it, and perceived that it was a woman. He inquired tidings from her, and what it was had happened unto her, and what it was that sent her thus forth? And she answered him, 'In sickness I was,' said she, 'and it appeared to my friends that I died, but really it was demons that spirited me away with them.' And the poet restored her to her people." This is said to have occurred about the middle of the tenth century, the time when the elder Mac Coise, chief poet to O'Rourke, prince of Briefny, flourished.*

The "Book of Glendaloc" does not now exist; but a transcript of its "wonders" is preserved in the "Book of Ballymote," in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.

The belief in the *brownie* still remains among the superstitious Presbyterians of the mountains of Derry and Antrim, who leave bread and milk for him on the hearth at night. It is, however, very difficult to find any genuine pagan Irish superstition without being more or less modified by the wonders of the Old or New Testament. The witch of Endor, and the rod of Moses turned into the serpent, have modified many of our superstitions—the marvellous corrupting the marvellous. The devils going into the swine have also helped to tinge many of our saints' legends.

* See "The Irish version of Nennius," by the Rev. Dr. Todd, in the "Irish Archæological Society's Transactions," page 209.

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The only genuine stories we have are told in the "Discourse between Patrick and Caoilte Mac Ronan," a purely bardic production, which has not been interpolated by the monks. In all the lives of Patrick he is made greater than Christ, and therefore his miracles become ridiculous.

The following instance of popular superstitious prejudice has been afforded the writer by a person who was present at the transaction; and, as it is best expressed in the words of the narrator, it is here inserted as a quotation: "I well remember in the year 1818, that Mary, the wife of Daniel Kelly, a bouncing, full, auburn-haired, snow-white-skinned woman, about twenty-eight years of age, died suddenly on a summer's day, while in the act of cutting cabbages in her garden. Great was the consternation throughout the entire parish of Moyarta, in the south-west of Clare, at this sad event, the more particularly as several persons who were in a westerly direction from her at the time, declared that they had *seen* and felt a violent gust of wind pass by and *through* them in the exact direction of Kelly's house, carrying with it all the dust and straws, &c., which came in its way. This confirmed the husband and friends of the deceased in their impression that she had been carried off to nurse for the fairies. Immediately Mary Quin, alias the Pet (*Maire an Pheata*), and Margaret MacInerheny, alias Black Peg, two famous fairy-women in the neighbourhood, were called in, who, for three days and three nights, kept up a constant but unavailing assault on a neighbouring fort or rath for the recovery of the abducted woman. But at the end of that time it was found that the body, or what in their belief appeared to be the body, of Mary Kelly, could not be kept over ground, wherefore it was placed in the grave, but still with a total unbelief of its identity. Her bereaved husband and her brothers watched her grave day and night for three weeks after, and then they opened it, in the full conviction of finding only a birch broom, a log of wood, or the skeleton of some deformed monster in it. In this, however, they were mistaken, for they found in it what they had put into it, but in a much more advanced state of decomposition."

Whenever the good people venture abroad, or suddenly

change their residence in the open day, their transit is marked by a whirlwind, in the eddies of which dust, straws, and other light substances, are taken up and carried along. When such occur, the Irish peasant, if conversing, ceases to speak, crosses himself, holds his breath, looks down, and mentally repeats a short prayer; and no irreverent expression with regard to the supernatural movement ever drops from him. Many persons have told us that they have often heard and FELT the fairies pass by them with a sound like that of a swarm of bees, or a flock of sparrows on the wing. An instance of this occurred lately during the hurricane at Limerick.

There is no prejudice more firmly rooted than the belief in the abduction of recently-confined females, for the purpose of acting as nurses either to the children of the fairy queen, or to some of those carried away from earth. In certain cases of mental aberration which sometimes occur at this period, the unhappy state of the patient is always attributed to fairy interference. It is believed that the real person is not physically present, but that the patient is one of the fairies who has assumed the features and general appearance of the abducted individual, while the actual person is "giving the breast" to one of Fin Varra's children in the fairy halls of the hill of Knockmaah, in the county Galway. In such cases, if there has been any delay in recovery, the medical attendant is at once discarded, and if a friar had been called in to read prayers over her, and that this did not prove immediately effectual, all legalised practitioners, medical or ecclesiastical, are dismissed, and the fairy doctor is applied to. His mode of proceeding is usually as follows: he fills a cup, or wine-glass with oaten meal, and mutters over it an Irish prayer. He then covers it with a cloth, and applies it to the heart, back, and sides, repeating the incantation on each application. If it is a fairy that is present, one-half of the meal disappears at one side of the vessel, as if it were cut down from above. That which remains is made into three small cakes and baked upon the hearth. The sick person is to eat one of these every morning, "fasting;" when the spell is broken, the fairy departs, and is once more replaced by the real mortal, sound and whole.

The "meal cure" is likewise employed, with some modification, for the heart-ache, and in that case, the expression, "*Foir an Cridhe*,—ease the heart, ease the heart," is made use of by the charmer on each application. The patient generally visits the doctor on a Monday, Thursday, and Monday, and the meal in the cup is lessened each time in proportion to the amount of disease removed, until at last the vessel is completely emptied. The remnant is brought home each day by the patient, who must not lose any of it, nor speak to any person by the way. The invalid then makes it into a cake, and sits by the fire until it is baked, taking care that neither cat, dog, nor any other living thing passes between him and his cake until it is baked and eaten with three sprigs of watercress, in the name of the Trinity. The meal cure is a very good specimen of fairy sleight of hand, and worthy the attention of modern wizards.

As the person is not always conscious of her state while labouring under what is termed by physicians, "puerpural mania," it is rather difficult to get any very accurate or collected account of the fairy nursery in which they pass their time; and when the cures and charms prove ineffectual, and they "die all out," the truth becomes more difficult to attain; nevertheless it is not quite impossible. In proof of this, we would refer our readers to a very poetic and well-told legend in the Rev. Mr. Neilson's "Introduction to the Irish Language,"* where we have an account of one Mary Rourke, who, having died in childbirth, in the county of Galway, was washed, laid out, waked, keened, and buried with all due form and ceremonial. Mary, however, "was in Knockmagha, three quarters of a year, nursing a child, entertained with mirth and sweet songs; but notwithstanding, she was certainly in affliction. At length the host of the castle told her that her husband was now married to another woman, and that she should indulge no longer in sorrow and melancholy; that Fin Varra and all his family were about to pay a visit to the province of Ulster. They set out at cock-crowing, from smooth Knockmaah forth, both Fin Varra and his valiant host. And many a fairy castle, rath

* Dublin, printed for P. Hogan, 1808.

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and mount they shortly visited from dawn of day till fall of night, on beautiful winged coursers:—

'Around Knock Greine and Knock-na-Rae,
Ben Bulbin and Keis-Corainn,
To Ben Echlann and Loch Da éan,
From thence north-east to Slieve Guilin,
They travelled the lofty hills of Mourne,
Round high Slieve Donard and Ballachanèry,
Down to Dundrim, Dundrum and Dunardalay,
Right forward to Knock-na-Feadala.'"

These are all the celebrated haunts of the fairy people in the west and north. Now at the foot of Knock-na-Feadala there lived with his mother, who was a widow woman, a boy named Thady Hughes, an honest, pious, hard-working bachelor. Well, Thady went out on Hallow Eve night, about the very time that the court of Fin Varra were passing through the air, and as he stood in the gap of an old fort looking up at the stars that were shining bright through the clear frosty air, he observed a dark cloud moving towards him from the south-west, with a great whirlwind; and he heard the sound of horses upon the wind, as a mighty troop of cavalry came over the ford, and straight along the valley, to the very rath on which he stood. Thady was in a mighty flustrification, and trembled all over; but he remembered that he had often heard it said by knowledgable people, that if you cast the dust that is under your foot against the whirlwind at the instant that it passes you, "them that's in it" (that is, if they have any human being along with them) are obliged to be released. So, being of a humane disposition, he lifted a handful of the gravel that was under his foot, and threw it lustily, in the name of the Trinity, against the blast, when, lo and behold! down falls a young woman, neither more nor less than Mary Rourke from Galway, all the way; but mighty wake entirely. Thady took courage, having heard her groan like a Christian, so he spoke softly to her, and lifted her up, and brought her home to his mother, who took care of her till she recovered. In process of time the heart of Thady was softened, and he took Mary to wife, and they lived mighty happy and contented for a year and a day, the lovingest couple in the whole county Down, till a

stocking merchant from Connemara, passing that way, recognized her as the wife of Michael Joyce, of Gort, who shortly after came all the ways from Connaught to claim her: and it took six clergy and a bishop to say whose wife she was.*

A few, however, of those who have been carried away have returned, and have left us faithful records of all they saw, and what was said and done in the court of his elfin majesty.

There lived a woman in Innis Shark—one of the group of islands on the eastern coast—named Biddy Mannion, as handsome and likely a fisherman's wife as you would meet in a day's walk. She was tall, and fair in the face, with skin like an egg, and hair that might vie with the gloss of the raven's wing. She was married about a twelvemonth, when the midwife presented her husband, Patsy-Andrew M'Intire, † with as fine a man-child as could be found between Shark and America, and sure they are the next parishes, with only the Atlantic for a mearing between them. The young one throve apace, and all the women and gossips said that Biddy Mannion was the lucky woman, and the finest nurse seen in the island for many a day. Now the king of the fairies had a child about the same age, or a little older; but the queen was not able to nurse it, for she was mighty weakly after her lying-in, as her husband had a falling-out with another fairy potentate that lives down one side of the Giant's Causeway, who, by the force of magic and *pishrogues*, banished the suck from the Connaught princess for spite. The gentry had their eye upon Biddy Mannion for a long time, but as she always wore a *gospel* round her neck, and kept an *errub* and a bit of a burnt sod from St. John's Night sewed up in her clothes, she was proof against all their machinations and seductions. At long run, however, she lost this herb, and one fine summer's night the young *gaurlough*,‡ being mighty cross with the teeth, would n't sleep in the cradle at all, but was evermore

* For further particulars on the subject of Irish medical superstitions, as regards the obstetric art, see the Author's essay on the subject in the "Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science," for May, 1849.

† Patsy, Pad, Paddy, Parra, Paurie, Paddeny, Paurikeen, and Paudeen, are all abreviations, synonymes, or short names derived from Patrick, our patron saint.

‡ A very young infant.

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starting and crying, as if the life was leaving him, so she got up at last, determined to take him to bed to herself, and she went down to the kitchen to light a candle. Well, just as she was blowing a coal, three men caught a hold of her, before she could bless herself, and she was unable to shout or say a word, so they brought her out of the house quite easy, and put her upon a pillion, behind one of themselves, on a fine black horse that was ready waiting outside the door. She was no sooner seated behind one of the men than away they all galloped, without saying a word. It was as calm and beautiful a night as ever came out of the sky, just before the moon rose "between day and dark," with the gloom of parting twilight softening every break upon the surrounding landscape, and not a breath of air was to be felt. They rode on a long time, and she did n't know where they were going to; but she thought to herself they must be on the mainland, for she heard the frogs croaking in the ditches, the *bunnaun lena* was sounding away in the bogs, and the *minnaun airigh* * was wheeling over their heads. At last the horse stopped of itself all of a sudden before the gate of a "big house," † at the butt of a great hill, with trees growing all round it, where she had never been before in her life. There was much light in the house, and presently a grand looking gentleman dressed all in scarlet, with a cocked hat on his head and a sword by his side, and his fingers so covered with rings that they shone "like *lassar lena* in a bog-hole," ‡ lifted her off the pillion as polite as possible, handed her into the house, and bid her a *cead mile failte*, just the same as if he had known her all his lifetime.

* There are no frogs in these small islands. The *Bunnaun lena* is the bittern, and the *Minnaun airigh* (the airy kid) is the clocking snipe, so called from the noise which it makes, like the bleating of a kid, while wheeling in the air during the twilight of a summer's evening. Neither of these birds are found in the small islands of the west.

† The word "big house" is applied by the peasantry to most gentlemen's seats.

‡ This, though a homely simile, is one very frequently used in many parts of Connaught, to express any bright shining appearance. The *Lassar lena*, which grows in bogs and marshy places, is the ranunculus flammea, so called from its brilliant yellow colour. It is a plant possessing many medicinal virtues, and will claim a special notice when we come to treat of the herb cures, and popular botany of the Irish.

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The gentleman left her sitting in one of the rooms, and when he was gone she saw a young woman standing at the *thrashal* of the door, and looking very earnestly at her, as if she wanted to speak to her. "Troth I'll speak, any way," says Biddy Mannion, "for if I didn't, I'm sure I'd burst." And with that she bid her the time of day, and asked her why she was looking at her so continuously. The woman then gave a great sigh, and whispered to her, "If you take my advice, Biddy Mannion, you'll not taste bit, bite, or sup, while you are in this house, for if you do you'll be sorry for it, and maybe never get home again to your child or husband. I ate and drank my fill, *forrior geraugh*,* the first night I came, and that's the reason that I am left here now in this enchanted place, where everything you meet is bewitched, even to the mate itself. But when you go home send word to them that's after me, Tim Conneely, that lives one side of the Killaries, that I am here, and may be he'd try what Father Pat Prendergast, the blessed abbot of Cong, could do to get me out of it."

Biddy was just going to make further inquiries, when in the clapping of your hand the woman was gone, and the man with the scarlet coat came back, and the same strange woman, bringing a young child in her arms. The man took the child from the woman, and gave it to Biddy to put it to the breast, and when it had drank its *fill* he took it away, and invited her into another room, where the queen—a darling, fine-looking lady, as you'd meet in a day's walk—was seated in an arm-chair, surrounded by a power of quality, dressed up for all the world like judges with big wigs, and red gowns upon them. There was a table laid out with all sorts of eating, which the man in the cocked hat pressed her to take. She made answer that she was no ways hungry, but that if they could give her a cure for a little girl belonging to one of her neighbours, who was mighty *dauny*, and never well in herself since she had a fit of the *feur-gurtagh*,† while crossing the Minaune Pass in Achill,

* *Forrior geraugh*, literally, bitter grief, woe, or sorrow; it is an expression denoting great regret.

† *Feur gortac*, literally, "*the hungry grass*," a weakness, the result of sudden hunger, said to come on persons during a long journey, or in particular places,

and to send herself home to Shark, she would be for ever obliged to them. The king, for that was the gentleman with the cocked hat, said he had ne'er a cure.

"Indeed, then," said the mother of the child, "as I was the cause of your coming here, honest woman, you must get the cure; go home," says she, speaking for all the world like an Englishwoman, "and get ten green rishes from the side of the well of Aughavalla,* throw the tenth away,† and squeeze the juice of the rest of them into the bottom of a taycup, and give it to the colleen to drink, and she will get well in no time."

The king then put a ring on her finger and told her not to lose it by any manner of means, and that as long as she wore this ring no person could hurt or harm her. He then rubbed a sort of an ointment on her eyes, and no sooner had he done so than she found herself in a frightful cave where she couldn't see her hand before her. "Don't be any ways afeard," says he; "this is to let you know what kind of a people we are that took you away. We are the fallen angels that the people up above upon the earth call the fairies;" and then after a while she began to see about her, and the place was full of dead men's bones, and had a terrible musty smell; and after a while he took her into another room where there was more light, and here she found a wonderful sight of young children, and them all blindfolded, and doing nothing but sitting upon *pookauns*. ‡ These were the souls of infants that were never baptised, and are believed "to go into naught." After that he showed her a beautiful garden, and at the end of it there was a large gate, which he opened with a key that was hung to his watch-chain. "Now," says he, "you are not far from your own house;" so

in consequence of treading on a particular kind of *fairy-enchanted* grass, called the ṙéan ʒoṁaċ by the native Irish. A bit of oaten-cake is said to be the best cure for it.

* A holy well in the barony of Murrisk, not far from Croagh Patrick, celebrated for its "cures," and its blessed trout.

† The antiquity of tithes is instanced in numberless examples in our "cures" and fairy lore. For example, ten gooseberry thorns are plucked to cure "the stye," nine are pointed at the part affected, and the tenth thrown over the left shoulder. Nine was the mystic number; but the additional one was added by the church for wise purposes.

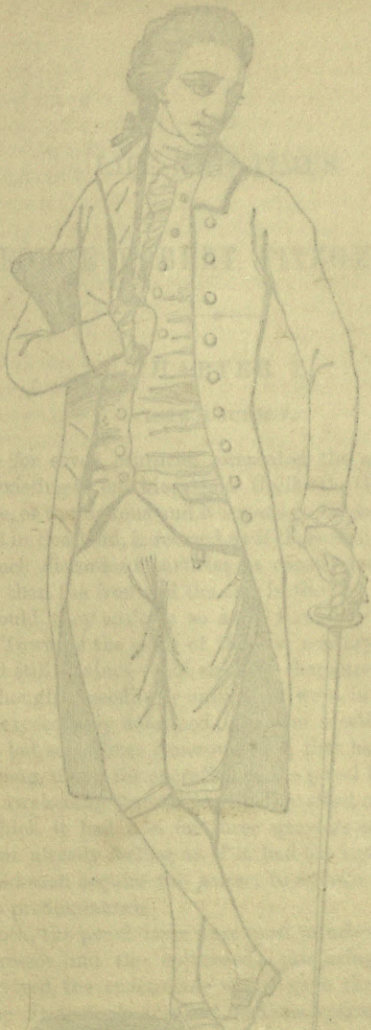
‡ *Pookauns*, mushrooms, fairy-stools, or puff-balls; the term is applied to all the family of fungi.

he let her out; and then says he, "who is that that is coming down the boreen;" and when she turned her back to look who it was, behold the man with the red coat and the cocked hat had disappeared.

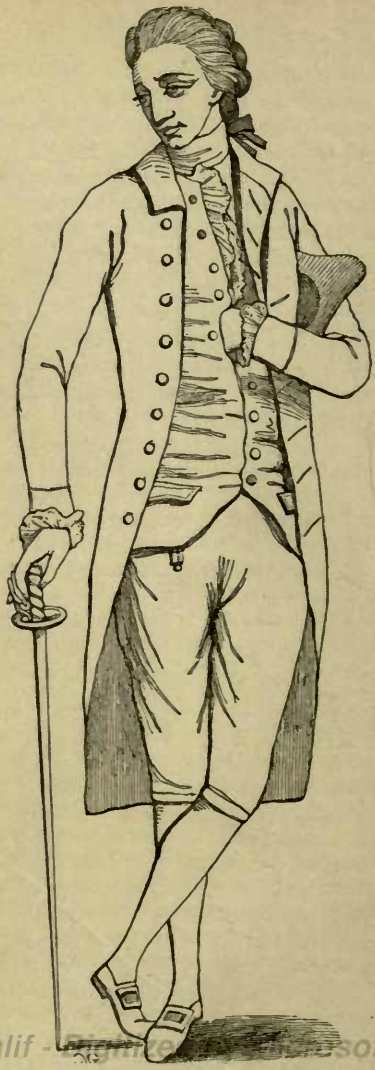
Biddy Mannion could not see anybody, but she knew full well the place where she was in a minute, and that it was the little road that led down to the *annagh** just beside her own house, and when she went up to the door she met another woman the very *moral* of herself, just as fair as if she saw her in the looking-glass, who said to her as she passed, "What a *gomal* your husband is that didn't know the difference between you and me." She said no more, but Biddy went in and found her child in a beautiful sleep, with his face smiling, like the buttercups in May.

**Annagh*, a cut away bog.

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GEORGE ROBERT FITZGERALD.

THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

GEORGE ROBERT FITZGERALD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IRELAND for seven centuries presented the spectacle of two nations existing in one kingdom. Unlike the Gauls and Franks in France, or the Saxons and Normans in England, or the Picts and Celts in Scotland, it seemed as if there could be no cementing of such discordant particles as constituted its population. No more than the iron and the clay in the feet of the prophet's image, could they coalesce so as to form any thing that was stable. Towards the close of the last century, the two races remained still distinct—still strongly characterized by features which, though exceedingly unlike, yet were, in their respective aspects, exceedingly deformed: the one a self-sufficient, overbearing, but sometimes generous, race, that had grown secure, if not strong, under the operation of the penal laws,—the other one just awakening from a torpor, the effect of a heavy blow under which it had lain for three quarters of a century prostrate, but already feeling as if it had the right and strength, and would soon acquire the *power*, to assume equality, and in due time predominance.

To both, the penal laws were most injurious—re-acting on the oppressor and the oppressed; producing characteristics that survived the enactments which gave them birth. They made the Protestants insolent, factious, corrupt, and improvi-

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dent,—so secure and self-sufficient as to consider that they were *alone* the NATION, and so forgetful of their position that they boldly considered that they could hold Ireland—be Ireland—independent of the country from whence they came. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, acquired all the bad habits of serfs. Indolent, insincere, and vengeful, losing the rights of freemen and bearing the deeply-cherished remembrance of oppression, they were ready to lend themselves to all who announced that they would lead them on to that predominance which must be attended with the recovery of long lost property, whether for their church or for themselves. The penal laws also deeply affected the *moral* character of the Irish. They fostered the growth of turbulence, pride, venality, and irreligion amongst Protestants; they made the Roman Catholics grovelling, false, priest-ridden, and fanatical, averse to any law, however in itself good, imposed by their oppressors, and prepared in secret to use all cunning expedients to evade what they dared not openly oppose or overthrow. Thus, idleness, immorality, ignorance—here superstition and there infidelity—like the palmer-worm and the canker-worm, covered the land, and made desolate what might have been so green and beautiful.

These, and other co-operating causes, may account for the character of the Irish squirearchy towards the end of the 18th century. Their pride was only equalled by their ignorance and uselessness. Too proud to trade, too indolent to adopt any profession that required assiduity or learning, the sons of the gentry increased on all sides. But they swarmed not to be industrious, like the working bee, but to consume like the drone, or commit mischief like the wasp. Restrained by his own exclusiveness, the younger son of a squire had in those days no resource but the army; and if that were not open for him, he must remain either as a wild sportsman, himself and dogs still encumbering the paternal hearth, or become a landholder. And even here his employment was limited by his pride of caste: he must *not* become a tiller of the soil—he might be *but* a grazier of cattle. The very occupation, if such it could be called, of a stock-farmer was instrumental in fostering those

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indolent and dissolute habits to which the young Irish were so naturally and nationally prone. Except at the period of the sale or purchase of their stock, their time hung heavy on their hands; and the very circumstance of attending fairs or markets in the way of their business promoted carousing, gambling, and quarrelsome propensities, and made them still more abandoned and ferocious. They who are old enough to recollect the condition of the gentry of the west and south of Ireland in the 18th century can but too well remember the lamentable ignorance, idleness, and dissipation that then prevailed. Reading was almost out of the question. In houses where thousands were spent in feasting and drinking, not a book was to be found except the almanac, the racing calendar, or some odd volume of a play-book or immoral novel; while we shudder at the ferocity and the recklessness of human suffering, that were exhibited at fairs, races, and elections. No matter what the pretext was for assembling the "gentry" together, the meeting was too often disgraced by gambling, blasphemy, and bloodshed. What Sir Jonah Barrington, in his "Personal Sketches of Ireland," tells so amusingly and so graphically, though in some instances over-coloured, is yet, in the main, but too close to the truth. To the same purpose is what Dr. Crump says, in his very clever essay, concerning the sons of the gentry of the province of Munster. As it is brief, it is worth while to quote what an English traveller says of the Connaught squireens at the commencement of the present century:—

"They labour," says he, "under all the disadvantages which arise from a want of a liberal education, without a compensation for that defect by diligence and regular habits. Their ideas are as grovelling as their manners are vulgar. What time they divert from business is devoted to frivolous amusement or licentious pleasures. They will be found galloping after a few famished hounds, or ranging the country in search of unfortunate females, whose poor parents sacrifice their daughters for a little money, and who are soon either abandoned or turned over to some wretches who consent to marry them on condition of being made freeholders. Fond of society, they may be seen nightly drinking together, and lying with their clothes on in a barrack-room, which is a parlour into which some beds have been thrown as a shake-down."

Is it any wonder that the people, witnessing such things

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amongst their betters, should copy from the pattern set before them?—and, unhappily, amongst the ill-educated peasantry, the evil *long* remained after it had been eradicated from the higher classes that had set them the example.

These lamentable results, fostered by impolitic legislation, were aggravated by the weakness and corruption of the executive. Of the Irish people it well might be said—

"Quicquid delirant Reges plectuntur *Hiberni*."

Moreover, it so happened that every new comer, friend or invader, adapted himself to the fashion of the natives, assuming the same love of battle, bloodshed, and rapine; he came not to teach, but to learn for the worse,—and so the foreigner was ever "*Ipsis Hibernis Hibernior*." It might be almost supposed that there was in the climate some predisposing cause for a propensity to pugnacity; for, let the immigrant be of what race he might—Belgic, Milesian, Danish, Norman, or English—he soon fell into the national vice.

The province of Ulster has led the van in the advance of peace and industry; but, subsequent to the settlement of James I. (when the great rebellion under Phelim O'Neil had nearly upset that plantation), this northern province was infested by turbulent, ferocious, nomadic clans, who could be readily excited to war and plunder by the O'Neils or the O'Donnells, and who roamed up and down from one mountain range to another; and it was not until the close of the war between William and James that these Ulster Creaghts, as they were called, were extirpated. Doctor Charles O'Connor, who, of all Roman Catholic historians, writes most temperately and intelligently, states that, previous to the Rebellion of 1641, "there were in Ireland a great number of idle, active fellows, the younger sons of the Ulster and Connaught chieftains, who were unprovided with any livelihood, eager for confusion, and capable of any enterprise the most rash and daring." And again he says—"Connaught is by nature the strongest of our provinces. It then abounded in idle swordsmen, more numerous and dangerous than any in Ireland: 7000 idle fellows had been booked down by officers, who were fit for nothing but arms,

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and lived upon their friends." When the wars of 1641 and of King William had ceased; when, pursuant to the policy of Cromwell, the most turbulent and disaffected in the other provinces were transplanted to Connaught; when thus the country beyond the Shannon became, as it were, the Alsatia, the *refugium peccatorum* of the island; when foreign enlistment ceased to provide a means of drafting off and employing the young gentry; when they were forced to remain hangers-on round the family table at home, or, becoming graziers, take long and of course profitable leases of portions of the paternal property, and so diminish, year after year, the income of the heads of houses;—then arose shameful family feuds, and an almost constant state of disunion between the father and the eldest son—disputes which produced an entangled intermingling of hostilities between families, leading to duelling and bloodshed —disputes that poisoned society, and made barbarous manners more ferocious.

These remarks may prepare the reader to receive with less incredulity the career of George Robert Fitzgerald, as they denounce a state of society that could alone foster and bring to maturity such a portent. This insolent oppressor—this lawless rioter—this reckless duellist—this bold, calculating murderer—could not have lived and moved and had his horrid being in any other place, or under any other circumstances, than in Ireland before the close of the 18th century. Yet he was not an insulated malefactor—a solitary monster, *sui generis*. On the contrary, he was only a prominent actor on a stage where there were others capable of playing the same part, and was only *primus inter pares* amongst duellists, homicides, law-breakers, and despisers of all law, human or divine. This is a hard saying, which it must be allowed one would fear to utter eighty years ago. But is it not nevertheless true? Let us see.

Was George Robert a homicide? and do we not find that a few months afterwards another estated gentleman of a Connaught county was hanged for walking up to his unarmed antagonist and shooting him through the head?

The trial of Mr. Keon, a man of considerable estate in the county of Leitrim, and also a practising attorney, took place in

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Dublin on Monday, 16th November, 1787. Mr. Duquery, the counsel for the crown, stated the case as follows:—

"The circumstances of this unhappy transaction are shortly these:—The late Mr. George Reynolds thought, upon what grounds I need not mention, that he had received some injury from Mr. Keon, for which he was entitled to redress. In consequence of that opinion, he sent a message to Mr. Keon, to meet him according to those rules of honour to which our laws give no sanction. Whatever advantage the prisoner can have from this circumstance, that the message was sent by Mr. Reynolds, he is entitled to avail himself of it. That message was delivered by Mr. Plunkett, and it was agreed between them, Mr. Keon and his friend, that the pistols should only be charged with powder—to which mode it will appear to you that Mr. Keon entirely acceded; and it was settled by all the parties, on the evening preceding the day of meeting, that powder only should be made use of on that occasion. Singular as it may seem, it will be clearly proved that the two principals and their friends knew that no balls were to be brought to the field on the day of meeting. It is obvious that the only object of this meeting was to preserve the appearance of adhering to those maxims of honour which it was conceived on that occasion to be necessary to observe; but that on the part of Mr. Reynolds, or of his friend who attended him, there was no idea entertained of doing or attempting an injury to any person. On the faith of this agreement, Mr. Reynolds, attended by Mr. Plunkett, came to the place appointed on the morning of the 16th October, 1786; and Mr. Reynolds, alighting from his horse, advanced to Mr. Keon, who was on the ground before him and was attended by three or four other persons. Mr. Reynolds had in his hand a slight whip, and, on coming up to Mr. Keon, he took of his hat and bid Mr. Keon good morning, who immediately replied—'Damn you, you scoundrel, why did you bring me here?' And presenting a pistol, which he held in his hand, close to his forehead, he directly fired at Mr. Reynolds, and shot him through the head. He instantly fell, and expired. Mr. Plunkett was, for his own safety, obliged to ride off the ground with all possible expedition."

It is worth remarking, as a proof of the low state of religious and moral feeling of the times, that when this criminal was ordered for execution, the wife of the man he murdered took a lodging opposite the place where he was to be hanged; and it has been proved that she and other females of the family witnessed the horrible transaction.

Was Fitzgerald the leader of an insurrectionary faction, and did he arm his retainers and erect a battery of cannon to overawe the authorities? Even in this he was not singular, for we find in the very same year that a Mr. O'Connor, who

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assumed to be a descendant of the ancient line of Connaught kings, taking upon himself the state and title of Prince, collected a force of 1000 men, fortified himself in an island in a bog, dispossessed people of their property, and did sundry acts in opposition to the laws and in defiance of the local magistracy. If the reader thinks this an exaggeration, he may refer to the to the description given by contemporaries:—

In the "Gentleman's Magazine" for February, 1786, it is stated that, "by accounts from the province of Connaught, a Mr. O'Connor, who is said to be descended from the Irish kings, has assumed the rights and privileges of royalty, and mustered a very powerful force of horse and foot. He has taken possession of estates to the amount of many thousand pounds—he turns the tenants out, and takes possession in due form, then admits them to their lands, as under him." In the Irish Parliament, Mr. Ogle said, "I ask the honourable gentleman, who speaks of trifling breaches of the peace, did he never hear of Mr. O'Connor. They say indeed he is a madman; but if so, there is a good deal of method in his madness." Mr. Robert Dillon said, "I am perfectly well acquainted with the particulars; O'Connor has for months had several hundred men under arms to maintain his claim. In the course of last month he assembled 1000 men under arms, and planted a piece of cannon on an eminence, in order to notify to his party the approach of an enemy. A tract of bog surrounds the lands in question, so that, on the shortest notice, he can retire to the mountains, where it is dangerous for the civil power to follow him." In the next number of the Magazine, the following is stated as Irish news:—"We just now hear that the famous Connaught chief, who had been in arms, and set himself up as supreme magistrate, under pretence of being descended from the ancient kings of that province (which, however, is far from the truth,) is deserted by the principal part of his followers, on the news that the dragoons were on their march for that part of the kingdom."

It would be easy to adduce many other instances, besides G. R. Fitzgerald's, of private revenge and public wrong, by which the peace of society was endangered and the laws compromised, perpetrated by the gentry of the west, who had yet to learn that the days of feudal tyranny were gone by, and that there must be no avenger but the law. It was but the peculiar state of manners at the time, reacting as they did on a person of peculiar temperament, who, from hereditary predisposition and from bodily injury, may be supposed to be, to a certain extent, deranged, that gave occasion to those peculiar atrocities which closed his career.

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Something further is therefore to be kept in view than the mere recording of the wild and wicked freaks of a genteel felon, in narrating certain passages of the life of George Robert Fitzgerald. Their narration will show how bad laws brought about bad manners; how the conduct of our HERO, even in its bad pre-eminence, was but a well defined symptom of an all-prevailing disease—a disease pervading all classes of society, and exhibiting itself in foul blotches on the character of the nobility, the gentry, the justices, and even the judges, of the land: so much so, that of the aspect of social life it might be said in the words of the complaining prophet, "The whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint." A novelist, such as Mr. Ainsworth, who panders to the morbid literary taste of the day, and loves to invest felons and highwaymen with fair characteristics overbalancing their crimes, so as to render evil doers, if not pardonable, at least amiable, and who thus casts around ruffians a mist of romance similar to the fog that the heat draws from a fen, making that which is hazy, fœtid, and unwholesome, lucid with lights from beneath, and investing with false grandeur what is but a huge deformity—such a writer, whether of the *new* French or English school must, while administering to a taste for such splendid viciousness, have an eye to the keeping of time and place; must, in the grouping of such characters, place them in positions naturally arising out of seasonable opportunities. It would never do to produce a Jack Sheppard or a Turpin, in the days of fast coaches or railways, nor to throw them back upon the earlier eras, when the rich travelled, armed with casque and cuirass, &c., attended by troops of men at arms and retainers. No. But the romancer must fix his highwaymen, doing and daring, just in that transition period, when feudal habits had passed away, and commercial activity had not yet commenced its rapid circulations. So it is with the story of Fitzgerald; it exhibits a state of society whose machinery was not working well for want of proper adjustments; when English law was still conflicting with inveterate Irish habits, and when it but too often happened that *this* law was resorted to but to be abused, and so wrested as to subserve the ends of the wickedly cunning,

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promote most tyrannical schemes, and put a fair face on atrocities of bad men invested with power. In this way, it will be shown how the ferocious characters of the western province resorted, as best served their turn, to curiously mixed methods of law and lawlessness—now using open and brute force, now taking advantage of the quibbles, evasions, and perversions of law; and how writs were served, and warrants issued by sheriffs and justices, under the instigation of those who could bribe, brow-beat, or cajole. Accordingly, not only a Fighting Fitzgerald and his rivals strut across our stage, pistol and sword in hand, but in the dusky rear creep stealthily along the subordinates, armed with false warrants and fraudulent affidavits. And moreover, we observe in the same wild melodrame the players changing characters, and lo! the man of law comes in front of the stage as a duellist, and the fire-eater enacts the part of the server of a false writ and of the bailiff executing a surreptitious warrant. All this could only be done in the days when George Robert flourished.

CHAPTER II.

FITZGERALD'S FAMILY, EARLY CAREER, AND FIRST MARRIAGE.

THE Fitzgeralds of the county Mayo are descendants of the Desmond branch of the great Geraldine family. Their possessions were originally in the county of Waterford, from whence, by an order of Cromwell, they were transplanted to Connaught, where, according to his policy, (which might have been attended with important results had it been carried into full effect,) he desired to confine all disaffected Irish families.* The new location of this originally Anglo-Norman stock was a good one. The vale of Turlough, north of Castlebar, as rich, perhaps, as any in Connaught, and remarkable for its ancient

* The confirmatory grant under the Act of Settlement is dated 30th May, 29th Chas. 2nd.—To John Fitzgerald, Esq., the estate of Turlough, in the barony of Carra, county of Mayo.—*Rep. Rec. Com.*, vol. iii., p. 245.

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round tower, as well as sundry curious Celtic and Druidical remains, became their inheritance; and this property still remains in the family.

George Fitzgerald married Lady Mary Hervey, the daughter of one and sister of two Earls of Bristol. This family was famous for producing characters that left the world in doubt whether they were madmen or men of genius. Some one said, who was desirous of expressing his sense of their singularities, that "God made men, women, and Herveys." Those who know any thing of the private history of the last century, must bear in mind what a singular kind of man that uncle of George Robert was, whose wife was brought to trial for bigamy, as Duchess of Kingston—or that still more eccentric being, who, in Ireland, as a bishop and an earl, ran such a strange career—assumed, in spite of his apron, the bearing of a Volunteer general, and left it in doubt with government whether they would pass by his freaks as those of a madman* or imprison him as a traitor in Birmingham tower. And if the subject of this narrative inherited from the maternal side what might derange the brain, it appears as if he drew from the paternal source enough to taint the heart. His levity and inconsistency might come from the former—his bloodguiltiness he drew from the latter. Lady Mary Hervey, who had been maid of honour to the Princess Amelia, thus united to George Fitzgerald of Turlough, brought him two sons—George Robert and Charles Lionel. It appears that she did not long live with her husband. Her eccentricity and his loose morals and quarrelsome habits were but bad materials to cement conjugal hap-

* Of the character of this peer and prelate, a judgment may be formed from the following circumstance I have heard from more than one person of credit. His lordship in his latter years resided entirely in Italy; where, in his taste, manners, and pursuits, he lived more in accordance with the character of an Italian cardinal and prince, than with that of a Protestant bishop. Being thus quite an absentee, the primate, in conjunction with the bishops of the two neighbouring dioceses, wrote a letter of remonstrance against his Episcopal neglects, and calling on him to return and discharge his duties. The following was his answer:—

"My Lords,

"Three huge blue bottle flies sat upon three blown bladders,
Blow, bottle flies, blow—burst, blown bladders, burst.

"Bristol and Derry."

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piness. She returned to England, and he took up with a kept mistress at Turlough. Yet so loose was the regard of public decency, that this harlot was accommodated with a seat on the bench beside the going judge of assize, while he was dispensing justice and supposed to be upholding the moral sanctions that hold society together.

George Robert, the heir, was, by instigation of his maternal connexions, sent to Eton. It would appear that he became a good scholar there. On many occasions in after life he showed that he had studied to some advantage, and could, on occasion, quote readily and aptly from the classics. It may be supposed that the system of fagging at this great seminary—where the aristocracy of England learn, in early life, to suffer as Helots, and then to inflict as tyrants—might be a fitting initiation for the deeds of his after life.

He left Eton to enter the army, and, as fate would have it, his first quarters were Galway—a town well calculated to bring into play his propensities. Here we find him, at the age of sixteen, making love to a milliner, who, of gentle blood, was—under circumstances—by the high born of that proud town, allowed to carry on her trade, and still retain the immunities and protections of gentility. Fitzgerald, of course, had no idea of matrimony; the lady *had*, and would gladly have been the wife of one who, to his advantages of birth and fortune, added very attractive personal qualities, and was even then most seductive in his manners. It would appear that this is the only instance that remains on record against this misguided man of impropriety respecting the female sex; and that herein he rather acted the part of a reckless boy than of a determined seducer. One day, he vaulted over the counter and snatched a kiss. This, of course, caused an outcry; and a Mr. Lynch, from the other side of the street, who, though a shopkeeper, was also so much a gentleman as to prefer fighting to calling in the aid of a constable, came to the rescue. Fitzgerald drew his sword: Mr. Lynch cried, "Oh! my bold boy, two can play at this work. I'll just, if you please, step across the street for my rapier." "What! you shopkeeping miscreant! do you think that *I* will measure blades with trades-

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men? No, sir, I'll flog you well with this my 'rascal-thresher,'" wielding an oak stick, which the young bravo always carried along with him, as well as a small sword. Lynch, who was a stout man, insisted he could play at that game too; and exclaimed, with no little blasphemy, that if he lifted his arm he would just step home and return with a cudgel that would break every bone in his body. The result of all this was a challenge from Lynch, which George Robert refused; but asserted he must fight with a Mr. French, for daring to bring him the message from one who wielded a cloth-yard. To this Mr. French consented; they retired to carry their wise intents into effect to a lonely public-house, into whose parlour they locked themselves, and took their places. Fitzgerald fired first, and missed, his ball entering the wainscot. French's pistol missed fire, for the best of reasons—he had forgot to prime it. George Robert, observing this, stepped forward and offered his antagonist his powder horn, and insisted on his making use of it to correct his forgetfulness. This placed Mr. French in a very embarrassing position, from which he was relieved by persons bursting into the room on hearing the report of a pistol. Of course such an absurd duel could proceed no further. This instance of magnanimity, if such it may be called, was not the only occasion on which this extraordinary man proffered his foe the means of taking his own life away.

Fitzgerald, rising rapidly, as young men of high fortune and connexion could in those days do, became a captain, and shortly after rushed into an unjustifiable scrape with a subaltern of the company which he commanded. Lieut. Thomson, a quiet, easy-going, patient, but brave man, had habits which made him an apt butt for petulance to aim at. The poor man for a long time submitted to Fitzgerald's annoyance; but at length an insult was offered which his self-respect could not brook, and with a pang, which a brave and conscientious man can most strongly feel, he had recourse to the direful measure of calling his superior officer out; but not before he had waited on the young man, and showed him the unwarrantable perverseness of his conduct, which, if apologised for, and not repeated,

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he declared he was willing to forget and forgive. This offer the madman (for could he be any thing else?) refused; and accordingly, at five o'clock in the morning, they met, unattended, in a garden near the barrack. Still Thompson proposed every possible terms of accommodation, to which Fitzgerald replied, "Here I am—fire when you please." Thompson still offered the choice of ground and distance; they fired a round without any harm done; but at the second discharge the ball struck Fitzgerald's forehead, and he fell. The neighbours now rushed into the garden, and they found the young captain insensible, and the lieutenant beside him on the ground embracing the body, and uttering grievous exclamations against himself for imbruing his hands in the blood of a giddy boy—lamenting, like a brave man alive to his accountability, that he had not borne, at all hazards, his petulance. By and by Fitzgerald came to himself, perfectly exculpated his antagonist, and acknowledged that he forced him to come to the ground, by the grossest and most unmerited ill-treatment. The narrator of this strange story says that this acknowledgment of Fitzgerald had almost a fatal effect on Thompson, who nearly ran mad with mingled feelings of joy at hearing his own exculpation, and of sorrow at seeing this beautiful but unaccountable boy on the verge of the eternal world. The surgeons, on examining the wound, asserted he must be trepanned. Here the levity and absurdity of the creature broke out in a strange way—for when it was announced to him that the operation must, without delay, take place, he implored the surgeons to spare his *toupee*. The professional gravity of those who must always *appear* to feel, could not resist this absurd caution. They began an operation, which, in those days, was oftener fatal than otherwise, with a very unprofessional relaxation of their risible muscles. But the young man *did* recover, and went home, to the great joy of his unmanageable, unaccountable father, who, when he heard that his son was so wounded as to be likely to die, actually plunged his sword into the body of a relative who would offer consolation. The steel glancing on the bone of the hip saved the comforter from being run through.

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Fitzgerald's biographer must feel he has to narrate the exploits of one who had *some* compunctive visitings of better things, and who often showed a capability for what was good, and generous, and humane.

He bore the marks of this skull wound to the grave; it no doubt tended to stimulate the wild violence and levity of his natural character. The descendant of a Hervey, indeed, needed not this physical aggravation. That this duel and this wound had some effect, though not lasting, on his conduct, the following circumstance will prove. He attended a race at Kilmain, in the county of Mayo. He had now made himself even more famous than his father, for overbearing insolence—for readiness to expose his person to bullet or blade. The ordinary, therefore, which was generally held at the adjoining town, and where all the gentry usually resorted, was but thinly attended when it was known that this wildling of the stock of Turlough was to dine there. Still some dozen men did sit down; and, when George Robert made his appearance, he assumed the head of the table, and, from the very commencement, took such a lead in the conversation that every one else held back, and the rooms only rang with the joyous bravadoes of the young insolent. Amongst the party was a Mr. Garret Dillon, an old story-teller, one who would as soon be buried alive as be over-talked in company. So, when the young captain was rattling on, and overwhelming every other voice, Dillon shouted out, "Captain Fitzgerald, let me ask you this little question; do *you* intend to pay every man's club present." "No, sir," replied Fitzgerald; "this is an ordinary, and not my private house." "Well then, sir, as you have now for two long hours engrossed the whole talk to yourself, I lay down my watch on the table, and if you attempt to say a word for one hour, I will make it a personal matter with you; you understand me, young sir." The whole assembly looked at each other with astonishment. They at least expected, that the young fire-eater would have hurled a decanter at his head; but not so; George Robert quietly submitted to the injunction; the hour passed on; Mr. Dillon had told, as under restraint, some stories in his worst manner; and it was a relief to the

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company, when Mr. Fitzgerald, at the expiration of the injunction, with perfect good humour, commenced to talk as if he had never been interrupted.

George Robert, while now residing under his father's roof, devoted himself, as most young men do, to the sports of the field, but without ever mixing in the low pursuits, or engaging in the cruel games, of the inferior gentry. Cock-fighting he hated and discouraged at all times. He became an expert horseman. He learned afterwards in Paris to ride with grace, here he acquired the power of keeping his seat while his horse was rising over a six-foot wall. His light, agile, and elegant figure, made him the fairest, his resolute and reckless character made him the foremost, in every chace; and yet, while thus addressing himself to those field exercises, he had the good sense and benevolence to turn his pursuit to his own good, and that of others. Becoming, as he did, acquainted in his sporting excursions with every field on his paternal property, he made his knowledge instrumental to the relief of his father's tenants; and used all his influence to better their condition, and place them in comparative comfort.

Young Fitzgerald, about this time, went to Dublin, whither his character as a fire-eater had gone before him. It rather (such was the spirit of the times) facilitated his admission into the best society, to which no doubt his rank and fortune entitled him. Here he became acquainted with the sister of Mr. Connolly, of Castletown, the great commoner as he was called, the cousin of the Duke of Leinster, and the sister of a future Lady Lieutenant. Fitzgerald was at all times gentle and engaging towards the female sex. In the bloom of youth he was, as we have heard old ladies assert, "a most fascinating creature." It is not wonderful, then, that while accepted as a lover by the young lady, who had a large fortune, he was objected to by her brother, who, naturally, did not approve of an alliance with such a wild and reckless character. Fitzgerald was excluded from the house; but he easily found means to continue his interviews with the object of his affections when more legitimate visits were forbidden. Traditionary superstition has accounted for his success by the means he

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employed. He had his mare shod with four silver shoes, each fastened with a single nail. Thus mounted, he cleared the gate which was closed against him. The shoes were, of course, lost in achieving the feat; but whether the fidelity of the finder or the inherent potency of the charm was the cause, a successful elopement on a moonlight night soon followed, and Miss Connolly and Fitzgerald were married in spite of all obstacles.

It would appear that, though he thus carried off his wife, there was a family reconciliation afterwards, and a settlement of property made, whereby Fitzgerald's father, for a sum of money paid down to him, agreed to give his son a rent-charge on his estate of £1000 a-year. This being settled, the young couple went abroad, and of course sought the French capital. Here their high birth procured them introductions to court, and to the highest circles of the nobility; and George Robert, though much restrained by the soft influence of his amiable wife, commenced playing pranks, and showing off extravagances, that only mental derangement could account for. His profusion was boundless, and the Parisians stared at one who eclipsed, in folly and vanity, even the most expensive of the English; for the young Irishman, to the lavish expenditure of a Briton, added all the freedom of manner, all the ease of address, all the *abandon* to light amusement, and all the assumption of bravery, that belonged to a Gascon nobleman. When, therefore, he arrived at Fontainbleau, where the court was, every one asked—Qui est ce Seigneur? d'où vient il? Il n'est pas Francois; quelle magnificence! quelle politesse! e't il possible qu'il soit etranger?

The character and name of this fine, fighting, frolicsome Irishman, reached of course the royal family, and the ill-fated Louis the XVI., with that love of what was peaceable, and disregard for what was turbulent, which rendered him so unfit to work through the troublous times on which he had fallen, when shown the young man who had fought so many duels, turned his face from him, saying, "Bah, he ought to be brother to Jack the Giant Killer." But he met with a more congenial character in the Count d' Artois, the man who was fated to

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bring dire evil on his race, and hurl it twice from the throne—who was the excuse of one revolution by his profligacy, and of the other by his bigotry,

This French prince fancied Fitzgerald, attracted by the bold bearing of the young man, but still more by seeing that he could easily fleece such a person at play; and he succeeded. To him George Robert lost large sums, which were necessary to keep up the extravagance of his style of living; and this forced Fitzgerald, after dissipating all his ready cash, to become a debtor to the royal gambler. Then, he naturally had recourse to sharpers and jockeys, by whose aid he expected to get out of his difficulties; and for a time he succeeded. A contemporary life of Fitzgerald, which (though a partial and prejudiced account, evidently composed to palliate the conduct of his adversaries, and to blacken as much as possible the man) is in some parts rather well written, describes the following amongst other deeds of Fitzgerald, after he had contracted a debt of 3000 Louis d'ors to the Count d'Artois. With one of those dangerous men living on their ways and means, calling himself Major Baggs, he consorted. With him Fitzgerald frequented some houses in Paris; where, either through want of skill in the other players, or through his knowledge of the games being improved by the lessons of this new friend, he made himself once more qualified to appear at court. But here his wonted inconsistency drew him into an error which exposed him to a sensible mortification; for, on entering the room, he found the Count d'Artois engaged in a party of piequet with another nobleman, and inconsiderately proposed a bet of a thousand pounds against d'Artois's hand—the hand of him, to whom at that very instant he owed three thousand Louis d'ors. The Count did not overlook it; he immediately applied to him for payment, and on being answered that it was not then convenient, he took him by the arm, led him to the stairs, and with a kick, dismissed him for that time from court.

Fitzgerald was not to be dashed by a trifle of this kind. The Count d'Artois was a Prince of the blood; his rank screened him from resentment; otherwise it is most certain,

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the hot Irishman would have called him to the field, as he did very many others before and after. He therefore smothered his feelings, and returned in some time after to Fontainbleau, where there was to be a grand stag hunt. Here he resolved to shine, as in every other branch of sport; he sent for his horses to Paris, and having chosen one on whose spirit and agility he could depend, he mounted him, and kept close to the hounds, regardless of the deference due to the King, Queen, Princes, or Princesses, who were all present. He hallooed and encouraged the hounds as he went along, dashed through the thickest of the forest, to the very great astonishment of a most numerous concourse of the first nobility of France. There was yet something wanting to crown his glory in this line; the forest was open; there were no enclosures—no leaps—no means of showing how regardless he was of life and limb; he longed for an opportunity of proving himself perfectly accomplished. Fortune proved favourable to him—she heard his ardent prayer, and furnished him with an occasion of gratifying his ambition. The river Seine intersects the forest near Fontainbleau; the banks of the river are high, the road runs by its side, and the late King, when he preferred his subjects' happiness to the gratification of his own passions, had ordered a wall to be built between the road and the river, to prevent unfortunate accidents; it was about three feet high; but the perpendicular on the river's side of the wall was at least fourteen feet. The stag, closely pursued by the hostile dogs, and probably not unacquainted with this obstacle, hoped to find his safety in committing himself to the river; he accordingly leaped the little barrier, and swam across to the other side. The hounds were too eager in the pursuit to stop at such an obstacle; they likewise took the water, and Fitzgerald, who rejoiced secretly at an impediment which he thought would show him to the best advantage, having waited until the dogs were half way over, gave the spurs to the generous horse he rode, and was immediately out of sight. This was an instance of temerity, such as the French, especially at Paris, are totally unaccustomed to see. The Queen screamed aloud; the attendant ladies politely followed her Majesty's example, so that the woods and

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waters resounded for a long time with the repetition of their piercing notes. The King looked astonishment; the courtiers set their countenances after his; so that, between the shrieks of the ladies and the attitudes of the lords, and Mr. Fitzgerald's emersion from the watery element, an indifferent spectator of the scene might have drawn a fund of infinite entertainment. The Irishman, careless of the alarms which his submersion had occasioned, re-appears undismayed and triumphant —lands on the opposite bank—pursues the hunt, and has the honour of bringing the stag to bay, before the court could come up, as they were obliged to wait for boats on the other side, to ferry them over. He might have presented the spoils to his Majesty, being armed with a couteau de chasse; but he knew too much of high life to rob the King of an honour which the French monarchs have always reserved to themselves exclusively, that of taking away the life of an inoffensive animal, no longer capable of defending himself, or of escaping by flight.

Subsequent to this George Robert engaged in a course of jockeying transactions not very creditable, that ended in a duel with a brother blackleg, which they were obliged to fight beyond the border of the French territory. Fitzgerald was severely wounded in the heel—a wound which made him halt in walking for the rest of his life, and kept him for a long time confined in Brussels. From thence he went to London, where he pursued the propensities he had unhappily acquired in Paris, became a gambler and jockey, and contrived to heap double insult on a man of the name of Bate, upon whom he palmed his footman as a gentleman, and sent them out to fight. He then entered into a paper war on some jockey point, wrote an appeal to the public, and went over to Lisle and fought another duel. All this was but commonplace—of ordinary occurrence in the lives of hundreds of other fashionable roués,—and may be passed by with the remark of a London journalist of that day, that "the sooner such pests of society as these duellists cut each other's throats the better for the world." Subsequent to this Fitzgerald returned to Ireland, and resided either at his house, Merrion-street, Dublin, or at Rockfield, near Tur-

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lough.* In Dublin his conduct was marked by deeds wild and unwarrantable, which would be now intolerable, but which then did not much outrage the spirit of the times. Besides fighting a duel with John Toler, afterwards Lord Norbury, he is said to have fired a pistol on one occasion at Denis Brown, the brother of Lord Altamont, in the open day, in Sackville-street; on another occasion he insulted, and it is said struck, John Fitzgibbon, afterwards so well known as the stern, overbearing Lord Chancellor Clare; and it has been said that Black Jack well remembered that blow, as well as Denis Brown that shot, when the one acted as crown prosecutor, and the other as high sheriff, on Fitzgerald's trial.

CHAPTER III.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN CONNAUGHT—FITZGERALD'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

FITZGERALD, at this period, took part with those who asserted the legislative independence of Ireland; he also joined the connexions of his wife and mother in bringing about the great Volunteer movement, and challenged with others his country's rights almost at the point of the bayonet. Still, he was a most exclusive Protestant, and it never entered into his calculation that Ireland extended beyond the pale of Protestantism; for he considered that the Roman Catholics had no more right to participate in the independence he asserted for the country than the Helots had to participate in the republic of Lacedæmon. George Robert was exclusive to his cost, for thereby he planted his foot on one of the downward steps by which he descended to his fate. He was now a right-hand man with his uncle, the bishop and earl, who, assuming a

* There is an account of these transactions in the Autobiography of Hamilton Rowan. Rowan, a great duellist himself, was Fitzgerald's second upon one of these occasions.

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leadership of the Volunteers, made himself as conspicuous as one of the martial prelates of feudal times. On the occasion of the great Convention meeting at the Rotunda, he rode up to Dublin from his palace at Downhill, county of Derry, attired in a costume half-episcopal, half-martial, and surrounded by a *cortege* of young parsons as his body guard—all dashing young fellows, gallantly mounted. And in this trim, with this guard, he made his appearance and took part in proceedings that, in imitation of the American Congress, almost went to a declaration of not only parliamentary, but sovereign, independence. The earl-bishop, on this occasion, made Fitzgerald's house his head-quarters, and it was not unacceptable to the extravagant nephew to receive from his munificent uncle, for the use of his house for a few days, a compliment of £1000.

Fitzgerald resided during that summer in the county of Mayo. It was at this period that he carried on those improvements of which he with justice boasted in the appeal he made to the public, and which those who know that part of Connaught well, consider were not much over-rated. He says:—

"Nor did I take a simple possession of the estate, and afterwards instantly fly away from my demesne to spend the rents of it in Dublin, London, Paris, or in Rome. On the contrary, I made it my stationary residence—a residence, not there to sot and dose away, in unmeaning dulness and inactive stupidity, a life burthensome to myself and useless to my fellow-creatures. To feed the hungry, to assist the sick, to clothe the naked, to employ the poor, and to raise up a spirit of industry amongst my own little tenantry, and make all happy about me—this was my chiefest study, this the occupation of my private hours. Nor did I hold the respectable character of a truly worthy country gentleman solely confined to the narrow circle of his own demesne. I, at least, carried my views into a more enlarged extent; not only self and my own dependants, which were *self alio intuitu*, but even the whole kingdom at large, as the place of my nativity, seemed to claim a right to no inconsiderable share of my thoughts, attention, and attendance."

Fitzgerald's object was to promote the growth of wheat in Ireland, which at that period almost entirely depended on foreign supply; and its cultivation the Irish Parliament encouraged, though for a long time in vain, by high bounties. Enlarging a good deal on this speculation, he proceeds:—

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"This truly patriotic intent in view, I set myself to work. Not a day-labourer in my own extensive manors—not a carpenter, mason, or architectonic artist, for miles around me, but winter and summer were constantly employed. Never less than fifty, and generally a hundred and fifty persons, of one denomination or other, daily partook of my bounty, and punctually received the wages of their industry and labour. In the place where nothing but famine, rags, and naked limbs had for ages before been known, now appeared a lively peasantry, neat in their apparel, their cheeks glowing with rosy health, and their eyes sparkling with gratitude, content, and joy. I had not only civilised the manners of a rude and almost savage people—I did more, for it may be truly said, 'I tam'd the genius of my stubborn plains.' The very face of my lands, like that of my villagers, was changed, and so much for the better, that it seemed an entirely new creation. The morassy, unproductive bogs, which had putrified the circumambient atmosphere, and had, from time immemorial, been equally noxious to man and beast, were now reclaimed, and afforded excellent pasture to my herds of cattle and numerous flocks of sheep. In this one year on my ground were planted no less than 10,000 timber trees, and 30,000 acorns—a future navy! *crescens in occulto*. Two hundred acres of land for wheat had already been brought under the dominion of the plough; and had I not been deprived of my liberty, I had laid out for *this* and every succeeding year four hundred acres for the sole culture and growth of bread-corn. Nor stopped I here, but having remarked the grittiness, coarseness, and muddy colour of our best wheaten flour, which I attributed to the bad apparatus of our mills, I appropriated twenty-five hundred pounds for the erection of a mill, now wholly finished, all but its covering in, and fitted it up with the choicest stones for grinding, brought at an enormous expense from France, none being equal to them in any other part of Europe; for I had determined, in my own breast, to bring these two articles of bread-corn and wheaten flour, to great perfection, and in as great a plenty as they are in our sister kingdom, England. While I was thus setting an humble, though perhaps laudable example of agriculture and useful husbandry to my compatriot nobility and gentry at large, I did not omit giving every possible attention and encouragement to the principal commodity of this country—I mean the manufacture of Irish linen, in all its various branches. This important article of internal consumption and foreign export having fallen, by the calamity of the present war, under its intrinsic real value, I purchased all the linens made by my own tenantry, and for four miles round about my neighbourhood, giving a halfpenny a yard above the market price, and thus preserved this important, this national article of commerce from languishing and pining away, which otherwise must soon have been the case had the manufacturers experienced the utter impossibility of acquiring a subsistence by it. If I did thus widely spread my wings abroad, let it be remembered I did not desert nor forget my own little nest at home —for plenty, without profusion, adorned my table; good order and

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sobriety reigned amongst my numerous servants; the gates of hospitality were opened alike to rich and poor; while morning and evening prayers, administered under my roof, seemed to have drawn down from heaven the invaluable blessing of harmony, content, and peace."

It may be well imagined that his most amiable and patient wife was mainly instrumental in the good here taken credit for; and there is considerable probability that had she been spared to him she might have kept his wild and ferocious temper within some tolerable bounds—so constraining, as it were, a wild beast with the silken bands of conjugal love. Still, no doubt, she had a hard card to play, for the tiger was there still, and his propensity to quarrel and to insult would now and then break out. Even the very act he took credit for, namely, introducing the linen manufacture into the neighbourhood, was done with a high hand, and Roman Catholic tenants were dispossessed to introduce Protestants from Ulster. This compromised him with the priest, and with a party that was just then beginning to have vitality. But the constitution of this admirable woman was undermined by her daily anxieties for her fondly-beloved but most uncertain husband, whose levities, quarrels, and wild doings kept her in continual alarm, shattered her nervous system, and gradually led her to the grave, She died in the bloom of beauty and of youth, lamented deeply by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance, leaving a daughter, the sad survivor not only of her mother's untimely departure, but of her father's ignominy. Fitzgerald's grief on this occasion was extravagant, as was every other passion of his mind; it would have been well had he remained as he was under this bereavement, even frantic. His wife had directed that her remains should be interred in the family vault at Celbridge. George Robert not only determined to accompany the funeral, but insisted that his infant daughter, with all his servants, male and female, should attend the procession.

While this long and slow journey from Mayo to the county Kildare was proceeding, during most inclement weather, Fitzgerald still showed his characteristics. Having occasion to halt one night at an inn, he ordered the coffin to be brought up to his own room, that he might wake and weep over it

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during the night. To this the innkeeper, who was a superstitious man, objected, as it was unlucky to let a *foreign* corpse into a house. The refusal at once roused Fitzgerald into a fury; he drew his sword, and it was well that Boniface was able to escape before he was turned into a second corpse, that was to lie in the house that night.

The obsequies being over, Fitzgerald returned to Mayo; and now his conduct became daily more and more extraordinary. He took up a passion for hunting by night. To his dogs, who followed their noses, it was all one whether they pursued fox or hare by day or night; but George Robert *must* have a number of servants well mounted, and carrying flambeaux to show him the way of the hounds; and so on he went, like Burger's wild huntsman, over drain and wall, moor and mountain, alarming and astonishing the people, who supposed that hell was broken up, and devils had adjourned to the earth. On this occasion the priests actually had recourse to exorcisms for driving away demons, and money was paid for masses to be said to relieve suffering souls from this diabolical pursuit. But by and by the people got accustomed to the nocturnal tally-ho, and mothers would appease their children, when awoke at night by the cry of men and dogs, by saying that it was only *mad* Fitzgerald that was riding by. But this was not all. When he hunted by day, and joined the other sportsmen of the country, he took upon him to send home any person he did not like should hunt in his company; and, in a peremptory tone, he would say to this squireen, "Go home, sirrah, you are fitter to follow the plough than the hounds;" to another, "Quit the field, honest man; it becomes you better to mind your father's sheep than be here;" and to another, "What, you big unwieldy porpoise! begone to your pig-stye, for if you follow the hunt you will certainly break your short neck." Many he thus discarded; and none dared say nay to a man whose desperate temper all were aware of; for they knew he would certainly, if they opposed his will, have a horsewhip laid on their shoulders. Such amongst men (and they in other cases brave and resolute) is the ascendancy of determined and well sustained insolence! Even this was not all: he carried his arbitrary con-

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duct still further. When he would honour a neighbouring gentleman with his company to dinner, he used to turn from the table those whom his caprice or his previous disputes made objectionable. On one occasion of this sort, when dinner was served, the son-in-law of his entertainer was objected to by him for his corpulency, and he insisted on his not sitting down at the same table with him, because such a huge man *must* be a gross feeder, and the sight of him eating would infallibly derange his nerves. Personal safety, on this occasion, induced a compliance, and the fat gentleman was sent to the side table rather than bring on a duel, for a duel with such a practised fire-eater was now considered as inevitable destruction. In this way Fitzgerald made himself feared and hated by the small gentry.

Hitherto we have found George Robert, either in the way of business or amusement, hazarding his popularity—making himself to be hated and feared by the people, and by the small gentry of Mayo. He soon took a more perilous step, and fell foul of the most influential, if not the highest, family in the county. The Browne family, by the exercise of good sense, and by keeping a steady view towards their own aggrandisement, in which qualities each son improved on his progenitor, had acquired great possessions and lofty rank; by a marriage into a family in high favour at the British court, they had secured to themselves that government favour and patronage which lead to substantial power and profitable places. In this way the Binghams, the Bourks, the Cuffs, the Knoxes, acknowledged an ascendancy which they could not gainsay; and so Lord Altamont and his brothers might consider this great county as in their hands. It is not at all unlikely that had Fitzgerald had an unincumbered property, and united to his elegant address, his bold bearing, and his ready and cultivated intellect, any portion of prudence or common sense, he would have proved an overmatch for the Brownes, with all their advantages. Had he headed, as he was from rank and fortune well entitled to do, the Bourks, the Binghams, &c., he might have snatched the county out of their grasp. But he was not calculated to coalesce with any one; his mind was not sound enough to form

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any settled plan of action. Like all madmen, his world was within himself, and, like all wild animals, he only rushed on to trample down what stood *straight* before him. The rival gentry of Mayo would no doubt have with pleasure seen the Earl of Altamont checked, and the Brownes humbled; but they did not approve of the wild insults of Fitzgerald, which were bootless, and that more especially when game immunities and manorial rights were invaded; for on this tender point every landed proprietor felt that his own privileges were compromised; and might be next invaded.

Fitzgerald, in his desire to brow-beat Lord Altamont, took the occasion of a visit he made to a gentleman near Westport, to go on the Earl's property; and he not only brought his own dogs and shot where he pleased, but meeting some of his lordship's gamekeepers, he asked them who sent them to shoot there? They replied, their master: he immediately took a cudgel, which he always carried with him and called his "rascal-thrasher," and beat the men most unmercifully, forbidding them, on pain of repetition of the cudgelling, ever again to appear in his sight with dog or gun. Lord Altamont had the good sense to take no notice of this outrage on his servants and property. But this was not all. Fitzgerald heard that a Mr. Browne, a member of the family, was shooting on a bog near Westport; he immediately assembled his dogs and men, and entered the bog at the other end. His appearance was enough for Mr. Browne, who withdrew at once; which the other perceiving, ran forward, until the retreat of the one and the advance of the other assumed the character of a chase, attended with shouting and all the tones of one cock crowing over another that had left his dunghill. There was yet more to follow. George Robert rode up to Westport House, and asked to see the wolf-dog, an animal so large and fierce that he was at the same time the admiration and terror of the neighbourhood. Just then his lordship's brother, a huge man, as the Browne family are disposed to be, enjoyed the high office of prime sergeant in the law courts, and was considered as the great lawyer of the family; for in those days it was particularly expedient for one member of a family to be at the bar, in order

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to bark and bite when occasion required. Now, Mr. Browne being the big bow-wow of the Brownes, it was not a bad hit for the Westportians to name the huge watch-dog of the house the Prime Sergeant. The minute George Robert was shown the dog, he instantly shot him, and desired the servants to tell their master, that until the noble peer became charitable to the poor, who now came to his door only to be barked at and bit by the over-fed monster, which devoured the broken meat that *should* have been bestowed on them, he could not allow any such brute to be kept. He, however, left a note to say, that as he always felt for the ladies, he would allow Lady Anne, Lady Elizabeth, and Lady Charlotte Browne, to have each *one* lap-dog. Proud of his exploit, he rode into the adjoining town of Westport, and proclaimed in the market-place that he had shot the Prime Sergeant. This announcement raised the whole populace. Every one had heard of George Robert's exploits as a man-slayer in duels; and now, in their alarm and horror, it was debated whether the homicide should not instantly be seized. Yes, by all means; but who was to bell the cat—who come forward to lay hands on this ready pistoller and swordsman? While they were thus hesitating, he quieted all by saying—"Gentlemen, don't be alarmed for your big counsellor. I have shot a much worthier animal, the big watch-dog."

One would think this was going far enough; but not so George Robert. He openly declared everywhere that what he had heretofore done was to irritate the Brownes into a personal conflict, but that their cowardice was not to be shaken; and, in order to show that pusillanimity was the motive of all their forbearance, he declared he would put it to the proof by grossly insulting Mr. Collector Browne, or, according to the appellation by which he was in latter days better known, "the Right Honourable Denis." Armed, then, with pistols, sword, and cudgel, and attended by some of his most desperate adherents, he rode up to this gentleman's door, insisted on seeing him, loaded him with abuse, and called on him to come out instantly and fight. Prudence, if not religion, should have restrained Mr. Browne from taking any other notice of this wild man than to shut his door in his face; but George Robert

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had, before all his servants, called him a coward,—and where is the Connaught squire that, even *now*, could brook being called a coward? So Denis Browne at once agreed to give him a meeting. "But," said he, "our battle must be on equal terms. You are an expert fencer, and have killed many with your small sword. I have never taken one in hand; so I won't fight with that weapon. I am a large fat man, a ready mark for your unerring aim, while you are so small and slender that I might as well fire at the edge of my penknife: I won't fight you then with pistols. But as fair play is a jewel, I will fight you with broadswords." To this proposition, as all that were present said it was just, George Robert agreed; and Browne, taking his sword under his arm, said he would go for a neighbouring gentleman to act as his second, and be back in a few minutes. To this also Fitzgerald appeared to assent; but when Browne was a few yards from the house, instigated by some unaccountable ferocity, Fitzgerald, though generally fair and honourable in his conflicts, let fly a pistol bullet at his foe, which fortunately did not take effect; whereupon Browne retreated as fast as he could into his own house, from whence no insult or bravadoes of Fitzgerald could draw him; he properly insisting that he would have nothing further to do with an assassin.

While Fitzgerald was thus embittering the minds of all against him, and becoming an object of surprise and terror both to his inferiors and equals, he felt it necessary to keep around him certain adherents, some in the way of companions, others in the way of servants, who were expected to aid and abet him in all his objects. It has been seen that he could be kind, and gentle, and engaging when he chose; he was most liberal, not only from a generous turn of mind, but from policy; and there is reason to believe that he was successful in strongly attaching people to his person,—so much so, that blinded by their devotedness, they were ready to act for him through thick and thin. But woe betide him that George Robert took up and found wanting in the hour of trial. The fate of a recreant led captain of his exemplifies this:—

About this period, a person of the name of Crofton, a native of Sligo, styling himself an officer in the army, had got into

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Fitzgerald's good graces, and for once he was deceived by a blustering braggart, who, by flattering his employer and insulting, under his wing, all others, made himself acceptable, and received for his expected services food, raiment, and money. But it so happened, that, after remaining with his patron for some time and doing all his behests, in an excursion which they took into the county of Sligo, Crofton got into an altercation with one of the pugnacious gentry of a district remarkable for its numerous and duelling squirearchy, and received an insult. George Robert insisted that he should challenge the man, which Crofton most unwillingly did, aware that he was a sure shot. But when the hour of fighting arrived, the fellow's heart quailed within him, and he actually refused to come to the ground; upon which George Robert was so incensed, that he instantly, in the face of all the people, stripped him of the fine coat he had bestowed on him, and drove him from his presence for ever, inflicting on him, as he fled away, sundry blows of his "rascal-thrasher."

It was in this country, and about this period, amongst a gentry with whom he was not so well known, or so unpopular, that Fitzgerald signalized himself by a *coup d'eclat* very characteristic. Being out with the hounds on a particular day, which brought together a large field of sportsmen, and the dogs being at fault, the hunters amused themselves examining a long range of wall, which on one side presented a height of about five feet, but on the other a perpendicular descent of upwards of fourteen feet, the fence being built at the edge of a limestone precipice. Fitzgerald instantly proffered a bet of two hundred guineas that he would find a man who could leap his horse over this fence. No one present suspecting that Fitzgerald himself was the person he alluded to, and all considering that none could be found so mad as to risk his own and his horse's neck in so perilous an undertaking, the bet was taken up; upon which George Robert instantly, and before any one could interfere to prevent him, rode his horse at the wall, and went over in tip-top style. The noble animal became the victim; for the bottom of the precipice was covered with rocks, upon which he broke all his limbs; but the wild rider received not the smallest

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injury, and he went back to his own country with the two hundred guineas in his pocket, and the character of being the most reckless and cruel of the human race.

Some time after the death of his first wife, George Robert married a second time. He had made acquaintance with the only child and heiress of Mr. Vaughan of Carrowmore, in the county of Mayo, a gentleman of good fortune and high character. Though so fierce and reckless, Fitzgerald continued to be not only handsome in person and polished in manner, but of the most bland and engaging address towards women. Free from the common and indiscriminate profligacy towards the sex which marked the generality of his contemporaries, he was known to have been a fond and faithful husband; and, whatever he had been to others, was always kind and indulgent towards his first wife. It is not then to be wondered at that Miss Vaughan felt favourably inclined towards him; and it may be imagined how, in those days, when female education was at a low ebb, the wild bravery of this fire-eater might have won on a daughter of Eve. But his character appeared in a widely different light to the lady's father; his overtures were therefore declined. But still Mr. Vaughan did not refuse him access to his house; and George Robert, of course, as often as he with propriety could, came. A statement has appeared in print of the mode in which Fitzgerald, a second time, overcame the obstacles to his desires, which, from its singularity, is worth preserving. It is said that, on one occasion, while conversing with the father and daughter in the parlour, he was, as it were, suddenly seized with a severe illness. Writhing as under intolerable agony, he requested to be put to bed; and he acted his part so imposingly, that on the following morning the family supposed he was at the last extremity, and he, as plainly perceiving his end approaching, professed acute sorrow for his wild and irregular life; declared that his blood-guiltiness was more than he could endure; assured them that it was his false faith that had led him on to perpetrate such impious deeds, and earnestly entreated that a Roman Catholic priest might be called to hear his confession, and give him that peace only to be found in the bosom of the true church, and that

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absolution which her clergy alone had power to bestow. Mr. Vaughan, whom the story supposes to be a Roman Catholic, and delighted with the opportunity of saving a soul from perdition, at once sent for a priest; and also, lest the matter should transpire and so subject the sick man's heirs to the penalties of the penal laws, no one was suffered to enter the penitent's chamber,—who continued loud in his renunciation of heresy,—except Mr. Vaughan, his daughter, and the priest. But his reverence was long in his exordium, George Robert still longer in his self-accusations and renunciations of Protestantism. In the meanwhile, Mr. Vaughan was called out of the room. All at once up leapt George Robert, presented a pistol, which he had concealed under the bed-clothes, to the head of the priest, and with the threat of instant death if he did not without delay comply, forced him to join him to the young lady in the bonds of matrimony. This the trembling clergyman instantly did; and Mr. Vaughan was obliged of a bad bargain to make the best. A cardinal fact, according to this account, is, however, an error, for Mr. Vaughan and his family were not Roman Catholics; and the tale appears to be one of those exaggerated statements which the public are ever ready to receive about a man of such unenviable notoriety as Fitzgerald. The event is certain, that Miss Vaughan and he were married; and, as far as concerned herself, Miss Vaughan had no reason to complain of her choice: he was invariably fond and attentive to her. It was to effect a settlement on her that he subsequently entered into the disputes and law-suits with his father and brother that led to his fate, over which she, as his relict, bitterly mourned. And ever after, retaining for his memory the strongest regard, she was undisguised in her animosity towards every one implicated in bringing about his catastrophe; nor could she ever be induced to show the least cordiality to her own relatives whom she knew to be inimical to him, however he might have provoked their hostility.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE LAW AND LAW-SUITS IN THE 18TH CENTURY.

As yet Fitzgerald has appeared as in some measure a deranged man, acting in consequence of his hereditary predisposition, in excess and outrageously, what others perpetrated more cautiously. We shall now find him walking deviously along the ill-defined boundaries that may be supposed to divide the realms of sanity and madness,—his deeds, however revolting and outrageous, not yet compromising him with the existing laws, nor excluding him from the pale of a social state,—plunging into family disputes, mingling with men as bold and bad as himself, and as ready to play the same game, but not so recklessly. We have already alluded to the character of George Robert's father; he must now be brought out more prominently, as a weak, false, vicious, and ferocious man; so vacillating, as not, by any, to be depended on; so base, as not to stop at any low trick; so abandoned as not to draw back from any evil deed; a man who, as a cotemporary describes him, "once possessed of very ample fortune—the esteem of his country—the love of a very respectable wife, and of considerable consequence in his county—now by his own misconduct reduced to the narrowest straits for common necessaries—become the laughing-stock of his country—despised by his wife, and disqualified from cutting any figure or bearing any weight in that county where he once could place his harlot, an outcast from a common brothel, at the right hand of a judge of assize, the representative of the majesty of Ireland." Now in his old age he had taken up with a concubine, who had neither youth, beauty, wit, nor accomplishments, that might excuse his attachment.

Subsequent to George Robert's marriage with Miss Connolly, there was a settlement made, by which, in consideration of the sum of £8000 paid down to the father, he granted a rent-charge on his estate of £1000 per annum, and also settled his whole estate on George Robert and on his issue *male;* but it was provided, that in default of such issue, the estate was to

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revert to the father, to be devised by him as he might think proper, paying certain sums to George Robert's *female* issue, or in default of that, to his appointment. It so happened, that George Robert had but one daughter by his first wife; and there was no likelihood of any issue by the second. This position threw a power into the hands of the father, and gave grounds of hope to the younger brother, Charles Lionel, whose object it now was to obtain as much influence as he could over his father, so that the inheritance should be secured to *him* and to *his* heirs. Hence the jealousy between the two brothers—hence the desire of both to secure a personal influence and control over this weak parent.

George Robert, having got a large sum of money with his first wife, did not, it would appear, while it lasted, and during his residence abroad and in England, strictly insist on the payment of the rent-charge of £1000 a-year settled on him; consequently an arrear of near £12000 accrued; and in the meantime the father went on as extravagantly and heedlessly as if there was no debt accruing. Living beyond his income, and wasting his substance on a greedy harlot, he was in the predicament of many an Irish squire before and since his time, who, after borrowing, make it their *principle* not to pay *interest*, and their *interest* not to pay *principal*. According to George Robert's published statement (which it is believed was not denied), an amicable application was made to the Court of Exchequer to give him, as having a prior claim to other creditors, possession of the estate until the debt was paid, he allowing his father a certain sum for maintenance. It would also appear that subsequently, the old man, instigated by his concubine, did his best to evade this arrangement, and that, in spite of the receiver, who was brought from Dublin to collect the rents, the woman had the wit and management to step in and anticipate the stranger with the tenants, and so receive all the proceeds of the estate herself. Charles Lionel joined the father against the elder brother, and he and a Mr. Cæsar Ffrench, assisted by the law-agency of Mr. Patrick Randal M'Donnell, undertook to secure the father from the consequences of George Robert's law proceedings, provided long and profitable leases

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were made to them of the best part of the estate, and provided Mr. Ffrench was put in the management of the property. This brought about collisions of force against force, and of chicane against chicane; and so we shall see the Galway fire-eater, Ffrench, in conjunction with the younger brother, a professed duellist also, pitted against George Robert; and Mr. Patrick Randal M'Donnell, as attorney, matched with the notorious pettifogger Brecknock.

Brecknock, it is true, came later on the stage of events, and not until a Dublin solicitor was tried and found wanting. It happened to the writer to have been well acquainted with Mr. T——l, who was a near relation of George Robert's law agent; and, having just served his apprenticeship in his office, and being of a smart, brisk, humorous, adventurous, but very fidgetty character, he readily fell in with Fitzgerald's offer to go down to Mayo, and there act not only as the receiver of the rents of the estate, but as his law adviser in general. The first time Mr. T——l went down, as has been just stated, he was over-reached in the receipt of the half-year's rents. Not, however, deterred by the failure of his first experiment, and no doubt foreseeing a large and weighty crop of law costs, he consented to go down again, and, having an interview with George Robert in Dublin, was gratified with the invitation of his haughty employer to take a seat in his carriage for the journey to Mayo—the event which, fortunately for him, put an end to his future connexion with George Robert. It was well for him, that, though a very decided man in urging on a suit, and in afterwards pressing for payment of his bills of costs, he was a singularly nervous person, and not very remarkable for what a prize-fighter would call personal pluck. The story of Mr. T——l's journey with George Robert is in more ways than one before the public.* Among others, Sir Jonah Barrington has described it in his "Personal Sketches of his Own Time," and, as none can rival the lively knight in powers of description (however they may excel in the accuracy of the facts), and as there is not much difference in the several narratives, we may take Sir Jonah's version of the story:—

* See *Dublin University Magazine*, vol. xv., p. 113, January, 1840.

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"Mr. Fitzgerald sent for the attorney, and told him that if his going down was previously known, there were several of the tenants, and others under the adverse influence of his father and brother, who would probably abscond; and that, therefore, since spies were watching him perpetually, to give notice in the county of his every movement, it was expedient that he should set out two or three hours before day-break, so as to have the start of them; that his own travelling carriage should be ready near the gate of the Phœnix Park to take up Mr. T———, who might bring his trunk of papers with him thither in a hack-carriage, so that there might be no suspicion.

"Mr. T——— had no idea that anybody else was coming with them, Mr. Fitzgerald not having at all mentioned such a thing. He found, however, a third gentleman, in a travelling cloak, sitting between himself and his client, who was dozing in the far corner. This stranger, too, he found not over courteous; for, though the carriage was not very roomy, and the gentleman was bulky, he showed no disposition whatever to accommodate the attorney, who begged him, with great suavity and politeness, to 'move a little.' To this he received no reply, but a snoring both from the strange traveller and Mr. Fitzgerald. Mr. T——— now felt himself much crowded and pressed, and again earnestly requested 'the gentleman' to allow him, if possible, a little more room; but he still only received a snore in return. He soon concluded that his companion was a low, vulgar fellow. The carriage now arrived at Maynooth, where the horses were instantly changed, and they proceeded rapidly on their journey, Mr. Fitzgerald declaring he would not alight till he reached Turlow, for fear of pursuit.

"The attorney now took courage, and, very truly surmising that the other gentleman was a *foreigner*, ventured to beg of Mr. Fitzgerald to ask 'his friend' to sit *over* a little, as he was quite *crushed*. Mr. Fitzgerald replied, 'that the party in question did not speak English, but when they arrived at Kilcock the matter should be better arranged.' The attorney was now compelled for some time longer to suffer the *hot-press*, inflicted with as little compunction as if he were a sheet of paper; but, on arriving at the inn at Kilcock, dawn just appeared, and Mr. Fitzgerald, letting down a window, desired his servant, who was riding with a pair of large horse-pistols before him, to rouse the people at the inn, and get some cold provisions and a bottle of wine brought to the carriage. 'And, Thomas,' said he, 'get five or six pounds of raw meat if you can, no matter what kind, for this *foreign gentleman*.' The attorney was now petrified—a little twilight glanced into the carriage, and nearly turned him into stone. The stranger was wrapped up in a blue travelling cloak, with a scarlet cape, and had a great white cloth tied round his head and under his chin; but when Mr. Solicitor saw the *face* of his companion, he uttered a piteous cry, and involuntarily ejaculated, 'Murder! murder!' On hearing this cry, the servant rode back to the carriage window and pointed to his pistols. Mr. T——— now offered his soul up to God, the stranger grumbled, and Mr. Fitzgerald, leaning across, put his

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hand to the attorney's mouth, and said he should direct his servant to give him *reason* for that cry, if he attempted to alarm the people in the house. Thomas went into the inn, and immediately returned with a bottle of wine and some bread, but reported there was no raw meat to be had; on hearing which Mr. Fitzgerald ordered him to seek some at another house. The attorney now exclaimed again, 'God protect me!' Streaming with perspiration, his eye every now and then glancing towards his mysterious companion, and then starting aside with horror, he at length shook as if he were relapsing into his old ague; and the stranger, finding so much unusual motion beside him, turned his countenance upon the attorney. Their cheeks came in contact, and the reader must imagine, because it is impossible adequately to describe, the scene that followed. The stranger's profile was of uncommon prominence, his mouth stretched from ear to ear, he had enormous grinders, with a small twinkling eye, and his visage was all bewhiskered and moustached, more even than Count Platoff's, of the Cossacks. Mr. T———'s optic nerves were paralysed as he gazed instinctively at his horrid companion, in whom, when he recovered his sense of vision sufficiently to scrutinize, he could trace no similitude to any being on earth save a *bear!* and the attorney was quite correct in this comparison—it was actually a Russian bear which Mr. Fitzgerald had *educated* from a cub, and which generally accompanied his master on his travels. He now gave Bruin a rap upon the nose with a stick which he carried, and desired him to hold up his head. The brute obeyed; Fitzgerald then ordered him to *kiss* his *neighbour*, and the beast did as he was told, but accompanied his salute with such a tremendous roar as roused the attorney (then almost swooning) to a full sense of his danger. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and at once gives courage and suggests devices. On this occasion every other kind of law,—civil, criminal, or equitable, was set aside by the attorney. All his ideas, if any he had, were centred in one word—'escape;' and, as a weasel, it is said, will attack a man if driven to desperation, so did the attorney spurn the menaces of Mr. Fitzgerald, who endeavoured to hold and detain him. The struggle was violent but brief; Bruin roared loud, but interfered not. Horror strengthened the solicitor; dashing against the carriage door, he burst it open, and tumbling out, reeled into the public-house; then rushing through a back-door and up a narrow lane that led to the village of Summerhill (Mr. Cowley's demesne) about two miles distant, he stumbled over hillocks, tore through hedges and ditches, and never stopped till he came breathless to a little alehouse, completely covered with mud, and his clothes in rags."

The fact was, that Fitzgerald, amongst his other eccentricities, had a passion for strange pets; and he kept, for his own amusement, and no doubt to terrify others, bears, foxes, and foreign ferocious dogs; and it was well for poor T———l that he was thus frightened out of his land agency, and never

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would have anything more to do with his Mayo client. He might have been terrified, so as to become slavishly subservient in a way that his better principle would have revolted at, but which his timidity would not allow him to gainsay; he might have thus followed the course, and suffered the fate of Brecknock.

The father and son now came to issue as to the possession of the property, and they both endeavoured to secure what they held to be their rights, by all legal shifts. However, it would appear, that under an order of the Court of Exchequer, the son got possession of the property, and, as he said, out of generosity, made his father a compliment of a house near Turlough and fifty acres of land. But by-and-by the hostile proceedings became more violent, and there arose, not only conflicting notices as to payment of rent served on the tenantry, but also acts of violence highly characteristic of the spirit of the times. Mr. Ffrench having got his lease, and being appointed receiver over the whole property, sent a number of cattle from the county of Galway to stock his new farms. George Robert, considering himself to be aggrieved by this usurpation of his present legal rights as a creditor in possession, and by the damage of his future inheritance, seized the cattle, sold some by auction, and converted the rest to his own use. Ffrench, on becoming acquainted with this fact, endeavoured to settle the matter amicably, and to that effect proposed a meeting in the town of Castlebar, to which George Robert acceded; and accordingly they met, and for a time urged their respective claims with some coolness. But on George Robert becoming more and more unsatisfactory and arrogant, Ffrench lost his temper, ran off to his inn for his sword, and returning found Fitzgerald haranguing the mob and detailing his injuries. Ffrench at once desired him to draw, which, with great coolness he did; first, however, appealing to the people, to bear witness to his own good conduct and to the impropriety of his antagonist. Both were excellent swordsmen, and they fought for a length of time up and down the street, making passes and feints, to the delight and admiration of the bystanders. At length Ffrench got a smart wound in the hip,

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which roused him to double exertion; and being the heavier and stronger man, he pressed George Robert so hard, that *he* felt that his only way to save his life was to throw himself on the ground as if he had fallen by chance. Of course, Ffrench was too honourable a man to take advantage of his fallen foe; and his wound now being very troublesome, he was conveyed to his inn; whereupon Fitzgerald, with his usual arrogance, asserted that he had conquered his antagonist, inasmuch as he had wounded him and had also possession of the field. It was said on this occasion, that Fitzgerald had on a sword-proof buff waistcoat, and there were those present who asserted that they saw French's sword bend on his body. But there is reason to believe that these and similar accusations were false. Hamilton Rowan, who was his second in a duel he fought in Flanders, states in his autobiography, that his antagonist on that occasion accused him of being *plastronè*,* (the French term for wearing such secret modes of defence), but that it was exhibited to all present that it was a false accusation.

Ffrench having recovered from his wound, now tried another expedient to redress himself and recover his cattle. He assembled a faction of his own family, friends, and followers, in the county of Galway, some of them men of rank and fortune, and to the number of four hundred horsemen, all armed, proceeded through the centre of the county of Mayo to Turlough, and there encamped, determined to seize his own cattle, or some other property of Fitzgerald, that might be equivalent. But the enemy was not to be taken unawares. George Robert had removed the stock, and so well secured himself and his property, that all the Galwagian army could neither injure him nor his. Therefore, Mr. Ffrench and his force having remained

* I believe, however, that in those days such covert defences were not uncommon; and when it is considered that a practised fencer or pistoller had, by constant exercise and craft, made himself superior as a death-dealer to the rest of mankind, it might almost be allowed to those who had neither the eye or arm to kill with grace and facility, to have some sort of defence to protect them against such terrible odds. The writer has seen one of those buff under-coats in the possession of a gentleman in Tipperary; whose progenitor was a great duellist. This fire-eater's friend seems to have done some service in its time, and the round and well-defined impressions of sundry pistol bullets are discernible on the right side.

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some time unmolested and idle, found it necessary to beat a retreat. It was *then* George Robert sallied forth, as would a Wellington or Fabius, and hung on his rear and succeeded in cutting off the baggage and making captives, while the van of the Galwagians was a mile a-head. A scout came up and informed Ffrench of the attack on his rear, who, at once, collecting the elite of his mounted friends, rushed back to the rescue, and found Fitzgerald dragging off his booty. A battle ensued, and George Robert, after a short encounter, finding that he and his people were getting the worst of it, abandoned his prey and his prisoners; and, with the loss of some of his own party captured, with difficulty made his escape to Turlough. The conquering Ffrench, in the meantime, exulting in his victory, marched back in triumph to his county, and lodged, with great parade, his prisoners in the gaol of Galway. What a pretty state a country must have been in, when two desperadoes, in the face of the magistracy, and while hundreds of volunteers had arms in their hands, could thus break the king's peace, and do deeds of war similar to those which the petty Irish kings perpetrated some centuries before?

Old Fitzgerald having thus thrown himself into the hands of George Robert's enemies, found that his son was ready and able to retaliate on him for withdrawing the annuity that was settled on him; for he could not now obtain from George Robert what would support himself, and he had recourse to the courts in Dublin to force the son to give that maintenance which was refused. And for this purpose a writ was issued, empowering the father to secure the body of his son until the maintenance was duly paid to him. To attempt taking him at Turlough was madness; he therefore waited until the following assizes at Ballinrobe, when watching George Robert, and seeing him safe, as he thought, in the grand jury room, he applied to the bench for liberty to arrest him there, inasmuch as it was next to impossible to effect his caption anywhere else, This the judge granting, the old man and his younger son proceeded into the jury room; but the bird had flown, having intimation of what was going on. George Robert got out on the roof of the building, and so on to that of another house,

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from whence he descended by a ladder, and made his escape to Turlough

George Robert, finding that his father, as long as he was under the influence of Charles Lionel, was likely to dispose of the reversionary interest in his property in case his eldest son had no male issue, determined, if possible, to get the old man into his power. He accordingly, hearing that the old man was to set out from Ballinrobe for Dublin, waylaid him; and, as it would appear, by force carried him to his house at Turlough. In his written vindication Fitzgerald excuses himself for thus taking his father to his own house, by asserting, that even had he seized him against his will, he was justified in so doing, on legal grounds. And in this respect he fortifies his argument by sundry cases in point, and maintains, that certain situations in a family may occur, in which it is prudent and advisable for some near relative to restrain the head of a family of his personal liberty. "For," says he, "as there are several *species* of insanity, so likewise are there several *degrees*. When the degrees become dangerous to the *community*, then the party is insane, and ought to be subject to the control of our *public* jurisprudence; but when it may be but noxious to the welfare, peace and quiet, of a *private family*, then the object is fit for private interposition and the constant oversight of some near relative." If this be applicable to the father, how much more so to George Robert himself! Of course, Charles Lionel was outrageous at his father's caption, and hastened to Dublin, where, by making oath of the forcible abduction, he obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, directed to the sheriff of Mayo. This writ the sheriff was, however, unable or unwilling to put in force, and still the old man remained in the custody of his eldest son.

And now the brother resorted to the same method the father had previously taken, but with more success, of arresting George Robert. Lodging an information before a magistrate, and making himself the special constable to execute the warrant, he appeared before the going judge, and obtained from him a licence to take his brother during the sitting of the court; he then entered the grand jury room, where George

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Robert was sitting, and made his caption. The elder brother, thus taken by surprise, and seized by the collar, had no other resource than to submit—still exclaiming loudly against the violence that was committed on him as a grand juryman, and against the insult that was given to the grand panel of the county, by thus having their privileges infringed. It certainly shows how much the man was detested and shunned by the leading men in Mayo, when they acquiesced, without a remonstrance, in such an inroad on their immunities. Mr. Carleton, afterwards Lord Carberry, a lawyer then of comparatively low standing, was the *locum tenens* of the regular judge at this assize, and he seems to have set his face sternly against George Robert; for conceiving that there was atrocious cruelty on the part of the son in thus seizing his father and keeping him in durance, he insisted on his producing his father in open court, or on proceeding with his trial. To this George Robert replied, that his father was his own master, and that it would be an *acknowledgment* that he had been in durance, could he thus produce him at the beck of any one. It was then proposed that the grand jury should proceed to Turlough and question the old man as to whether he was under detention or not. To this Fitzgerald replied, that were the whole jury to go in a body to the house, they might alarm the old man, who feared green-wax and other processes, and who might, in his wrath and terror, fire out on them; but that he was quite willing that two or more of the jury, who were personally known to him, should go and put what question they pleased. To this the judge would not consent; and witnesses being produced who swore to the abduction and the barbarous usage of the old man, there was a true bill found; the trial proceeded; the petit jury found George Robert guilty; and the judge sentenced him to three years' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of £1000 to the king. It seems that though Fitzgerald was hated and feared by the gentry, he had *still* a strong party amongst the lower classes; for it was thought necessary not only to have a strong party of the Mayo Volunteers to escort him to prison, but also another equally strong to attend the judge to his lodgings and protect him from the insults of the mob.

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But all this did not bring about the liberation of the father, nor did it break down the spirit, or subdue the resistance, of the son. Four days after his committal, George Robert, knowing his men and making all due preparation, armed himself with a brace of pistols, threw a bag full of silver amongst the turnkeys and, while they were picking up the coin, walked out of the gaol, (the doors being all open), mounted a ready horse, crossed fields, walls, and hedges, and arrived at Turlough, where he was received, not unexpectedly, with a discharge of cannon and small arms by his corps of volunteers. By the way, it is right here to state, that George Robert, as a colonel of the Turlough Volunteers, had possessed himself of a few cannon belonging to a vessel that was wrecked in Clewe Bay, and had mounted them on a Danish fort near his house, on which was a small building, which he converted into a sort of watch-tower and place of arms; and here he had guards mounted, and carried on the imitation of garrison duty. With any one else, such a pretence would have been considered as a pure folly; under the hand of such a man as Fitzgerald, it was considered as a formidable centre of danger and wrong to the whole vicinity.

Foiled in recovering the possession of his father, and disappointed in securing and punishing his brother, Charles Lionel proceeded to Dublin to seek an interview with the lord lieutenant, and claimed the assistance of the government against this formidable and fortified outlaw, and for the liberation of his father from thraldom. It would appear that the assistance claimed, as being an extreme case, was liberally, and without delay, granted; and it is almost ridiculous, and shows the apprehension with which the conduct of George Robert was viewed and the imperfect information those in power had of what was going on in the western province, that, to quell a mad outlaw, who had ensconced six small ship guns on a Danish rath, an army of horse, foot, and artillery were actually sent by forced marches from Dublin, with orders for *all* the disposable force in the surrounding towns to join the commander's banner. A Major Longfield was placed in command of this army; and it is laughable to read the solemn prepara-

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tions that were made for this western expedition. The Castle paper thus describes the admirable conduct of the affair, and its brilliant result:—"During the whole march, the disposition made by the major, evinced marks of very superior military genius, and afforded to the officers and men the most flattering assurance of success. Fitzgerald, well knowing the skill and bravery of his opponent, spiked his cannon, and carried off his stores." And again, "we are happy to assure our readers, that no irregularity happened during the expedition, as the major had formed his LINE with such critical military exactness, and the officers were so clever in the execution of every order, that no soldier, were he so inclined, could stray from the main body." George Robert, in his Appeal, which he published in the year 1782, turns all this demonstration into ridicule; asserts that the government were imposed on by Lord Altamont and Major Pomeroy, the commanding officer of the province; and calls upon Major Longfield, on his knowledge as an officer and his honour as a gentleman, to say whether there were at Turlough any fortifications or preparations for military defence, which could justify the sending of any such armament. At all events, Fitzgerald, taking his father with him, retreated into the county of Sligo. Being followed there by the Mayo Volunteers, under the command of Patrick R. M'Donnell, in order to escape, he, without acquainting any but one or two of his most trusted followers, committed himself and his father in an open boat to the mercy of the Atlantic ocean, and hastened to hide himself from his pursuers in a small island off the bay of Sligo. Here his father, no doubt disrelishing his quarters, and perhaps desirous of obtaining his liberty, proposed to his son, that, if he would pay £3000 to clear him of his debts and give him a small yearly stipend, he would convey to him his reversion in the estate and exonerate him from all blame as to his forcible detention. To this George Robert agreed, and they proceeded by unfrequented roads to Dublin; but the father, as soon as he was placed in his old lodgings in Castle-street, absolutely refused to perfect the deeds he had agreed to and set George Robert at defiance. This caused a separation; and George Robert went to lodge in College-green;

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but there being a reward for his apprehension of £300, he was speedily arrested by Mr. Hall, the town-major, who for claiming the reward was challenged by Mr. Fenton, George Robert's Sligo brother duellist.

CHAPTER V.

FITZGERALD'S IMPRISONMENT AND APPEAL.

FITZGERALD, now confined to Newgate, employed his active mind in writing an Appeal to the Public—a work which, however he might be assisted in getting it through the press by others and more especially in its law arguments, yet carries the internal evidence of being for the greater part his own composition; and it certainly shows that he was no mean writer, whether we look to the ingenuity of his reasoning, or to the freedom and elegance of his style. It is, in fact, an elaborate and able defence of his conduct towards his father and brother, and a most bitter attack on the judge and jury who tried him. There is scarcely a crime that a man in his father's position could commit, that he does not lay to his charge—cruelty, subornation of his child's assassination, perjury, forgery, and desperate litigiousness—these are but a portion of the black catalogue he lays to a parent's charge; and he reports of his brother still more severely. He represents *himself* as acting towards this brother with unexampled kindness and generosity; supplying his necessities when his unbounded profligacy and extravagance had brought him into trouble; as standing between him and his mother's just anger; inducing her, when about to exclude him from any testamentary benefit, to leave him the half of her property; and doing everything that a fond and considerate elder brother could do to palliate his errors, and withdraw him from his vicious courses. The following are but specimens of the accusations that the elder heaps upon the younger brother:—

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"I can scarcely express the secret pleasure on the first overtures my father made of his most earnest wish and sincere desire to pay me. If this pleasure was afterwards much alloyed, it was through my father's giving me to understand that the sole and real cause of his being considerably in arrear to me, was entirely owing to the profligate dissipation and incorrigible villainy of his abandoned son Charles; and that he did not use these seemingly harsh terms merely because that worthless wretch (as he then called him) had married a little child of thirteen or fourteen years of age, without a single shilling, but that he had married into a puritanical rascally family, and without his consent; that he had undone and ruined him to all intents and purposes; that in the absence of my father, having had the presumption to go down to his country house, there was no kind of folly, debauchery, and madness his son Charles had not been guilty of there; all the while keeping open house, and entertaining, at free cost, all the unprincipled, gambling, swindling young fellows of the neighbouring towns he could possibly assemble together, who, in their mad frolics, had either broken all the furniture of his best rooms, or utterly spoiled it with their dressings and powderings, or, what was still worse, with the filthy disemboguings from their over-gorged stomachs; that they had either drunken, or, like true bucks of the first head, as they boasted themselves to be, had gloriously set afloat all the liquors in his cellars, there not remaining one single bottle of wine, beer, rum, or brandy, which had escaped their unparalleled brutality and insanity; that he had either swapped or challenged away all his horses; that he had received my father's rents without any order for so doing, and had left every debt he had contracted in the country unpaid; that on his return to Dublin his conduct was, if possible, still more scandalous and *outré*, wantonly and wildly squandering away every guinea he could rap or rend upon the lowest and most infamous prostitutes in the town, like another Macheath, bedizening his Chapelizod seraglio with silk gowns, silk stockings, and other glaring, gaudy, ill-suited apparel; that the public prints teemed every day with advertisements for retrieving watches, seals, and other lesser articles of bijouterie, which, in the frequent paroxysms of his nocturnal intoxications, he had been robbed of by the numberless *impures* he constantly and openly assorted with, or by their nimble-fingered associates or bullies; and, to crown the character of so young and yet so accomplished a villain (as my father was thus pleased to call him), the old gentleman, with tears in his eyes, finished this picture of his son Charles by assuring me that he had several times remitted money to my agent, Mr. Lyster, for my use, through the hands of this graceless and worthless young spendthrift, who as constantly appropriated it to his own wants and follies; and that if it had not been for this hopeful brother of mine, not one shilling would be owing to me."

He accuses his brother and his wife of attempting to swindle a young man of fortune, and even proceeds to denounce him as an unfair duellist and cold-hearted manslayer:—

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"He could not but recollect and call to mind the villainous, blood-thirsty deed which had so recently been perpetrated in his own country, on the confines of Bellcara and Monola, by the same Mr. Charles Lionel Fitzgerald. For sure the fields are still dyed with the blood-gore of Captain Swords. And doth not the whole neighbourhood still ring with the foul murder? And you, Mr. Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, after you had thus coolly imbrued your hands in your companion's blood, and deprived a mother of her only son, did you not accost that mother, while under all the sharp agonies of her deepest affliction, and with unparalleled brutality tell her, in the public street, in the open face of day, that she might blubber on if she liked it, but for your part you was only sorry she had not another son, as you had another pistol, ready for a like occasion? Hah! do your cheeks turn pale? Does the shrill cock, that ever wakeful monitor within the breast, begin to crow and warn you of the near approach of morn? What! are your deeds so evil you cannot bear the least dawn of day? Is your conscience, then, but slightly seared, and not quite grown callous to all reflection? Pity you had not learned that very difficult, but (to you) most flattering science, the science to forget! Or, if you have, what a pity you cannot teach it to that weeping mother, whose only son you murdered in cold blood! Pity you cannot teach it to an only brother, whose life you would have falsely sworn away! Pity you could not teach it to Mr. Sheriff Blake! but he remembered your black deeds too well ever to venture to walk the public streets of Dublin alone. Hence was he always attended by his namesake, an excellent swordsman, after you had once vented your threats and hinted to him what he might expect if his return of the writ should not be altered to your liking."

This extract is given as a specimen of the feelings which rankled in the eldest brother of this "happy family," but the picture of his brother is greatly overdrawn and distorted. Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, in after life, conducted himself as a good man and a respectable member of society, and the atrocious aspersions endeavoured to be cast on him by George Robert must be regarded as of a piece with the malignant imputations he profusely casts upon many others unconnected with his family, who had incurred his hatred. In the course of this "Appeal," he urges strong charges against the judges and both juries. He asserts that the grand jury were creatures of Lord Altamont; that the judge was worked on by the Browne family to prejudge him. On this subject, he uses the following:—

"The first news I heard that morning was, that Mr. Carleton was gone to dine at Lord Altamont's, who is nephew to the foreman of the

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grand jury, and also to the associate judge. It is the custom throughout the province of Connaught, for any person who gives a public dinner, to push about the bottle, more especially when the '*arbiter bibendi*' hath some particular views upon any gentleman in company. I do not say that this was really the case at Lord Altamont's that day; however, it is notoriously known from one end of the county of Mayo to the other, that there is much ill blood of a long standing between the Fitzgeralds and the Brownes of that county. I leave it therefore to the public to judge, whether Lord Altamont's house was a proper place for Mr. Sergeant Browne and Mr. Carleton to dine at, knowing in their conscience that they were both to sit in judgment on me the next day."

Fitzgerald then describes how the party at Lord Altamont's laid their heads together for his conviction; the consequence was:—

"That Mr. Justice Carleton, before he could well alight from his chaise, on his return to Castlebar, swore an unseemly oath that he would fine me a thousand pounds, and imprison me at least three years, and that before the trial came on at all."

Of the sheriffs he then speaks:—

"Mr. Valentine Blake, the high sheriff, being out of the kingdom, Mr. John Gale, the under sheriff, officiated in his stead: and this Mr. Gale, through the influence of the Altamont family, had been suffered to enjoy the office for three years, contrary to the statute. We would, however, be apt to conclude, that an under sheriff, who had continued in office so long, must have been expert in the execution of his duty, and would not put on the panel such as were unqualified; and yet the event proved the contrary, for two of the twenty-four grand jurors were under age; thirteen others were, and still are, outlaws. With such a grand jury, every one of said outlaws being notoriously under the influence of Lord Altamont and the uncle of Lord Altamont being at the head of the grand jury, what honesty—what act of legal justice had I reason to expect? and if Mr. Under Sheriff Gale was thus assiduous in *picking*—I do not absolutely say in *packing*—a grand jury, was he one iota less complaisant in the management of the petit jury? Here I think he outdid his former outdoings; for the whole twelve persons who composed this jury were every one of them Papists, and, as such, may have been naturally inclined to wish well to the Altamont family—especially when the point at issue might be supposed by them to be a kind of contest between me and Lord Altamont—as I am known through the county of Mayo to be a staunch Protestant, and firmly attached to the Hanoverian succession. Moreover, it does not appear that any one of this jury of Papists, were described by the addition of their estate or their mysteries, or place of abode; so that, from any thing appearing to the contrary, this jury might be resident in Portugal or Italy, and

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subjects of a Popish prince; and I am actually informed that one of them was and is a burgess of the town of Cadiz, in Spain; but this Spaniard coming over to Ireland to visit his relatives, Mr. Sheriff Gale shot him flying."

Of Mr. Carleton, his judge, he, after accusing him of many previous acts of partiality, passion, and prejudice, says:—

"Passing over these, and many other irregularities, I come to take notice of the partial, uncandid, and loose manner in which he summed up the evidence; for without once mentioning the names of the several witnesses who had clearly deposed that they considered my father in every respect a freeman, and under no restraint, Mr. Carleton tells the jury '*they were to find upon the hearsay evidence of the country*,' in direct contradiction to the *viva voce* evidence they had heard with their own ears; so that Mr. C., by thus directing the jury, has the honour of broaching a new doctrine; but let him remember, that, by so doing, he has rendered our trials by jury inefficacious, nugatory, and useless."

George Robert closes his accusation of the judge and all concerned in bringing about his conviction and very severe punishment, by the following remonstrance to all concerned in the liberty of the subject, outraged, as he says, in his person:—

"For shame, my countrymen! rouse up your ancient spirit! Settle the constitution afresh, and build up again its ancient bulwarks, its ancient muniments and ancient foundations. Then shall a prosecutor of the crown dread to swear that a father had been murdered, whom the whole neighbourhood knows to be alive; then shall a justice of the peace tremble to break his oath of office; then shall an under sheriff shudder at continuing in his office longer than for a year; then shall our grand juries no longer be made up of outlaws, and of striplings under age; then shall you be tried by a petit jury, all of them freeholders, all of them your proper equals and peers; and your judges shall no longer direct your juries to find a free subject of this realm guilty on *hearsay* evidence; nor shall they longer venture to inflict a heavier fine on an individual at common law than what the common law itself prescribes. If you leave the actors in this unprincipled prosecution unreproved, you will tacitly encourage others to emulate them in their audacity and insolence. Affluent in my private fortune—allied to the noblest families of Great Britain, and head, as I now am, of the house of Desmond—and, as such, most indubitably to be considered as the *premier noble* of this kingdom—I say *premier noble*—for the Desmond is known and allowed to be the *elder*, while the Kildare or Leinster holds only the secondary honour of being the cadet or *younger* branch of the ancient and puissant race of Fitzgeralds; yet a work of such enterprise is too arduous an undertaking for any private individual, more especially for an individual

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oppressed and circumstanced as I at present am, to hope or even presume to accomplish it by his own single efforts, or by his own single prowess. It is to you, my countrymen, in your aggregate capacity, that such an important work of reformation must be entrusted—by you it must be taken in hand, otherwise there can be but little hopes to see it ever begun, much less effectually carried into execution. There remains not the least shadow of a doubt but that this judgment will be reversed in the course of next Michaelmas term. But, oh! my countrymen! will that reversal compensate me for the fourteen months' imprisonment I shall then have unjustly and unmeritedly endured? What recompense will it make me for the loss of my health which I have experienced, and the alarming effects of which I still continue to experience? What adequate satisfaction can it propose to me for the foul and unjust aspersions that have been thrown upon my character and reputation? or what reparation will it make me for my herds of cattle or my flocks of sheep, that have been *stolen* from off my lands by the orders of Mr. Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, and which have been sold for his use and behoof, except such of them as may have been slaughtered by his commands for his own private domestic consumption, as too evidently appears from the affidavits appended to this appeal? In short, will the reversal of that judgment replace the timber on my estate which hath been cut down, carried off the premises, and sold by the orders and to the use of my prosecutor and persecutor, Mr. Charles Lionel Fitzgerald? Will it replace those beautiful, extensive, and expensive plantations which have been grubbed up and sold by the same orders and to the same use? Will it rebuild my mansion-house, which hath been wantonly and wickedly burnt down to the ground in the dead of the night? Will it re-plough and re-sow those two hundred acres of ground which I had sown with the choicest wheat seed that could be obtained from foreign markets, in order to supply the Dublin market with the finest wheat flour, and that too of the growth and manufacture of this island?"

Family pride seems to have had a strong mastery over Fitzgerald's mind, and made him arrogant in his manner and insulting in his conduct. This made him treat the gentry of Mayo, and especially those whom he considered as *parvenus*, with insolence which was never forgotten; and surely if pride of this nature ever had a fall, it was in the case of this haughty Geraldine. Yet so powerful were family influence and high connections in Ireland, that they were sufficient to procure for Fitzgerald, notwithstanding the infamous notoriety he had attained to, the highest public compliments. The following are extracts from a Londonderry paper of the year 1784. They are worth perusal, as strongly indicating the characteristics of the uncle and nephew, and showing that, up to within

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two years of George Robert's execution, he had so little forfeited social respect, as to be made free of the proudest of all Irish cities:—

"On Tuesday last, the mayor and other members of the corporation gave an elegant entertainment, in the Town Hall, to G. R. Fitzgerald, Esq., nephew to the Earl of Bristol; at the same time Mr. Fitzgerald was presented with the freedom of the city, upon receiving which he addressed the mayor as follows:—'Mr. Mayor, the real sentiments of the heart are but too frequently disguised under a multiplicity of words. I will be concise: your moments, sir, in this alarming crisis of public affairs, are of too much importance to this city and to the nation at large, to be amused with insincerity or with trifles. These are times for action, not for parlance. You have done well—you have conferred the freedom of your city on the nephew of the Earl of Bristol. Every mark of attention you pay to that illuminated and illuminating constellation, what is it but a public debt paid, that before was due to public virtue? But when, out of respect to that radiant luminary of this meridian, you extend your attention to me, a private individual, I become at once your debtor for life, and you bind me to the corporation of Derry with the triple cord of ingrafture, confraternity, and gratitude. It is not only the act itself, but the mode of dispensing it. I cannot, on the most accurate and critical inquiry, find that any, even the most respectable and respected characters who have been honoured with the freedom of this city, have ever received it with the same kind and very distinguishing ceremony with which it hath this day been accompanied to me. An attempt to elucidate my feelings on this occasion would be vain—I find all words far inadequate to the task. I must, therefore, solicit those who could so eminently mark their gratitude and affection to the Earl of Bristol by obligations heaped on his nephew, to give me credit, in some degree, for a virtue which they so eminently and bountifully themselves possess. Thus, Mr. Mayor, by your spontaneous favour, and through merit not my own, I this day stand enrolled on your archives as a brother *freeman*—I was your brother *countryman* before. We are now become nearer, and, I trust, dearer to each other. For, certainly, a freeman of the city of Derry, whose ancestor, in the reign of King John, signed and witnessed, with his own handwriting, the great charter of liberties, the magna charta,—the pride, the boast of every Irishman,—will scarcely ever suffer the *chartered* rights of this city to be violated or infringed with impunity; or, should he be so degenerate, would he not stand self-condemned as unworthy to be any longer acknowledged the *indubitable*, immediate heir-male of your magna charta Fitz-Gerald? But, sir, fired as I am with the seraphic flame of liberty, and ardently aspiring to emulate the patriotic, brilliant example of an uncle, who, in all his actions, public or private, combines the excellency of dignity and excellency of power, *I trust in the day of trial*, under so pure and virtuous a guide, *I shall prove myself not unworthy of my birth;* and that you, Mr. Mayor, shall find

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no cause to repent that the freedom of your city hath this day been conferred on the nephew of the Earl of Bristol."

"Londonderry, 19th May, 1784.

"At a meeting of the Presbytery of Derry, the following address to the Earl of Bristol was unanimously agreed to:—

"'My Lord,—When the valuable part of this kingdom are forward in doing justice to your merit, the Presbytery of Derry, who reside immediately in your Lordship's diocese, think themselves bound to express their perfect approbation of the liberality of your Lordship's religious sentiments. Christianity is liberal; and he is the best disciple of Jesus Christ who possesses the most extensive charity and good will to the human race. They conceive it, therefore, not inconsistent with their duty, as ministers of the gospel of peace, to give that praise to a prelate of another church, which the unaffected purity and rectitude of his own claims from every honest heart. Equally incapable of being profited by adulation to your Lordship, abhorring the mean idea in case they were, and sensible of meeting with your Lordship's contempt on that account, they rejoice in this opportunity of giving their tribute of deserved praise to a character in every respect so dignified.

"'Signed, by order,

"'Sam. Patten, Moderator.

"'John Law, Clerk.'"

"TO THE PRESBYTERY OF DERRY.

"Just landed, as it were, to witness the inauguration of my hospitable nephew as a citizen of this grateful and independent city, the Presbytery of Derry (if I may use a trite adage) have caught me—as my *enemies* never will catch me—*flying*.

"I am happy, my brethren, to receive, in this episcopal mansion, so honourable a testimony of the Presbytery's affection; but I feel still more happy in the consciousness of deserving it. That liberality of sentiment which you ascribe to me flows from the rare consistency of a Protestant bishop, who feels it his duty, and has, therefore, made it his practice, to venerate in others that *unalienable exercise of private judgment*, which he and his ancestors claimed for themselves. Happy epoch in Irish annals! and formidable only to the bigots of either sect, when the Presbytery of Derry, instigated neither by fear nor adulation, can proclaim the liberality of a bishop, and glory in their testimony.

"On the *great object* which now centres in me the applauses of such various and even contradictory denominations of citizens, I do own to you the very rock which founds my cathedral is less immovable than my purpose to liberate this high-mettled nation from the petulant and rapacious oligarchy which plunder and insult it. A convulsion of nature might, indeed, shiver the one to atoms, but no convulsion, either of nature or of the state, could slacken my purpose: it may destroy, but it cannot stagger me.

"Bristol."*

"Londonderry, 19th May, 1784."

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CHAPTER VI.

FITZGERALD'S LIBERATION AND PENITENCE.

FITZGERALD having published his appeal, of which we have afforded the reader a few specimens, and thus hoping that he would have interested the public in his cause, moved for a new trial in the Court of King's Bench; but without effect. The court above confirmed the sentence of Castlebar, and he was remanded to prison. On the occasion of this argument the man's absurdity and frivolity were as evident as ever; he made his appearance in court in a dress so mean that a gentleman would, on any occasion, be ashamed to wear it; his hat, that piece of attire which sets off or disfigures the individual, was not of itself worth a groat, but in the front of this shocking bad hat sparkled a diamond loop and button, that made his head-dress worth fifteen hundred pounds. The disappointment, however,

* The above transactions show that this Earl Bishop was very liberal in his religious views, and very reforming in his politics. I may quote the following anecdote (supplied by the same friend who gave the foregoing extracts,) as indicative of similar *liberality*. It has been already stated that Lord Bristol spent his latter years in Italy, where he conformed in a great measure, in dress and habits, to the dignified clergy of Rome, and was treated with great consideration, for reasons best known to themselves, by the cardinals and governing ecclesiastics of the states of the church. On one occasion, while travelling, he carried with him from a cardinal governor of Rome a letter of introduction to such monasteries as, for want of inns, he might find it convenient to stop at; and this letter recommended to the abbots of the respective convents, as worthy of all hospitable attention and high consideration, the Lord Bishop of Derry. Accordingly, his Lordship arrived on a certain evening at a large monastery, in a valley of the Appenines, where, presenting his letter, he was received with all possible civility, and the resources of the recluses were not only taxed to the utmost to supply him with good fare, but, as a princely ecclesiastic, he was treated with all deferential worship; for, in truth, the worthy monks had but small skill in geography, and knowing nothing of Derry, or whether it was *in partibus fidelium* or *infidelium*, they looked on him as one of their own. Therefore, on the morrow, when the prelate was about to depart, all the monks, lay brothers, acolytes, and servitors were arranged on their knees in the courts of the convent, ready to receive his benediction, which his Lordship, without any hesitation, bestowed in the most approved episcopal form; and, having placed in the hands of the abbot a handsome sum to be distributed to the poor, he departed, leaving the simple religionists in ignorance that it was a heretic prelate that had laid his unsanctified hands on their shaven crowns.

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of his appeal to the King's Bench had a serious effect on his constitution, and a severe fit of sickness ensuing, the government were induced, under the solicitations of his high connections, to grant him a free pardon.

The first use he made of his liberty was to revenge himself on a person who had given him mortal offence—one who, in after life, became well-known for eccentricity and benevolence—Dick Martin, of Connemara. Martin at that time was a barrister; he took strongly the part of the Brownes of Mayo against Fitzgerald, and had, on the trial of George Robert, at Castlebar, used some severe language in animadverting on his conduct. Fitzgerald now free, and in Dublin, determined to insult Martin, and that in the most public manner. Accordingly, meeting him in the play-house, he arrogantly stared Martin in the face. "Have you anything to say to me, Mr. Fitzgerald?" said Martin. "Only to tell the world," was the reply, "that you are the bully of the Altamonts, and therefore take this, you scoundrel," whereupon he struck Martin with his cane, and instantly walked out of the box. Martin's feet were caught in the curtain of the box-door as he attempted to follow his foe, and he stumbled and fell; of course there was a great row, and, in the midst of the riot, Fitzgerald, on leaving the house, said, "Martin, you have got a blow; I desire to disgrace you more, for you are not yet punished enough; but when you get enough of it in that way, you shall have the satisfaction of being shot or run through the body." On this occasion Martin of course, sent a challenge, and a Mr. Lyster, a young man and a cousin of Fitzgerald's, undertook to deliver the message. George Robert received him in his drawing-room, and Lyster having opened his business, the other rung. A footman appeared. "Bring me up my cudgel with the green ribband," said Fitzgerald. Having got it, he accosted his cousin thus—"how dare *you* deliver *me* a message?" and then striking him right and left, he gave him a most unmerciful beating, struck off the diamond ring he had on his finger, and so completely quelled the spirit of the young man, that when George Robert ordered him to take up the broken ring off the floor and present it to him, he consented; and as soon as George Robert got it, he,

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with great mockery of politeness, folded it up in paper, and returning it to the spark, said, "young fellow, take care of this, put it up safe, and don't swear I robbed you of a present from a fair one." The upshot of all this was, that Martin could not, in Dublin, get Fitzgerald to give him a hostile meeting, for it was George Robert's tactics to make him smart and feel sore under the blow and abuse he had heaped on him. But by-and-by both gentlemen returned to Connaught, Fitzgerald, it would appear, soured in his temper, and living in a way very different from what he was accustomed to. During his imprisonment his house had been gutted of all the furniture, and now his apartments were scarcely supplied with the common accommodations of a gentleman; he neither paid nor received visits; he had brought over from England Mr. Timothy Brecknock to act as his law adviser, and he was his principal male companion; his confidential servant was Andrew Craig; of both much will have to be said hereafter. His living was as mean as his furniture and his company; his food consisted of the game on his estate and the vegetables of his garden. In such a mood, and under the discouragement of universal unpopularity, which not only existed with the gentry but extended to the townspeople of Castlebar, the man became every day more and more morose and vengeful—in a word, more insane.

George Robert was formerly quite a favourite with the townsmen of his country town, who were perhaps as desperate and ferocious a set of men as could be found in all the boroughs of Ireland, and that is a large word; for probably there did not exist in the wide range of the empire a more worthless, profligate, and daring set of men than the gossiping, pot-walloping, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, now a little busy and then very idle, populace of a Connaught town. All this vicious idleness had been aggravated by their getting arms in their hands as volunteers; making the bold doubly insolent, the ferocious doubly dangerous, rendering them fit actors in the insurgency and military licentiousness that deluged the land in blood at the close of the eighteenth century. George Robert, by his bravery, his affability, his largesses, was for a time the favourite of the Castlebar townsmen, and he counted on that

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popularity on an occasion in which he found himself grievously disappointed. The volunteer corps called the Mayo legion, about three hundred strong, being without a commander (their first colonel, Lord Lucan, having resigned) that curious anomaly in military government, namely, the men electing their commander, came into play, and George Robert having been a captain in the line, a man of known bravery, of high connections, and of considerable property, and living within three miles of the town, thought himself best entitled to the honour. Accordingly, when he heard of the vacancy, and that the election was to take place in a day or two, he is said to have rode down to Castlebar, from Dublin, on a single horse in the course of the day, and with all his might and means canvassed the corps. Some he won over to his wishes; but the majority, no doubt dreading his wild and fierce character and apprehending that, under his command, they might, on some future occasion, be dangerously compromised, elected the man, of all others, perhaps, most offensive to George Robert—a Mr. Patrick Randal M'Donnell, a Roman Catholic, an attorney, of small property and comparatively low family, but an ambitious, able, brave, turbulent, and intriguing man; one, who, with all his ambition and turbulence, though always ready either for a duel or a lawsuit, had his wits about him and, unlike Fitzgerald, could weigh well before he acted, and could foresee where the danger of a proceeding was too great to hazard attempt.

Fitzgerald, stung to the quick by this defeat, and by such a rival, determined to have his revenge. He, in the first instance, induced a large portion of those who gave him their votes on this occasion to quit the Mayo legion and join his Turlough corps. Moreover, he revived a long dormant patent, which one of his forefathers had obtained for a market at Turlough. By this step he hoped to distress the inhabitants of Castlebar! because as that town was principally supplied from the north-east, the provisions passed through Turlough, and his spite getting the better of his common sense and economy, he gave a premium, over and above the Castlebar price, to all provisions sold in Turlough market. This proving an expensive work, he found himself put to great difficulty for funds; and, as is reported,

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had recourse amongst other expedients to the following:—Assuming (or feeling really, for George Robert was himself free from the profligacy that too generally prevailed, and doubtless detested it in others), considerable anger, that the wife of one of his followers called Foy, had been subservient to the pleasure of Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, he declared that she must be discarded. This he did, knowing the man's attachment to the woman, and feeling assured that, though he appeared to discard her, he would still keep her near him. Accordingly, he had the woman watched, and found he was not mistaken; for she was harboured in one of the villages on his estate. Whereupon he ordered his bailiff to drive the cattle of these villages, without stating for what the distress was made. Consequently, the pound was crowded, and the tenants imagining they were distrained for rent came in and paid up all they owed; which the landlord having received, said—"My good fellows, I am glad to find you are able to pay so well out of the common course; but you are not distrained because of non-payment of rent, but for harbouring an adultress." It may be supposed that George Robert's pecuniary wants were as strong as his moral indignation; for he was soon reconciled to Foy on an assurance he was misinformed as to the conduct of his wife.

Another instance of the petty revenge of Fitzgerald brought him into additional trouble, and increased the dislike of the Castlebar populace. The tradesmen of that town, like those of similar Irish boroughs, are fond of keeping bull-dogs, water spaniels and lurchers, with which they can prowl about the adjoining country when trade is dull, when no job is at hand, and when their credit is low at the public house. George Robert set about waging war on those dogs; he shot many of them, and amongst others, whether by mistake or recklessness, a dog belonging to one Mecklan, a shoemaker. He had sided with Fitzgerald at the election for command of the legion, had deserted that corps and joined the Turlough legion, and had kept garrison with him when George Robert kept his fort in defiance of the government. But when this stronghold was abandoned, and the corps dispersed, he had returned to his occupation in Castlebar, and still remained one of the few

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attached to George Robert and his cause. Now, it so happened that Mecklan's dog, a fine creature, which Fitzgerald had often fondled and fed with his own hands, and which thereby was often tempted to come to Turlough, was there, either in mistake or recklessness, shot dead. On hearing of this, Mecklan, a desperate determined town bully—furious in his wrath—gathered together his friends; and amongst the rest, some equally desperate fellows, named Tiernan, Gregory, and Hipson. They set off armed to Turlough, to retaliate on Fitzgerald's dogs; and they succeeded—for making a great noise as they advanced, three of George Robert's pointers came out, and were shot before his door. A fourth followed, and Andrew Craig, commonly called Scotch Andrew, being now in Fitzgerald's service, seeing his master's best dog in danger, ran up and threw himself upon the animal. Hipson, who had not discharged his gun, called on Andrew to uncover the dog, or if not, he would fire at both. This Andrew would not do, and the fellow made good his threat, by killing the dog in the servant's arms. A piercing scream from Andrew announced that he had also received part of the gun's charge. Regardless, however, of his cries, and seeing that they had shot all the dogs they could find, the party returned to Castlebar intriumph; where, in describing their feat, they added to their insolence by asserting that had George Robert himself come forth in defence of his dogs, they would have put a bullet through him as readily as through one of his pointers.

Fitzgerald had informations sworn against these fellows—not for shooting his dogs, but for wounding his servant; but for some reason he did not go on with the prosecution. He, however, remembered the feat of Hipson, as we shall by and by find, to his cost.

While he thus compromised himself with the people of Castlebar, it so happened that as he was in that town one day, Colonel Martin, whom he had struck in Dublin, either by chance or by design met him in the street. Martin was walking arm in arm with a Dr. Martin, his relative. Fitzgerald was attended by a county Sligo gentleman, named Fenton, and followed by some of the mob, who were well disposed to insult him if they dared. Both gentlemen wore swords. Martin,

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stung with the blow he had got in Dublin, called on George Robert to draw; this he refused to do in the street, because he said he was lame, and the pavement bad, and he could not keep his footing; upon which Colonel Martin lifted his cane to strike him, but Fitzgerald cried out, "No! damn it, Martin, there is no necessity for this with a soldier and a gentleman. I am ready to fight you this instant in a proper place, with sword or pistol." And then, with that readiness which showed that he might have been a great man were not his insanity and bad passions at hand to countervail all that was good, he, aware how much in his coming conflict it was necessary to have the mob on his side, played at once on the local partialities of the people, and turning round, cried:—"The Mayo cock against the Galway cock. What say you, Martin, of the tribes, for a hundred pounds." Upon this the mob shouted "Mayo for ever;" and Fitzgerald saw he had gained his faction. But the respectable friends on both sides sensible of the impropriety of a duel in the open street, announced that they should retire to the barrack-yard, and there decide the matter with pistols. To which arrangement the officer commanding consented, on being told by George Robert with great politeness, that he only requested a cockpit when a Galway was pitted against a Mayo cock for a main. Now, Dick Martin was known to be a steady pistoller; he had not long before shot a counsellor Jordan, *quite fairly*, and George Robert saw well that he was a formidable antagonist. But what was that to such a master, who had reduced this kind of combat to a science, and had made some useful discoveries that had stood him in much aid in the thirty or forty duels he had been heretofore engaged in. One of these secrets worth knowing was, that a pistol loaded for nine yards, if discharged at the distance of five, will not be as sure as if fired at the proper distance. The second discovery was, that if a man can be taken off from his *first* aim, any future one he may take will not be so exact as his first. Accordingly, when it was settled that the distance should be nine yards, and when they were in the act of levelling their pistols, George Robert cried out, and proposed that for quick work's sake they both should advance two paces. Martin, not aware of the design, and

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being both angry and brave, agreed, and they stepped forward. Again they level, when once more Fitzgerald cried out, "Stop, I am not yet prepared." Then, after a minute, they both fired, and without effect. On a second discharge, Martin's shot hit George Robert. Some say that the shot was turned by a button, and passed off in a tangent; others say he wore then, as he was said to do before, a pistol-proof waistcoat. Be it as it may, he was stunned for an instant; but then, taking deliberate aim, he fired, while exclaiming, "Hit, for a thousand;" and so it was; Martin was wounded in the breast, and, crying out, "I'm done for," started from his position. "*You* need not stir, Fitzgerald," cried Doctor Martin, the Colonel's seconder, "I am in his place," producing, as he spoke, a loaded pistol. "Oh! let Glisterpipe come on," exclaimed Fitzgerald. "No," said Mr. Fenton, "this must not be; the Mayo cock *shall* have fair play;" and so, taking George Robert under the arm, he wheeled his principal off the ground. Martin was conveyed to the house of Doctor Lindsay, when his wound was found to be not very dangerous. The author of "Connaught Legends" (Mr. Archdeacon), tells the conclusion of this affair as follows:—

"Doctor Lindsay was just after having dressed his patient, and given the usual exhortations to rest and quietness, when, to his utter astonishment, Fitzgerald entered the apartment, saying, with the most perfect *sang froid:* 'Well, Lindsay, how does your patient get on?' 'Fitzgerald (responded the Doctor, in an angry tone), this is most extraordinary, and, I must say, a most unbecoming place for you to visit at present.' 'Pho! never mind, Lindsay (said the unabashed duellist, crossing the room, and opening the curtains of the bed on which the patient rested); Martin, my dear fellow, how do you feel?' The Colonel opened his eyes, and muttered something unintelligible—'Well, my dear fellow, keep yourself quiet; don't agitate yourself; it is but a mere scratch, I understand; not worth a fig. Keep yourself perfectly quiet, I always do in such a case, and you will be as sound as a trout in a few days. Good morning, Lindsay; see that my friend be kept undisturbed; nothing like rest for a scratch. Good morning;' and turning on his heel, he departed with the same coolness with which he had entered."

But Fitzgerald's courage was of a very uncertain character, for though he was often known to have shown great bravery and subsequent generosity in duels and rencontres, yet on some occasions he acted a sly, scheming, and over-reaching part,

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would take a dirty advantage, and, as the phrase is, show the white feather. In his conduct towards Mr. Bate, to which allusion has been already slightly made, he behaved in a manner incredibly insolent and cowardly. The Rev. Mr. Bate was one of those weeds that sometimes spring up in an endowed church: and who, growing up therein to do no good and some mischief, ought to be speedily plucked out. Like the Abbés in the Gallican church, a set of men have been found in the English, who, entering the profession for the sake of its loaves and fishes, being disappointed in their speculations, withdraw in disgust from its laborious duties, resort to London or elsewhere, and there hang loose on society; for by an impolitic law the presbyters of the English church are not eligible to other learned professions, and, therefore, though a man at twenty-four may become a priest, there is for him no *locus penitentiæ;* and the tinctorial adage is true, that though any colour may dye black, black cannot be turned into any other. So it was with Mr. Bate; unsuited to the profession he had hastily adopted, and yet incapable of engaging in another, he had no opening for his talents, except becoming a pedagogue or a contributor to the periodical press; and, choosing the latter, he became the clever editor of the *Morning Post.*

Following this occupation for a livelihood, as a man of pleasure he frequented the theatres, and became the companion of actresses, to whom he was not only acceptable for his conversational powers, but for his good looks and fine person. As he was walking one evening in Vauxhall with a fine woman, one of the most admired at that time on the stage, Fitzgerald, with two young officers of the Guards, met them; and Fitzgerald, evidently for the purpose of reckless insult, put up his glass and peered into the lady's face, in a way that Bate at once took notice of, and demanded his name and address. This the other refused with an insolent banter, and walked away. Bate being a high-spirited man, and not considering that his cassock should be any obstacle to himself or protection to others, was casting about how he might find out who the persons were who had insulted him, when he was waited on in his lodgings by the two officers, who said that they came to demand satisfaction on the

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part of their Irish friend, for the insulting language Mr. Bate had used. "Why," said Bate, "I was doing all I could to find *you* out, in order to demand the same from you." "Well," said the young Guardsmen, "you see we are before you; and now, sir, we have to tell you that our Irish friend you have insulted, according to the fashion of that part of Ireland he comes from, always fights as a boxer, and therefore it is in that way he will engage you." "Oh, very well," said Bate (who happened to be not only a very strong man, but one of the best pugilists in London) "I will fight the fellow in *any* way." Accordingly, time and place were fixed; and, at the hour, the officers appeared on the ground with a stout Irish chairman that Fitzgerald had procured, and he was passed off on Bate as the Irish gentleman that desired satisfaction. So to it they fell, and, before long, Bate so punished the chairman that he lay on the ground, and swore he would have no more of it. "And now, young gentlemen," said Bate, turning himself to the officers, "as I have settled *your* Hibernian friend, I insist that either one or both of you shall fight me in the way that gentleman ought to settle *their* disputes. I have brought pistols, so let one or other of you take up your ground." This the officers declined; and, along with Fitzgerald, who was there in disguise, they quitted the field, and left Bate to crow over them. Fitzgerald left London for Ireland; Bate found out the officers' names, and published the whole transaction in his newspaper. The consequence of this publishing was, that it was signified to the Guardsmenthat they must sell out; and they did so accordingly. Mr. Bate subsequently became, by inheritance possessed of a large fortune, and was made a baronet by George the Third.

CHAPTER VII.

M'DONNELL, BRECKNOCK, AND SCOTCH ANDREW.

BEFORE proceeding farther with the events that contributed to the close of George Robert's career, we must give some

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account of another of those men of blood and sons of violence with which Connaught then abounded—a man who, crossing George Robert's path in every possible way that could irritate and injure, fell a victim to the hostility he had provoked and gave cause, though by no means an excuse, for that revenge which seemed to be the sole engrossing object of Fitzgerald, during the latter years of his existence. A Browne might excite his animosity, but it would extend no farther than an insult; a Martin might provoke his dislike, but it would not extend beyond a row or a duel; and he might lead on his Turlough followers to retaliate on a Ffrench as an invader of his property. But there were deeper wrongs inflicted by M'Donnell, begetting a rancour that could not be repressed—a thirst for revenge that must be slaked in blood. His successful rival in popularity—his ceaseless annoyer in prosecuting claims on his estate—his bitterest foe as the law adviser of his father and brother; Patrick Randal M'Donnell seemed born to be his curse. And, perhaps, he was thus produced, in the arrangements of Providence, in order to bring out into such fearful prominence the blood-guiltiness of the time, and arouse the government to avenge the outraged laws, and make a great and terrible example. It may be well, then, to give as short an account as may be of this foe of Fitzgerald.

He was the son of a Roman Catholic gentleman of some property, whose estate, on his marriage, as is usual, was settled on his eldest son. This Mr. Alexander M'Donnell, the father, was one of the most extravagant and profligate squires of his day; and as he found that he could not part with his estate, or raise money by mortgage, in consequence of the entail, he felt the boy stood in the way of his unmeasured self-indulgence, and he took an intense hatred to him; he refused him, even when a child, the common advantages of his birth, denied him any education, and though not making any direct attempt on his life, he sought by privation and hardship to break the spirit of the child and bring him to an early grave. To these cruel deeds he was, moreover, instigated by the boy's being left by an uncle, when about seven years old, a property of £300 a-year. In order, then, to enable him to sell this pro-

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perty, which was more manageable than an entailed estate, he secreted the will, and drove the youth from his house; and lest any of his relations should harbour him, he represented the lad as incorrigibly perverse and wicked in his disposition. But this did not deter his maternal uncle, Mr. Patrick Fitzgerald, of Castlebar, from receiving him and rearing him as his own child, giving him a suitable education, and binding him to an attorney. Doubtless he was induced to give him this profession, in order the better to enable him to recover his property, which Mr. Fitzgerald knew was bequeathed to him, but was now withheld, its value depreciated, and disposed of to a person who had the hardihood to purchase, under the usurer's temptation, a great bargain. Young M'Donnell coming of age, and having much acuteness of intellect, great legal ability, and, moreover, an ardent and determined spirit that rejoiced in the conquest of difficulties, was told, for the first time, by his uncle of the property to which he was entitled, and the circumstances under which it was placed. Accordingly Patrick Randal set to work, searching, but in vain, for a registry of the will, and sat down for a time in the unwilling conviction that there existed no proof whatever of his uncle's bequest, but in the deed itself, which, if at all in existence, was in the father's keeping. While thus unable to get on, he was informed, by means of an anonymous letter, that the will was in a certain black box which had been placed by the father in the hands of the purchaser of the estate, and that the worthy seller and buyer of the property, aware of their otherwise want of title, had no dependance but on the secretion and safe keeping of this instrument. On this occasion the young attorney, knowing where his treasure was, did not stop *at any* means to get possession of it. Accordingly, watching his time, when Mr. ——, the holder of the will, was from home, he contrived to get into the house, to break open the black box, and carry off the papers. The upshot of this was, that informations for the robbery were sworn by the father against the son; he was brought to trial as a burglar on the information of his parent, before a Dublin jury, where he ably defended himself, exposing the whole transaction; the father had to quit court amidst hisses

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and abuse, and the son was honourably acquitted. But he did not stop here; he filed a bill against the purchaser of the estate; showed he *knowingly* bought it under fraudulent circumstances, and the Chancellor gave a decree which put him into instant possession. This property, as it happened, was in the immediate vicinity of Turlough; and Pat. Randal, proud of the way in which he recovered it, called it Chancery Hall.

Those who hold property, wittingly or unwittingly, under bad titles—those who are tyrannical, and are wrong-doers—nay, more, those who in the prosecution of their *just* right may have taken false steps, so as to do things illegally, ought to tremble when a young, ardent, clever attorney, who is flushed with recent legal success, who has the command of money, and who is ready even to break into a house and rifle a chest in prosecution of what he considers a certain claim, comes into their neighbourhood. In this way young M'Donnell became the redresser of wrong in the vicinity of Castlebar; and he had an abundant field for his operations,—for he rushed among squires, great and small, exercising, as they often did, most tyrannical power over their tenants, armed with all the costly terrors of the Four Courts and Chancery. In this way there are many instances known of his redressing the grievances of the poor, and of his bringing to shame the tyranny of the landlords. One may suffice, as showing how matters went on in those days. A squire of high degree had a demesne of which he was very proud, and which he desired to make as compact in its enclosure as possible; and so it was that a field of a tenant of the name of Gibbons, who held an old subsisting lease, interfered much with the rotundity of the screen with which the rich man desired to shut himself *in*, and the world *out*. Oh, this much coveted angle! how he longed to make it his own! Naboth's vineyard did not more disturb the ease of Ahab—and Gibbons was as obstinate as the poor Israelite; for it was with him, also, "forbid it me that I should give thee the inheritance of my fathers." To be sure, the squire's means of having his own way were not so truculent as those of the tyrant of Samaria—he only contrived that Gibbons' cattle should be driven by night into his deer park, and be seized

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there, and then required such a sum for the trespass, that it was hard for poor Gibbons to pay. He did, however, release his cattle, but time after time, the same proceeding was resorted to; and, in spite of the poor man's vigilance, his stock were almost as often in pound as on his pasture. Under these breaking-down vexations, Gibbons applied to Patrick Randal M'Donnell, who managed to detect the landlord's share in these proceedings, and to expose him before a court of justice; so the poor man had considerable damages awarded to him, and he remained unmolested, though the great man's park was not all within a ring fence.

All this, no doubt, was very good; but it is to be feared that these successes made M'Donnell proud and insolent, that the remedy was sometimes worse than the disease; and wielding, as he could and dared, both a law suit and a pistol, he was as pugnacious as he was litigious, and his name was only inferior to that of George Robert as a successful duellist.

The first occasion of the enmity between these two dangerous men was as follows. Mr. Patrick Fitzgerald, junior, the son of the man who had been so kind in his youth to Patrick Randal, considering himself as a relation to George Robert, when he came from Dublin, for the first time, to take possession of the property he had recovered from his father, invited George Robert to his house, and made much of him—a hospitality which was quite convenient to George Robert, as, just then, he had no house of his own. Of course, the young squire expressed his gratitude on going away; which induced the entertainer to ask for a renewal of a profitable lease, which he held of part of the estate of Turlough.

Landlords ought to be very cautious how they accept favours from tenants, in the way of hospitality or presents; for their prudential refusal of a subsequent request is rather an awkward process. Tenants are thus but too apt to throw out a sprat to catch a salmon. If George Robert acted unhandsomely in not paying for his entertainment, by a sacrifice of his property, it is at any rate a proof he was no fool. Be this as it may, Patrick Randal did not forget that his cousin was refused; and accordingly hearing that there were two Miss

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Dillons who had claims upon landed property to a considerable amount, and part of this property being in the possession of George Robert, he immediately took up their cause, fought for them with his usual success, and not only recovered from Fitzgerald, but also much larger portions from others. He thus put them in possession of a fine estate, though not without violence and alleged cruelty in ejecting under-tenants; and, amongst the rest, a poor, decrepit, decayed gentlewoman of ancient family, whom he forced, with the sheriff at her back, to leave the bed of sickness and old age, to seek another shelter.

Who ever heard of an attorney being such a knight-errant as to set up for a redresser of wrong without fee or reward? We, at any rate, never, either in tale or history, read of such a legal Quixotte. Certainly it was not for nothing that Patrick Randal worked for the Misses Dillon. He got their bond for £600; he had a lease made to himself of a considerable portion of the estate, as he stated, in *additional* remuneration for his trouble, but, as the old ladies said, in *trust* for the purpose of securing a settlement for the younger sister from the elder. So at the end of two years, and not before, he demanded the profit rents of the property leased to him; and the Misses Dillon denying his right, disputed his claim, under the advice of a confidential servant such as are generally about rich old ladies, and who will not, in their wisdom, allow any one to rob their mistresses but themselves. So this Mr. Tristram opposed himself to M'Donnell, and directed his mistresses to resist his claim. Of course, the odds were altogether in favour of the pugnacious attorney in this contest; he tried the law first, and finding his processes resisted by a rising of Miss Dillon's tenantry, he, as colonel of the Mayo Legion, ordered sixty of his merry men to march; and he and his apprentice proceeded (only think, O ye colonels of modern times! of an attorney-colonel, with his apprentice as his aide-de-camp, marching, writ in one hand and sword in the other,) to storm the quarters of the two old maids.

At Lavallyroe he encamped, and all the neighbouring gentry gathered to see the sport, some to act as mediators, and some who would rather have a row. In the meanwhile, John

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Tristram, the old ladies' man of trust, stoutly urged them not to give in. So Colonel M'Donnell set about with his men of war pulling down the refractory tenants' houses; some he set fire to, in order to smoke out the inmates, and one family were nearly burned to death; the people were enraged, and public opinion, both of the lower classes and of the gentry, was loud against all this *hard* work. The indignation went so far that informations were sworn against M'Donnell for the arson, and he and his apprentice were arrested and committed to gaol in Dublin, from whence, after some time, on high bail, he was liberated, being bound over to stand his trial at Castlebar; but his aide-de-camp and apprentice, Mr. Alick M'Donnell, remained, for want of bail, in Newgate. The duress, however, was not, in those days, very strict; for men of *honour* who *could be generous* were let out by night on parole; so this young jail-bird was often seen off his perch and hopping free and unquestioned with his brother canaries through the purlieus of Crow-street and Smock-alley; and when the time of trial came, the youth was sent down under the care of Mr. Jeremiah M'Ginty, the under jailer, a man of great humour, much good nature, and passionately fond of hunting. Being possessed of a roan mare of great speed and action, there was not a ditch, drain, or dyke in Fingal, from the wall of Santry to the Lock of the bay, that M'Ginty had not mastered; and he was known to have been in at the death of a March hare, that had run from the Cross of Finglas to the Man of War. On the occasion, then, of his going to Ballinrobe with Master Alick, the sporting jailer had a new glory before him; he had to face walls that he could see through, but not over; but still over he went, for the lively roan, the pride of Fingal, made as little of stone walls as she did of Squire Domville's double ditches; so across bog drains, over transparent walls and rasper ditches, the man of the stone jug went, heading the Mayo gentry, and putting to shame all the sportsmen of the barony of Carra. Patrick Randal was acquitted on this occasion; and, as a mark of his gratitude to M'Ginty for his kindness to himself and his nephew, he presented him with as good a hunter as Mayo possessed.

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These anecdotes are, perhaps, sufficient to give the reader some idea of this Connaught attorney of the 18th century, certainly not the worst of his profession, a bold, brave, able, active, selfish, at the same time, good-natured and good-humoured man; a fast friend, when his friendship was not likely to be at variance with his own interest; a dangerous foe, when there was any weak point on which the law could fasten, and at the peril of purse or person, place a man, and especially a Cromwellian squire, in the wrong. George Robert Fitzgerald and Patrick Randal M'Donnell could not live and prosper in the same neighbourhood; it was impossible they could agree, and equally so that one should not in the end by some means get the mastery over the other. Both were men of ability; both generous in their way; both brave and daring. George Robert, however, had one great superiority, independent of his rank and polished manners; he was chaste and moral in his demeanour; a fond and faithful husband, he was tenderly beloved by both his wives; while M'Donnell, like too many of his cotemporaries, was quite the reverse. He had discarded a wife, by whose pecuniary means he had been able to recover from his unnatural father his withheld property, and he lived openly and shamelessly with a base woman.

But what did all this avail when differences arose upon which *law* was to decide; *then* the astute and practised attorney was an overmatch for the wild squire. Accordingly, in self-defence, and to retaliate on a foe from whom he had suffered so many defeats, Fitzgerald cast about, and, not finding any Irishman able and at the same time willing to throw in his lot with him, he invited a Mr. Timothy Brecknock from London, to be his law adviser and companion; and certainly, he could not, in the wide range of the British empire, have selected a more extraordinary or more dangerous associate.

Timothy Brecknock, born in the year 1756, was the son of a Bishop of St. David's. Showing a considerable aptitude for learning, he was from infancy designed for the church; and having got as good a preparatory education as Wales could then afford, he was entered at Jesus College, Oxford. Here he signalized himself for great ingenuity of mind and quick-

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ness of apprehension; but these qualities were so neutralized by inconstancy and frivolity that he did little good. Emulous of others to a morbid extreme, he heard of no one as eminent that he did not attempt to get past him; but, before attaining the success he sought, some other object started up as worthy of his rivalry; and so he went on, like a wild hound in a field where there is much game, ever changing the object of pursuit —at every thing by starts, and nothing long. In the midst of these vagaries his father died, and Timothy, though but slenderly provided for, had the honesty, feeling scruples as to doctrine, to desert the church as a profession and choose that of the law. For this object he left Oxford without taking a degree, and took up his abode in one of the London Inns of Court. Here, with that perversion of mind which marked his character, he sat down to make himself acquainted with the quibbles, evasions, and nice distinctions with which our complicated system of jurisprudence abounds, rather than with those beautiful and recondite doctrines which render English law, with all its faults, so conducive to the well-being and prosperity of a free and civilized people. In truth, Brecknock had a sort of innate attraction for the discharge of the functions of a Newgate solicitor, and towards that position his talents, his conduct, and, shall we say, his fate, precipitated him, as to his proper level. A sceptic in matters of religion, professionally an exerciser of quibbles, by which law, the protector of morals, can be evaded, handsome, tall and well made, it is no wonder that Brecknock's desires and passions should be gratified at the expense of his purse and his character. He was unhappily abundantly successful in those exploits which could, at all times, be performed on the stage of London life; and especially during that coarse and disgustingly demoralized period, the middle of the eighteenth century—a period of which we have such graphic but gross pictures in the pages of Fielding and Smollett. In this way lived Brecknock; his business was that of a knave; his pleasures those of a green-room frequenter and friend of demireps; he was, in practice, the Tom Jones of sundry Lady Bellastons. But, by and by, he was detected in a crim. con. with an actress of some notoriety; he fled

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to France, came home for want of funds, was prosecuted, arrested for the damages given against him, and remained in jail as an insolvent until the husband of his mistress died. While in confinement he perfected himself in his knowledge of criminal law, and in his expertness in finding evasions for all who needed them.

He thus gained a character, and, of course, means of support. As a sample of his ability, we may take the following cast of his ART. A man had been committed to the Old Bailey for a highway robbery; and there was every reason to believe, not only from the credibility of the person who swore the information, but also from his bearing, his acquaintances, and the conscious recognitions of others in the prison, that the man was a knight of the road. Accordingly Brecknock waited on him, and, stating that he was ready to become his adviser, required, as the first step towards extricating him, that he would fully confess the whole transaction; which the fellow at once did.

He said that he had stopped a gentleman, travelling in his chariot, at half after eleven at night; that he robbed him of thirty-seven guineas, but not of his watch—it not being *his practice* to meddle with such discoverable things; that as it was a bright moonlight night; he had taken the precaution of wearing a crape mask, but that it unfortunately fell off when in the act of forcing open the chariot door, and he was apprehensive that one or both of the gentleman's servants had marked his features; that after he had effected the robbery he rode off, winding down a lane, but, by and by, heard himself pursued, and found that the coachman had mounted one of the carriage horses and was stoutly following him; that he did not like to fire any shots for fear of raising the country, and therefore hurried on, but at length came to where the lane terminated, and was forced to ride his mare at a paling, which she leaped in good style; that, when the coachman attempted to follow, his draft horse balked, and so he was safe, but, as he was in the middle of a well enclosed demesne, he thought it better to dismount and escape to London on foot—which he accordingly did, and, to his great surprise, found that his mare

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had made her way home as well as himself, and was standing at the stable door; that, five weeks after the robbery, he ventured to ride the same mare through Whitechapel, where he was recognized by the footman, arrested, and committed to prison. This was the substance of his confession. "Well," said Brecknock, "have you any money?" "Yes." "How much?" "Oh, about £100, which I have secreted about my person." "Well," said his counsel, "give me, at once, £80. I won't tell you what I will do with it; it is not, be assured, to put in my own pocket—I ask nothing from you till you are acquitted, which I am sure will be the case. There is plenty of time for me to prepare your defence. It won't be by that foolish resource of an alibi. I don't deal in such clumsy tricks. At any rate, make yourself easy, your neck is safe."

Accordingly, when the day of trial came, though the witnesses swore unhesitatingly to the identity of the prisoner,—inasmuch as they recognized both him and his horse by the light of the moon,—Brecknock broke down their evidence by producing Ryder's Almanack, the best authority of the kind then, which, handing up to the bench and jury, he pointed to the *fact* that the moon did not rise until three o'clock in the morning, just three hours and a half after the robbery had been committed. The result of this exposure was, that the judge charged in favour of the prisoner; the jury, without a moment's delay, acquitted him, and he was discharged instantly from the dock; and mounting his horse, which Brecknock, for the purpose of hastening his escape, had ready prepared at the court for him, he went forth, of course to prey on the public as before.

The way in which Brecknock managed this acquittal spoke well, at least, for his ingenuity. With the money furnished by his client, he got a new edition of Ryder's Almanack printed, exactly like the one published, in which nothing but the year's lunations were changed; and he, moreover, had the precaution to have half-a-dozen copies distributed through the court, to be ready for inspection in case any one expressed a doubt of the exactitude of the one handed to the jury. A few days afterwards the Recorder detected the imposition; but the

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highwayman was on the road, and the solicitor, of course, was not answerable for the misprints of an almanac.*

Some time after this, Brecknock, turning political writer,

* As a specimen of the ingenuity and ability of this person, we may as well give his speech on the trial :—

"My Lords, and Gentlemen of the Jury,

"I have not the least doubt on my mind that this man is innocent, though he stands here under very untoward circumstances,—inasmuch as though he was in bed, and *at home* at his lodgings at the time the robbery was committed, yet he can prove the *fact* on no other testimony than that of his wife, (and I know what little regard is paid to the testimony of wives witnessing for their husbands,) and of a child five years of age, who is too young to be admitted to take an oath. Moreover I do not seek to impeach the veracity of the prosecutor; his character is too well established. I say I have not the least doubt of the fact of HIS being robbed in the way sworn to; nor do I attempt to controvert the circumstance of the coachman following the robber; still I rest confident that the prisoner at the bar is *not* the person who committed the robbery. With respect to the identity of the horse, I feel that that is quite out of the question; and will assert that a horse seen by night cannot be easily known in daylight, and at the distance of five weeks. There is scarcely an instance of a horse so singularly marked that others cannot be found marked likewise; and, as a proof, there are now four horses, which the sheriff has been good enough to allow me to have at hand; they are in the Old Bailey Yard, standing together with the prisoner's horse, of which the witnesses for the prosecution are so very certain; and if the three witnesses agree in selecting, separately, the prisoner's horse from the rest, I will acquiesce in his guilt. But, my Lords, and Gentlemen of the Jury, I have more to urge in respect of the alleged identity of the MAN. The prosecutor, no doubt, is impelled by a love of justice; but this love carries a man sometimes into an extremity of zeal. The coachman may also have a love for justice; but, when it is taken into consideration that the conviction of the prisoner will entitle him to a reward of 40*l*., the court and jury may be disposed to look with jealousy on his testimony as interested in the conviction. The footman, having heard some particulars sworn to by the prosecutor and his fellow-servant, may believe what they say to be so true as to join in the same story. The *three* witnesses all have deposed that they remember the prisoner's face from having seen it so clearly at the time of the robbery, by means of the strong light of the moon. Now, I have one witness that will undoubtedly set aside even this concurrence of evidence. It is, indeed, an uninterested witness,—a silent witness,—yet one that will speak home to the conviction of the whole jury,—it is Ryder's Almanack!!! Yes, my Lords on the bench, and ye, Gentlemen of the Jury, I pass this almanac into your hands, and thereby you will see, at once, how utterly impossible it was that the witnesses could have so seen the prisoner by the light of the moon; for you will observe that, on the night of this robbery, namely, the eighteenth of October, the moon did not rise until sixteen minutes after three in the morning; consequently, it could not have given light at half-past eleven. And if the witnesses are found to be mistaken in such a capital point of their evidence, no part of it can affect the prisoner. My Lords and Gentlemen, I rest assured of his acquittal."

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changed his name from Timothy to Timoleon. At the period of the change of Ministry, when Lord Bute turned out the great Earl of Chatham, he wrote a bitter poem, called "The Blood-hounds," in which he abuses Wilkes, Horne and Churchill, in unmeasured terms, and praises the court favourite and minister, Lord Bute, up to the skies. Some say he was well paid for this effusion; others that the minister gave him not even thanks; it certainly, from the specimens we have read, did not deserve that any one should, in future, desire to retain such a poetical advocate. The following is one of the stanzas of this tasteful effusion of *well-bestowed* praise and blame:—

Them to succeed, a statesman came,
So free from vice, so void of blame,
So much above man's level;
One might mistake him for a god,
[*i. e.* Lord Bute]
Descending from his bright abode
To rid us of the devil.
[*i. e.* Lord Chatham]!!

Brecknock next tried his hand at prose, and brought out a pamphlet, entitled "Le Droit de Roi," in which he advocated the divine right of kings, the irresponsibility of their power, their right to impose taxes and dispense with parliaments, in a way that was unheard of since the Revolution, and which even exceeded the assumptions of a Lestrange or a Mainwaring. This absurd production of an obscure man would have sunk unnoticed and harmless into its deserved oblivion, had not a writer of the name of Dodd, who conducted a periodical entitled the "Tribune of the People," called public attention to it and challenged punishment for its author. Whereupon the House of Lords took the matter up, voted it a wicked and dangerous libel on the constitution, and ordered it to be burned by the common hangman,—which was, in due form, done; and its author, unprotected by the prime minister, was obliged to fly and hide himself until the public indignation was overpast.

It was in this obscurity, and after some years, that a new change came over the spirit of the man; and he emerged again, no longer an infidel, a debauchee, a knavish advocate for thieves

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and cut-throats,—but a religious enthusiast, holding the Bible in his hand, and urging his tenets with all the vigour of an active intellect and a fresh fanatic. In order to make himself more conspicuous, he let his beard grow, assumed a peculiar dress, made bread and vegetables his only food, and, staff in hand and bare-headed, went forth to promulgate his creed; and, if we are to believe what is reported of him, this creed, or rather bundle of creeds, was a congeries of almost all the mischievous and offensive heresies that ever were broached by the ascetics of the East or the scholastics of the West. He asserted the metempsychosis of Pythagoras; maintained the millennium, and that *he* would reign 1000 years with Christ on earth; took up the opinions of the Purists, that he was impeccable, and that nothing he did was sin; that revenge was nobleness of soul; that the Devil was wholly driven out of *him*, and that his body was the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Were we not sure that men holding altogether as absurd dogmas have been listened to and followed in England, it might be said that it was impossible for Brecknock to get a hearing. That he *was* heard there is no doubt; that he had not many followers did not arise from the wickedness or absurdity of his creed, but from the impropriety of his previous life: for we may rest assured, that, when the Devil desires to forge a heresy and make it pass current with the world, the utterer of the base coin must appear with clean hands at any rate. All heresiarchs, therefore, have been what the world calls HOLY men; their piety has served as the passport for their falsehoods; the messenger of darkness so wins his way as an angel of light.

While Brecknock was thus endeavouring to get a notoriety (which was the longing of his soul), by his new religious ways and appearance, a notoriety which failed, as has just been said, to lead to honour and acceptance, George Robert Fitzgerald, who knew him some years before in London and aware of his legal abilities had asked him then to accompany him to Ireland, now feeling an increased need of some aid, to protect himself and property from the machinations of his brother and the clever proceedings of M'Donnell, repeated the

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invitation; and, in order to secure Brecknock's services, he offered him an asylum for the remainder of his days, and furnished him with ample funds for his journey.

The season was winter, the weather severe, when, about the year 1782, Brecknock set out from London for Holyhead. The coach having six persons inside could only accommodate Brecknock with a seat in the basket; and, when it began to snow, there was a debate amongst those within whether they might not, by a little compression, find room for the queer man without, who, though outlandish in his attire, had the language and address of a gentleman. To this all acceded but a middle-aged lady, who, in all the maidenish firmness of one whose good nature had long ago withered away on the virgin-thorn, declared *she* could by no means ride in the same coach with one who had such a *mischievous* beard. The elder, therefore, had to bide the storm as best he could. He was, however, permitted—a great concession in those times—to eat his meat with the inside gentry; and it was observed that, though he eat nothing but vegetables and drank nothing but water, he paid, and was allowed so to do—the maiden saying nothing, in this respect, to the contrary—his full share of the bills along the road.

After six long days, they arrived safe at Holyhead; and, as was most common, there was a head wind against the sailing of the packet, and all were at the mercy of the innkeeper of that day, save and except Mr. Brecknock, who took lodgings for himself. One day, as his fellow-travellers were warming their heels (not cooling them) up and down the delightful town of Holyhead, they observed a quarter of Welch mutton and sundry flaggons of ale going into Brecknock's lodgings; and desirous as they were—and why shouldn't they?—to detect the sly Pythagorean hypocrite, they by and by burst into his parlour, expecting to find the old curmudgeon feasting on flesh to his secret heart's content; when, lo! there were a number of paupers sitting round the table and partaking of the meat and ale, while Brecknock was sitting at a side-table by himself, eating and drinking as Adam did—his food vegetables, his drink water. The truth is, that this eccentric man was always

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singularly generous; and now that he had, and that decidedly and probably conscientiously, given up the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, he was ready to give all he could gain to feed the poor. What an anomaly was he! What a congeries of contradictions do we thus find in one man!

There is another individual beside Brecknock to be noticed, as extraordinary in himself, and as much connected with the fate of our hero,—Andrew Craig, or, as he was called in Mayo, Scotch Andrew; for the Connaught people, not being able to distinguish the dialect of the north-east of Ireland from that of Scotland, credited Caledonia with the worthy. But Carrickfergus acknowledges him as born within her strongest walls; for he was the son of a turnkey and bailiff of that ancient pile —once a fortress, now a prison—and his father was well known, to the sorrow and dismay of many there, as Jack the Tripper. But whether this same cognomen was given to the worthy sire from his unwedded mother being often found tripping, or from his father's mode of apprehending his victims in the way of tripping up their heels, Mr. M'Skimmin, the historian of Carrickfergus, has left undecided. All we can declare, with certainty, respecting his youth is, that he was apprenticed to a blacksmith and farrier. And certainly a forge is a fit college for the perfection of a knave. Here, on the anvil of idleness, gossiping and horse-jockeying, may be best worked off a ready rascal.

The son of Jack the Tripper passed from hence, as a right merry, astute, and accomplished horse-boy, into the service of sundry Antrim squires in succession; and as he moved along from one place to another (for Andrew was a rover), he acquired a knowledge of the good points of a horse and the weak points of a man, that made him a "knowing blade." And with him knowledge was power; but it was power to do mischief to others, and procure pleasure for himself. Andrew's mischief was, in his younger days, mixed up with fun. The feline genus in youth is prone to playfulness, and a young man-tiger, taught to be trickish in a forge, might be very sportive.

There are sundry stories handed down of this mixture in Andrew's character. One or two may suffice. He had passed into the service of a testy old gentleman, who, knowing his

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tendency to misdemeanour, but aware of his cleverness, was desirous, by strictness and by following up transgression with certain punishment, to bring about the reformation of the scape-grace. But this had the very contrary effect upon the caitiff; it set him on schemes of revenge rather than on resolutions of amendment. And to this effect—knowing as he did that his master was very hoby-horsical and very obstinate, and that with him money was as trash when opposed to the attainment of what he desired,—on a day, when the old squire attended an auction and had fixed his fancy on a high-bred cow in calf, and when the animal was put up for sale, Andrew, taking his position in the crowd as far as possible from his master, bid away against him, and thus, by over-bidding, raised the price, so that the master had the honour of having the beast knocked down to him at treble her proper price. The cow was brought home, and, for security, placed in a meadow directly under the window of the old man's bed-chamber; and night after night he used to get up to watch the calving of the *dear* animal. Andrew, aware of this, learned to imitate the lowing of a calf; on a certain dark night, he put his talent into use, and the old gentleman, hearing the long-expected sound, rose from bed, and came forth into the field in his night-gown and slippers. Andrew crept on before him, still imitating the calf, until he lodged for the night the poor old gentleman up to his hips in a bog that was in a lower part of the field.

On another occasion, he accompanied his master to the house of a friend; when, one evening, seeing through the window the two old gentlemen enjoying their wine, he determined he should have wine too. So he stole into the kitchen, brought out a lighted coal of turf, and running with it rapidly about the house, it at the same time casting off sparks, he cried out, "Fire! fire!" The gentlemen in the parlour, hearing this outcry and seeing the sparks, rushed out of the house; and as they came out Andrew rushed in, and drank off the best part of the decanter of claret. But this was not done so cleverly as to elude detection: accordingly his master, informed of it, pursuant to his usual practice, determined to defer punishment until he should inflict it with all coolness when at home. On

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their return, therefore, Andrew, who knew what was in store for him, awaited his doom with no small terror and watchfulness, and he set one of his master's sons (a boy he had initiated into all the *science* of the stable) to find out how he was to be punished; and he was made acquainted that on a certain morning, just at cock-crow, his master would come into his bedroom, and with a cudgel would set about the castigation. Andrew, therefore, rose out of bed, tied his night-cap on the top of his bolster, making the bolster appear in the bed as like himself as possible, and then crept under it and awaited the coming of the avenger. So, by and by, in rushed the old gentleman, and seeing what he supposed to be Andrew, he, while stating why he punished, set about to belabour the bolster, while Andrew, from beneath, cried out imploringly; but by and by, gradually dropping his voice, he seemed unable to complain any longer; and then the old man, who was in fact a tender compassionate person, fearing that he had done too much, hastened to tell his two sons, whom he called up, that he feared Andrew had got the cholic, from the terrible groans he heard him utter, and he gave them some brandy to take to him to ease him of his pains. In the mean time Andrew had got into bed, and when the young men came in there he lay moaning. The sons approaching the bed, were greatly alarmed; but Andrew soon reassured them, telling them how he had eluded their old father, but nevertheless he *would* have his revenge on him; and he moreover said, that if they would not favour him in helping to pass the joke on their father, he would go and tell every wild and wicked act that, under his stable-training, they had lately been guilty of. The boys, of course, acceded to Andrew's conditions, when he assured them that no injury whatever to their father was to follow the scheme. Accordingly, by and by a report was spread through the house that poor Andrew was very bad—that he felt something inward was hurt —that he strongly accused the master of being the cause of his great suffering; and the poor master spent the whole night in great distress, and he heard with utter dismay in the morning that Andrew was no more. As men are not very anxious to look upon the body of one in whose death they feel they have

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been instrumental, the master would not venture near the body, but ordered that every thing should be done to give him a decent burial, and in those times a *decent* burial involved a merry wake. So in the barn Andrew was laid out, the young men being privy to the joke; and there, while he lay as stiff and quiet as he could, smoking, drinking, dancing, and all kinds of jollity went on, until towards midnight, when, the old women that sat around the corpse being stupified enough with whiskey and tobacco, the young accomplices of Andrew contrived to go round amongst them and sew their petticoats together. And now the witching hour of midnight had come, and stories of ghosts, banshees, and witches were told; and even the dancers gave over footing it on the floor, to hear of one who was allowed to come back from the tomb to warn of the woes that attend the wicked in the place where the fire is not quenched —when up started Andrew from the table on which he was stretched, and, casting a terrific glance around, he uttered a moan as of one under horrible agony. Universal confusion took place; all rushed to the door, all stuck together in the pass, and tumbled over each other. The old women, who till now had sat so soberly round the corpse, tried to rise and make off as well as the rest, but could not; the first that rose, finding she was fastened to her neighbour, and supposing that *she* would not let her go, gave her a blow in the face; the other, feeling herself in the same predicament, returned the compliment; and then anger got the better of terror, and even the ghost was forgotten; and, while all the hags were on the offensive with teeth, nails, and claws, Andrew and the boys returned to their rooms, and laughed themselves to sleep at the fun they had produced. Of course, the old gentleman, not wishing any longer to retain such an instructor for his children in the forging of fun, and not liking the ridicule of this particular adventure, dismissed him next day.

It is not our intention to biographize in this way farther; enough it is to state that Andrew joined the Hearts of Steel, and when that association was broken up he contrived to escape; he then passed from the service of a Mr. Lambert, in the county of Antrim, to that of his cousin of the same name, in the county of Galway; and next to that of a Mr. Burke,

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where, happening to wound himself seriously while out duck shooting, he felt contrite for past delinquencies. Being in a Roman Catholic country, and assured by those around him that a priest was the surest hand at making a clean breast, he requested the attendance of one, and casting himself into the bosom of the Church, that most indulgent mother of sinners, he prepared himself as he thought best for his awful transition. He subsequently passed into the service of Sir Henry Lynch Blosse, where he conducted himself so well, and was such an excellent huntsman, groom, and starter of game, that when Sir Henry gave up his hounds and his desire for hunting, on parting with Andrew, he made him a present of his pack of hounds and his two hunters. Having sold these, this notorious person passed into the service of George Robert Fitzgerald. From what we have stated, it would seem that he was just the clever, bold, loose-principled man that George Robert wanted.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

HAVING thus made our readers acquainted with the characters of the principal persons engaged in the closing scenes of Fitzgerald's career, it remains to narrate, and that as briefly as may be, the catastrophe. We have found how Fitzgerald had been thwarted in his schemes, wounded in his self-esteem, deprived of what he considered his property, and, what was worse than all, outrivalled in what he sought as the object of his fond ambition, by Mister Patrick Randal M'Donnell. Leagued, as this man was, with his father and brother against him, we find him not only their urgent adviser, but their active coadjutor in every attempt, whether by legal proceedings or factious and open violence, to get the better of him.* Even as

* The frequency of duels, and the constant occupation of pistolling, stabbing, and wounding, must have generated a blood-thirstiness and a recklessness in injuring each other that led on from homicide to murder. Barrington enumerates thirteen cotemporary *judicial* and official duellists, including the Lord

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his blood relation, these hostilities assumed a more aggravated character; and their properties being almost in juxtaposition made the occasions for mutual criminations more frequent, and

Chancellor, Master of the Rolls, and three Chief Justices! On what degree of violence could such ministers of justice consistently pronounce judgment? But, though there can be no excuse for Fitzgerald, and it must be allowed that the malignant way in which he brooded over and contrived the shooting of M'Donnell constituted him the worst of murderers—though he was not personally engaged in the deed, and even suppose he plotted it so as to be done in consequence of a rescue—yet, if oaths are to be at all credited, we find, from the following deposition, that M'Donnell set him the example; and, if the attorney had perpetrated what he had contrived, he would have exchanged fates with his rival:—

"The deposition of Martin Reddington, late servant of Patrick Randal M'Donnell: That, on Friday, the 22d of September last, as this deponent was returning from Rockfield, in the same county, he met with said Patrick Randal M'Donnell, near the house of Turlough, in said county aforesaid; at which time the said Patrick Randal M'Donnell hired this deponent as a servant, and brought deponent into the house of Turlough aforesaid, where George Fitzgerald, Esq., the elder, Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, Esq., with several others, were preparing guns, blunderbusses, swords, and a great quantity of powder, ball, swanshots and slugs; and that the said George Fitzgerald, Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, and several others of them, declared that they were very glad to see deponent, as they said they had business enough for this deponent, and thus mentioned 'The more the better.' Deponent saith, that on Friday the 22d he saw a great number of cattle in the dog-kennel near the said George Fitzgerald's house in Turlough aforesaid, the property of George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq., which had been taken by the order of Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, Esq.

"Deponent saith, that on Wednesday and Thursday, the 27th and 28th of September last, there were a great many people employed, with crow-irons and sledges, and several implements, in making spike-holes in the gables and other parts in the dwelling-house and offices of said house of Turlough aforesaid, in order to fire at said George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq,, and his people, in case he or they should offer to come near said house, for the purpose of replevying the said George Robert Fitzgerald's cattle. That on Thursday, the 28th of September last, this deponent saw said George Robert Fitzgerald, accompanied by others, come towards the house with a paper in his hand, which this deponent understood to be a replevin, and which he delivered to a man unarmed, and desired it to be given to Charles Lionel Fitzgerald; but before said man could come over the bridge, which is near the house, this deponent heard said Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, Esq., cry out to the men in the house and offices, "*Fire away, my boys!*" on which there was a general discharge from windows and spike-holes, both of house and offices, of guns and blunderbusses. That during the continuation of the fire, Patrick Randal M'Donnell charged one gun with swanshots, and afterwards he put in a ball, which he said he would keep until he got a fair shot at George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq.; and he frequently rubbed his hands, and swore by —— he hoped he would soon be happy by having a good shot at said George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq. That after the replevin was by force executed, said Patrick Randal M'Donnell often lamented he had not got a good shot at said George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq., as he was sure he would have killed him."

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the chances of collision more numerous. It is, then, easy to conceive how such aggravations, working on a haughty imperious man, biassed by an hereditary derangement,—whose type was, in a great measure, family pride,—might, in the absence of sound Christian principle, in default of those adjustments and checks which true religion might have provided him, have chafed and festered his soul into that malignity which made the destruction of his universal and everywhere enemy his being's end and aim. But it may be asked, why did he not seek an honourable quarrel with the man he hated? why did he not try to rid himself of his bane in what would have been counted the fair way of a duel,—to join issue in which it would seem that M'Donnell would have been nothing loath? But no doubt Fitzgerald looked down, or affected to do so, on the man, though his blood relation. The Geraldine desired to consider him his inferior, and he would not cross swords or level pistols with an attorney. At all events, though on one occasion they were on pistolling ground together, where two angry doctors chose to prescribe bullets instead of pills for one another, and he and another fire-eater acted as friends to "poticaries," who, in the Connaught way, desired to show they were *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*, yet then no duel took place; Fitzgerald only demeaned himself by outrageous abuse of M'Donnell. Besides, Fitzgerald, on some occasions, as was before stated, showed an almost unaccountable cowardice. Whatever was the reason, M'Donnell and he never fought; and still George Robert was heard to say that the same country *should* not and *must* not contain them both. Subsequently, when on a certain day M'Donnell was passing from Castlebar to his house at Chancery Hall, he was shot at and wounded in the leg. The wounded man himself, as well as most of the people, ascribed this attempt at assassination, without any doubt, to the procurement of Fitzgerald. Alarmed and vengeful at this outrage, M'Donnell used every means to detect the actual instigator, and to this purpose he had one Murphy, a retainer of Fitzgerald, arrested, and for twenty days, while he was kept in jail, used every means to induce him to come forward to impeach his employer. Murphy, however, either would not or could not

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be induced to criminate his landlord, and he was discharged without trial. And now it came to Fitzgerald's turn to act. Taking up the cause of Murphy, he got informations drawn and sworn before Mr. O'Mealy, a magistrate, for the false imprisonment and cruel treatment of Murphy, and upon these procured a warrant for the arrest of M'Donnell and others. For some time, owing to M'Donnell's confinement with his sore leg, this warrant could not be executed. But Fitzgerald, having a spy in his rival's house, and being by him informed that on a certain day he, Gallagher and Hipson would proceed from Castlebar to Chancery Hall, seized this opportunity. M'Donnell was beset on his return home by a large faction, led on by Fitzgerald; and it was in vain for him to take shelter in a house, or to hide himself in a heap of malt. He was discovered, dragged out, placed on horseback, and brought with his companions to Turlough House. In vain M'Donnell required to be brought into Castlebar, or to the nearest magistrate, in order to procure bail. Fitzgerald refused, on pretence of the lateness of the evening and that there might be a rescue. On this occasion George Robert acted with his usual arrogance and imprudence: for, finding a priest in the house whither M'Donnell had retreated, and this clergyman having, as became him, used exertions to have the weak and infirm man protected and enlarged, Fitzgerald ordered him to be tied up and made prisoner; and it was not until remonstrated with by some of his stanchest retainers that he consented to let go the priest. Why, if George Robert intended that M'Donnell should have been murdered, he did not order him to be destroyed when he took refuge in this house, and when he was detected in his hiding-place and it could not have been proved that there was not offered such resistance as might authorize his being put to death, seems extraordinary. This, and other circumstances, leads to the suspicion, that though Fitzgerald's object was certainly the death of his rival, it was not in the way of direct assassination. The mode he desired to bring it about in was the scuffle which he foresaw would take place if a rescue were attempted; and in order to bring about that rescue, he brought him to Turlough, and there kept him for the night, aware that

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M'Donnell's friends in Castlebar, but three miles off, being made acquainted with his caption, would come out in force in the morning and make the attempt to get him out of his hands. Expecting this to be done, Brecknock, who acted all through as the law adviser, was brought forth to read out of some law book that it is lawful, in case of a rescue, to put prisoners to death. Such determined fellows as Scotch Andrew and Fulton, being primed with this authority, were ready for the work of the morning. During the night, the three prisoners were kept in a room by themselves. M'Donnell was allowed a bed, which he accepted of, but refused all offers of refreshment. In the morning the three were sent forward, under a strong escort of Fitzgerald's men, of which Scotch Andrew was the leader, M'Donnell mounted and a man leading his horse, Gallagher and Hipson tied together. Not far from Turlough, as they passed along the Park, shots were fired from the other side of the wall; a man was wounded, and, as some say, another was killed. Upon this, by the orders of Craig, the prisoners were fired on. Hipson fell dead; M'Donnell, wounded in the arm, rode on, but was stopped at a little bridge by a man that was cutting timber; and this gave time to Scotch Andrew to come up, who remorselessly, whilst the poor gentleman implored his compassion, shot him through the head. In the mean time Gallagher, the other prisoner, being but slightly wounded, threw himself into a ditch, and pretended to be dead; but, by and by, was taken and brought up to Turlough House. If Fitzgerald and Brecknock were decided and accomplished murderers, they would and ought to have put Gallagher, when again in their power, to death. He was the only witness against them,—all the others present at the slaughter were of their own party; but he remained quite safe, and the only thing said to him was by Brecknock, who coolly told him he would be severely punished for bringing about the rescue, until the coroner, his brother, came out with regular troops, volunteers, and an immense mob from Castlebar.

The conclusion of this transaction, and the closing scenes of George Robert Fitzgerald's career, have been so accurately and graphically described by an author whom we have before

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quoted (Mr. Archdeacon), that they cannot be better told than in his words.*

"Brecknock was for remaining, as with the calmness of conscious innocence, and boldly demanding a warrant against Gallagher and others. This opinion, however, did not agree with Fitzgerald's own, who justly dreaded the fury of the volunteers and the populace, with whom M'Donnell had been so popular. Neither did it coincide with that of the Rev. Mr. Henry, the Presbyterian clergyman of Turlough, who had been latterly a resident in the house, and was now wringing his hands in wild alarm for what had occurred. This gentleman's horse was at the door, and he strongly urged George Robert to mount and ride, for his life, out of the country altogether, till the powerful intercession he could command might be made for him. In compliance with this advice, which entirely coincided with his own opinion, it is stated that he made several attempts to mount; but that —splendid horseman as he was,—whether through nervous excitement, guilty terrors, or the restiveness of the animal, he was unable to attain the saddle, and, in consequence, obliged to fly into the house again, as the military were announced to be approaching near. It is also generally asserted that the Rev. Mr. Ellison, who headed the soldiers, sent them on to Gurthnefullagh, without halting them at Turlough, where he himself stopped. Were this circumstance even true, however, Fitzgerald gained but a short respite by it, as the volunteers, with many of the populace, came furiously up immediately after; and, some of them being placed about the house, the remainder entered to search and pillage it. Brecknock and Fulton were immediately captured, but, after ransacking every corner and crevice more than once without finding him, the volunteers were beginning to think that Fitzgerald must have effected his escape before their arrival, when one of them, forcing open a clothes chest in a lower apartment, discovered him among a heap of bed-clothes in his place of concealment. 'What do you want, you ruffian?' he asked, on finding himself detected. 'To dhrag ye, like a dog's head, to a bonfire,' replied another volunteer named Morran, a powerful man, who seized him, at the same time, by the breast, and drew him forth by main force. A pistol was now presented at him by a third to take summary vengeance; but a comrade snapped it from his hands, asking if there was not murder enough already? 'What mercy did himself or his murdherers show to those every way their betthers?' 'Well, let them pay for that on the gallows, but let us be no murdherers: let us give him up to the law.' He was accordingly hauled out to the front of the house, where perceiving Mr. Ellison, he exclaimed, 'Ellison, will you allow me to be handled thus by such rabble?' Mr. Ellison's response to this saved him from further molestation for a time; and exertions were then made to withdraw the pillagers from the wholesale plundering they were practising within. One fellow

* *Connaught Legends.*

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had girded his loins with linen almost as fine as Holland—so fine that he managed to make some hundred yards fit round his body without being much observable. Another, among other valuables, made himself master of the duellist's diamond-buttoned coat; while a third contrived to appropriate to himself all the jewels, valued at a very high amount. In short, so entire were the spoliation and destruction, that, before sunset, not a single pane of glass was left in the windows. The remainder of those implicated in the murders were speedily apprehended, except Craig, who escaped for the time, but was taken soon after near Dublin. Fitzgerald was alone on the night of his capture, in the room assigned to him in the gaol. It was not a felon's apartment, but was guarded on the outside by two armed soldiers, lest he should make any desperate attempt to escape. It was some hours after nightfall when Clarkes, the then sub-sheriff, removed one of those sentinels to another portion of the prison, where he stated he required his presence. They had scarcely disappeared when the remaining soldier, M'Beth, (according to his own after account,) was knocked down, and his musket taken from him; while the door was burst open, and a number of men, all armed with pistols, sword-canes, and the sentinel's musket, commenced a furious and deadly attack on Fitzgerald, who, though totally unarmed, made a most extraordinary defence. Several shots were discharged rapidly at him, one of which lodged in his thigh, while another broke a ring on the finger of one of his hands, which he put up to change the direction of the ball. He was then collared by John Gallagher, one of the assailants and a powerful man, and, while struggling in his grip, thrust at with blades and a bayonet, one of the former of which broke in the fleshy part of his arm; the latter, too, in forcing out two of his teeth, had its point broken, and was thereby prevented from passing through his throat. After having freed himself, by great exertions, from Gallagher's grasp, he was next assailed with musket-stock, pistol-butts, and the candlestick, which had been seized by one of the assailants, who gave the candle to a boy to hold. By one of the blows inflicted by these weapons, he was prostrated under the table, and, while lying there, defending himself, with unimpaired powers, against other deadly-aimed blows, he exclaimed. 'Cowardly rascals, you may now desist; you have done for me, which was, of course, your object.' The candle had, by this time, been quenched in the struggling, and the gaol and streets thoroughly alarmed; so that the assailants, fearing to injure one another, and deeming that their intended victim was really despatched, retreated from the prison, leaving Fitzgerald, though wounded, once more in security. In his evidence respecting this transaction, he accused five individuals principally,—namely, John Gallagher, Dr. Martin, Charles and Luke Higgins, and Daniel Clarke. Of Andrew Gallagher, he stated he could say nothing but good, but others there were concerned in the attack whom he did not know; and, when we consider that those five principal assailants—not to speak of the others—were all particularly able-bodied men, while he himself was but of 'stature small and slender frame,' we cannot but

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conceive his escape, with life at all, a very extraordinary circumstance. Respecting the motives that induced the attack, various ones have been assigned to the various individuals concerned. Some, it is said, were actuated by fears that Fitzgerald, notwithstanding all his desperate acts, would still escape deserved punishment altogether, through his influential friends; while others acted under the apprehension that, if he were again released from prison by any chance, a close investigation of the spoliation of Turlough House would inevitably take place, and ample restitution be insisted on. But, whatever the unworthy motives, we have no hesitation in saying that the murderous and cowardly assault of so numerous a body of armed assailants on a defenceless prisoner, however guilty, who was already in the hands of the law, can admit of no palliation."

In the words of this author, we may repeat, "Thank God! such a scene as that *could not* be repeated *now*." A mob, in company with a military force, and in the presence of a magistrate, gutting a house, carrying off with impunity its property; and all under the pretence of taking vengeance for the death of M'Donnell! But this is not all. What are we to think of the attack on Fitzgerald in prison? And if the friends of M'Donnell were capable of such an outrage, were they not capable of attempting the rescue, and is it not probable they *did* attempt it? One thing, however, is shown from the *finale* of this transaction, and it is this,—that the state of morals and manners in Mayo was degraded indeed. When these men were afterwards brought to trial, though there was strong evidence that they, and none but they, were the perpetrators, —though public opinion clearly fixed the crime on these genteel ruffians — yet were *alibis* of the most suspicious nature accepted of by the jury as grounds of acquittal, even in the face of the judge's charge; and this unrighteous verdict was received by the whole populace, inside and outside the court, with an acclamation of rejoicing. He who lives more than half a century from these transactions, can dispassionately assert, that the acquittal of these men afforded just grounds for George Robert's trial being changed to another place, and committed to another panel than what Mayo could afford.

Fitzgerald's and Brecknock's trials were put off for two months, in consequence of George Robert's weak state, as suffering under his wounds. The two important witnesses against

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them both were Andrew Gallagher, one of M'Donnell's party who had escaped, and Scotch Andrew. Andrew had been arrested, after an anxious search, (for where will not the eye of justice reach, when its vision is sharpened by the keenness of personal revenge,) by Mr. Dennis Browne; and now, as approver, he proffered his evidence. Gallagher deposed that, on the night in which he, along with M'Donnell and Hipson, was brought to Turlough, and confined in a room over the stairs, he overheard, by means of a broken pane, Fitzgerald and Brecknock conversing, and giving directions to the men; and that one of the directions was, "if they saw any rescue, or chance of a rescue, to be sure to shoot the prisoners, and take care of them;" and that, when these orders were given, Fitzgerald said to Brecknock, "Hah! we shall soon get rid of them *now*," and Brecknock replied, "Oh, *then* we shall be easy indeed!" And after the guard was settled, Fitzgerald called back Andrew Craig; and when he came within about ten yards of him, he said, "Andrew, be sure you kill them; do not let one of the villains escape." Gallagher further said, that there was nobody with him then but M'Donnell and Hipson, except the man who was guarding them,—namely, Fulton.

Leaving Andrew Craig's evidence out of the question, as the informer, who was the actual murderer and whose life was saved for his information, there was no other evidence to prove that Fitzgerald had ordered the slaughter of the prisoners; and it is extremely improbable that Fitzgerald and Brecknock, aware that the prisoners were in a room over-head, would have been so imprudent as to give such directions within ear-shot of them. Neither is it likely that Fulton, who was in this little room, and must have heard these directions as well as Gallagher, would not have informed his employers that they were overheard. Moreover, a servant-maid, for the defence, testified that, though there was a pane of glass broken, yet the hole was fastened up with a board. Is it at all likely that if Gallagher had overheard this conspiracy to have them all shot he would not have told M'Donnell and Hipson; and would they not, all three, before going, as they knew they were, to certain

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death, have loudly remonstrated against being forced along to inevitable destruction? It is difficult to read the trial (which was soon after published) without coming to the conclusion that were it to take place in the present day, the evidence of Gallagher would be much doubted, and the judge would not direct a jury to find a verdict of guilty, when this evidence was corroborated only by the testimony of such a ruffian as Craig, who, though the actual murderer himself, was left untried and allowed to give his evidence against accomplices. The bench conducted the trial with great dignity and temper. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-General, exhibited more than his wonted acerbity and flippancy. On one occasion he forgot himself, or rather, his station, so much as to call Stanley (the counsel for Fitzgerald), Mr. Tautology Puzzlepate. Stanley retorted; and on this awful occasion the law lost much of its dignity, when two men, learned in their craft and eminent in station, were allowed thus to exercise their *little wit*.

Fitzgerald's address, after sentence was passed on him, was calm, pertinent and resigned, and delivered with a firm tone, and most respectfully. He said:—

"I beg leave to trouble your Lordships with a few words. I shall be very short. I do not mean to cast blame anywhere. I accuse no one. From the evidence the judges could have given no other charge —the jury could have found no other verdict. I think the verdict of the jury a just one, according to the evidence produced; but I did not think such evidence could have been produced. I did not think such charges could have been made against me, or I should have been better prepared. I had no idea of being found guilty. There are some family affairs which I have been endeavouring to settle, and which in truth are not yet finished, that I could have wished to have completed. All that I request of your Lordships is, to give me the longest day possible, that I may be prepared to meet my God. However guilty I may be conceived within a narrow circle, I hope, in a higher one, the unprejudiced part of the world will think me innocent: those who know me from my earliest life, know me incapable of such an action. I never feared death; nor am I afraid to meet it in any shape—in the most formidable, even an *ignominious* death. It may be thought I wish to solicit pardon—I would not accept of pardon, after being found guilty by such a jury, because I know I could not face the world after it. It has been suggested, and I understand the report prevails, that I wish for time in order to commit suicide. As a worldly man I never feared death; and, as a Christian, which I hope I am, and a good one, what sort of a passport would that be to

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the place of eternity? I forgive every one, and though I assert my innocence, I do not mean to say I have no sins: I have many which overwhelm me, and I only request time that I may make my peace with God."

Brecknock was found guilty also, and recommended to mercy by the jury on account of his advanced age. But the Chief Baron gave him no hope, and was severe on him in passing sentence. We say *severe*, because the learned lord presumed to judge the convict's motives. The following is part of what he said:—

"Unfortunate old man! happy had it been for you that you had never known law at all, or that you had known it better. The unhappy gentleman who is now at your side, would not have been brought to the wretched situation in which he now stands, or to the dreadful end which must now await him. Miserable man; you are fallen a victim to your own subtleties, and become the dupe to your own cunning. The venerable appearance you have assumed, and the sanctity you affect, I fear is put on as a disguise for the concealment of your wickedness."

The sun was not allowed to set on the criminals, after the passing of sentence. It would appear as if the high sheriff, the prosecutors, and indeed all the gentry of Mayo, were afraid that if there were any delay a reprieve might have been procured, by means of Fitzgerald's great connexions. Brecknock and Fulton were brought out first; the latter acted as a common ruffian, but the conduct of the former old man, now in his seventieth year, was serene and dignified—without one friend to stand by him, alone in a strange land, and neither understood nor beloved. He had, while living with Fitzgerald, been perfectly pure in his morals, abstemious in his habits, and modest and moderate in his demeanour; yet he had lived without drawing towards him the affection of any one. Though all allowed that he was a man of prayer, and, to all appearance, pious; yet still, as desirous to find some excuse for Fitzgerald, all the squire's outrageous and lawless proceedings were said to be instigated by Brecknock. And now this old man approached his fearful fate with all the calm fearlessness of one walking to martyrdom as a saint, rather than to execution as a criminal. He was plainly dressed, had his hair neatly curled on his neck, and wore his beard as usual, streaming

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down on his bosom; as he passed along, he bowed to the few who would acknowledge him, and ascended the cart from which he was to be turned off, with a firm but solemn step. When asked to join in the prayer which his companion was offering up, in the extreme of contrition and mental agitation, he calmly said, it was unnecessary; for he had made his peace with God, and was not conscious of having committed a sin for fifteen years. He also exhorted Fulton to confess all he knew; and when that poor wretch knelt down a second time, and joined the clergyman in offering up the Lord's Prayer, Brecknock, meekly and with precision, *repeated it in Greek.* He then stood up in the cart, adjusted his clothes, took out a woollen cap from his pocket, put it on, and stated that, as it was the last time he would ever draw it over his head, he might confidently say he had no apprehension of what he was going to suffer. He then drew it over his face, put one hand in his pocket and the other in his bosom; and thus patiently awaited, and that without a tremor, until he was warned that his companion was ready to have the cart drawn from under the gallows.

At six o'clock in the evening, George Robert was brought out. The sheriff permitted him to walk, and he went along to his last place by a bye-lane, the executioner preceding him, wearing a mask. He walked with a hurried step, and was arrayed meanly and without any care; his coat was a stained and worn uniform of the Castletown Hunt; his waistcoat soiled and unbuttoned; his stockings and shoes coarse and dirty; his hat tied with a hempen cord. Altogether he presented a spectacle fearfully in contrast with that which he exhibited when, on his return from the French Court, his light, elegant and distinguished figure set off with all that was fine and costly in the modes of Paris, he passed along, the envy of all the men, the admired of all the women, "the observed of all observers." The life of man has rarely presented such a contrast as this; it was a sight that even a Brown or a Fitzgibbon might have turned from and wept.

On reaching the scaffold he asked in an eager tone, "Is this the place?" Being told it was, he sprung up, shook hands rapidly with several about him, flung off his cravat,

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opened his collar, and adjusted the rope with his own hands. He then impatiently desired Mr. Henry, who, with his friend Benton, was attending him, to be brief in his prayers; after joining in them for a few minutes, he called on the executioner to perform his office well, and, having shaken hands with Mr. Henry, immediately after flung himself off, as if eager to be rid at once of life. But the rope snapped across and the unfortunate sufferer fell to the earth. He was but little hurt, however, and springing up, asked, "Is it possible the grand jury of Mayo will not afford me a rope sufficiently strong?" "Never fear, you shall have one strong enough, and speedily," responded the Right Hon. Denis Browne, the then high sheriff. "Quick, Clarke, let another rope be brought, and strong enough. Do you hear?—no more botching." In a few minutes another rope was brought; but even these minutes produced a most striking change in Fitzgerald. He now shrunk with horror from the fate for which he before appeared so eager. The pious reader will be disposed to consider this breaking of the rope, and the delay thus occasioned, as a merciful dispensation from God, of time and opportunity, to the criminal; he was allowed to taste of some of the bitterness of death, to call him to contrition, and make him feelingly, and for the first time, in faith, apply to a throne of mercy. Now, instead of impatience to leave the world, he was all reluctance; tremblingly, imploringly anxious for a little time to spend in prayer. Interval after interval passed on, and still he besought a few minutes' longer respite, which, when granted, he occupied in most intense supplication, and in the expression of the deepest compunction for his manifold misdeeds. The tears, the self-accusation, the trembling penitence of the man, who had been the most reckless of duellists, who had courted death and danger all through life, as if for amusement, who had rushed on to his execution so heedlessly, had a powerful effect on the surrounding multitude. The rock of popular feeling was struck, and the waters flowed; those who came to triumph and rejoice over a bad man's shameful end, now felt a sympathy in his sorrow; and pity and grief were expressed loudly, vehemently, and with unre-

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strained tears. The following is Mr. Archdeacon's description of the final scene :—

"In our peaceful times, when even the memory of civil commotions is beginning to fade fast away from our minds, death at the hands of the common hangman seems to be a fate appertaining only to the very lowest class of society; and it must have been a startling sight to see a man of Fitzgerald's birth, acquirements, and high connections, undergoing such a doom. That it was felt so in the times we are writing of, we have the authority of eye-witnesses still living, who have often told us they could scarcely comprehend the spectacle, for some time after his fall, to be other than a portion of some hideous dream. Even after he had remounted the ladder, he thrice drew down the cap, and thrice raised it again, beseeching, each time, some minutes more for prayer, in which he was joined alternately by Messrs. Benton and Henry. Those protracted respites were granted with some reluctance by the sheriff, who, with some other of Fitzgerald's opponents, could scarcely deem themselves secure from his turbulence until they were certain he was some feet under the clay. The shades of evening were gathering fast when he was a second time pushed from his last hold on life, and with renewed suffering. His executioner was not the regular Jack Ketch, who had operated on Brecknock and Fulton,—that functionary having refused to execute Fitzgerald on any terms,—but a convict who was to receive pardon for his services on the occasion. He was, of course, no adept in his new profession; and, what between his awkwardness and compunction, probably much increased by the late accident and his victim's after-nervousness, he managed the rope so badly that it instantly slipped down the scaffold pole to which it was attached, so that the body fell so low that the feet occasionally touched the ground. In this position he remained a few minutes, writhing and strangling, till a man named Metlan, one of the nearest bystanders, approaching, said: 'Well, though you had me in the warrant itself, and might have served me like M'Donnell and Hipson, still, for old nature's sake, I will not see you strangling without a lift. Hallo, you sir, hangman, shorten the rope;' and he raised the tortured body, while the executioner, at whom stones were beginning to be thrown over the heads of the military, complied with his directions. All was now speedily over. In half an hour the body was taken down, and, by the sheriff's permission, conveyed, unmutilated, to Turlough House; and it is a striking fact that he, who had been reared in the lap of luxury and the associate of the highest in the land, was waked with lights placed in bottles,—so utter had been the wreck, so entire the plunder of a house which had contained such an abundance of various valuables, that not a single candlestick was left for the performance of the last rite he should require on earth."

Popular belief adds an additional circumstance of horror to this execution. An opinion still prevails, to some extent,

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among the lower classes, that Fitzgerald was executed while the Right Honourable Sheriff held the reprieve in his pocket. The rumour, however, carries its own refutation on the face of it; as, in those days, information could not have been transmitted to and from Dublin by any conveyance then known, between the period of his conviction and that of his execution; and the rumour altogether arose, in all likelihood, from the publicly expressed anxieties and fears of the sheriff and other gentlemen, lest Fitzgerald's powerful friends should, after all, screen him from final punishment.

We have now brought this extraordinary man to his end, strange and fearful as it was; and though it must be allowed that such an atonement was most desirable to be made to the outraged law, yet, in making an example of this flagrant culprit, the law itself was outraged; and we are disposed to agree with the sturdy old barrister, who, on meeting the Chief Baron Yelverton, on his return from circuit, thus accosted his Lordship—"Well, my Lord, you are returned, I see, safe from Castlebar; come from dealing out *Connaught justice*. Yes, George Robert was a murderer, and he was murdered."

Fitzgerald, at the time of his execution, was about thirty-eight years of age. He was rather low in stature, but elegantly made, and of very prepossessing countenance; his eyes were keen, penetrating, and towards men, of a haughty, indignant expression; but all his looks and manners towards women were affable and fraught with softness; he was polished, to a fault, in his address, and very agreeable and sparkling in conversation. One who was frequently in his company used to say that, when he first saw him, on his return from France, dressed out in all the expensive elegance of the Court of Versailles, the button and loop of his hat, his sword-knot and buckles all brilliant with diamonds, his coat and vest as rich as the brocades and velvets of the French loom could make them, a muff on his left arm and two enamelled watch-chains with a multitude of seals dangling from either fob, his *tout ensemble* so light, foppish, and yet distinguished, he could not believe that that was the man who had fought more duels than any other of his time, and had shown on these and other occasions, a

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ferocity and blood-thirstiness very much out of character indeed with his appearance in a ball-room.

George Robert was interred at midnight in the family tomb, situated in a ruined chapel adjoining a Round Tower. After many years his bones were raised preparatory to the interment of his brother in the same grave. A ring was found on his finger, which remained for some years in the hands of a respectable yeoman, named Ritchie; and a deep fracture mark was distinctly perceptible in the skull. This fracture had been produced by a pistol bullet in Galway. The monumental stone has always been a source of admiration for the beautiful and highly-finished sculpture of the coat of arms, surmounting the inscription, namely, a boar with a lion rampant, and wreaths of shamrock in the centre, surrounded by a border of the most exquisite tracery. This admirable piece of workmanship is said to have been the performance of one of the Foys, a name remarkable in this part of the country for producing clever and ingenious mechanics; and there is a tradition afloat, that the ill-fated artist afterwards met a tragic, but not improbable, end, at one of the Italian colleges, where he was pursuing his studies. He was poisoned, the tradition says, by a brother artist, on the eve of an exhibition, through envy of the beautifully executed group he had chiselled for the occasion. The motto attached to the coat of arms is, "*Honor probaque virtus;*" and we give the inscription *verbatim*, and at full length, for the curiosity of its genealogical account. It is as follows:—

"Here lieth the body of Thomas Fitzgerald, Esq. He ended a life of as few failings and as many virtues as ever fell to the share of man, the 15th day of July, 1747, in the 86th year of his age. He was son and heir of John Fitzgerald, of Gorteen, in the county of Waterford, where his ancestors and he enjoyed great possessions, as well as in the county of Kilkenny, from the landing of Strongbow, in the reign of King Henry the II., A.D. 1111, to the time of his transplantation to Mayo. He first married Elizabeth Ferron, mother of Ralph Jemison, Esq., Master of the Buckhounds to his Majesty George II. He afterwards married Henrietta Browne, daughter to John Browne of the Neal, Esq., by whom he had Elizabeth, John, George, Nicholas, Julia, Henry, Mary Cecilia, Bridget, Edward and Michael, of which only married, George to the Right Honourable Lady Mary Harvey, sister to the Right Honourable the Earl of

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Bristol; Mary, to the Marquess D'Arezzo, governor of Naples; and Nicholas, to Margaret Stephenson, daughter to James Stephenson of Killylagh, Esq., and Bridget, to Thomas Lyster, Esq., of Grange.

G. R. Fitzgerald left a wife and daughter. His wife adhered faithfully and devotedly to him to the last, and was untiring in her exertions during his trial, supplying information to the lawyers, and seeking out for evidence. His daughter the writer has seen; an interesting, gentle, but not a handsome young lady, of very retired manners, and, as he imagined, of a decidedly melancholy habit; and yet when he saw her she was not aware of her father's shameful fate. She mostly resided at Castletown, the seat of her uncle, and from that most excellent of women Lady Louisa Connolly, she received all the fond attentions that her peculiar position required. But it so happened that, being alone in the library and looking over the upper shelves, she hit upon the trial of her father; she read it, and never after lifted up her head, but sunk into an early grave,—and it was best. Neither fortune, nor high connexion, nor all the delicate attentions and fond solicitude of friends could lift from her abasement the felon's daughter.

The informer, Scotch Andrew, spent the remainder of his few and evil days in the jail of Castlebar—looked on with universal abhorrence. He died in superlative misery of the *morbus pedicularis;* and it is even asserted that when dying by inches of this most loathsome of human maladies, and when his fellow-men would scarcely approach him, the rats came and eat into his vitals by night; and so closed the scene of his crimes and his sufferings. Such is the popular tradition, and it goes further and says, that of the six who were tried and acquitted unrighteously for attacking George Robert in prison, not one died of a natural or quiet death. One died after suffering excruciating pains from fistula. Another was said to have poisoned himself, after having been for a long time in the Marshalsea. Another expired a wasted shadow, a scoffing unbeliever, and requiring to be buried with the burial of a dog. Two others fought duels in their old age. How they wrought out the tradition by dying differently from other homicides, we have no knowledge, neither is it worth knowing or reading.

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CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

How much has Ireland changed since the days of G. R. Fitzgerald! The vices of the higher orders of one generation are apt to be those of the lower orders in the next; and who can say how much of the social irregularities which our own days have witnessed are justly chargeable on the gentry of the last century? But the moral revolution is spreading—has already in a great measure spread—to the humblest classes. In the higher orders it has long been complete. In amiable manners, exemplary habits, religious and moral propriety, the Irish gentry of the present day are, as a general rule, excelled by no other class of men. As it would be impossible now to find a judge so reckless of decency as to place the kept mistress of an aristocrat on the bench beside him: so it would be difficult among the Irish aristocracy to find one who would afford the opportunity. If few public bodies would be now influenced to compliment such a jail bird as G. R. Fitzgerald: so no bishop would use his influence for such an object. If no government would venture to pardon a criminal merely for his high connections: so criminals with high connections are rarely found. As officers of the law do not now submit to be made the tools of private vengeance or use the processes of justice as veils for violence and bloodshed: so few in such a rank as would enable them to abuse the law would desire to do so. Gentlemanly assassins, episcopal buffoons, fire-eating judges, reckless officers of justice, official paraders of profligacy,—in fact, the entire category of privileged criminals, have long passed away. The influence of improved public opinion has been of late years felt even among the most violent of the humbler ranks of society. The prospect of this progress has no doubt been occasionally darkened by increased political and religious animosities. Even these are softening down. But the most pernicious of political agitations implies some sense of restraint, and indicates a more wholesome state of society than

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the social chaos where all political differences are obliterated in the wild confusion of a corrupt government and a lawless people; and the worst phases of sectarian acerbity are preferable to the uniform impiety which drowned religious difference in the united blasphemies of a hell-fire club. Much has been written and said on the causes of and impediments to the improvement of Ireland. The fact is indisputable, so far as its moral and social condition is concerned,—few countries have undergone so great a revolution in so short a time.

THE END.

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IRELAND SIXTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF SOCIETY AND THE CITY OF DUBLIN—LIBERTY BOYS AND ORMOND BOYS—COLLEGIANS—POLICE—BUCKS AND BULLIES—CHALKERS.

THE character of Ireland sixty or seventy years ago was an anomaly in the moral world. Though united to England for seven centuries, and every effort made during that period to assimilate the people to its sober, prudent, and thinking neighbours, little progress seems to have been made in engrafting their habits, manners, and modes of thinking, on the wild Irish stock. The laws were promulgated, and sometimes enforced with unrelenting severity; yet there was no advance in the general improvement of the people. Even within the pale, or in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis, the king's writ was nearly as much disregarded, in the eighteenth century, as when Maguire of Fermanagh, in the sixteenth, demanded the price of the sheriff's head, that if his people cut it off, his *Eric* might be sent as a compensation to the Castle of Dublin. So little change was made in the moral feeling of the nation, that laws were inoperative. *Quid leges, sine moribus, proficiunt?*

A characteristic sample of the spirit of the times is afforded by the career of the well-known George Robert Fitzgerald,*

* See "FIGHTING FITZGERALD" (another volume of this series) for an account of this extraordinary man.

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in the strange and almost incompatible traits of character he displayed; his alternate gentleness and ferocity, love of justice, and violation of all law; his lenity and cruelty, patient endurance of wrong, yet perpetration of foul and atrocious murders. The scene of his outrages was, however, confined to a portion of Ireland separated from the rest by its local position on the remote shores of the Atlantic, seldom visited by strangers, having little intercourse with England, and either generally ignorant of its laws, or, from long impunity, setting them altogether at defiance. Still more striking are the examples of a kindred spirit existing among persons born and living within the pale of civilization, brought up among Ireland's best inhabitants, mixing with intelligent strangers, and having no excuse, from ignorance or seclusion, for violations of law and justice.

At the period we refer to, any approach to the habits of the industrious classes by an application to trade or business, or even a profession, was considered a degradation to a gentleman, and the upper orders of society affected a most rigid exclusiveness. There was, however, one most singular pursuit in which the highest and lowest seemed alike to participate with an astonishing relish, viz., fighting, which all classes in Ireland appear to have enjoyed with a keenness now hardly credible even to a native of Kentucky. The passion for brawls and quarrels was as rife in the metropolis as elsewhere, and led to scenes in Dublin, sixty or seventy years ago, which present a most extraordinary contrast to the state of society there at the present day.

Among the lower orders, a feud and deadly hostility had grown up between the Liberty boys, or tailors and weavers of the Coombe, and the Ormond boys, or butchers who lived in Ormond market, on Ormond quay, which caused frequent conflicts; and it is in the memory of many now living that the streets, and particularly the quays and bridges, were impassable in consequence of the battles of these parties. The weavers, descending from the upper regions beyond Thomas Street, poured down on their opponents below; they were opposed by the butchers, and a contest commenced on the quays which

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extended from Essex to Island bridge. The shops were closed; all business suspended; the sober and peaceable compelled to keep their houses; and those whose occasions led them through the streets where the belligerents were engaged were stopped, while the war of stones and other missiles was carried on across the river, and the bridges were taken and retaken by the hostile parties. It will hardly be believed that for whole days the intercourse of the city was interrupted by the feuds of these factions. The few miserable watchmen, inefficient for any purpose of protection, looked on in terror, and thought themselves well acquitted of their duty if they escaped from stick and stone. A friend of ours has told us, that he has gone down to Essex bridge, when he has been informed that one of those battles was raging, and stood quietly on the battlements for a whole day looking at the combat, in which above a thousand men were engaged. At one time, the Ormond boys drove those of the Liberty up to Thomas Street, where, rallying, they repulsed their assailants, and drove them back as far as the Broad-stone, while the bridges and quays were strewed with the maimed and wounded. On May 11, 1790, one of those frightful riots raged for an entire Saturday on Ormond quay, the contending parties struggling for the mastery of the bridge; and nightfall having separated them before the victory was decided, the battle was renewed on the Monday following. It was reported of Alderman Emerson, when Lord Mayor, on one of those occasions, that he declined to interfere when applied to, asserting that "it was as much as his life was worth to go among them."

These feuds terminated sometimes in frightful excesses. The butchers used their knives, not to stab their opponents, but for a purpose then common in the barbarous state of Irish society, to *hough* or cut the tendon of the leg, thereby rendering the person incurably lame for life. On one occasion, after a defeat of the Ormond boys, those of the Liberty retaliated in a manner still more barbarous and revolting. They dragged the persons they seized to their market, and, dislodging the meat they found there, hooked the men by the jaws, and retired, leaving the butchers hanging on their own stalls.

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The spirit of the times led men of the highest grade and respectability to join with the dregs of the market in these outrages, entirely forgetful of the feelings of their order, then immeasurably more exclusive in their ideas of a gentleman than now; and the young aristocrat, who would have felt it an intolerable degradation to associate, or even be seen with an honest merchant, however respectable, with a singular inconsistency made a boast of his intimate acquaintance with the lawless excesses of butchers and coal-porters. The students of Trinity College were particularly prone to join in the affrays between the belligerents, and generally united their forces to those of the Liberty boys against the butchers. On one occasion several of them were seized by the latter, and, to the great terror of their friends, it was reported, they were hanged up in the stalls, in retaliation for the cruelty of the weavers. A party of watchmen sufficiently strong was at length collected by the authorities, and they proceeded to Ormond market; there they saw a frightful spectacle—a number of college lads in their gowns and caps hanging to the hooks. On examination, however, it was found that the butchers, pitying their youth and respecting their rank, had only hung them by the waistbands of their breeches, where they remained as helpless, indeed, as if they were suspended by the neck.

The gownsmen were then a formidable body, and, from a strong *esprit de corps*, were ready, on short notice, to issue forth in a mass to avenge any insult offered to an individual of their party who complained of it. They converted the keys of their rooms into formidable weapons. They procured them as large and heavy as possible, and slinging them in the sleeves or tails of their gowns, or pocket-handkerchiefs, gave with them mortal blows. Even the fellows participated in this *esprit de corps*. The interior of the college was considered a sanctuary for debtors; and woe to the unfortunate bailiff who violated its precincts. There stood, at that time, a wooden pump in the centre of the front court, to which delinquents in this way were dragged the moment they were detected, and all but smothered. One of the then fellows, Dr. Wilder, was a man of very eccentric habits, and possessed little of the gravity and decorum that

distinguish the exemplary fellows of Trinity at the present day. He once met a young lady in one of the crossings, where she could not pass him without walking in the mud. He stopped opposite her; and, gazing for a moment on her face, he laid his hands on each side and kissed her. He then nodded familiarly at the astonished and offended girl, and saying, "Take that, miss, for being so handsome," stepped out of the way, and let her pass. He was going through the college courts on one occasion when a bailiff was under discipline; he pretended to interfere for the man, and called out—"Gentlemen, gentlemen, for the love of God, don't be so cruel as to *nail his ears* to the pump." The hint was immediately taken; a hammer and nails were sent for, and an ear was fastened with a tenpenny nail; the lads dispersed, and the wretched man remained for a considerable time bleeding, and shrieking with pain, before he was released.

Another striking instance of this laxity of discipline in the university occurred in the case of a printer of the name of Mills, He was publisher of the *Hibernian Journal*, and had incurred the anger of the students by some severe strictures on certain members of the college which appeared in his paper. On the 11th of February, 1775, some scholars drove in a coach to his door, and called him out on pretence of bargaining for some books. He was suddenly seized, thrust into the coach, and held down by the party within, with pistols to his head, and threats of being shot if he made any noise. In this way he was conveyed to the pump; and, after being nearly trampled to death, he was held there till he was almost suffocated—indeed he would have expired under the discipline, but for the prompt interference of some of the fellows. This gross outrage in the very courts, and under the fellows' eyes, which ought to have been visited by the immediate expulsion of all concerned, was noticed only by a mild admonition of the Board to a single individual; the rest enjoyed a perfect impunity, and openly exulted in the deed. The form of admonition actually excused the act. It was drawn up by the celebrated Dr. Leland, the historian of Ireland. It commenced in these words:—"Cum constet scholarium ignotorum cœtum injuriam admisisse in

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typographum quendam nomine Mills, qui nefariis flagitiis nobiliora quæque collegii membra in chartis suis lacessivit," &c.

The theatre was the scene of many outrages of the college students. One of them is on legal record, and presents a striking picture of the then state of society. On the evening of the 19th of January, 1746, a young man of the name of Kelly, a student of the university, entered the pit much intoxicated, and, climbing over the spikes of the orchestra, got upon the stage, from whence he made his way to the green-room, and insulted some of the females there in the most gross and indecent manner. As the play could not proceed from his interruption, he was taken away, and civilly conducted back to the pit; here he seized a basket of oranges, and amused himself with pelting the performers. Mr. Sheridan was then manager; and he was the particular object of his abuse and attack. He was suffered to retire with impunity, after interrupting the performance, and disturbing the whole house. Unsatisfied by this attack, he returned a few nights after with fifty of his associates, gownsmen and others. They rushed towards the stage, to which they made their way through the orchestra and across the lights. Here they drew their swords, and then marched into the dressing-rooms in search of Mr. Sheridan, to sacrifice him to their resentment. Not finding him, they thrust the points of their weapons through chests and clothes-presses, and every place where a man might be concealed,—and this they facetiously called *feeling* for him. He had fortunately escaped; but the party proceeded in a body to his house in Dorset Street, with the murderous determination of stabbing him, declaring, with the conspirator in *Venice Preserved*, "each man might kill his share." For several nights they assembled at the theatre, exciting riots, and acting scenes of the same kind, till the patience of the manager and the public was exhausted. He then, with spirit and determination, proceeded legally against them. Such was the ascendancy of rank, and the terror those "bucks" inspired, that the general opinion was, it would be impossible that any jury could find a *gentleman* guilty of an assault upon a *player*.

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A barrister in court had remarked, with a sneer, that he had never seen a "gentleman player." "Then, sir," said Sheridan, "I hope you see one now." Kelly was found guilty of a violent assault, sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred pounds, and, to the surprise and dismay of all his gentlemen associates, sent to Newgate.

Sometimes students, in other respects most amiable, and on other occasions most gentle, were hurried into those outrages by the overruling spirit of the times, and a compliance with its barbarous usages. Among the lads at that time was a young man named M'Allister, whose fate excited as much pity as execration. He was a native of Waterford, and one of the young members of the university most distinguished for talent and conduct. He supped one night at a tavern, with a companion named Vandaleur; and they amused themselves by cutting their names on the table, with the motto, *quis separabit.* Issuing from thence in a state of ebriety, they quarrelled with a man in the street, and, having the points of their swords left bare through the ends of the scabbards (a custom then common with men inclined for a brawl), ran him through the body in the course of the fray. They were not personally recognised at the time; but the circumstance of carving their names on the table was adverted to, so they were discovered and pursued. M'Allister had gained his rooms in college, where he was speedily followed. He hastily concealed himself behind a surplice which was hanging against the wall, and his pursuers, entering the instant after, searched every spot except the one he had chosen for his superficial concealment. They tore open chests and clothes-presses, ran their swords through beds, but without finding him; and, supposing he had sought some other house of concealment, they departed. On their retreat, M'Allister fled on board a ship, and escaped to America, where he died. He was a young man of a most amiable disposition. Had he lived in better days, he might have been distinguished for gentleness and humanity; the spirit of the times and the force of example converted him into an atrocious murderer.*

* He was well known for his poetic talents. In his exile he wrote an elegiac epistle to his sister, to whom he was strongly attached; the strain of tender

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Such riots and violence as we have described to have been frequent, seem hardly credible to those who know only our present well-ordered city and efficient police. But it is to be remembered that, at the period of which we write, there were no police. So keenly was the want of them felt, that, during the existence of the Volunteers, gentlemen of that body for a time arranged among themselves to traverse the streets at night, to protect the peaceably-disposed inhabitants, and men of the first rank in the kingdom thus voluntarily discharged the duties of watchmen. But the occupation assorted badly with the fiery spirits on whom it devolved, and the streets were soon again abandoned to their so-called legitimate guardians. In the day-time the streets were always wholly unprotected. The first appointment even of a permanent night-watch was in 1723, when an act was passed under which the different parishes were required to appoint "honest men and *good Protestants*" to be night-watches. The utter inefficiency of the system must have been felt; and various improvements were, from time to time, attempted in it, every four or five years producing a new police act—with how little success every one can judge, who remembers the tattered somnambu-

affection it breathes, and the polished elegance of the versification, evince at once the taste of a cultivated mind and the feelings of a kind and warm heart. A few stanzas are here subjoined as a specimen :—

"Whilst thou, the chosen sister of my heart,
With mirth dissembled, soothe a mother's woe,
Or solitary stray, and, scorning art,
From genuine anguish give the tears to flow,
Behold thy brother, cruel Fortune's slave,
With folded arms and brow depressed in care,
Where the beach bellows to the lashing wave,
Indulge each mournful accent of despair.

* * * * *

"Yet, torn from objects which my heart holds dear,
Still shall my fondness for Eliza live:
Then take this prayer, accept a brother's tear,
For prayers and tears are all I now can give—
'Parent of Nature, let thy sleepless eye
Be ever watchful o'er Eliza's ways;
Should stern misfortune threat, oh! be Thou nigh,
And guide her safe through life's intricate maze.'"

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lists who represented the "good Protestant watchmen" a few years ago. Several attempts had also been made to establish an efficient civic magistracy, but with such small benefit that, until a comparatively recent period, a large portion of the magisterial duties within the city were performed by county magistrates, who had no legal authority whatever to act in them. An office was kept in the neighbourhood of Thomas-street by two gentlemen in the commission for the county, who made a yearly income by the fees; and the order to fire on the mob who murdered Lord Kilwarden, so late as 1803, was given by Mr. Bell, a magistrate of the county and not the city of Dublin. Another well-known member of the bench was Mr. Drury, who halted in his gait, and was called "the lame justice." On the occasion above mentioned, he retired for safety to the garret of his house in the Coombe, from whence, as Curran remarked, "he played with considerable effect on the rioters with a large telescope."

Among the gentry of the period was a class called "Bucks," whose whole enjoyment and the business of whose life seemed to consist in eccentricity and violence. Many of their names have come down to us. "Buck English," "Buck Sheehy," and various others, have left behind them traditionary anecdotes so repugnant to the conduct that marks the character of a gentleman of the present day, that we hardly believe they could have pretensions to be considered as belonging to the same class of society. These propensities were not confined to individuals, but extended through whole families. There was an instance in which one brother of a well-known race shot his friend, and another stabbed his coachman. They were distinguished by the appellatives of "Kilkelly" and "Killcoachy." At the same time, there were three noblemen, brothers, so notorious for their outrages, that they acquired singular names, as indicative of their characters. The first was the terror of every one who met him in public places—the second was seldom out of prison—and the third was lame, yet no whit disabled from his buckish achievements; they were universally known by the names of "Hellgate," "Newgate," and "Cripplegate."

Some of the Bucks associated together under the name of

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the "Hell-fire Club;" and among other infernal proceedings, it is reported that they set fire to the apartment in which they met, and endured the flames with incredible obstinacy, till they were forced out of the house; in derision, as they asserted, of the threatened torments of a future state. On other occasions, in mockery of religion, they administered to one another the sacred rites of the church in a manner too indecent for description. Others met under the appellation of "Mohawk," "Hawkabite," "Cherokee," and other Indian tribes, then noted for their cruelty and ferocity; and their actions would not disgrace their savage archetypes. Others were known by the soubriquet of "Sweaters and Pinkindindies." It was their practice to cut off a small portion of the scabbards of the swords which every one then wore, and prick or "pink" the persons with whom they quarrelled with the naked points, which were sufficiently protruded to inflict considerable pain, but not sufficient to cause death. When this was intended, a greater length of the blade was uncovered. Barbers at that time were essential persons to "Bucks" going to parties, as no man could then appear without his hair elaborately dressed and powdered. The disappointment of a barber was therefore a sentence of exclusion from a dinner, supper party, or ball, where a fashionable man might as well appear without his head as without powder and pomatum. When any unfortunate *friseur* disappointed, he was the particular object of their rage; and more than one was, it is said, put to death by the long points, as a just punishment for his delinquency.

There was at that time a celebrated coffee-house, called "Lucas's," where the Royal Exchange now stands. This was frequented by the fashionable, who assumed an intolerable degree of insolence over all of less rank who frequented it. Here a Buck used to strut up and down with a long train to his morning gown; and if any person, in walking across the room, happened accidentally to tread upon it, his sword was drawn, and the man punished on the spot for his supposed insolence. On one occasion,—an old gentleman who witnessed the transaction informed us,—a plain man, of a genteel appearance, crossed the room for a newspaper, as one of the Bucks of

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the day was passing, and touched the prohibited train accidentally with his foot. The sword of the owner was instantly out, and, as every one then carried a sword, the offending man also drew his, a small tuck, which he carried as an appendage to dress, without at all intending or knowing how to use it. Pressed upon by his ferocious antagonist, he was driven back to the wall, to which the Buck was about to pin him. As the latter drew back for the lunge, his terrified opponent, in an impulse of self-preservation, sprung within his point, and without aim or design pierced him through the body. The Buck was notorious for his skill in fencing, and had killed or wounded several adversaries. This opportune check was as salutary in its effects at the coffee-house as the punishment of Kelly was at the theatre.

On the 29th of July, 1784, six Bucks were returning home, after dining with the Attorney-General, Fitzgibbon. As they passed the house of a publican, named Flattery, on Ormond quay, they determined to amuse themselves by "sweating," *i. e.*, making him give up all his fire-arms. They entered the house, and began the entertainment by "pinking" the waiter. Mrs. Flattery, presuming on the protection that would be afforded by her sex, came down to pacify them, but one of the party, more heated with wine than the rest, assaulted and began to take indecent liberties with her. Her husband, who had at first kept himself concealed, in the hope that his tormentors could be got quietly out of the house, roused by the insult to his wife, rushed out and knocked the assailant down. The Bucks drew their swords. Flattery armed himself with a gun, and aided by the people of the house and some who came to his assistance from the street, succeeded in driving them out on the quay. The Bucks, who happened to hold high military rank, unfortunately met with some soldiers, whom they ordered to follow them, and returned to Flattery's house, vowing vengeance on all the inmates. A message had been sent to the Sheriff, Smith, to come and keep the peace, but he was able to collect only five men at the main guard, and when they reached the scene of the riot, it was so violent that their assistance was quite useless. The "spree" would probably have ended in the

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total sacking of Flattery's house, only for the accidental arrival of some gentlemen dispersing from a Volunteer meeting, who willingly assisted the Sheriff. The "Bucks," however, escaped being arrested. One of them was a noble lord, two were colonels in the army, and the others of high rank and aides-de-camps to the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Rutland. The latter interested himself on their behalf; and such was the influence of their rank, that the matter was hushed up, and the *gentlemen* engaged in this atrocious outrage, though all well known, escaped unpunished.

The excitement of these men was not, however, always of a cruel or violent kind. Their eccentricities were often of a peaceful character, and displayed themselves in a more harmless manner. Colonel St. Leger (pronounced Sallenger) was a large man, handsome and well made, and particularly acceptable to the society of the Castle during the viceroyalty of the Duke of Rutland, and was a devoted admirer of the beautiful Duchess, taking all occasions to display his gallantry, sometimes in the most extravagant manner. Seeing her Grace wash her hands and mouth one day after dinner, he called immediately for the glass, and, standing up, drank to the bottom the contents. "St. Leger," said the Duke, "you are in luck; her Grace washes her feet to-night, and you shall have another goblet after supper."

The feat of another gentleman, who proposed a bet of a considerable sum, that he would proceed to Jerusalem, play ball against its walls, and return in a given time, is well known in Dublin, and obtained the enterprising challenger a soubriquet by which he was ever afterwards universally known. His name was "Whaley," and to the hour of his death, which occurred recently, he was called "Jerusalem Whaley."

The legislature of the time presents a few striking illustrations of the violent spirit exhibited in some of the anecdotes we have here recorded. From 1773 to 1783 several acts were passed enacting the most extreme penalties for the punishment of offenders called "Chalkers." These acts recite that profligate and ill-disposed persons were in the habit of mangling others "merely with the wanton and wicked intent to disable

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and disfigure them." They seem as appropriate to the gentlemanly brutalities of Bucks and Pinkindindies as to the feats of their rivals the weavers and butchers, and there is an exception in the punishment, which seems adapted more particularly for the former, viz., that while the punishment for "chalking" is made in the highest degree severe, it is provided that the offence shall not corrupt the offender's blood, or cause a forfeiture of his property to the prejudice of his wife or relatives. In 1783 the brutal custom of houghing (a favourite practice, as we mentioned before, with the Dublin butchers in their feuds), occasioned another statute, for the more effectual discovery and prosecution of offenders called "Houghers." This latter act had the curious effect of increasing the evil it was intended to check. It adopted the clumsy contrivance of pensioning the victim of the hougher for life on the district where the offence was committed, unless the offender was convicted. It appears from the act that the military were the class against whom the practice of houghing was most in vogue, and when soldiers became unwilling to continue in the army, either from being employed against their political prejudices, or from being entrapped as recruits, or from any other reason, they used secretly to *hough themselves*, and, as the conviction of the offender was then impossible, they thus obtained a pension for life.

CHAPTER II.

DUELLING—JUDICIAL AND LEGAL DUELLISTS—DUELLING CLUBS AND RULES—HAYES—PAT POWER—BRYAN MAGUIRE—TRIALS FOR DUELS.

THE universal practice of duelling, and the ideas entertained of it, contributed not a little to the disturbed and ferocious state of society we have been describing. No gentleman had taken his proper station in life till he had "smelt powder," as it was called; no barrister could go circuit till he had obtained a

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reputation in this way; no election, and scarcely an assizes, passed without a number of duels; and many men of the bar, practising half a century ago, owed their eminence, not to powers of eloquence or to legal ability, but to a daring spirit and the number of duels they had fought. Some years since, a young friend, going to the bar, consulted the late Dr. Hodgkinson, Vice-Provost of Trinity College, then a very old man, as to the best course of study to pursue, and whether he should begin with Fearne or Chitty. The doctor, who had long been secluded from the world, and whose observation was beginning to fail, immediately reverted to the time when he had been himself a young barrister; and his advice was—"My young friend, practise four hours a day at Rigby's pistol gallery, and it will advance you to the woolsack faster than all the Fearnes and Chittys in the library." Sir Jonah Barrington gives some singular details illustrative of this, and a catalogue of barristers who killed their man, and judges who fought their way to the bench. We shall notice some of them, with a few additional particulars which Barrington has not mentioned.

Among the barristers most distinguished in this way was Bully Egan, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the county of Dublin. He was a large, black, burly man, but of so soft and good-natured a disposition, that he was never known to pass a severe sentence on a criminal without blubbering in tears. Yet he, perhaps, fought more duels than any man on or off the bench. Though so tender-hearted in passing sentence on a criminal, he was remarkably firm in shooting a friend. He fought at Donnybrook with the Master of the Rolls, before a crowd of spectators, who were quite amused at the drollery of the scene. When his antagonist fired, he was walking coolly away, saying his honour was satisfied; but Egan called out he must have a shot at "his honour." On his returning to his place, Egan said he would not humour him, or be bothered with killing him, but he might either come and shake hands, or go to the devil. On another occasion he fought with Keller, a brother barrister. It was no unusual thing for two opposite counsel to fall out in court in discussing a legal point, retire to a neighbouring field to settle it with pistols,

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and then return to court to resume their business in a more peaceable manner. Such an instance occurred at the assizes of Waterford. Keller and Egan fell out on a point of law, and both retired from court. They crossed the river Suir in a ferry-boat, to gain the county of Kilkenny. Harry Hayden, a large man, and a justice of peace for the county, when he heard of it, hastened to the spot, and got in between them just as they were preparing to fire. They told him to get out of the way or they would shoot him, and then break every bone in his body. He declared his authority as a justice of the peace. They told him if he was St. Peter from heaven they would not mind him. They exchanged shots without effect, and then returned to court. The cause of their absence was generally understood, and they found the bench, jury, and spectators quietly expecting to hear which of them was killed.

Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-General, who was afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of Clare, fought with Curran, afterwards Master of the Rolls, with enormous pistols, twelve inches long.

Scott, afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Earl of Clonmel, fought Lord Tyrawly on some affair about his wife, and afterwards with the Earl of Llandaff, about his sister, and with several others, on miscellaneous subjects, and with various weapons, swords, and pistols.

Metge, Baron of the Exchequer, fought with his own *brother-in-law*, and two other antagonists.

Patterson, Justice of the Common Pleas, fought three country gentlemen, and wounded them all; one of the duels was with small swords. Toler, Lord Norbury, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, fought "fighting Fitzgerald," and several others. So distinguished was Mr. Toler for his deeds in this way, that he was always the man depended on by the administration to frighten a member of the opposition; and so rapid was his promotion in consequence, that it was said he *shot up* into preferment.

Grady, First Counsel to the Revenue, fought Maher and Campbell, two barristers, and several others *quos perscribere longum est.*

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Curran, Master of the Rolls, was as much distinguished for his duels as his eloquence. He called out, among others, Lord Buckingham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, because he would not dismiss, at his dictation, a public officer.

The Right Honourable G. Ogle, a Privy Councillor, and member for Dublin, the great Orange champion, encountered Barny Coyle, a distiller of whiskey, because he was a papist; and Coyle challenged him, because he said "he would as soon break an oath as swallow a poached egg." The combatants were so inveterate, that they actually discharged *four* brace of pistols without effect. The seconds did not come off so well as the principals—one of them broke his arm by stumbling into a potato trench. Ogle was as distinguished a poet as a duellist, and his song of "Bannow's Banks" has been for half a century a prime favourite.

Sir Hardinge Gifford, Chief Justice of Ceylon, had an encounter with the unfortunate barrister, Bagnal Harvey, afterwards the rebel leader in the county of Wexford, by whom he was wounded.

The Right Honourable Henry Grattan, leader of the House of Commons, was ever ready to sustain with his pistols the force of his arguments. His cool ferocity, on such occasions, was a fearful display. He began by fighting Lord Earlsfort, and ended by shooting the Honourable Isaac Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer. He called him, in the debate on the Union, "a dancing-master," and while the debate was going on, went from the house to fight him, and shot him through the arm.

So general was the practice, and so all-pervading was the duel mania, that the peaceful shades of our university could not escape it. Not only students adopted the practice, but the principal and fellows set the example. The Honourable J. Hely Hutchinson, the Provost, introduced, among other innovations on the quiet retreats of study, dancing and the fashionable arts. Among them was the noble science of defence, for which he wished to endow a professorship. He is represented in Pranceriana* as a fencing-master, trampling on Newton's

* "Pranceriana—a collection of fugitive pieces, published since the appointment of Provost Hutchinson, A.D. 1775."

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Principia, while he makes a lunge. He set the example of duelling to his pupils, by challenging and fighting Doyle, a Master in Chancery; while his son, the Honourable Francis Hutchinson, Collector of the Customs in Dublin, not to degenerate from his father, fought a duel with Lord Mountnorris.

As if this was not a sufficient incentive to the students, the Honourable Patrick Duigenan, a Fellow and Tutor in Trinity College, challenged a barrister, and fought him; and not satisfied with setting one fighting example to his young class of pupils, he called out a second opponent to the field.

The public mind was in such a state of irritation from the period of 1780 to the time of the Union, that it was supposed three hundred remarkable duels were fought in Ireland during that interval. Counties or districts became distinguished for their dexterity at the weapons used—Galway, for the sword; Tipperary, Roscommon, and Sligo, for the pistol; Mayo for equal skill in both.

So universal and irrepressible was the propensity, that *duelling clubs* were actually established, the conditions of which were, that before a man was ballotted for he must sign a solemn declaration that he had exchanged a shot or thrust with some antagonist: and a code of laws and regulations were drawn up as a standard, to refer to on all points of honour. This was called, "The practice of duelling and points of honour settled at Clonmel summer assizes, 1755, by gentlemen delegates from Tipperary, Galway, &c., and presented for general adoption throughout Ireland." This singular national document is still extant, though happily now never appealed to.

The following occurrence, which took place in February, 1781, is characteristic of the mode in which points of honour were then settled. A gentleman in the uniform of the Roscommon Volunteers came into the room at a fashionable hazard-table. He was abused by one of the company present, with whom he happened to be engaged in litigation, and to whom, for that reason, he did not choose to reply. The bystanders imputing his silence to cowardice, added their sneers to the reproaches of his first assailant. One of the party, a subaltern in the army, was particularly severe in his taunts, and at

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to length, in a paroxysm of indignation at what he conceived be a disgrace to the military costume—being worn by a man who appeared not to have a spark of courage—he came up to the stranger, and rudely taking off his hat, tore the cockade out of it, and threw it on the ground. The strange gentleman drew his sword, and called upon any person who dared to come forward till he would chastise him. The young officer declared that he was under a promise never to fight in that house. The parties therefore retired, but a hostile message was, of course, immediately sent. The zealous subaltern, however, having discovered that his antagonist, far from being a coward, was a man of established courage and a skilful duellist, offered to make any apology. None would be accepted which was not as public as the insult, and the terms to which he was obliged to submit were the following. He provided a cockade similar to that he had taken from the gentleman's hat, brought it to the coffee-room at the most public hour of the day, there in presence of the company acknowledged his offence and asked forgiveness, and taking his adversary's hat placed the cockade in it, declaring he thought him most worthy to wear it.

Weapons of offence were generally kept at the inns, for the accommodation of those who might come on an emergency unprovided. In such cases "pistols were ordered for two, and breakfast for one," as it might, and did sometimes, happen that the other did not return to partake of it, being left dead on the field. No place was free from these encounters: feuds were cherished and offences often kept in memory till the parties met, when swords were drawn, and the combat commenced in the public street; a ring was formed round the parties, and they fought within it like two pugilists at Moulsey Hurst. A spectator described to us such an encounter which he witnessed in St. Stephen's-green. One of the combatants was, we believe, G. R. Fitzgerald. The parties were walking round the enclosure in different directions, and as soon as they met they sprang at each other like two game cocks; a crowd collected, and a ring was formed, when some humane person cried out, "For God's sake, part them." "No," said a grave gentleman in the crowd, "let them fight it out; one will probably be

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killed, and the other hanged for the murder, and society will get rid of two pests." One of them did thrust the other through the tail of his coat, and he long exhibited in public, by his uneasy gait, the painful and disgraceful seat of the wound.

Among the duellists of the south of Ireland, at the close of the last century, were several whose deeds are still talked of. One was a gentleman named Hayes, and called "nosey," from a remarkable fleshy excrescence growing from the top of his nose, which increased to an enormous size. It was said to be the point at which his antagonist always aimed, as the most striking and conspicuous part of his person. On one occasion he tried in vain to bring an offender to the field, so he charged his son never to appear again in his presence till he brought with him the ear of his antagonist. In obedience to his father's commands, the son sought out the unfortunate man, seized him, and, as was currently reported, cut off his ear, and actually brought it back to his father, as a peace offering, in a handkerchief.

Another was Pat Power, of Daragle. He was a fat, robust man, much distinguished for his intemperance, and generally seen with a glowing red face. He on one occasion fought with a fire-eating companion called Bob Briscoe; when taking aim, he said he still had a friendship for him, and would show it; so he only shot off his whisker and the top of his ear. His pistol was always at the service of another who had less inclination to use his own; and when a friend of his declined a challenge, Power immediately took it up for him. When the Duke of Richmond was in the South of Ireland he knighted many persons, without much regard to their merit or claims. In Waterford he was particularly profuse of his honours in this way. Among his knights were the recorder, the paymaster of a regiment, and a lieutenant. Power was in a coffee-house conversing with a gentleman he accidentally met, and the topic of conversation was the new knights. He abused them all, but particularly "a fellow called B——, a beggarly half-pay lieutenant." The gentleman turned pale, and in confusion immediately left the coffee-room. "Do you know who that is?"

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said a person present. "No," said Power; "I never saw him before." "That's Sir J. B—— whom you have been abusing." "In that case," said Power, with great unconcern, "I must look after my will." So he immediately proceeded to the office of T. Cooke, an eminent attorney, sat down upon a desk stool, and told him instantly to draw his will, as he had no time to lose. The will was drawn and executed, and then he was asked what was the cause of his hurry. He explained the circumstance, and said he expected to find a message at his house before him. "Never fear," said Cooke, the knight is an *Englishman*, and has too much sense to take notice of what you have said." Cooke prophesied truly.*

When travelling in England, Power had many encounters with persons who were attracted by his brogue and clumsy appearance. On one occasion a group of gentlemen were sitting in a box at one end of the room when he entered at the other. The representative of Irish manners at this time on the English stage, was a tissue of ignorance, blunders, and absurdities; and when a real Irishman appeared off the stage, he was always supposed to have the characteristics of his class, and so to be a fair butt for ridicule. When Power took his seat in the box, the waiter came to him with a gold watch, with a gentleman's compliments and a request to know what o'clock it was by it. Power took the watch, and then directed the waiter to let him know the person that sent it; he pointed out one of the group. Power rang the bell for his servant, and directed him to bring his pistols and follow him. He put them under his arm, and, with the watch in his hand, walked up to the box, and presenting the watch, begged to know to whom it belonged. When no one was willing to own it, he drew his own old silver one from his fob, and presented it to his servant, desiring him to keep it; and putting up the gold one, he gave his name and address, and assured the company he would keep it safe till called for. It never was claimed.

On another occasion he ordered supper, and while waiting

* A similar anecdote is told of a Mr. Bligh. It is probable that both he and Power, having acquired celebrity in the same line, may have been the heroes of similar achievements.

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for it he read the newspaper. After some time the waiter laid two covered dishes on the table, and when Power examined their contents he found they were two dishes of smoking potatoes. He asked the waiter to whom he was indebted for such good fare, and he pointed to two gentlemen in the opposite box. Power desired his servant to attend him, and directing him in Irish what to do, quietly made his supper off the potatoes, to the great amusement of the Englishmen. Presently his servant appeared with two more covered dishes, one of which he laid down before his master, and the other before the persons in the opposite box. When the covers were removed there was found in each a loaded pistol. Power took up his and cocked it, telling one of the others to take up the second, assuring him "they were at a very proper distance for a close shot, and if one fell he was ready to give satisfaction to the other." The parties immediately rushed out without waiting for a second invitation, and with them several persons in the adjoining box. As they were all in too great a hurry to pay their reckoning, Power paid it for them along with his own.

Another of these distinguished duellists was a Mr. Crow Ryan. He shouted along the streets of Carrick-on-Suir, "who dare say boo," and whoever did dare say so, was called out to answer for it. The feats of another, the celebrated "fighting" Fitzgerald (mentioned at page 9), are still well remembered in Dublin. He made it a practice to stand in the middle of a narrow crossing in a dirty street, so that every passenger would be forced either to step into the mud, or jostle him in passing. If any had the boldness to choose the latter, he was immediately challenged.

The deeds of Bryan Maguire continued till a still more recent period "to fright the islanders from their propriety." He was a large burly man, with a bull neck and clumsy shoulders. His face, though not uncomely, was disfigured by enormous whiskers, and he assumed on all occasions a truculent and menacing aspect. He had been in the army serving abroad, and, it was said, dismissed the service. He availed himself of his military character, and appeared occasionally in the streets in a gaudy glittering uniform, armed with a sword, saying it

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was the uniform of his corps. When thus accoutred he strolled through the streets, looking round on all that passed with a haughty contempt. His ancestors were among the reguli of Ireland, and one of them was a distinguished Irish leader in 1641. He therefore assumed the port and bearing which he thought became the son of an Irish king, The streets were formerly more encumbered with dirt than they are now, and the only mode of passing from one side to the other was by a narrow crossing made through mud heaped up at each side. It was Bryan's glory to take sole possession of one of those, and to be seen with his arms folded across his ample chest, stalking along in solitary magnificence. Any unfortunate wayfarer who met him on the path was sure to be hurled into the heap of mud at one side of it. The sight was generally attractive, and a crowd usually collected at one end of the path to gaze on him, or prudently wait till he had passed.

His domestic habits were in keeping with his manner abroad. When he required the attendance of a servant he had a peculiar manner of ringing the bell. His pistols always lay on the table beside him, and, instead of applying his hand to the bell-pull in the usual way, he took up a pistol and fired it at the handle of the bell, and continued firing till he hit it, and so caused the bell below to sound. He was such an accurate shot with a pistol, that his wife was in the habit of holding a lighted candle for him, as a specimen of his skill, to snuff with a pistol bullet at so many paces' distance. Another of his royal habits was the mode of passing his time. He was seen for whole days leaning out of his window, and amusing himself with annoying the passengers. When one went by whom he thought a fit subject, he threw down on him some rubbish or dirt, to attract his notice, and when the man looked up, he spit in his face. If he made any expostulation Bryan crossed his arms, and presenting a pistol in each hand, invited him up to his room, declaring he would give him satisfaction there, and his choice of the pistols. After a time Bryan disappeared from Dublin: he has since died, and has had no successor.

The laws by which duelling is punishable were then as severe as now; but such was the spirit of the times, that they

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remained a dead letter. No prosecution ensued, or even if it did, no conviction would follow. Every man on the jury was himself probably a duellist, and would not find his brother guilty. After a fatal duel the judge would leave it as a question to the jury, whether there had been "any foul play;" with a direction not to convict for murder if there had not. Instances have occurred within the last sixty years in which this question has gone to the jury.

The late Judge Mayne was a serious, solemn man, and a rigid moralist. His inflexible countenance on the bench imposed an unusual silence and sense of seriousness upon the court. A case of duelling came before him on the western circuit, accompanied by some unusual circumstances, which, in the disturbed state of the moral feeling of the time, were considered an alleviation. An acquittal was therefore expected as a thing of course. The judge, however, took a different view of the case; he clearly laid it down as one of murder, and charged the jury to find such a verdict. His severity was a subject of universal reprobation, and his efforts to put down murder were considered acts of heartless cruelty. In a company of western gentlemen, when his conduct was talked over, some one inquired what was Judge Mayne's Christian name. "I cannot tell what it is," said another, "but I know what it is not—it is not *Hugh*." Since then a memorable change has come over the spirit of the times, and men, who had been slaves to public opinion, dared to brave it. Criminal informations for challenging or provoking to fight were ventured upon by gentlemen, even at the hazard of being considered cowards. In one term thirteen were filed from the neighbourhood of Galway. Duelling in Ireland, like drunkenness, is now nearly extinguished.

The mania seems to have commenced after the battle of the Boyne, and terminated with the Union. The effect of the first was, to disband a number of military men by the dissolution of the Irish army, who wandered about the country without employment or means of living, yet adhering with tenacity to the rank and feelings of gentlemen. They were naturally susceptible of slight or insult, and ready, on all occasions, to

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resent them by an appeal to their familiar weapons—the sword or pistol. Their opponents, the Williamites, had been soldiers likewise, and were not likely to treat with due respect ruined and defeated men. These causes, acting on temperaments naturally hot and irritable, brought on constant collisions, which were not confined to the parties, but soon extended through all classes. Since the Union, the sober and wiser modes of thinking of our English neighbours have corrected this, with others of our own unstable and more excitable habits.

CHAPTER III.

ABDUCTION—ABDUCTION CLUBS—THE MISSES KENNEDY—MISS KNOX.

ABDUCTION, or forcibly carrying off heiresses, was another of those crying evils which formerly afflicted Ireland; but it was an outrage so agreeable to the spirit of the times, and so congenial to the ardent and romantic character of the natives, that it was considered an achievement creditable to the man, and a matter of boast and exultation to the woman. From the time that the King of Leinster abducted the frail Dervogle, and royalty set an example of carrying off ladies, it was a constant practice. When once it went abroad that a woman in any station in life had money, she became the immediate object of some enterprising fellow, who readily collected about him adherents to assist in his attempt. No gentleman or farmer felt himself safe who had a daughter entitled to a fortune; she was sure to be carried off with or without her consent, and he lived in a constant state of alarm till she was happily disposed of in marriage. It was generally the wildest, most "devil-ma-care" fellow who undertook the enterprise, and unfortunately such a character was found to have most attractions in the eyes of a young and romantic girl.

The frequency of this offence was such a crying grievance that the legislature, at an early period, interfered to prevent it

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and the law on this subject was made, and has since continued,* more stringent in Ireland than in England. So early as the year 1634 a statute had been passed for punishing such as "carried away maydens that be inheritors;" but this being found ineffectual, in 1707 *forcible* abduction was made a capital felony, and at the same time provisions were made for punishing those who carried off heiresses, though not forcibly, and preventing their ever enjoying their wife's property.† The law was however inoperative, from a notion which prevailed, that the offender was not punishable if the woman abducted him. The girl carried off was accordingly placed *before* the man on the horse, who thought he might thus evade the punishment; and the maidens so frequently, like the Sabines, became reconciled to their ravishers, that prosecutions bore a very small proportion to the number of offences.

A memorable instance of this occurred in a distinguished literary family in Ireland. Captain Edgeworth, a widower, with one son, married Mrs. Bridgeman, a widow, with one daughter. The young people formed an attachment for each other, at the early ages of fifteen and sixteen, and declared their love to their parents. The mother, however, was decidedly hostile to the match, and refused her consent. The young lady was an heiress, and the penably of abducting her was known; so to avoid it she first mounted a horse, and assisted the young man to mount behind her. In this way she galloped off with her lover, and they proceeded to church and got married.

An association was formed in the south of Ireland, which could not have existed in any other country. This association was "an abduction club," the members of which bound them-

* These statutes, as well as those relating to chalkers, &c., which we before noticed, with the alterations made by subsequent acts, were all repealed in the consolidation of the criminal code in 1829; but the substance of the former was re-enacted. The capital punishment for forcible abduction has lately been ameliorated, as to offences after October, 1842.

† This latter act contains a curious clause, telling the story of one John O'Brien, who was a person of no property, and had forcibly carried off Margaret M'Namara, junior, who was entitled to two thousand pounds, and provides a special remedy for saving the two thousand pounds. The House of Commons would be not a little surprised at a private anecdote of this kind being introduced into a modern bill.

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selves by an oath to assist in carrying off such young women as were fixed upon by any members. They had emissaries and confederates in every house, who communicated information of particulars—the extent of the girl's fortune, the state and circumstances of the family, with details of their intentions and domestic arrangements and movements. When a girl was thus pointed out the members drew lots, but more generally tossed up for her, and immediate measures were taken to secure her for the fortunate man by all the rest. No class of society was exempt from their visits; and opulent farmers as well as the gentry were subject to these engagements of the clubs, according to their rank in life.

The persons who were most usually concerned in such clubs were a class of men abounding in Ireland, called "squireens." They were the younger sons or connections of respectable families, having little or no patrimony of their own, but who scorned to *demean* themselves by any *useful* or profitable pursuit. They are described by Arthur Young and other writers of the day, as distinguished in fairs and markets, races and assizes, by appearing in red waistcoats, lined with narrow lace or fur, tight leather breeches and top-boots, riding "a bit of blood," lent or given them from the stables of their opulent connections.

Hurling was at that time the universal amusement in which the gentry as well as the peasantry engaged, and in this athletic sport the squireens excelled. They were generally addicted to a base and brutal advantage sometimes taken in this noble exercise. It frequently happened, in pursuit of the ball, that two antagonists came into collision, and in the shock one of them, thrusting the handle of his hurley under his arm, took with the point of it his antagonist in the side, who in some instances fell dead, and in others remained with crushed ribs, a maimed and disabled man for life. This base act was not only practised, but applauded as a dexterous and justifiable *ruse*. On occasions when districts or counties challenged each other in this game, the rival parties were headed by the gentry of this class, who thus became identified with, and united to the peasantry.

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These things, with a prestige in favour of family connexion or pretension to the rank of gentlemen, made young men of this class most popular and special favourites with the peasantry, who were ready and delighted to assist in any enterprise in which they were concerned. When a girl fell to the lot of a member of the club, it was probable he never had known or spoken to her, but it was his care to meet her at a public ball, where he generally contrived to make himself agreeable, and in the bustle and confusion of breaking up to put her into a chaise, or on horseback, with or without her consent.

Catharine and Anne Kennedy were the daughters of Richard Kennedy, of Rathmeadan, in the county of Waterford. Their father was dead, and they lived with their mother in much respectability; they were each entitled to a fortune, under their father's will, of two thousand pounds, a large sum at that time as a girl's portion in Ireland; but even that was exaggerated, and they were looked upon as co-heiresses of immense wealth, and, as such, were objects of great cupidity to the abduction clubs. The fortunate persons to whose lot they fell were Garrett Byrne, of Ballyaun, in the county of Carlow, and James Strange (pronounced Strang), of Ullard, in the county of Kilkenny. They were young men of great popularity in the country, dissipated, dashing, careless, spirited fellows, but of different dispositions. Strange was irritable, impetuous, and tyrannical, sacrificing everything to accomplish his ends, and little regarding the means or feelings of others. Byrne, on the contrary, was amiable, and, as far as his pursuits and propensities permitted, of a kind and gentle temper, particularly to women, with whom he was an universal favourite. He had attached himself to Catherine Kennedy, whose disposition was somewhat like, and congenial to his own. Strange had fixed his regards on Anne, who, in like manner, resembled him in determination and haughtiness of temper. In the intercourse of the country they had occasionally met at race-balls, and other convivial meetings, and the men had endeavoured to render themselves agreeable to the girls, with such success, that it was reported, on the authority of their confidential maids, that they were actually invited by them to avail them-

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selves of the first opportunity to carry them off, as there were no hopes that their mother and friends would consent to their marrying men of such desperate fortunes.

While this intercourse was going on, Catherine was but fifteen, and her sister Anne but fourteen; they were both very lovely girls, but Anne was most distinguished, and her form and face gave promise of something eminently beautiful.

On the 14th of April, 1779, the girls accompanied their mother, aunt, and some friends, to a play enacted at Graiguenamana, a small town in the county of Kilkenny; and before the representation was concluded, a notice was conveyed to them that Byrne and Strange had formed a plan to carry them off that night from the play, and had assembled a number of adherents round the house for the purpose. In great alarm, the girls, with their mother and aunt, left the theatre, and retired to another room in the same house, accompanied by several gentlemen, their friends, who resolved to protect them. They bolted and barricaded the door, and remained for two hours without any attempt being made on the room. At length a violent rush was felt at it, the door gave way, and the party outside entered. There was a bed in the room, and the girls hastily retired behind the curtains, endeavouring to conceal themselves, and impress on the minds of the rioters that they had escaped from the apartment and were no longer in the house. For an hour or more the men seemed irresolute, and used no violence, but at the end of that time they rushed to the bed, and drew the girls from their concealment. They now displayed arms of all kinds, swords and pistols, with which they were provided, and in spite of all the opposition of the girls' friends, whom they fiercely attacked and threatened with instant death, they dragged them into the street, where they were surrounded by above one hundred armed men with shirts covering their clothes, by way of disguise, the then common costume, in which originated the name of "Whiteboys." Two horses were ready saddled. Catherine was forced to mount one, and placed before Byrne, and Anne was placed upon the other before Strange; and in this way, surrounded by a desperate body of men sufficient to intimidate and overawe the coun-

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try, they were carried off from their friends. To allay the terrors of the the girls, it was proposed to send for other females who would be their companions. They received the proposal with joy, and they were speedily joined by some women, who proved, however, to be sisters and near relatives of the abductors, and prepared and in readiness to promote their criminal views.

They rode all night, surrounded by a strong armed guard of Whiteboys, to a place called Kilmashane, fifteen Irish miles from Graiguenamana. During the journey they were repeatedly solicited to consent to marry the men, and threatened that if they did not they should be carried to a distant country, where they never should see either mother or friends again. The women who had joined the party urged the same thing, and threatened if they persisted in their refusal, to abandon them, and leave them to whatever treatment the men chose to give them. In this place they obtained some refreshment, and continued for a considerable time subject to the constant importunity of the party. At length a man was introduced who was reported to be a priest, before whom Byrne and Strange took a solemn oath, that they would harrass them night and day, by riding through the country with them, till they should be exhausted with fatigue and suffering; but if they consented then to be married by the priest, they should be immediately restored to their friends. At length, terrified and subdued, they became passive, and a short form of ceremony was read, and an extorted assent was given. They then claimed the promise to be immediately restored to their friends, but it was evaded till night came on. The girls refused to retire to rest till solemnly assured by the females that one should sleep with each of them; they, however, abandoned them at midnight, and the men took their places.

From this house, which appeared to be a waste place and belonging to no master, they again were set on horseback as before, and, accompanied by their lawless patrol, they rode on to Borris, where they passed the next night. The exhausted girls entreated to be allowed to sleep with the females, but this was refused. After various wanderings, by riding night and

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day with a whole cavalcade of armed ruffians, they were brought to the house of another priest, who undertook to persuade them to submit to their fate, and be reconciled and obedient to their husbands. They still persisted in their remonstrances against the violence offered to them, when it was threatened to carry them to Castlecomer, and bury them there for ever in the coal-mines; and Strange, in a paroxysm of anger struck Anne in the face with a pewter pot. This brutal violence sunk deep into her mind, and rankled with an inextinguishable resentment never to be forgotten.

It will hardly be believed, that for *five weeks* they were paraded night and day, accompanied by their lawless cavalcade, and resting at miserable houses, through the counties of Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Kildare, and so on to the north of Dublin, where they stopped at Rush, a small fishing town within a few miles of the metropolis. In this place they were put on board a vessel, accompanied by the whole party, and sailed to the town of Wicklow; where, with a feeling of perfect indifference and security, some of the party went on shore; but while they were absent, the vessel was boarded by a Mr. Power, accompanied by an armed party, who rescued the harassed girls, and restored them to their friends. In the meantime Byrne and Strange made their escape to Wales; but they were instantly pursued, and were apprehended at Milford on the 6th of July, and lodged in the gaol of Carnarvon.

It was long doubtful whether they would not claim the girls as their wives, and a belief was entertained that no prosecution would ensue. Catherine was said to be strongly attached to Byrne, who had always treated her with gentleness and affection, except in the manner of her abduction; but Anne's animosity to Strange was irreconcilable, and the brutal indignity of the blow was only to be effaced by his death. Though so young—a mere child—her energetic resentment overcame the reluctance of her elder but more yielding sister; her resolution was confirmed by a near relation of her own, distinguished by the number of duels he had fought, a Mr. Hayes, of whom we have before made honourable mention. It was by the unshaken determination of Hayes the men were

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brought to trial. The joint depositions of the girls were taken before the Lord Chief Justice Annaly, and Byrne and Strange were tried at the Kilkenny Lent assizes, on the 24th of March, 1780. Letters were produced from the young ladies, containing the most tender expressions of affection, and inviting their respective lovers to carry them off in the way usual in the country, to which they were ready and willing to consent. These letters, however, were clearly proved to be forgeries by the sister of Byrne, who was heard to boast she could perfectly copy Miss Anne Kennedy's handwriting. Others were read, really written by the girls, speaking of the men in an affectionate manner, and calling them their dear husbands, but these were proved to be dictated under the strong impressions of threats and terror. The men were found guilty, and sentenced to death.

It was supposed the sentence would never be executed. Their respectable rank in society—connected with all the gentry of the country—their actual marriage with the girls, and the frequency of the act of abduction, which made such a marriage be considered a thing divested of all criminality, created a strong feeling in their favour. The intercession of powerful friends, including, among others, the Minister from the Court of Vienna, was earnestly urged in their behalf. But Scott, afterwards Lord Clonmel, was then Attorney-General, and conducted the prosecution. He openly declared in court, that if this abduction was suffered to pass with impunity, there would be no safety for any girl, and no protection for the domestic peace and happiness of any family, and he called upon the government to carry out the sentence. His remonstrance was attended to, and the unfortunate gentlemen were hanged, to the great astonishment of their numerous friends and admirers. So strong and general was the excitement among the peasantry, that a rescue was greatly feared, and an extraordinarily large force of horse and foot was ordered to attend their execution; and such was the deep sympathy for their fate, that all the shops were shut up, and all business suspended in Kilkenny and the neighbouring towns.

The subsequent fate of the girls was melancholy. When-

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ever they appeared in the towns of Waterford, Kilkenny, or the vicinity, they were assailed by hissing and hooting of the mob, who followed them with execration through the streets. They both had a pension from government, settled on them as a remuneration for their sufferings and their conviction of felons. This the common people considered as the price of blood, and could not conceal their abhorrence whenever they were seen. They were, however, respectably married. The eldest, Catherine, married a gentleman named Sullivan; but even he could not escape the superstitious credulity of the country. He was a worthy but weak man, and fancied himself haunted by the spectre of Byrne—frequently shouting out at night, when waking from a frightful dream, and declaring that he stood before him. He always kept a light burning in his room, as a protection against this apparition. His handsome wife fell into flesh, and preserved but little of that comeliness which attracted her lover, and she sought, it was said, the indulgence of smoking, to drown reflection! The fate of Anne was more severe. She fulfilled the promise of her youth, and became a dignified and magnificent beauty. She was married to a gentleman named Kelly. Her married state was miserable, and she died an object of great commiseration—sunk, it was said, in want and degradation. The common people declared her fate a judgment, and continued to execrate herself while living and her memory when dead. The very act of a man hazarding his life to carry her off was deemed a noble act, her prosecution a base return, and her misfortunes nothing but the vengeance of heaven visibly visited upon her.

Another awful catastrophe of this kind occurred in a different part of Ireland, about the same period, which is, perhaps, one of the most interesting and melancholy on record.

On the Derry side of the Foyle, and about two miles from the city, is Prehen, the seat of the Knoxes. It is highly wooded, and covers a considerable tract, descending to the river, and overhanging the broad expanse of water in this place with its dark shade. The circumstance which marked its ancient owners with affliction is of such a character as to

correspond with the gloom that pervades its aspect; and no traveller passes it without many reflections on the sad event which happened there.

John M'Naghtan was a native of Derry. His father was an opulent merchant, and gave his son all the advantages of a most liberal education. He graduated in Trinity College, Dublin; but having inherited from his uncle a large estate, which precluded the necessity of engaging in any profession, he commenced a career of dissipation, then too common in Ireland. He married early, but his extravagance soon involved him in such distress, that he was arrested by the sheriff, in his own parlour, for a considerable debt, in the presence of his pregnant wife. The shock was fatal. She was seized with premature labour, and both wife and child perished. Being a man of address and ability, he was appointed to a lucrative situation in the revenue by the then Irish government, and in the course of his duty contracted an intimacy with the family of Mr. Knox, of Prehen, whose daughter, a lovely and amiable girl, was entitled to a large fortune, independent of her father. To her M'Naghtan paid assiduous court, and as she was too young at the time to marry, he obtained a promise from her to become his bride in two years. When the circumstance was made known to her father, he interdicted it in the most decided manner, and forbade M'Naghtan's visits to his house. This was represented as so injurious to M'Naghtan's character, that the good-natured old man was persuaded again to permit his intimacy with his family, under the express stipulation that he should think no more of his daughter. One day the lovers found themselves alone, with no companion but a little boy, when M'Naghtan took from his pocket a prayer-book, and read himself the marriage ceremony, prevailing on Miss Knox to answer the responses, which she did, adding to each, "provided my father consent." Of this ceremony M'Naghtan immediately availed himself; and, when he next met her at the house of a mutual friend, openly claimed her as his wife. Again he was forbidden the house by the indignant father. He then published an advertisement in all the newspapers, declaring the young lady was married to him. By a process,

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however, in the spiritual court, the pretended marriage was entirely set aside.

In the course of these proceedings M'Naghtan wrote a threatening letter to one of the judges of the court of delegates, and, it was said, lay in wait to have him murdered when he came on circuit, but fortunately missed him in consequence of the judges taking a different road. The result was, that M'Naghtan was obliged to fly to England. But here his whole mind was bent on obtaining possession of his wife; so at all hazards he returned, and lay concealed in the woods of Prehen. Warning of this circumstance had been communicated to her father, but he seemed to despise it. There was, however, a blacksmith, whose wife had nursed Miss Knox, and he, with the known attachment of such a connexion in Ireland, always followed his foster-daughter, as her protector, whenever she ventured abroad.

To detach his daughter from this unfortunate connexion, Mr. Knox resolved to leave the country, and introduce her to the society of the metropolis; and in the beginning of November, 1761, prepared to set out for Dublin. M'Naghtan and a party of his friends having intimation of his intention, repaired to a cabin a little distance from the road, with a sack full of fire-arms. From hence one of the party was dispatched to the house of an old woman who lived by the way-side, under the pretence of buying some yarn, to wait for the coming up of Mr. Knox's carriage. When it did arrive, the woman pointed it out, named the travellers it contained, and described the position in which they sat. They were Mr. Knox, his wife, his daughter, and a maid-servant. It was attended by but one servant, and the smith before mentioned. The scout immediately ran before, and communicated to M'Naghtan the information he had received. The carriage was instantly surrounded by him and three other men. M'Naghtan and one of his accomplices fired at the smith, whom they did not kill, but totally disabled. The blinds were now close drawn, that the persons inside might not be recognised. M'Naghtan rode up to it, and either by accident or design discharged a heavily-loaded blunderbuss into it at random. A shriek was heard

inside. The blind was let down, and Mr. Knox discharged his pistol at the assassin. At the same moment another was fired from behind a stack of turf, by the servant who had concealed himself there. Both the shots took effect in the body of M'Naghtan. He was, however, held on his horse by his associates, who rode off with him. The carriage was then examined. Miss Knox was found dead, weltering in her blood. On the first alarm, she had thrown her arm about her father's neck, to protect him, and so received the contents of the murderer's fire-arms. Five balls of the blunderbuss had entered her body, leaving the other three persons in the carriage with her unhurt and untouched by this random shot.

The country was soon alarmed, and a reward of five hundred pounds offered for the apprehension of the murderers. A company of light horse scoured the district, and amongst other places were led to search the house of a farmer named Wenslow. The family denied all knowledge of M'Naghtan, and the party were leaving the house when the corporal said to one of his companions, in the hearing of a countryman who was digging potatoes, that the discoverer would be entitled to a reward of three hundred pounds. The countryman immediately pointed to a hay-loft, and the corporal running up a ladder, burst open the door, and discovered M'Naghtan lying in the hay. Notwithstanding his miserably wounded state, he made a desperate resistance, but was ultimately taken and lodged in Lifford gaol. Some of his accomplices were arrested soon after. They were tried before a special commission at Lifford, and one of them received as king's evidence. M'Naghtan was brought into court wrapped in a blanket, and laid on a table in the dock, not being able to support himself in any other position. Notwithstanding acute pain and exceeding debility, he defended himself with astonishing energy and acuteness. A singular trait of Irish feeling occurred in the course of the trial. One of his followers implicated in the outrage, named Dunlap, was a faithful and attached fellow, and his master evinced more anxiety to save his life than his own. As a means of doing so, he disclaimed all knowledge of his person; "Oh, master dear," said the poor fellow beside him

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in the dock, "is this the way you are going to disown me after all?"

On the day of execution M'Naghtan was so weak as to be supported in the arms of attendants. He evinced the last testimony of his regard to the unfortunate young lady he had murdered, of whom he was passionately fond, and whom he mourned as his wife. The cap which covered his face was bound with black, his jacket was trimmed with black, having jet buttons, and he wore large black buckles in his shoes. When lifted up the ladder, he exerted all his remaining strength to throw himself off, and with such force that the rope broke, and he fell gasping to the ground. As he was a man of daring enterprise and profuse bounty, he was highly popular, and the crowd made a lane for him to escape, and attempted to assist him. He fiercely declined their aid, declaring, in a manner characteristic of the impetuous pride of his nature, that "he would not live to be pointed at as the half-hanged man." He called to his follower, Dunlap, for the rope which was round his neck, the knot of which was slipped and placed round his own. Again he was assisted up the ladder, and collecting all his energies, he flung himself off, and died without a struggle. His unfortunate but faithful follower stood by wringing his hands as he witnessed the sufferings of his dear master, and earnestly desired that his own execution might be hastened, that he might soon follow him and die by the same rope.

This murder and execution took place on the road between Strabane and Derry; and as the memory of them still lives among the peasantry, the spot is pointed out to passengers, and recalls traits of what Ireland was eighty years ago, even in the most civilized county. Abduction was then a common mode of courtship in the north, as well as the south, and a man was deemed a man of spirit if he so effected his marriage. Any fatal accident resulting to resisting friends was considered a venial offence, and the natural effect of their unreasonable obstinacy.

The circumstances and character of the parties in this affair rendered it one of the deepest interest. The young lady was but fifteen, gentle, accomplished, and beautiful, greatly attached

to the unhappy man, devotedly fond of her father, and, with the strongest sense of rectitude and propriety, entangled in an unfortunate engagement from simplicity and inexperience. The gentleman was thirty-eight, a man of the most engaging person, and a model of manly beauty. His manners were soft, gentle, and insinuating, and his disposition naturally generous and humane; but when roused by strong excitement, his passions were most fierce and uncontrollable. His efforts on his trial were not to preserve his life, which became a burden to him after the loss of her he loved, but to save from a like fate a faithful follower, and to exculpate his own memory from a charge of intended cruelty and deliberate murder.

CHAPTER IV.

CIVIC PROCESSIONS—RIDING THE FRANCHISES—THE LIBERTIES—THE LORD MAYOR'S PENANCE.

THE greatest change wrought in any one body of our metropolis within the last century has decidedly been in our city corporation. We speak not of the political alterations effected by "the act for transferring corporate abuses to other hands," as some one calls the corporation reform bill; but of a change of manners, as marked in the old corporation before its dissolution, as in its present successor—a change brought about, not by the operation of acts of Parliament, but by the silent progress of time and alteration of public feeling, and evincing itself in the almost total discontinuance of display in civic ceremonies and civic processions. We have now no peregrinations of trades on their saints' days. The shoemakers no longer perambulate with King Crispin at their head; and the smiths will never again walk in company with a limping Vulcan; nor the fishmongers' corporation personate the Twelve Apostles. Even the very principal ceremony on which the boundaries of our civic liberties depended is no longer observed;

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and though the Archbishop of Dublin were to depasture his horses on the Lord Mayor's garden, or the seneschal of St. Sepulchre's to execute an attachment under the very piazza of the post-office, the sturdy citizens will never again ride their franchises. The last miserable remnant of our corporate dignity is the Lord Mayor's annual procession, in his old glass coach, accompanied by a sorry troop of horse police; and the only merry-making that accompanies it is an occasional upset of that terror of pawnbrokers, the city marshal, from his military charger. Sixty years ago those things, though beginning to decline, had not wholly fallen from their ancient state; the remnant of them was kept up, and in some matters adhered to with as much earnestness as ever.

The principal civic ceremony which still continued within that period with unabated splendour was the triennial procession of the corporation, vulgarly called "riding the fringes." The great object of all civic corporations, in their original constitution, was the protection of the rights and properties of the citizens against the usurpation of powerful neighbours, church and lay, and the stout upholding of the several immunities and privileges conferred by their different charters. The vigilance of the Dubliners in ancient times, was principally to be exercised against their ecclesiastical neighbours of St. Mary's Abbey, Kilmainham, Thomas-court, and St. Sepulchre's, the latter being the liberty of the Archbishop of Dublin. Various were the disputes and feuds about their respective boundaries, and many are the charters and inquisitions defining them, which are still extant. To guard themselves from encroachment, the citizens from time immemorial perambulated the boundaries of their chartered district every third year, and this was termed "riding their franchises," corrupted into "riding the fringes." In ancient times, when the ecclesiastics were a powerful body, this was a very necessary ceremony, and in some measure a dangerous service. The worthy citizens went forth "well horsed, armed, and in good array;" and so they are described in an account of this ceremony in 1488, still extant in the book of Christ Church. But when the power and possessions of their clerical neighbours passed away, there was

no one with the will or the means to interfere with them. The citizens had long ceased to march out with a black standard before them—"a great terror to the Irish enemies;" and their military spirit having completely died away, the riding of the franchises became altogether a peaceful exhibition of civic pomp, consisting chiefly of the following emblamatic personages, and display of craft :—

Every one of the twenty-five corporations was preceded by a large vehicle, drawn by the most splendid horses that could be bought or borrowed; indeed all were eager to lend the best they had. On these carriages were borne the implements of the respective trades, at which the artisans worked as they advanced. The weavers fabricated ribbons of various gay colours, which were sent floating among the crowd; the printers struck off hand bills, with songs and odes prepared for the occasion, which were also thrown about in the same manner; the smiths blew their bellows, hammered on their anvils, and forged various implements; and every corporation, as it passed, was seen in the exercise of its peculiar trade. They were accompanied by persons representing the various natures or personages of their crafts, mixing together saints and demigods, as they happened to be sacred or profane. Thus, the shoemakers had a person representing St. Crispin, with his last; the brewers, St. Andrew, with his cross; but the smiths, though patronised by St. Loy, were accompanied by Vulcan and Venus, which last was the handsomest woman that could be procured for the occasion, and the most gaily attired. She was attended by a Cupid, who shot numerous darts, *en passant*, at the ladies who crowded the windows. The merchants, who exist under the patronage of the Trinity, could not without profanation attempt any personal representation; but they exhibited a huge shamrock as the emblem furnished by St. Patrick himself, while they were also accompanied by a large ship on wheels navigated by *real* sailors.

The course of proceeding of this motley assembly was this: they drew up at the old custom-house, and passing along Temple-bar and Fleet-street, they came to the sea at Ringsend. They then proceeded to low-water mark, when a trumpet was

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sounded, a water bailiff advanced, and, riding into the water as far as he could, hurled a spear eastward. This marked the eastern boundary of the city. They then crossed the Strand, and traversing the boundaries of the city and county, by Merrion, Bray-road, Donnybrook, &c., came by Stephen's-green to the division between the city and liberties. Then traversing Kevin's-port, Bolton-lane, Bride-street, Bull-alley, &c., they again emerged at Dolphin's-barn, from whence they took a round by Stonybatter, Finglass, Glasnevin, and Clontarf, ending a little beyond Raheny. In the course of this peregrination they passed through several houses, and threw down any fences that came in their way, particularly on the confines of the liberties.

The liberties of Dublin consist of an elevated tract on the western side of the city, so called from certain privileges and immunities conferred upon it. It contained formerly a population of forty thousand souls, who had obtained a high degree of opulence by the establishment of the silk and woollen manufacture among them. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz, a number of industrious artisans of the reformed faith, driven from their own country, had taken refuge in this district, and brought the manufacture of silk and woollens to a high state of perfection. About seventy years ago they had three thousand four hundred looms in active employment; and in 1791 there were twelve hundred silk looms alone. This prosperity was liable to great fluctuations. Two years after, when war was declared with France, and the raw material was difficult to be procured, the poor artisans experienced great distress; but the breaking out of the insurrection in '98, in which many of them were engaged, entirely ruined them; so that at the time of the Union they were reduced to utter beggary.

On all occasions of distress, they descended in masses from their elevated site to the lower parts of the town, and, as has been remarked, they resembled an irruption of some foreign horde—a certain wildness of aspect, with pallid faces and squalid persons, seemed to mark, at these times, the poor artizans of the Liberty as a separate class from the other inhabitants of Dublin. Of this famous and flourishing community

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nothing remains at the present day but large houses, with stone fronts and architectural ornaments, in ruins, in remote and obscure streets; and a small branch of the poplin and tabinet manufacture, a fabric almost exclusively confined to them, and whose beauty and excellence are well known.

At the time of which we write, however, they exhibited their power on every public occasion; and during the perambulation of the Lord Mayor, they particularly signalized themselves. As they had manor-courts and seneschals of their own, with a court-house and a prison, they were exceedingly jealous of their separate jurisdiction. They assembled in detachments in some places leading to their territories, and made a show of strongly opposing any invasion of their independence. The most remarkable was on the Cross Poddle, leading to the Coombe, the great avenue to the interior of the Liberties; and here they made a most formidable exhibition of resistance. They seized upon the sword-bearer of the corporation, wrested from his hand the civic weapon, and having thus established their seeming right to resist encroachment, the sword was restored, on condition of receiving a present as a tribute, and liberating a prisoner from confinement. These demands being complied with, a formal permission was given to the procession to move on. The man who wrested the sword from the bearer had a distinguished name and an achievement to boast of during the rest of his life.

Besides hurling the spear into the sea, the Lord Mayor and Corporation observed several other ceremonies. In their progress they made various stops, and held sham consultations, which were called *courts*. At a court at Essex-gate it was a regular ceremony to summon Sir Michael Creagh in the following form:—"Sir Michael Creagh! Sir Michael Creagh! come and appear at the court of our lord the King, holden before the right honourable the Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, or you will be outlawed." This singular ceremony originated from the circumstance of Sir Michael Creagh's having been Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1688, and absconded, carrying with him the gold collar of SS, which had been given to the Corporation only a few years before by Charles II. The civic citation to

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the fugitive thief being wholly fruitless, and Sir Michael Creagh never having returned with the collar, a new one was obtained by Bartholomew Vanhomrigh from William III., in 1697, which is the one at present in use. The citation, however, continued to be made during the procession. The worthy citizen through whom the collar of SS was restored was father to Swift's celebrated Vanessa.

The trappings and equipments of this procession seem to have been borrowed from the ancient practice of acting plays or mysteries by the different guilds of the Corporation. Those representations had been discontinued since the time of Elizabeth; they are, however, mentioned by many writers; and in the books of the Corporation there are several entries relating to the expenses, and mode of proceeding for them, which show the allegories acted to have been similar to the characters assumed by the guilds in riding the franchises. They were a most extraordinary medley of religion and profanity, morals and indecency. Thus, in the same interlude, the carpenters acted the story of Joseph and Mary; the tailors, Adam and Eve; while the vintners personated Bacchus and his companions, with their drunkenness and gallantries; and the smiths, Vulcan and the intrigues of his fair consort; or, as it was modestly entered, "Vulcan, and what related to him." Such things formed regular items in the corporation accounts. Several items are given in Whitelaw and Walsh's "History of Dublin," and are sufficiently amusing. For a celebration of St. George's day are the following:—

"Item 3. The elder master to find a maiden, well attired, to lead the dragon; and the clerk of the market to find a golden line for the dragon.

"Item 4. The elder warden to find for St. George four trumpets; but St. George himself to pay them their wages."

On the subject of civic processions, we may mention one which, though discontinued for many centuries, was much talked of on the election of the first Roman Catholic Mayor of the new corporation, viz., the ceremony of the Lord Mayor walking barefooted through the city on Corpus Christi day. The origin and account of this ceremony is given at length in

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Stanihurst's "Chronicle." In 1514, there were constant disputes between Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, and James Butler, Earl of Ormonde. The origin of the long-continued feud between their two illustrious families is referred to the contest between the houses of York and Lancaster; the family of Kildare adhering to the house of York, and that of Ormonde to the house of Lancaster. The government, after the accession of Henry the Seventh, relied implicitly on the Kildare family, and the Earl of Kildare was accordingly made deputy; but, in the words of the historian, "James, Earl of Ormonde, a deepe and farre reaching man, giving backe like a butting ram, to strike the harder push, devised to inveigle his adversarie, by submission and curtesie, being not then able to match him with stoutnesse or pre-eminence. Whereupon Ormonde addressed his letters to the deputie, specifying a slander raised on him and his, that he purposed to defame his government, and to withstand his authoritie; and for the cleering of himself and his adherents, so it stood with the deputie his pleasure, he would make his special repaire to Dublin, and there in an open audience would purge himselfe of all such odious crimes, of which he was wrongfullie suspected."

The Earl of Kildare having assented to this arrangement, Ormonde marched to Dublin at the head of a "puissant army," and took up his quarters in Thomas-court, now a part of the city, but then a suburb. The meeting was arranged to take place in Patrick's Church. Before it took place, however, the feuds between Ormonde's followers and the citizens had arisen to an uncontrollable height; and during the conference, while the leaders were wrangling in the church about their mutual differences, their adherents came to blows, and a body of archers and citizens rushed to the church, meaning to have murdered Ormonde. The Earl, however, suspecting treachery, fled into the chapter-house, and made fast the door. The disappointed citizens, in their rage, shot their arrows at random through the aisles and into the chancel, leaving some of them sticking in the images. In the riot a citizen named Blambfeil was slain.

The Earl of Ormonde was so much alarmed that he would not come out of his sanctuary till the deputy assured him of his

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life by joining hands. A hole was accordingly cut in the door; but Ormonde, suspecting it was a trick to get an opportunity to chop off his hand, refused to put it out; so the Earl of Kildare, to reassure him, thrust his hand in, after which they shook hands, and were for the present reconciled. We give the result, so far as the citizens were concerned, in the historian's words:—

"Ormonde, bearing in mind the treacherie of the Dublinians, procured such as were the gravest prelates of his clergie to intimate to the court of Rome the heathenish riot of the citizens of Dublin in rushing into the church armed, polluting with slaughter the consecrated place, defacing the images, prostrating the relicks, rasing down altars, with barbarous outeries, more like miscreant Saracens than Christian Catholikes. Whereupon a legat was posted to Ireland, bending his course to Dublin, where, soone after, he was solemnly received by Walter Fitzsimon, Archbishop of Dublin, a grave prelat, for his lerning and wisdome chosen to be one of King Henrie the Seventh his chaplins, in which vocation he continued twelve yeares, and after was advanced to be Archbishop of Dublin. The legat, upon his arrival, indicted the city for this execrable offence; but at length, by the procurement as well of the Archbishop as of all the clergie, he was weighed to give the citizens absolution with this caveat, that in detestation of so horrible a fact, and *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, the maior of Dublin should go barefooted through the citie, in open procession before the sacrament, on Corpus Christi daie, which penitent satisfaction was after in everie such procession dulie accomplished."

CHAPTER V.

DRUNKENNESS—NOTIONS OF CONVIVIALITY.

The habit of intemperate drinking had grown to such an excess in Ireland, that it was gravely asserted there was some-

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thing in the people's constitution congenial to the excitement of ardent spirits. The propensity of intoxication among the people had been remarked from the earliest times. Sir W. Petty, who wrote in the year 1682, when Dublin contained but 6,025 houses, states 1,200 of them were public houses, where intoxicating liquors were sold. In 1798, in Thomas-street, nearly every third house was a public house. The street contained 190 houses, and of these fifty-two were licensed to sell spirits. Among the upper classes the great consumption was claret, and so extensive was its importation, that, in the year 1763, it amounted to 8000 tuns, and the bottles alone were estimated at the value of £67,000. This fact is detailed by honest Rutty, the Quaker historian of the county of Dublin. Such were the convivial habits of the day, and so absorbed were the people in the indulgence, that the doctor recommended that port should be substituted in its place—"because," said he, with quaint simplicity, "it would not admit so long a sitting—a great advantage to wise men in saving a great deal of their precious time." In fact, the great end and aim of life in the upper classes seemed to be convivial indulgence to excess. The rule of drinking was, that no man was allowed to leave the company till he was unable to *stand*, and then he might depart if he could *walk*.

If on any occasion a guest left the room, bits of paper were dropped into his glass, intimating the number of rounds the bottle had gone, and on his return he was obliged to swallow a glass for each, under the penalty of so many glasses of salt and water. It was the practice of some to have decanters with round bottoms, like a modern soda-water bottle, the only contrivance in which they could stand being at the head of the table, before the host; stopping the bottle was thus rendered impossible, and every one was obliged to fill his glass at once, and pass the bottle to his neighbour, on peril of upsetting the contents on the table. A still more common practice was, to knock the stems off the glasses with a knife, so that they must be emptied as fast as they were filled, as they could not stand. Sometimes the guests, as they sat down, put off their shoes, which were taken out of the room, and the emptied bottles

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were broken outside of the door, so that no one could pass out till the carouse was over.

Such orgies were not occasional, but often continued every night, and all night long. A usual exhortation from a father to his son was, "make you're head, boy, while you're young;" and certain knots of seasoned drinkers who had succeeded in this insane attempt, were called κατ' εξοχην, "the heads." from their impenetrability to the effects of liquor. It was said that, "no man who drank ever died, but many died learning to drink;" and the number of victims who fell in acting on this principle was an appalling proof of the extent of this practice —most families could point to some victim to this premature indulgence.

An elderly clergyman of our acquaintance, on leaving home, to enter college, stopped, on his way, at the hospitable mansion of a friend of his father for a few days. The whole time he was engaged with drinking parties every night, and assiduously plied with bumpers, till he sank under the table. In the morning he was, of course, deadly sick, but his host prescribed, "a hair of the old dog," that is, a glass of raw spirits. On one night he contrived to steal through a back window. As soon as he was missed, the cry of "stole away" was raised, and he was pursued, but effected his escape into the park. Here he found an Italian artist, who had also been of the company, but, unused to such scenes, had likewise fled from the orgies. They concealed themselves by lying down among the deer, and so passed the night. Towards morning they returned to the house, and were witnesses of an extraordinary procession. Such of the company as were still able to walk, had procured a flat backed car, on which they heaped the bodies of those who were insensible—then throwing a sheet over them, and illuminating them with candles, like an Irish wake, some taking the shafts of the car before, and others pushing behind, and all setting up the Irish cry, the *sensible* survivors left their departed insensible friends at their respective homes. The consequences of this debauch were several duels between the active and passive performers on the following day.

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No class of society, even the gravest, was exempt from this indulgence. Even judges on the bench were seen inebriated, without much shame, and with little censure. One, well known, was noted for the maudling sensibility with which he passed sentence. It was remarked of him by Curran, that, "though he did not weep, he certainly had a drop in his eye." The indulgence was so universal, that pursuits of business never interfered with it. An attorney (Howard), writing in 1776, complaining of the want of reform in the law, and the evils of his profession, thus speaks:—"This leads me to mention an evil, which I would fain have thrown a veil over, but for the great degree of excess to which it has arrived in this kingdom, above all others, and even among the professors of the law, a profession which requires the clearest, coolest head a man can possibly have. Can we complain of being censured of dishonesty, if we undertake the management of a man's affairs, and render ourselves incapable of conducting them? and is not this the case with every man who has filled himself with strong wines, unless he has such an uncommon capacity as not one in a thousand is ever blessed with? The observation of Englishmen of business is, that they could not conceive how men in this kingdom transacted any business, for they seemed to do nothing but *walk the courts the whole morning, and devote the whole evening to the bottle.*"

Innumerable are the anecdotes which might be collected to illustrate the excessive indulgence in drink, now fortunately wholly exploded from all classes. Sir Jonah Barrington has recorded some, in which he was an actor, which are so highly characteristic, that we cite two of them, though, perhaps, already known to most of our readers. Near to the kennel of his father's hounds was built a small lodge; to this was rolled a hogshead of claret, a carcase of beef was hung up against the wall, a kind of ante-room was filled with straw, as a kennel for the company, when inclined to sleep, and all the windows were closed, to shut out the light of day. Here nine gentlemen, who excelled in various convivial qualities, were enclosed on a frosty St. Stephens day, accompanied by two pipers and a fiddler, with two couple of hounds, to join in the chorus raised

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by the guests. Among the sports introduced was a cock-fight, in which twelve game cocks were thrown on the floor, who fought together till only one remained alive, who was declared the victor. Thus, for seven days, the party were shut in, till the cow was declared cut up, and the claret on the stoop, when the last gallon was mulled with spices, and drank in tumblers to their next merry meeting. The same writer describes a party given in an unfinished room, the walls of which were recently plastered, and the mortar soft. At ten, on the following morning, some friends entered to pay a visit, and they found the company fast asleep, in various positions, some on chairs, and some on the floor among empty bottles, broken plates and dishes, bones and fragments of meat floated in claret, with a kennel of dogs devouring them. On the floor lay the piper, on his back, apparently dead, with the table-cloth thrown over him for a shroud, and six candles placed round him, burned down to the sockets. Two of the company had fallen asleep, with their heads close to the soft wall; the heat and light of the room, after eighteen hours' carousal, had caused the plaster to set and harden, so that the heads of the men were firmly incorporated with it. It was necessary, with considerable difficulty, to punch out the mass with an oyster-knife, giving much pain to the parties, by the loss of half their hair and a part of the scalp. Allowing all licence for the author's colouring, in what other country on the face of the earth could any thing like such scenes have occurred?

CHAPTER VI.

GAMBLING—LOTTERIES.

THE intense passion of the Irish for gambling has often been observed. Campion, writing nearly three hundred years ago, mentions it, and notices a class, called Carrowes, whose only occupation, all the year long, was playing at cards. He

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describes them as gambling away their mantles and all their clothes, and then lying down in their bare skins in straw by the road-side, to invite passers-by to play with them for their glibbes, their nails, their toes, and even more important parts of their bodies, which they lost or redeemed at the courtesy of the winner. Card-playing is, at this day, indulged in by the Irish peasantry with an eagerness perfectly astonishing, and is often the parent of many vices. It is not uncommon, in some places, to spend whole days playing for salt herrings; and as it is a point of honour to *eat* the stake, the player may suffer by losing, but a parching thirst is the only reward of winning. The propensity for gambling exhibits itself at the earliest ages. Boys of ten years old, sent with car-loads of turf to market-towns, commonly gamble on the proceeds of their merchandize; and it is not unusual to see the young seller of a six-penny load beggar all his companions travelling the same road home.

This national propensity led to the most frightful excesses during the first government lotteries. Those very unwise and immoral devices for raising money were hot-beds for the growth of the passion in Dublin, where the humbler classes indulged in gambling with a frantic eagerness unknown in any other place. The mode which they adopted was what was called "insuring" a ticket; and it was even still more prompt and exciting than the purchase of one. An adventurer presented himself at the lottery-office during the days of drawing, and selected, among the undrawn tickets, a particular number, upon which he "insured"—*i. e.*, he laid a wager with the office-keeper that it would be drawn next day, or some particular day, or would be a blank or a prize, as the case might be. The risk was in proportion to the number of undrawn tickets; but it was so managed that the odds were usually silver to gold; thus, if five shillings were deposited, and the insurer won, he would get five guineas. These bets were made so low as a shilling, so that it was within the reach of every person to try his fortune. Lucky and unlucky numbers occupied the attention, and filled the minds of the citizens with omens and visions of success; a speculator walking the streets, if he acci-

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dentally met an object he thought lucky, would run directly to the lottery-office, and insure some number indicated by it; when once the insurance was effected, it was not in the power of the fascinated man to rest as long as his number remained in the wheel; he went on increasing his premium while he had any thing to pledge or sell.

The lottery-hall was in Capel-street, which was every day choked up by the crowds of adventurers eager to hear their fate. The multitude of these unhappy beings, and the anxiety and distraction they displayed, was sometimes appalling. All industry was suspended; a number was to be insured at any risk, though the means were secured by pawning, selling, or robbery; every faculty seemed absorbed in watching the chance of the number when procured; all the excesses that have been attributed to gambling in a few of the upper classes, were here displayed by the whole population; the scenes that shock an observer in the privacy of a gaming-house were of common occurrence in the public streets—the cheer of success and the groan of ruin, the wildness of exultation and the frenzy of despair, were daily to be witnessed. The man who was honest before became a thief, that he might have the means of insuring. The very beggars allocated their alms to this fascinating pursuit. A poor blind creature used to beg in Sackville-street, and attracted the notice of passengers by her silent and unobtrusive manners and cleanly appearance. She had a little basket with articles for sale, covered with a net, and received more alms than an ordinary beggar. She dreamed of a number that was to make her fortune; and next day was led to a lottery-office, and insured it. It was not drawn, and she lost; but convinced that it was to make her fortune she still persevered in insuring it. Her little store was soon exhausted; she sold her clothes, and pledged her basket; but her number still stuck in the wheel, and when she had nothing left she was obliged to desist. She still, however, inquired after the number, and found it had been drawn the very day she ceased to insure it. She groped her way to the Royal Canal, and threw herself into it.

The hall in which the drawings took place was open to the

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public. Two large wheels were set on a slope, beside which stood two boys of the Blue Coat Hospital, each with one hand thrust into his belt behind his back, and the other flourishing in the air; on every turn of the wheels they dived in and took a rolled-up packet from each, one containing a number, and the other a blank or prize; one clerk then read the number aloud, and another declared its fate. This hall was usually crowded with persons anxious to know their own or their friends' fortunes. So absorbing was the interest connected with every thing belonging to the lottery, that it is said an impostor made a considerable sum of money by exhibiting himself, for a shilling admittance, in Capel-street, as the person who got a £20,000 prize.

The misery and vice caused by this species of gambling evoked some strong remonstrances, and many memorials to government; but the ministers of the day were reluctant to forego the trifling advantage of a loan without interest, for the short period for which a lottery procured it—the only benefit derived from this demoralizing device. The practices above described were, however, prohibited by the legislature, and the insurance of tickets made penal in 1793; and several wholesome regulations and restrictions were introduced, which very much ameliorated and modified the evils of subsequent state lotteries.

CHAPTER VII.

SHOEBLACKS—THE STREETS—PUBLIC VEHICLES.

THE common people of Dublin were eminently distinguished by peculiar traits of character, in which they differed from the populace of every other city. Among them, the shoeblacks were a numerous and formidable body, the precursors of Day and Martin, till the superior merits of the latter put an end to the trade. The polish they used was lampblack and eggs, of which they purchased in the markets all that were rotten.

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Their implements consisted of a three-legged stool, a basket containing a blunt knife, called a spudd, a painter's brush, and an old wig. A gentleman going out in the morning with dirty boots or shoes, was sure to find a shoeblack sitting on his stool at the corner of the street. He laid his foot in his lap without ceremony, where the artist scraped it with his spudd, wiped it with his wig, and then laid on his composition as thick as black paint with his painter's brush. The stuff dried with a rich polish, requiring no friction, and little inferior to the elaborated modern fluids, save only in the intolerable odour exhaled from eggs in a high state of putridity, and which filled any house you entered before the composition was quite dry, and sometimes tainted even the air of fashionable drawing-rooms. Polishing shoes, we should mention, was at this time a refinement almost confined to cities, people in the country being generally satisfied with grease. The circumstance is recorded in the ballad of the famous wedding of Baltimore:

"Oh! lay by the fat to grease the priest's boots."

Goose grease was the favourite and most fashionable, and so was reserved for his reverence.

These artists were distinguished for other qualities as well as professional skill. Their costume was singularly squalid—if possible, generally exceeding the representation of the brother of the brush preserved in Hogarth's picture of the idle apprentice, one of whose associates is a member of the craft, with his basket and brush, playing chuck-farthing on a tombstone during divine service on Sunday. But the Dublin shoeblack far excelled his English contemporary in qualities designated by the alliteration of "wit and wickedness, dirt and drollery." Miss Edgeworth has preserved some traits of their genius in her admirable essay on Irish bulls, most ingeniously proving that what appeared to be the blundering phraseology of this class was in reality figurative and poetical language, and a tissue of tropes and metaphors.*

* The sketch is so generally known, that we forbear to quote it. The fair authoress will pardon us, however, if we suggest an amendment. In her version, Bill concludes his statement with the following passage: — "You lie,

One known by the simple appellation of "Bill,"—perhaps the very Bill whom Miss Edgeworth has immortalized,—was distinguished on many other occasions for his ready wit. He generally sat on Ormond Quay, at the corner of Arran Street, and had an overflow of customers, who resorted to his stool, as much to hear his wit as to receive his polish. Some ladies, at that time stars in the Irish court, were not very scrupulous in seeking such entertainment, and frequently accosted Bill to hear his *bon mots*, though they were not always fit to be repeated.



One day, the gay Mrs. Stratford walked up to him, and by way of entering into conversation and hearing his good things, she asked him the way to the Phœnix Park. While Bill was politely directing her, an aid-de-camp came up, to whom she turned and whispered that she was about to extract something witty from Bill; so, accosting him again, she renewed the conversation, and begged him to go on, adding, "and so, sir, you were saying ——." Bill, offended at her inattention, replied, "Oh, be des, marm, I was saying—you are de ould proverb—tell a story to a ——" and then repeated one, which, though singularly apposite, is too coarse for these pages. The fair querist hastened away, satisfied with one specimen of Bill's wit, with which the aid-de-camp afterwards regaled the viceregal

says I; with that, he ups with a lump of a two-year old, and lets drive at me. I outs with my bread-earner, and gives it him up to Lamprey in the bread-basket." All the knives were then made by the famous cutler of the name of Lamprey, which was impressed on the blade. The true reading is, "up to de Y in the bread-basket," the name being always formed with the L to the point and the Y to the handle; so that not only the blade, but the very name, to the last letter, was buried in his body. This was literally the classical description quoted by Miss Edgeworth—*capulo tenus abdidit ensem*. We give a sketch of this now extinct instrument: an inspection of it will give an idea of the singular force of the expression.

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circle. Such coarse humour was the delight of the court then held in the castle of Dublin.

The number of crippled and deformed beggars that even to the present day haunt all places of resort in Ireland, has long been a subject of remark to strangers. Among the notable efforts of the Irish parliament for the relief of the poor, was one of turning this class, the maimed and halt, in Dublin, into shoeblacks and newsvenders. To secure them employment, a statute was passed in 1773, by which young and able-bodied shoeblacks, in the city, were made liable to be committed as vagabonds. This provision, like many others of the very silly code of which it formed a part, seems never to have been very rigidly executed; and for many a year afterwards the fraternity flourished as sound in health and limb as ever.

The rapid improvement of the streets was destined, however, soon to prove far more destructive to the craft than commitments; and Messrs. MacAdam and the paving-board were worse enemies than beadles and parish constables. The state of the best streets, about a century ago, was much worse than the Pill Lane or Goat Alley of 1847. There were no areas in front of houses, as there are now in all streets consisting of private residences; and the spouts, instead of being carried down to the ground by trunks, so as to suffer the water to run off in a confined stream, projected out either from the roof, or half-way down the wall, so as to pour in torrents over a large space below, after every shower. Sewers there were few or none, and many houses having no rere or place of deposit behind, the inhabitants threw all species of filth into the middle of the street, so that Dublin was as little purified as Edinburgh or Lisbon. As late as the year 1811 there was not one covered sewer in the most populous district of the city—the Liberty, south of the Coombe; and it is a very singular circumstance, that when the great sewer through Capel Street was commenced under the powers vested in the paving-board, after 1806, that street being then one of the most populous in Dublin, and in which the most thriving shopkeepers of the day lived, the sewer was covered in at *the desire of the inhabitants*, and left unfinished.*

* "History of Dublin," vol. ii. p. 1077. The sewer was so wide and deep in

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For want of sewers, the filth and water were received in pits, called cesspools, dug before the doors, and covered in; and those continued in Sackville Street, and other places, long after the year 1810; and many now remember the horrid sight and smell which periodically offended the inhabitants in the most fashionable streets, when those stygian pools were opened and emptied.

To the causes of accumulating filth was to be added the excessive narrowness of the streets. Chancery Lane, once one of the most fashionable streets in the city, and the residence of all the leading members of the legal profession, who have now migrated to Merrion Square, is hardly the width of a modern stable-lane; and Cutpurse Row, the leading thoroughfare from the southern road to the eastern end of the town was, before it was widened, in 1810, only fifteen feet broad.

Among the momentos of the former state of the streets of our metropolis, some, not the least curious, are the various acts passed for their improvement, which draw most piteous pictures of their condition. From one passed in 1717 it appears to have been a lucrative business to lay dirt in the streets for the purpose of making manure. In such a state of the city shoeblacks must have had a thriving trade. The face of things is now changed. Dublin is one of the cleanest cities in Europe, and a pedestrian may walk from east to west and north to south of it without soiling his foot.

The advance of this improvement in our metropolis was occasionally marked by events which exhibit strange traits. Among others, Gorges Edmund Howard mentions a characteristic anecdote of the mode of carrying the law into effect in the year 1757. After the institution of the wide-street commissioners, who were then first appointed for the purpose of opening a passage "from Essex-bridge to the royal palace, the castle of Dublin," they proceeded to carry the work into execution; but when the bargains for the houses they had purchased were concluded, the inhabitants refused to give up possession, alleging they had six months to remain; and prepared bills for

proportion to the breadth of the street, that the inhabitants were afraid the foundation part of their houses would give way and fall into it.

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injunctions against the commissioners. A host of labourers were engaged with ladders and tools in the night before the day on which the injunctions were to be applied for, who proceeded at the first light in the morning to strip the roofs, and in a short time left the houses open to the sky, The terrified inhabitants bolted from their beds into the streets, under the impression that the city was attacked, of which there were some rumours, as it was a time of war. On learning the cause they changed their bills of injunction into bills of indictment, but the commissioners proceeded without further impediment.

Another fatal enemy to the craft of shoeblacks was the increase and cheapness of public vehicles. About fifty years after the introduction of coaches into England, the first hackney-coach stand was established in London. It was formed A.D. 1634, by an experimenting sea captain, named Bailey, at the May-pole, in the Strand; but the general use of one-horse vehicles is of very recent introduction there, dating no farther back than 1820, when the Londoners borrowed their cabs from their Parisian neighbours. The precise date of the introduction of hackney-coaches into Dublin we know not; but the first arrangement for regulating and controlling them was made in 1703, when their number was limited to one hundred and fifty, and each horse employed in drawing them was required to be "in size fourteen hands and a half, according to the standard." The hackney-coaches we borrowed from our English neighbours, as their name imports; but our one-horse vehicles have always been peculiar to ourselves, and were in use long before anything of a similar kind was introduced into England. The earliest and rudest of these were the "Ringsend cars," so called from their plying principally to that place and Irishtown, then the resort of the *beau monde* for the benefit of sea-bathing. This car consisted of a seat suspended on a strap of leather, between shafts, and without springs. The noise made by the creaking of the strap, which supported the whole weight of the company, particularly distinguished this mode of conveyance. Its merits may be judged of by the mode in which it is alluded to by Theophilus Cibber, in his familiar epistle to Mr. Warburton in 1753:—"There straddles he over the buttocks of the

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horse with his pedestals on the shafts, like the driver of a Ringsend car furiously driving through thick and thin, bedaubed, besplashed, besmattered, and besmeared."

The Ringsend car was succeeded by the "noddy," so called from its oscillating motion backwards and forwards. It was a low vehicle, capable of holding two persons, and drawn by one horse. It was covered with a calash, open before, but the aperture was usually filled by the "noddy-boy," who was generally a large-sized man, and occupied a seat that protruded back, so that he sat in the lap of his company. The use of the noddy by certain classes grew into a proverb—"Elegance and ease, like a shoeblack in a noddy."

The next improvement was the "jingle," a machine rolling on four wheels, but so put together that the rattling of the work was heard like the bells of a waggon team. This was finally succeeded by the jaunting-car, which still holds its place, and was, *Hiberniee*, termed a "*vis-a-vis*," because the company sit back to back. The addition of covers to the kind of cars called inside-cars, is an improvement made within the last few years, giving the vehicle most of the advantages of a coach; since which our national vehicle has completely beaten the English importation out of the field. There is not now a single coach plying for hire on a stand in Dublin. The licensed cars amount to about 1500, being nearly equal to the number of licensed cabs in London—a fact to be accounted for probably by the absence of omnibuses here. Hackney-coaches still exist in London, but are rapidly giving place to their more youthful and active French rivals.

The jingle and jaunting-car were both in use for some time after the Union, when most of the Irish nobility became absentees, and gave occasion to the *bon mot* of the witty Duchess of Gordon, that there were but two titled men who frequented her soirees at the castle—Sir John Jingle and Sir John Jaunting-Car; alluding to Sir John Stevenson, the celebrated musician, and Sir John Carr of pocket-book celebrity.

Before the use of one-horse cars became so general and popular, the common vehicle for a single passenger was a sedan. The introduction of sedans into England is due to King

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Charles I., when a prince, and the Duke of Buckingham, who brought them from Spain.

Though the notion of "degrading Englishmen into beasts of burden" was at first exceedingly unpopular, the people soon became accustomed to it. In process of time the chair became of almost universal use. In Hogarth's time it was a very general favourite in London, especially among the fashionable. It could not exist, however, in the present crowded state of the giant metropolis, among the thunder of omnibuses and the clash of cabs; and such a thing as a sedan chair plying for hire has for some time been unknown there. Chairs still survive in our more peaceful city, but are devoted almost solely to the service of old ladies and invalids. The notion of a healthy man traversing our clean and even streets in a sedan, appears nearly as ludicrous as a man in a bonnet and petticoats; and even the fair sex of the present day seem to have resigned these solitary vehicles to the surviving members of the last generation. Far otherwise was it sixty years ago. A chair was then as indispensable to every family of distinction as a coach; and public chairs for hire were more numerous than any other public vehicle. Women always used them in cases where they would now walk; and men in full dress, in the gaudy fashion of that day, were equally unscrupulous as to the charge of effeminacy. In 1771 the number of "hackney-coaches, landaus, chariots, postchaises, and Berlins," licensed by the governors of the Foundling Hospital (in whom the jurisdiction was then vested) to ply in Dublin and the environs, was limited to three hundred, while the number of sedans was four hundred. The author of the *Philosophical Survey*, writing in 1775, says —"It is deemed a reproach for a gentlewoman to be seen walking in the streets. I was advised by my bankers to lodge in Capel Street, near Essex bridge, being in less danger of being robbed, *two chairmen* not being deemed sufficient protection." *

The Irish seem to have preferred walking with a chair to making more speed with any other conveyance. The number of Irish chairmen in London was often remarked. They made

* Phil. Survey, p. 46.

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a fearful engine of attack in riots, by sawing the poles of their chairs in two, at the thick part in the middle—each pole thus supplying two terrific bludgeons.

The dangers of the streets, alluded to by the writer above quoted, were a fertile subject of complaint in the sister country, as well as here; but the footpads of Dublin robbed in a manner, we believe, peculiar to themselves. The streets were miserably lighted—indeed, in many places hardly lighted at all. So late as 1812 there were only twenty-six small oil lamps to light the immense square of Stephen's Green, which were therefore one hundred and seventy feet from one another. The footpads congregated in a dark entry, on the shady side of the street, if the moon shone; if not, the dim and dismal light of the lamps was little obstruction. A cord was provided with a loop at the end of it, The loop was laid on the pavement, and the thieves watched the approach of a passenger. If he put his foot in the loop it was immediately chucked. The man fell prostrate, and was dragged rapidly up the entry to some cellar or waste yard, where he was robbed, and sometimes murdered. The stun received by the fall usually prevented the victim from ever recognising the robbers. We knew a gentlemen who had been thus robbed, and when he recovered found himself in an alley at the end of a lane off Bride Street, nearly naked, and severely contused and lacerated by being dragged over the rough pavement.

According to Mr. Knight's account, the last London shoeblack might have been seen in 1820, in a court at the north of Fleet-street. We believe the last "regular shoeblack" in Dublin had his stand at the corner of Essex-street and Crampton-court, and disappeared at a much earlier period—more than thirty years ago. The original crafts-men, such as we have described them, were for a short time succeeded by peripatetic practitioners, who used the modern blacking that requires friction. The use of the new material, however, required too much delay and trouble, and the improvement never throve.

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CHAPTER VIII.

SLANG SONGS — PRISON USAGES — THE NIGHT BEFORE LARRY WAS STRETCHED — KILMAINHAM MINIT — EXECUTIONERS — BULL BAITING — LORD ALTHAM'S BULL — THE BUSH.

Among the popular favourites of the last century, now almost entirely exploded, were slang songs. As compositions their merits were of various degrees; but the taste of the times has so entirely changed, that their literary pretensions would now gain them little attention. Their value chiefly consists in being genuine pictures of uncouth scenes, not to be met with elsewhere.

The favourite subjects of these compositions were life in a goal and the proceedings of an execution. The interior and discipline of a prison of this date presented a frightful contrast to the same things at the present day. The office of a gaoler was regarded as a place of profit, of which a trade might as fairly be driven as in the keeping of an inn; and so as the prisoners were kept safe, and the gaoler's fees paid, the entire object of such institutions was supposed to be answered, with a total disregard to the improvement or correction of the unfortunate inmates. One striking instance of this is the custom introduced in the time of King Henry the Eighth, and which continued to a comparatively recent date, of licensing poor prisoners to beg for their fees. When an unfortunate captive was discharged, for want of prosecution or on acquital, the gaoler nevertheless would not let him out, till his fees were paid; and if he was unable to pay them from his own means, he was allowed a certain time to beg in the neighbourhood of the gaol, to procure them.

But the most shocking example of the utter laxity of all discipline, and want of decency, was exhibited in the manner in which condemned capital convicts were allowed to pass their last hours. When so many petty offences were punishable with death, and commitment on suspicion was so often but the stepping-stone to the gallows, it was natural that, to

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the unfortunate felons themselves, an execution should be stripped of all the salutary terrors, in which alone the utility of capital punishment consists, and should be by them regarded as an ordinary misfortune in their course of life. The numerous instances recorded of utter levity and recklessness, exhibited by convicts on the very verge of eternity, clearly show this to have been so, not merely in Ireland, but in the sister kingdom. The practice of prisoners selling their bodies to surgeons, to be dissected after their execution, was common, we believe, to both countries, and the anecdote of the felon who took the money, and then told the surgeon, laughing, that "it was a bite, for he was to be hung in chains," we believe we can hardly claim as Irish wit. But there was one trait, evincing a similar careless indifference, which was peculiarly Irish. The coffins of condemned malefactors were usually sent to them, that the sight might suggest the immediate prospect of death, and excite corresponding feelings of solemn reflection and preparation for the awful event. From motives of humanity, the friends of the condemned were also allowed free intercourse with him during the brief space preceding his execution. The result was, that the coffin was converted to a use widely different from that intended. It was employed as a card-table, and the condemned wretch spent his last night in this world gambling on it.

A man named Lambert was an outcast of a respectable family, and was known thus to have spent his last precious moments; and it was on him the celebrated song of "De nite afore Larry was stretched" is supposed to have been written. He was a cripple, paralytic on one side, but of irreclaimable habits. He was at once ferocious and cowardly, and was reported to have always counselled murdering those whom he had robbed. When on his way to execution, he shrieked and clung with his hands to whatever was near him, and was dragged with revolting violence, by the cord about his neck, to the gallows from which he fell; and while passing into eternity, he vomited up the effects of his intemperate excess a few hours before.

The celebrated song composed on him has acquired a last-

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ing fame, not only as a picture of manners, but of phraseology now passed away; and its authorship is a subject of as much controversy as the letters of Junius. Report has conferred the reputation of it on Burrowes, Curran, Lysaght, and others, who have never asserted their claims. We shall mention one more claimant, whose pretensions are equal to those of any other. There was at that time, a man named Maher, in Waterford, who kept a cloth shop at the market cross; he had a distorted ancle, and was known by the soubriquet of "Hurlfoot Bill." He was "a fellow of infinite humour," and his compositions on various local and temporary subjects were in the mouths of all his acquaintance.* There was then a literary society established in Waterford, which received contributions in a letter-box, that was periodically opened, and prizes awarded for the compositions. In this was found the *first* copy of this celebrated slang song that had been seen in Waterford. Its merit was immediately acknowledged; inquiry was made for its author, and "Hurlfoot Bill" presented himself, and claimed the prize awarded. We give this anecdote, which must go for *tantum quantum valet;* but we have heard from old members of this society, that no doubt, at the time, existed *among them* that he was the author. His known celebrity in that line of composition rendered it probable, and he continued to the end of his short and eccentric career of life to claim the authorship with confidence, "no man forbidding him."

Though "De nite afore Larry was stretched" has survived almost all its rivals, many songs of the same style once enjoyed nearly an equal popularity. One very similar was "Luke Caffrey's Kilmainham Minit." The subject is also an execution, but turns on a different topic—the hope of being brought to life by a surgical process. This hope was often the last clung to by the dying wretch, and had some foundation in reality, as several well-known instances are recorded in which

* There stood formerly a statue of Strongbow, in front of Reginald's Tower, on the quay of Waterford. One Sunday morning this statue was seen converted into that of a woman, with an inscription, supposed to be Maher's composition, detailing circumstances which proved that it was not a statue of Strongbow, but of Eva his wife. The metamorphosis was, however, so offensive, that this ancient figure was removed from the conspicuous place it occupied.

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it was actually effected. The unfortunate Lanigan, who was hanged at that time in Dublin, for the supposed participation in the murder of O'Flaherty, was known to be alive, and seen by many, after his public execution. When given for dissection, the use of the knife on his body had caused a flow of blood, which, in a little time, restored suspended animation. A general belief therefore existed, that opening a vein after hanging was a certain means of restoring to life—an idea particularly cherished by felons, who seldom failed to try the experiment on their departed friends. We annex specimens of this song, which, though once very popular, is now rarely met with, and, we believe, out of print.

"LUKE CAFFREY'S KILMAINHAM MINIT.

"When to see Luke's last jig we agreed,
We tipped him our gripes in a tangle,*
Den mounted our trotters † wid speed,
To squint at de snub as he'd dangle;
For Luke he was ever de chap,‡
To boozle de bull-dogs § and pinners,
And when dat he milled a fat slap,‖
He merrily melted de winners,¶
To snack wid de boys of de pad.**

"Along de sweet Combe den we go,
Slap dash †† tro de Poddle we lark it,
But when dat we come to de Row,‡‡
Oh, dere was no meat §§ in de market;

We subjoin a glossary of some of the unintelligible phrases.

* "Tipped our gripes in a tangle." A strong figurative expression for an earnest shake of many hands.

† "Mounted our trotters," synonymous with "riding shank's mare."

‡ "Chap," a contraction of chapman, a dealer in small wares—similar to the epithet of "small merchant," applied to a boy.

§ "Boozle de bull-dogs," &c., outwit thief-takers and gaolers.

‖ "Milled a fat slap," made a rich booty.

¶ "Melted the winners," spent the booty—winners, by mytonymy for winnings.

** "Boys of the Pad," footpads, robbers. Paddington, a village near London, once infamous for such means "the town of robbers."

†† "Slap dash," &c. The Poddle was a low street over the stream of that name, always flooded and dirty; the passengers waded through it like "mud larks."

‡‡ "Come to de Row," New-row, where the prison was then.

§§ "Meat," a human body: "seeing the cold meat home," was attending a funeral.

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De boy he had travelled afore,*
Like rattlers, we after him pegged it;
To miss him, would grieve us full sore,
Case why, as a favour he begged it—
We'd tip him the fives † fore his det."

They come up with him before he is turned off, and the following dialogue ensues:—

"'Your sowl, I'd fight blood to de eyes,
You know it, I would to content ye,
But foul play I always despise—
Dat's for one for to fall upon twenty.'
Ses he, ''Tis my fate for to die,
I knowd it when I was committed,
But if dat de slang you run sly,
De scrag-boy ‡ may yet be outwitted,
And I scout again on de lay.

"'When I dance twixt de ert and de skyes,
De clargy may bleet for de struggler,
Bud when on de ground your friend lies,
Oh, tip me a snig in de jugglar;
Ye know dat is all my last hope,
As de surgents of ottamy § tell us,
Dat when I'm cut down from de rope,
You'd bring back de puff to my bellows,
And set me once more on my pins.'

"Dese last words were spoke wid a sigh.
We saw de poor fellow was funkin,
De drizzle stole down from his eye,
Do we tought he had got better spunk in;
Wid a tip of de slang we replied,
And a blinker dat nobody noted,
De clargy stept down from his side,
And de dust-cart ‖ from under him floated,
And left him to dance on de air.

"Pads foremost he dived, and den round,¶
He capered de Kilmainham minit,

* "Travelled afore," set out for Stephen's-green, where the gallows then was.

† "Tip me de fives," five fingers—shake hands.

‡ "Scrag-boy," hangman—from scrag, the neck.

§ "Ottamy," anatomy.

‖ "Dust-cart," the flat platform cart provided for the accommodation of the doomed, before the invention of prison drops.

¶ "Pads foremost he dived, and den round." This is horribly graphic, as those who have unfortunately chanced to witness such a scene can testify.

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But when dat he lay on de ground,
Our bisness we tought to begin it;
Wid de stuff to a shebeen* we hied,
But det had shut fast every grinder,
His brain-box hung all a one side,
And no distiller's pig could be blinder;
But dat's what we all must come to.

"His disconsolate widdy† came in
From tipping the scrag-boy a dustin—"

The poet then records her melancholy situation, in the prospect of being soon a mother, and concludes thus:—

"We tipped him a snig as he said,
In de juggler, oh dere where de mark is,
Bud when dat we found him quite ded,
In de dust-case we bundled his carcase,
For a Protestant lease of the sod."‡

We may mention in passing, that one circumstance which contributed to the strange contradiction exhibited at an Irish execution, turning that awful scene into an opportunity for merriment and jest, was the character and dress of the hangman. That functionary was generally disguised in a fantastic manner, very ill suited to the occasion. On his face he wore a grotesque mask, and on his back an enormous hump, in the whole resembling Punch in the puppet show. The original design of this apparent levity was, to protect the executioner by the disguise; and it was in some degree necessary. The use he made of the hump was curious. It was formed of a large wooden bowl-dish, laid between his shoulders, and covered with his clothes. When the criminal was turned off, and the

* "Shebeen," a low public-house, where a weak small-beer was sold for a farthing a quart. It was in high request, as connected with the family of St. Patrick, for we are told in the song—

"His mother kept a shebeen shoe
In the town of Enniskillen."

† "His disconsolate widdy." It is a remarkable fact that felons were generally attended by females in the family way, who had various duties to perform: the first was to *dust*, *i. e.*, abuse the hangman; the second to beg for the funeral. See p. 91.

‡ "Protestant lease of the sod." In allusion to the penal laws, which prohibited Roman Catholics from acquiring long titles.

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"dusting of the scrag-boy" began, the hangman was assailed, not merely with shouts and curses, but often with showers of stones. To escape the latter, he ducked down his head, and opposed his hump as a shield, from which the missiles rebounded with a force that showed how soon his skull would have been fractured if exposed to them. After some antics, the finisher of the law dived among the sheriff's attendants, and disappeared. This grotesque figure, surrounded by two or more human beings, struggling in the awful agonies of a violent and horrible death, was regarded by the mob as presenting a funny and jocular contrast.

Many anecdotes are recorded of the levity of hangmen eminent in their day. The last and most notorious of the craft was "Tom Galvin." He is not very long dead, and in his old age was often visited at Kilmainham gaol by persons who indulged a morbid curiosity to see him and the rope with which he had hanged most of his own nearest relations. One of his practical facetiæ was, to slip the rope slily round a visitor's neck and give it a sudden chuck, which would nearly cause the sensation of strangling. He was brutally unfeeling in the discharge of his horrid duty, and when a reprieve would come to some wretch whose hanging he anticipated, he would almost cry with disappointment at the loss of his fee, and say, "it is a hard thing to be taking the bread out of the mouth of an old man like me!" He was always impatient at any delay made by a convict. When the wretched Jemmy O'Brien was about to be executed, he exhibited the greatest terror, and lingered over his devotions, to protract his life thus for a few moments. Galvin's address to him is well known. He called out at the door, so as to be heard by all the bystanders, as well as the criminal, "Mr. O'Brien, jewel, *long life* to you, make haste wid your prayers; de people is getting tired under de swing-swong."

The history of the last century in Ireland presents instances of unprofessional executioners, whose actions would be even more grotesque if they were not so revolting, that horror supersedes every other feeling respecting them. The best known is the case of Lieutenant Hepenstal, commemorated by

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Barrington, who, however, is mistaken in his account of him. He was in the Wicklow militia, and a very tall man. On one occasion, in Westmeath, his corps being in want of a gallows to hang "a croppy," Hepenstal volunteered to execute him without one, and actually hanged the wretched man by swinging him over his own shoulder with a drum cord. He owes his name of "Walking Gallows" to the following epigram:—

> "This county owes you many thanks,
> And will reward your friendly pranks,
> But what fresh evils may befal us,
> Now that we've lost our walking gallows!"

But the brutality of Hepenstal is left in the shade by the contrast presented by a *female* hangman. In August, 1793, a gang of robbers were surrounded and captured near Bruff. One of them was a Margaret Farrell. Among her duties one was to find the cord for the execution of persons who were sacrificed to the vengeance of the gang. On an occasion, when she was at a loss for a cord, she stripped off her clothes, and taking her chemise tore it into strips, which she twisted, tied round the neck of the wretched man who was doomed to suffer, and, when he was swung up to a neighbouring tree, complacently contemplated the strength of the contrivance till he died.

Another slang song, once in great celebrity, but now nearly forgotten, is "Lord Altham's Bull." As it is little known, and, we believe, not to be obtained in print, and is, perhaps, the most graphic of its class, and the best specimen of the slang of sixty years ago, we subjoin a few extracts from it also. We should premise that the subject of the song—a bull bait—though the humanity of modern legislation has now very properly prohibited it—was, at the time of which we speak, not merely a very common and popular sport among the lower orders, but, like prize-fighting and the cock-pit, often keenly relished by the better classes of society. This was not merely owing to the grosser tastes of the age, but in a great measure to peculiar circumstances. Ireland was then a pastoral country, with little agriculture and less manufactures. It was the great grazing ground on which were fed all the cattle that supplied

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the armies of England, in their incessant wars then waged for the balance of power in Europe, the subjugation of revolted colonies in America, or counteracting the revolutionary principles of France. The midland counties of Ireland, particularly Tipperary, now waving with corn, were one great bullock walk; and Cork, Waterford and Dublin were the marts where the beasts were slaughtered and prepared for exportation.

Among the cattle sent in was a large proportion of bulls. The south of Ireland, connected by several ties with Spain, adopted many Spanish usages and sports; among the rest, bull-fighting, which degenerated into bull-baiting. In Waterford and other towns, on the election of every mayor, he was surrounded by a mob, who shouted out, "a rope, a rope, a rope!" and the new mayor never failed to grant their demands. A rope two inches in diameter, with a competent leather collar and buckle, had been previously prepared, and was then delivered to the claimants, who bore it away in triumph, and deposited it in the city gaol-yard, to remain there till wanted. We have an extract before us from the old corporation books of Waterford, dated 1714, October, in which month the slaughtering season commenced:—"Ordered, that a bull-rope be provided at the charge of the city revenue." Under this sanction, the populace assumed the authority of seizing all the bulls, and driving them to the bull-ring to be baited before they were killed. The place for baiting them was an open space outside the city gate, called Ballybricken. It was surrounded with houses, from which spectators looked on, as at a Spanish bull-fight. In the centre was the ring through which the rope was passed. It was surmounted by a pole, bearing a large copper bull on a vane. In 1798, when bull-baits were prohibited, this apparatus was removed, and the sport discontinued; but prior to that it was followed with the greatest enthusiasm; and it was not unusual to see eighteen or twenty of these animals baited during the season.

To enhance and render perfect this sport, a peculiar breed of dogs was cherished; the purity of whose blood is marked by small stature, with enormous, disproportioned heads and jaws, the upper short and snub, and the under projecting beyond it.

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The savage ferocity and tenacity of those small animals are quite extraordinary. A single one unsupported would seize a fierce bull by the lip or nose, and pin to the ground the comparatively gigantic animal, as if he had been fixed with a stake of iron. Even after the fracture of their limbs, they never relax their hold; and it was often necessary, at the conclusion of a day's sport, to cut off broken legs, and in that mutilated state they were seen on three legs rushing at the bull.

When, on rare occasions, a rope was refused by a refractory mayor, or a new one was required, the bull was driven through the streets of the town, and sometimes even into his worship's shop or hall, as a hint of what was wanted, and the civic authorities were often called out with the military to repress the riots that ensued. Lives were frequently lost, and a Lord Mayor of Dublin was long remembered by the name of "Alderman Levellow," for his interference on such an occasion. A bull was driven through the lower part of Abbey-street, then open and called the "lots," and the mob became so riotous that the military were called out and ordered to fire. They directed their muskets above the heads of the people, but the Lord Mayor laying his rod on them, depressed them to a murderous level, and several persons were killed. This, we believe, was the last bull-bait recorded in Dublin, and the restrictive regulations adopted at the time of the rebellion in '98, prohibiting the assemblage of persons, suppressed bull-baiting then, and it was never since revived.

The custom of seizing bulls on their way to market, for the purpose of baiting, became so grievous an evil in Dublin in 1779, that it was the subject of a special enactment, making it a peculiar offence to take a bull from the drivers for such a purpose, on its way too or from market.* The place for bull-baiting in Dublin was in the Corn-market, where there was an iron ring, to which the butchers fastened the animals they baited. An officer, called the "Mayor of the bull-ring," had a singular jurisdiction allowed to him. He was the guardian of bachelors, and it was a duty of his office to take cognizance of their conduct. After the marriage ceremony, the bridal party

* Statute, 19, 20, George III., c. 36.

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were commonly conducted to the ring by "the mayor" and his attendants, when a kiss from "his worship" to the bride concluded the ceremony, from which they went home with the bridegroom, who entertained them according to his ability.

Having premised so much, we give an example of

LORD ALTHAM'S BULL.*

"'Twas on the fust of sweet Magay,
It being a high holiday,
Six and twenty boys of de straw†
Went to take Lord Altham's bull away.

"*Spoken*—I being de fust in de field, who should I see bud de mosey wid his horns sticking in de ground. Well becomes me, I pinked up to him, ketched him by de tail, and rode him dree times round de field, as well as ever de master of de tailor's corporation rode de fringes;‡ but de mosey being game to de back bone, de first rise he gev me in de elements, he made a smash of me collar-bone. So dere being no blunt in de cly,§ Madame Stevens was de word,‖ where I lay for seven weeks in lavendar, on de broad of me back, like Paddy Ward's pig,¶ be de hokey.**

* As the allusions and phraseology of this composition are now nearly obsolete, a few explanatory notes on the text may be necessary.

† "Boys of de straw!"—Citizens of the straw market, Smithfield, a locality still distinguished as the residence of a bull-baiting progeny.

‡ "Fringes"—the name by which the triennial procession of the trades was known—a corruption of "franchises." The masters rode at the head of their corporations, and the tailors were never distinguished as first-rate horsemen. We have already given an account of this extraordinary ceremony. The last, we believe, took place on the election of Grattan to the representation of Dublin. Those who remember it say O'Connell's late procession of the trades was a poor imitation of it.

§ "No blunt in de cly."—No money in the pocket.

‖ "Madame Stevens was de word."—Miss Griselda Stevens was left by her brother, an eminent physician in Dublin, an estate in Westmeath and the King's County, yielding £600 per annum, for her life; and after her death to found an hospital. She, however, most benevolently commenced the application of it to the donor's charitable intentions during her life. She founded in 1720 the celebrated hospital near Kilmainham, which bears her name, and has ever since been the gratuitous receptacle of the maimed and poor, particularly for sudden accidents, as the inscription on the door declares—"Ægris succiisque sanandis." Larry, therefore, means he had to betake himself to the hospital, where he had nothing to pay.

¶ "Paddy Ward's pig."—Who Paddy Ward was, we believe, has eluded the inquiries of historians and antiquaries. He was, however, very eminent for his sayings and doings: he measured a griddle, and declared it was "as broad as it was long!" Hence, his "griddle" was as famous an illustration as his pig.

** "Be de hokey!"—A form of adjuration condensing into one, two words, "holy poker!"—a supposed implement of purgatory held in much awe.

"We drove de bull tro many a gap,
And kep him going many a mile,
But when we came to Kilmainham lands,
We let de mosey rest awhile.

"*Spoken*—Oh! boys, if de mosey was keeper of de ancle-spring warehouse,* you cud not help pitying him; his hide smoked like Ned Costigan's brewery,† and dere was no more hair on his hoofs dan dere's wool on a goose's gams,‡ be de hokey.

"We drove de bull down sweet Truck-street,
Widout eider dread or figear,
When out run Mosey Creathorn's§ bitch,
Hand cotched de bull be de year.

"*Spoken*—Hye, Jock—dat dog's my bitch‖—spit on her nose to keep her in wind—fight fair, boys, and no stones—low, Nettle, low¶—shift, shift, my beauty, and keep your hoult. Oh! boys, your souls, I tought de life ud leave Mosey Creathorn's glimms, when he saw his bitch in de air; 'Oh! Larry Casey, happy det to you, and glory may you get, stand wide and ketch her in your arms—if her head smacks de pavement, she's not worth lifting up—dat's right, yer sowls, now tip her a sup a de blood while it's warm.'

"We drove de bull down Corn-market,
As all de world might segee,
When brave Tedy Foy trust his nose tro' de bars,
Crying 'High for de sweet liberty.'**

* "Ancle-spring warehouse," an ingenious periphrasis for the stocks.

+ "Ned Costigan,"—a celebrated Dublin distiller, whose premises were long famous for adumbrating the liberties with their smoke.

‡ "Gams!"—Legs: from the French *Jambes*. Nothing, perhaps, could more forcibly describe the total absence of hair from the poor bull's legs than the state of a goose's gam.

§ "Creathorn."—A respectable name long appearing among the commons and freemen of the butchers' guild.

‖ "Dat dog's my bitch!"—This confusion of genders is not confined to Mosey Creathorn. His late Majesty, George IV., when Prince of Wales, was notoriously fond of bull-baiting. On one occasion, a Smithfield butcher slapped him on the back in ecstacy, crying out, with an imprecation, "d—— your blood, Mr. Prince, the dog that pinned the bull is my bitch!"

¶ "Low, Nettle!—low!—and keep your hoult!"—Taking a bull by the ear, was the mark of a mongrel. The perfection of a bull-dog was, to seize the bull by the nose, and hold fast—so Nettle is ordered to shift, but keep her hold, *i. e.*, move down to the nose without letting go. Limbs were often broken by the tossing of the bull, and amputated, which, however, did not repress the animal's ardour; and many a "three-legged bitch" acquired great celebrity, after losing her limb.

** "Corn-market."—The old prison stood in this street, and was called "Newgate," because it had been once a gate of the city. In 1773 the new prison was built, and the old taken down. Corn-market lay in the way from Kilmainham

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"*Spoken*—Oh! cruel Coffey, glory to you, just knock off my darbies—let me out on padroul of honour*—I'll expel de mob—kill five, skin six, and be de fader of de scity, I'll return like an innocent lamb to de sheep-walk. 'Oh! boys, who lost an arm,† who lost five fingers and a tumb?' 'Oh!' says Larry Casey, 'it belongs to Luke Ochy, I know it by de slime on de slieve.'

"De mosey took down Plunket-street,‡
Where de clothes on de pegs were hanging,
Oh! den he laid about wid his nob,
De shifts around him banging.

"*Spoken*—Oh! Mrs. Mulligan, jewel, take in de bits o' duds from de wall, out o' de way o' de mosey's horns—be de hokey, he'll fly kites wid dem, and den poor Miss Judy will go de Lady Mayress's ball, like a spatchcock.

"Lord Altham is a very bad man,
As all de neighbours know,
For driving white Roger from Kilmainham lands,
We all to Virginy must go!

"*Spoken*—Well! boys!—suppose we go for seven years, an't dere six of us! Dat's just fourteen monts a-piece.§ I can sail in a turf-kish, and if ever I come back from his Majesty's tobacco-manufactory,‖ I'll butter my knife in his tripes, and give him his guts for garters. All de world knows I've de blood of de Dempseys in me."

to the city market, near Plunket-street, which, therefore, the bull had to pass through; and this causes Teddy Foy's affecting aspiration after liberty, with his nose through the bars.

* "Padroul"—Parole of honour.

† "Who lost an arm," &c.—Larey Casey's mark of recognition of the owner is not merely graphic, but, coarse as it may appear, is very classical. The father of Horace, it seems, was addicted to Luke Ochy's habits, which caused his adversaries to say—"Quoties vidi cubito se emungentem."—See præfat. Hor. Sat. Ed. Delph.

‡ "Plunket-street," long distinguished as the mart in Dublin for the sale of old clothes, whence the proverb, to describe a person dressed in second-hand finery, that he "stripped a peg in Plunket-street." It is in the immediate vicinity of the scene of action.

§ "Dat's but fourteen monts a-piece!"—Larry Dempsey's calculation may appear not according to the rules of arithmetic, however it may be to those of sentiment. Miss Edgeworth we believe it is who remarks, that such Irishisms are founded on sociability of temper. The two Irishmen transported for fourteen years, who comforted themselves, because it was but seven years a-piece, were consoled with the reflection, that the enjoyment of each other's society would make the time appear to each but half its real length.

‖ "His Majesty's Tobacco Manufactory."—This may seem merely a metaphor of Larry's; but is nevertheless legally correct, and borrowed from parliamentary phraseology. The language of all statutes previous to the 30 George III. was, "transportation to His Majesty's plantations in North America."

We shall conclude with specimens from one more song, very popular in its day. We have before noticed the feuds between the Liberty and Ormond boys. Various objects of petty display presented objects of emulation and strife. Among them was planting a May-bush—one party endeavouring to cut down what the other had set up. A memorable contest of this kind in which the weavers cut down "the bush" of the butchers, is thus celebrated in song:—

"DE MAY-BUSH.

"De night afore de fust of Magay
Ri rigidi, ri ri dum dee,
We all did agree without any delay,
To cut a May-bush, so we pegged it away,
Ri rigidi dum dee!"

The leader of the boys was Bill Durham, a familiar corruption of Dermot, his right name, a distinguished man at that time in the Liberty riots. When the tree was cut down, it was borne back in triumph, with Bill astride on it, exhibiting a classical picture still more graphic than the gem of Bacchus astride on his tun:—

"Bill Durham, he sat astride on his bush,
Ri rigidi, ri ri dum dee,
And dere he kept singin', as sweet as a trush—
His faulchin in one hand, his pipe in his mush—*
Ri rigidi dum dee!"

"The Bush" having been planted in Smithfield, contributions were raised to do it honour; and among other contributors were the fishwomen of Pill-lane, who, from contiguity of situation and similarity of dealing, were closely allied to the butchers of Ormond market. A custom prevailed here, of selling the fish brought for sale, to the women who retailed it, by auction. The auctioneer, who was generally one of themselves, holding a plaice or a haddock by the tail, instead of a hammer, knocked down the lot to the highest bidder. This was an important time to the trade; yet the high-minded poissardes, like their Parisian sisters, "sacrificed every thing to their patriotic feel-

* "In his mush"—mouth, from the French *mouche*. Many words are similarly derived—gossoon, a boy, from *garçon*, &c.

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ings," and abandoned the market, *even* at this crisis, to attend "de bush:"—

"From de lane* came each lass in her holiday gown,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
Do de haddock was up, and de lot was knocked down,
Dey doused all dere sieves,† till dey riz de half-crown,‡
Ri rigidi dum dee!"

After indulging in the festivities of the occasion round "de bush," some returned, and some lay about *vino somnoque sepulti;* and so, not watching with due vigilance, the Liberty boys stole on their security, cut down, and carried of "de bush." The effect on Bill Durham when he heard the adversary passing on their way back with the trophy, is thus described:—

"Bill Durham, being up de nite afore,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
Was now in his flea-park,§ taking a snore,
When he heard de mob pass by his door,
Ri rigidi dum dee!

"Den over his shoulders his flesh-bag he trew,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
And out of the chimbley his faulchion he drew,
And, mad as a hatter, down May-lane he flew,
Ri rigidi dum dee!

"Wid his hat in his hand by de way of a shield,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
He kep all along crying out 'never yield!'
But he never cried stop till he came to Smithfield
Ri rigidi dum dee!

* "De lane."—Pill-lane, called so, *par excellence*, as the great centre and mart of piscatory dealing.

† "Doused all dere sieves."—Laid them down at their uncle's, the pawnbroker's.

‡ "Riz half-a-crown."—The neuter verb, "rise," is classically used here for the active verb, "raised," a common licence with our poets.

§ "Flea-park."—This appellation of Bill's bed was no doubt borrowed from the account the Emperor Julian gives of his beard, "I permit little beasts," said he, "to run about it, like animals in a park." The word he uses is φθειρες pediculi; so that Durham's "flea-park" was evidently sanctioned by the Emperor's "—park." The Abbe de Bletterie, who translated Julian's work, complains that he was accused for not suppressing the image presented by Julian; but adds very properly, *la delicatesse Francaise va-t-elle jus'qu au falsifier les autcurs?* So we say of our author.

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"Dere finding no bush, but de watch-boys all flown,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
Your sowls, says Bill Durham, I'm left all alone
Be de hokey, de glory of Smidfield is gone!—
Ri rigidi dum dee!"

Bill vows revenge in a very characteristic and professional manner, by driving one of the bulls of Ormond-market among his adversaries:—

"For de loss of our bush, revenge we will get,
Ri rigidi ri ri dum dee,
In de slaughtering season we'll tip 'em a sweat,
Rigidi di do dee,
We'll wallop a mosey down Mead-street in tune,
And we won't leave a weaver alive on de Coombe;
But we'll rip up his tripe-bag, and burn his loom.
Ri rigidi di do dee!"

CHAPTER IX.

RAPPAREES AND ROBBERS—HEDGE SCHOOLS—FRENEY—NORTHERN ROBBERS—SHAWN CROSSACH—WILLIAM CROTTY—CROTTY'S LAMENT—FELON'S BODIES—FREDERICK CAULFIELD.

If the moral conduct of a people is formed by the instruction of their early years, it is not difficult to account for the great laxity observed in the conduct of the lower orders in Ireland half a century ago. It is true the excellent schools of the Incorporated Society, inculcating religion, morality, and obedience to the laws, in the different counties, were like beacons spreading light around them to a certain extent; but they were comparatively few and far between, and the unceasing objects of calumny and attack; and, in fact, the only places of general instruction were "Hedge Schools," that is, benches laid loosely either in a waste cabin, or under a hedge by the wayside, where the only books of instruction were sixpenny volumes, named "Burton Books." They were small octavos, bound in cheap white basil, the paper and type of the coarsest

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kind, and full of typographical errors, illustrated occasionally by plates of the most "uncouth sculpture." But the rudeness of the book was a trifling defect compared with its contents. The general character of such volumes was loose and immoral, Among them, two were most popular—"Laugh and be fat," and "The Irish Rogues and Rapparees." The first was a collection of the most indecent stories, told in the coarsest language; the second celebrated the deeds of highwaymen. By the one, the moral sense of the children of both sexes was corrupted, by teaching them to indulge in what was gross and indelicate; by the other, their integrity and sense of right and wrong was confounded, by proposing the actions of lawless felons as objects of interest and imitation. Among the rapparees was one held in high esteem by the youth of the peasantry, and a representation of his deeds formed a part of their plays and sports. This person was James Freney.

He was born in the house of Mr. Robbins, a respectable gentleman, in the county of Kilkenny, where his father was a servant. He showed an early dislike to every thing that was praiseworthy and of "good report," and no efforts of his kind patron could turn him from low dissipation. He had a precocious and incorrigible fondness for cock-fighting, hurling, and gambling. His friends at length were compelled to abandon him to his own irregular courses, and he became a highwayman. He collected round him all the idle and worthless fellows of the neighbourhood, whom he formed into a gang of robbers, and over whom he exercised absolute control, an object of alarm and terror to Kilkenny and the neighbouring counties. The manner of their proceeding was very summary. When a house was *set* to be robbed, he proceeded to a forge in the vicinity, and ordering one of his gang to open it and take out a sledge, they went at once to the house, dashed in the door or windows, and rifled it of all its valuable property. Such was the terror they excited, and the system of violence they pursued, that they were rarely opposed. During the day they stopped travellers, and robbed on the highway, and even levied black mail on carmen, openly demanding a ransom for the goods they seized. The usual conveyance for shop goods from

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large to small towns, were common cars; spies were set, and the approach of the cars with goods announced to Freney, who met them at a convenient place, drove them to a thicket, or some near mountain, set a ransom on their value, and then dismissed one of their drivers to report the loss, and bring back the ransom, which was rarely withheld. On one occasion, five cars proceeding from Waterford to Thomastown, loaded with valuable shop goods, were thus stopped, their ransom set down at £150, and one of the drivers sent to fetch it. While Freney was, as usual, waiting for the return, in confident expectation, one of his scouts ran back with information that a body of the merchants of Waterford, accompanied by a strong force of the militia, were near at hand to take him. He looked out, and saw the road beset on all sides. He ran, and after some pursuit, concealed himself in a cleft of a rock covered by furze and brambles. Here he laid his loaded musket across his body, and a case of cocked pistols at each side of him, and after waiting for some time, expecting his pursuers, he fell fast asleep. One of the party in search of him heard him snoring, looked in, and having ascertained who it was, immediately ran to announce to the pursuers his discovery. Freney was immediately surrounded by the *posse*, who began firing into the spot where he lay. The sound awakened him, and he saw the ground about him riddled and torn by the balls, which passed over his body. He lay still until some of the party, supposing he must be dead, were about to pull him out by the legs, when he suddenly started up, and rushed out with his musket cocked. The terror of his name, and the suddenness of his appearance, frightened the party, They all, military and mercantile, ran off in different directions, each man alarmed for his own safety; while Freney, availing himself of the momentary panic, escaped under cover of a neighbouring hedge. He met a spancelled horse, and cutting the cords with his knife, mounted on its back, and rode off, under a shower of balls, to the river Nore, not far distant; this he dashed into, swam across, and found himself in safety at the other side, his pursuers stopping on the bank of the river, and firing at him without effect, as he crossed the opposite fields.

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By such daring deeds and hair-breadth escapes as these he astonished the country, and kept it in alarm, and, to a certain degree, in subjection, for five years. No one thought of resisting him on the highway, or defending a house when attacked, or refusing the ransom for goods when demanded. But at length his gang, one by one, melted away. They turned informers against each other, and were hanged in succession, till but one, named Bulger, remained with him. They were "set" in a cabin, and in making their escape, Bulger was wounded by a ball in his leg, but his companion took him on his back, and they both escaped. Freney now seeing no prospect of safety to himself, determined to purchase it by the sacrifice of his last friend. He had him set, and delivered into the hands of justice, and thus saw the last of his gang convicted and executed. For his treachery on this occasion, his own pardon was secured by the interest of Lord Carrick, and a small situation in the revenue was given to him in the town of New Ross, in which he continued many years. Several gentlemen visited him, to hear him tell his adventures, which he freely communicated. He ultimately wrote his autobiography, which became one of the most popular school-books in our *system* of education sixty years ago. His adventures were the favourite themes of school-boys, and the representation of his achievements their favourite amusement. His robbery on the highway, his bursting open houses, his exacting ransom were faithfully enacted, particularly the scene of his escape from the Waterford militia, and his carrying off his companion, Bulger, with a wounded leg. In effect, the consequence said to have followed from Schiller's Robbers on the youth of Germany, was realised among the young peasantry of Ireland.

Freney is still well remembered in the south-east of Ireland. On the road between Clonmel and Kilkenny, the scene of many of his robberies, an elm is pointed out to the traveller, which is known as "Freney's tree." His character has been much overrated, as represented by some novel writers. He had nothing of dignified appearance or gentlemanly manners. Those who saw and conversed with him described him as a mean-looking fellow, pitted with the small-pox, and blind of an eye, whence

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Freney became a *soubriquet* for all persons who had lost an eye. He was not of a sanguinary disposition, and was susceptible of grateful attachment. His most determined pursuer was a Mr. Robbins, who often nearly captured him, but he never could be prevailed on to take his life, though it was often in his power, because he was one of the family to whose kindness he was early indebted. He had no such feeling, however, for his companion, Bulger, who often saved his life. He betrayed him, like others of his gang, to insure his own pardon. He was a coarse, vulgar, treacherous villain, much of the highwayman, and nothing of the hero.

While Freney gained fame in the south, many of his fraternity, Redmond O'Hanlon and others, are commemorated in the same books as achieving renown in the north. Indeed, the last of the highwaymen was a northern, named Collyer, who infested the roads to Drogheda so lately as within the last thirty years. One of the northern rapparees is distinguished for a singular trait of character. "Shawn Crossach" was an old freebooter, who infested the counties of Derry and Tyrone. He had two sons, whom he educated from their earliest days in acts of robbery. He placed a pot of stirabout in the centre of his cabin, between two doors, and no boy got his supper who was not able to take it by force or fraud from his father. One of them, "Paurya Fhad," or "Young Paddy," was a distinguished proficient in free-booting. Their robbery of an officer of rank, of a considerable treasure, is yet commemorated by the name of the bridge where it was effected, which is called "the General's Bridge." For this daring deed on a high functionary, they were all apprehended, tried, and convicted. After sentence was passed, it was represented that two victims would be a sufficient example to satisfy justice, and mercy might be shown to the old man. They were all, however, led out to execution; but at the gallows, the father was told that he was pardoned by the mercy of government. He looked no way glad, but the contrary, and at first offered to exchange the pardon with "Paurya Fhad," his youngest son. When he was informed that this could not be allowed, he said, after a short deliberation, "Well, I'm an old man, anyhow, and can't live

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long, and what use will pardon be to me! so, wi' the blessing o' God, I'll shake a foot wi' the boys." He persisted in his determination, and would listen to no persuasion against his right to be hanged, and have his sentence executed; so he suffered between his two sons, holding affectionately one of their hands at each side.

But more eminent than any of these we have mentioned, though prior in time, was a rapparee, named William Crotty. The habits and usages which English writers of the sixteenth century impute to the "wild Irish," were not wholly extinct eighty years ago. Men from the woods and mountains infested the neighbourhood of populous towns, having holes and dens from which they issued to commit their depredations, and to which they retired, like wild beasts to their lair; when pursued, they thus suddenly sunk into the earth and disappeared, and were passed by their pusuers. They lived like the subjects of the Irish chieftain, who pronounced a malediction on any of his tribe that would dwell in a house built with hands. The den of the modern rapparee was usually in a situation commanding a view of the road, from which he could pounce, like a vulture on his quarry, on the passengers, and return with his prey to his rock. Such was the mode of life of Crotty. His den, still known as "Crotty's Hole," is on the south-eastern point of the Comeragh mountains, in the west of the county of Waterford. It is on an eminence commanding a view of the subjacent country, east and west, almost from Dungarvan to Carrick, and south, to Tramore. There is scarcely a place in Ireland commanding a more extensive view of high roads. The eminence is accessible from below with some difficulty, and the descent into "the hole" is very steep and precipitous.

The interior of this cave consists of one large chamber, from which branch off some smaller recesses. These were occupied by Crotty for sleeping and other domestic purposes; but tradition assigns to them a more horrible use. Crotty was reputed to be a cannibal, and he was believed to fill these recesses with stores of human flesh, on which he fed. Hence he was called the "Irish Sawny Bean," after the Highland robber of that name, who is said to have had a taste for the same diet.

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Crotty was a man of desperate courage and unequalled personal agility; often baffling pursuers even when mounted on fleet horses. His accomplice was a man named David Norris, who was superior to Crotty in ability and the cunning of his craft, though his inferior in strength and activity. Their depredations were usually designed by Norris, and entrusted to Crotty for execution; and Norris often stimulated Crotty to acts of violence and wanton cruelty, to which he would have been otherwise indisposed. Among other instances of their barbarity recorded by tradition is the following:—Passing one night by a cabin on the road-side, they saw a light in the window; on looking in, they perceived a man and his wife at their supper; the former of whom having peeled a potato, was raising it to his mouth. "Now, for any bet," said Crotty, "the ball in my pistol shall pass his lips before the potato." He fired, and the poor man fell dead, the ball having pierced his mouth while yet the potato was at his lips. Crotty was afterwards taken, having been disabled by a shot in the mouth, and the peasantry, to this day, affirm it was the judgment of heaven inflicted on him for this act of cruelty.

Though well known personally to all the county, Crotty never hesitated to appear at fairs and markets, where he was generally well received. Like many other highwaymen he was in the habit of sharing with the poor what he plundered from the rich; and thus acquired popularity sufficient to procure him immediate warning of any danger which might threaten him. He frequented the fair green of Kilmacthomas, and openly joined with the young men in hurling and foot-ball on Sunday evenings, danced with the girls at wakes and patterns, and familiarly entered respectable houses. He once visited a widow lady, named Rogers, near Tramore, while she was entertaining a large company at dinner. The guests were terror-stricken when he stalked into the room and displayed his arms; but he calmly desired a servant to give him the plate on the side-board, and his direction being instantly complied with, he walked out without committing any further depredation. The servant was immediately charged with being his accomplice, and threatened with prosecution; whereupon he

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ran after Crotty, and implored him to restore the plate. Crotty complied, turned to the house, and handed back the property to Mrs. Rogers. She was profuse in her thanks, but he desired her to observe he was only lending the plate to her, and peremtorily demanded it back. She again surrendered it, and he said—"Now, madam, remember it was you, and not your servant, who gave this to me, and do not charge him with the loss." Such was the terror of his name that no attempt was made to pursue him.

Crotty's depredations becoming intolerable, and his retreat known, a gentleman, named Hearn, who lived within three miles of it, at length determined to capture him. Hearn was a man of uncommon strength and indomitable resolution. He bribed Norris's wife to give him notice when Crotty would be found "at home." She met Mr. Hearn one day on the road, and as she passed, said slily, and without looking at him, "the bird's in the nest." He was unaccompanied, but, being well armed, he acted on the hint, and went directly to "the hole." He called Crotty by his Christian name, "William," and the robber, without suspicion, came up. The moment his head appeared, Mr. Hearn, knowing he must be well armed and his desperate character, fired at him, and wounded him severely in the mouth. He succeeded, however, in effecting his escape. Mr. Hearn determined still to watch him; and in a short time afterwards, received secret information from Norris's wife that Crotty was in Norris's house. He proceeded thither directly, well armed, and took Crotty by surprise, who was wholly unprepared, and imagined himself secure. The latter submitted to be arrested, without further resistance, saying, he long knew Mr. Hearn was the man who would take him.

As in many of his countrymen, the extremes of ferocity and kindly feeling were combined in Crotty. When Mr. Hearn was leading him away, he asked him why, as he lived so near, and had so frequent opportunities of taking his life, he had not done so. "I often intended it," said the malefactor; "and last Christmas I went to shoot you; but I saw through the parlour window you and your wife and children sitting so happily round the fire, that though I had the pistol cocked and you

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covered, my heart failed me, and I could not draw the trigger. I often followed you, too, when you were fishing in the Clodagh; but your son was with you, and I felt sure if I killed *you*, he would shoot *me*, and I could not bring myself to take both your lives."

The gun with which Crotty was shot is preserved and shown as a curiosity at Shanakill house, which was the residence of Mr. Hearn. It is labelled "Crotty's gun," and the interest attached to it proves how the service must have been estimated, in those days of imperfect police, of ridding the country of such a dreaded desperado.

At Crotty's trial, a woman, who lived with him as his wife, appeared in court, in a state of pregnancy usually exhibited by felons' female companions on such occasions; and when the jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the judge was beginning to pass sentence the criminal cried out, "A long day, my lord, a long day." "I see no reason for granting it," said the judge. "Oh, my lord," said the woman, "there is great reason, if it was only to let him see the face of his child;" and she stood up and exhibited her condition to the court. The request was denied to the cruel felon, and he was executed next day. His wife appeared at his wake, and her lament is recorded in a popular dirge, which is sung at this day, at wakes, in the county of Tipperary. On the next page will be found the score of this plaintive Irish melody, taken by a lady who often heard it sung by the peasantry. The two first verses of the song commonly appropriated to it are as follows:—

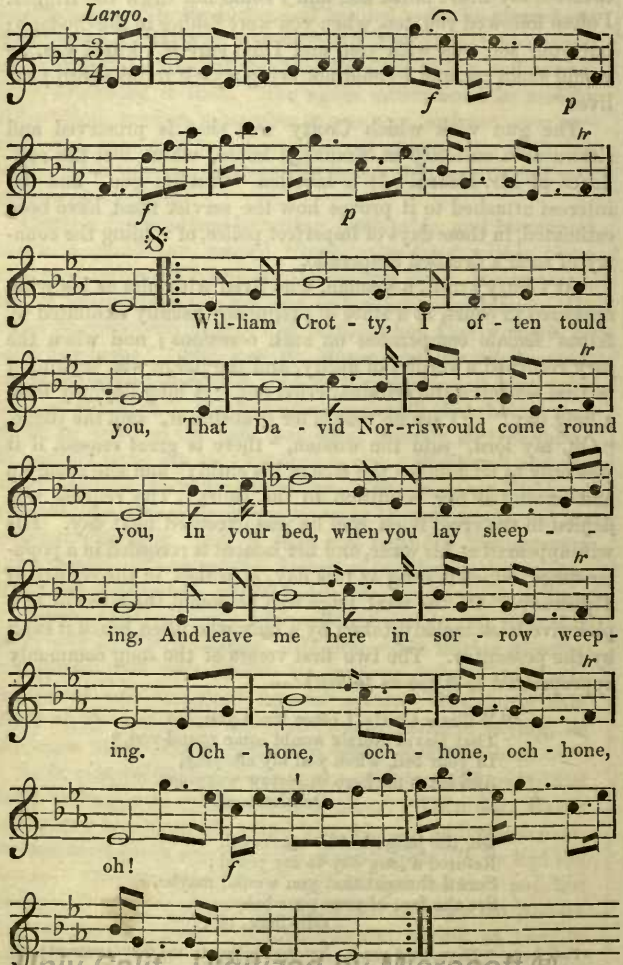
"William Crotty I often tould you,
That David Norris would come round you,*
In your bed, when you lay sleeping,
And leave me here in sorrow weeping,
Och-hone, oh!

"Oh, the judge but he was cruel,
Refused a long day to my jewel;
Sure I thought that you would, maybe,
See the face of your poor baby,
Och-hone, oh!"

**Var. lect.*—"Have sould you." But the reading in the text is correct; for the Irish peasantry never regard the consonants in their rhymes.

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CROTTY'S LAMENT.



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Crotty was decapitated, according to his sentence, and his head was placed on a spike over the gate of the county gaol, which was at a great thoroughfare, and often a resting-place for those who brought milk to the markets. In a few days the head became in a state of putrid solution, and began to distil drops of gore into the milk-cans, for some time before it was discovered, to the inexpressible disgust and horror of all who had been drinking the milk. The hair did not decay with the flesh—it grew on the bony cranium; and there for a long time the ghastly skull of this miscreant excited as much horror after his death as his cruel actions had during his life.

When a criminal was executed for an offence for which his body was not liable to be given to the surgeons for dissection, his friends were allowed to take it. It was washed, and then laid on a truss of straw in a public street, with or without a head, and a plate was laid on the breast, with a halfpenny on it, as an invitation to passengers to contribute to the funeral. It formed sometimes a solemn spectacle, with the felon's widow at the head, wailing, with dishevelled hair, and singing, in a low dismal chant, her lament, her children ranged at the foot. But the utter indecency with which executions were then accompanied sometimes occasioned the most revolting and horrible scenes. About the same time at which the abominable occurrence just mentioned of Crotty's head took place, three highwaymen, Stackpole, Cashman, and Hierly, were hanged in Waterford. Their bodies were given to their friends, and were brought to the fish-house to be washed. While in the act of being washed, the bell rung to intimate a fresh arrival of fish; the bodies were hastily removed from the boards which they occupied, and the fish were thrown down in their place, swimming in the loathsome washings and blood of the corpses. The latter were then exposed on straw in the street, and an elderly gentleman, who communicated the circumstance, was brought by his nurse to see them, as a sight worthy of contemplation. The belief was, that if the beholder did not touch the body he saw, the ghost of it would haunt him; so he was led up by his nurse for the purpose, and laid his hands on them one after the other. The cold clammy feel and the

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ghastly spectacle never left his memory, but haunted him ever after.

To turn from such horrors, we will mention one more anecdote connected with the robberies of this period, which is perhaps the most singular in the annals of the detection of crime. At the close of the American war, Frederick Caulfield was on his way from England, when he met, in the ship, a young man named Hickey, and formed an acquaintance with him. They arrived in Waterford, and Hickey informed his companion that his friends lived in the county of Cork, and that he was going to see them, after a long absence in Newfoundland, where he had made some money, by the fishery, which he was carrying home; he invited Caulfield to accompany him, and they proceeded on their journey together. After a short time Caulfield came back to Waterford. He was a grave man, of decent appearance and serious, religious manners, and no observation was made on his returning alone. A trifling incident, however, drew attention to him. He wanted a dozen shirts made in a hurry, and to expedite them he gave them to twelve different sempstresses to work. Soon afterwards a rumour was heard of a young man who was expected home by his friends in Cork from Newfoundland, but had not appeared. On the circulation of this report, an innkeeper at Portlaw, named Rogers, came forward and stated that Caulfield had come to his house in company with Hickey, and left it along with him. On being asked if his house was not an inn much frequented, and if so, how he could swear to the identity of a casual passenger, whom he had never seen before, he hesitated, and said it was caused by a circumstance so extraordinary, that he was unwilling to mention it. On being pressed, he declared that on the morning of that day, his wife, on awaking, had told him a dream which had made a strong impression on her mind. Two men, she said, had entered the house together, dressed like sailors, a tall man and a short man; they had some refreshment, and soon after they left it. The spirit of her dream followed them, and she saw one of them strike the other as he descended a gap, murder him on the ground, rifle him, and bury him beside a hedge. The locality was distinctly painted to her vision, and

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she described the spot. As soon as Caulfield and Hickey entered the house she ran to her husband and said they were the men she had seen in her dream. They remained some time taking refreshment, eat and drank together in great apparent friendship, and, having obtained some directions as to their intended line of journey, they were about to depart, when Rogers, feeling some strong misgiving in his mind, from the impression his wife's dream had made upon him, entreated them to remain where they were till the morning. This they refused to do, and proceeded on their journey.

The locality described by Rogers as the scene of the murder in his wife's dream was searched. It was on the road between Portlaw and Carrick-on-Suir; and the body of Hickey was found there, in the identical situation indicated by the dream. Caulfield was arrested, tried at the ensuing assizes, and convicted. The circumstance of the dream being mentioned at the trial, the witnesses were cross-examined about it with a view to throw ridicule on their testimony; but the manner in which it had transpired before the finding of the body made a deep impression on the jury. The judge, whose name, by a curious coincidence, was also Caulfield, in passing sentence, strongly adverted to it as an instance of the interference of Providence for the detection of murder.

Caulfield, after conviction, acknowledged his guilt. He said that the steady gaze of the innkeeper's wife, as he entered the inn at Portlaw, so appalled him, that he had given up the design of murdering his companion, till he himself afforded him an opportunity. He had a stick which hurt his hand, and Hickey offered him his knife to pare it. He was in the act of doing so, and Hickey was descending a gap in the hedge, when "the devil," said Caulfield, "appeared to me, and whispered in my ear, 'now strike.'" He did so, then cut Hickey's throat with his own knife while he lay on the ground, robbed him, and tried to bury him in the spot where he was found. Another remarkable circumstance connected with the dream was the mode of its interpretation. The dream represented the less of the two men murdering the larger; this was contrary to the fact; but that was

"Confirmation strong as proof of holy writ,"

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to demonstrate the truth of the vision, to those who believed in dreams then in Ireland—the established faith being that dreams always go by contraries.*

Caulfield's confession and appearance of sincere penitence, coupled with the mysterious discovery of his guilt, interested many of the religious in Waterford in his favour. Several persons of great respectability and high connexions visited him daily in prison, for devotional purposes. He was a handsome man, and particularly attentive to his dress. The ladies therefore purchased different articles, which they sent, for him to choose the most becoming to die in; and when the hour for the last awful scene approached, a large company, particularly ladies, were admitted at the gaol, and formed a long procession. The place of execution was then about a mile out of the town, and they walked with the murderer to the foot of the gallows, chanting the fifty-first psalm, in which he appeared to join with fervent piety. Such an extraordinary spectacle at a public execution is hardly less striking than—though so strong a contrast to—the horrible levities that often followed such scenes sixty years ago.

CHAPTER X.

TIGER ROCHE.

Among the characters distinguished for unbridled indulgence and fierce passions, who were, unfortunately, too frequently to

* A curious illustration of this—in Ireland almost universal—superstition, occurred in the reign of Elizabeth. The Earl of Leicester and Duke of Ormond were deadly enemies, and the latter denounced the former as a villain and a coward. This coming to Leicester's ears, he met Ormond in the ante-chamber at court, and, after saluting him with apparent courtesy, said; "I was dreaming of you last night." Ormond asked what was the dream. "I dreamed," said the Earl, "that I gave you a box on the ear." "Very good," replied the Duke of Ormond; "and as dreams always go by contraries, that portends that *I* must box *you*," and struck him a blow in the face. For this offence Ormond was imprisoned, but insisted he was only accomplishing Leicester's dream. He was soon afterwards liberated.



TIGER ROCHE.

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be met with in Ireland in the last century, was one whose name attained so much celebrity as to become a proverb. "Tiger Roche," as he was called, was a native of Dublin, where he was born in the year 1729. He received the best education the metropolis could afford, and was instructed in all the accomplishments then deemed essential to the rank and character of a gentleman. So expert was he in the various acquirements of polite life, that at the age of sixteen he recommended himself to Lord Chesterfield, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who offered him, gratuitously, a commission in the army; but his friends having other views for him, they declined it. This seems to have been a serious misfortune to the young man, whose disposition and education strongly inclined him to a military life. His hopes were raised, and his vanity flattered, by the notice and offer of the viceroy; and in sullen resentment he absolutely refused to embark in any other profession his friends designed for him. He continued, therefore, for several years among the dissipated idlers of the metropolis, having no laudable pursuit to occupy his time, and led into all the outrages and excesses which then disgraced Dublin.

One night in patrolling the city with his drunken associates, they attacked and killed a watchman, who, with others, had attempted to quell a riot they had excited. He was, therefore, compelled to fly from Dublin. He made his way to Cork, where he lay concealed for some time, and from thence escaped to the plantations in North America. When the war broke out between France and England, he entered as a volunteer in one of the provincial regiments, and distinguished himself in several engagements with the Indians in the interest of the French, during which he seems to have acquired those fierce and cruel qualities by which those tribes are distinguished.

He was now particularly noticed by his officers for the intrepidity and spirit he displayed, and was high in favour with Colonel Massy, his commander; but an accident occurred of so humiliating and degrading a nature, as to extinguish at once all his hopes of advancement. An officer of Massy's regi-

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ment was possessed of a very valuable fowling-piece which he highly prized. He missed it from his tent, and made diligent inquiry after it, but it was nowhere to be found. It was, however, reported that it was seen in the possession of Roche, and an order was made to examine his baggage. On searching among it the lost article was found. Roche declared that he had bought it from one Bourke, a countryman of his own, and a corporal in his regiment. Bourke was sent for and examined. He solemnly declared on oath that the statement of Roche was altogether false, and that he himself knew nothing at all of the transaction. Roche was now brought to a court-martial, and little appearing in his favour, he was convicted of the theft, and, as a lenient punishment, ordered to quit the service with every mark of disgrace and ignominy. Irritated with this treatment, Roche immediately challenged the officer who had prosecuted him. He refused, however, to meet him, on the pretext that he was a degraded man, and no longer entitled to the rank and consideration of a gentleman. Stung to madness, and no longer master of himself, he rushed to the parade, insulted the officer in the grossest terms, and then flew to the picket-guard, where he attacked the corporal with his naked sword, declaring his intention to kill him on the spot. The man with difficulty defended his life, till his companions sprung upon Roche and disarmed him. Though deprived of his weapon, he did not desist from his intention; crouching down like an Indian foe, he suddenly sprung, like Rhoderick Dhu, at his antagonist, and fastened on his throat with his teeth, and before he could be disengaged nearly strangled him, dragging away a mouthful of flesh, which, in the true Indian spirit, he afterwards said, was "the sweetest morsel he had ever tasted." From the fierce and savage character he displayed on this occasion, he obtained the appellation of "Tiger," an affix which was ever after joined to his name.

A few days after, the English army advanced to force the lines of Ticonderaga. Unfortunate Roche was left desolate and alone in the wilderness, an outcast from society, apparently abandoned by all the world. His resolution and

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fidelity to his cause, however, did not desert him. He pursued his way through the woods till he fell in with a party of friendly Indians, and by extraordinary exertions and forced marches, arrived at the fortress with his Indians, to join in the attack. He gave distinguished proofs of his courage and military abilities during that unfortunate affair, and received four dangerous wounds. He attracted the notice of General Abercrombie, the leader of the expedition; but the stain of robbery was upon him, and no services, however brilliant, could obliterate it.

From hence he made his way to New York, after suffering incredible afflictions from pain, poverty, and sickness. One man alone, Governor Rogers, pitied his case, and was not satisfied of his guilt. In the year 1785, Roche received from his friends in Ireland a reluctant supply of money, which enabled him to obtain a passage on board a vessel bound for England, where he arrived shortly afterwards. He reserved part of his supply of money for the purchase of a commission, and hoped once more to ascend to that rank from which he had been, as he thought, unjustly degraded; but just as the purchase was about to be completed, a report of his theft in America reached the regiment, and the officers refused to serve with him. With great perseverance and determined resolution, he traced the origin of the report to a Captain Campbell, then residing at the British Coffee-house, in Charing-cross. He met him in the public room, taxed him with what he called a gross and false calumny, which the other retorted with great spirit. A duel immediately ensued, in which both were desperately wounded.

Roche now declared in all public places, and caused it to be everywhere known, that, as he could not obtain justice on the miscreant who had traduced his character in America, he would personally chastise every man in England who presumed to propagate the report. With this determination, he met one day, in the Green Park, his former colonel, Massy, and another officer, who had just returned home. He addressed them, and anxiously requested they would, as they might, remove the stain from his character. They treated his

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appeal with contempt, when he fiercely attacked them both. They immediately drew their swords, and disarmed him. A crowd of spectators assembled round, and being two to one they inflicted severe chastisement on Roche. Foiled in his attempt, he immediately determined to seek another occasion, and finding that one of them had departed for Chester, Roche set out after him with the indefatigable perseverance and pursuit of a bloodhound. Here Roche again sought him, and meeting him in the streets, again attacked him. Roche was, however, again defeated, and received a severe wound in the sword-arm, which long disabled him.

But that redress to his character now came accidentally and unexpectedly, which all his activity and perseverance could not obtain. Bourke, the corporal, was mortally wounded by a scalping party of Indians, and on his death-bed made a solemn confession that he himself had actually stolen the fowling-piece, and sold it to Roche, without informing him by what means he had procured it, and that Roche had really purchased it without any suspicion of the theft. This declaration of the dying man was properly attested, and universally received, and restored the injured Roche at once to character and countenance. His former calumniators now vied with each other in friendly offers to serve him; and as a remuneration for the injustice and injury he had suffered, a lieutenancy in a newly-raised regiment was conferred upon him gratuitously. He soon returned to Dublin with considerable eclat; the reputation of the injuries he had sustained, the gallant part he had acted, and the romantic adventures he had encountered among the Indians, in the woods of America, were the subject of every conversation. Convivial parties were everywhere made for him. Wherever he appeared, he was the lion of the night. A handsome person, made still more attractive by the wounds he had received, a graceful form in the dance, in which he excelled, and the narrative of "his hair-breadth 'scapes," with which he was never too diffident to indulge the company, made him at this time "the observed of all observers" in the metropolis of Ireland.

But a service which he rendered the public in Dublin

deservedly placed him very high in their esteem and goodwill. It was at this time infested with those miscreants whom we have before mentioned, "sweaters," or "pinkindindies," and every night some outrage was perpetrated on the peaceable and unoffending inhabitants. One evening late, an old gentleman with his son and daughter, were returning home from a friend's house, when they were attacked on Ormondquay by a party of them. Roche, who was accidentally going the same way at the same time, heard the shrieks of a woman crying for assistance, and instantly rushed to the place. Here he did not hesitate singly to meet the whole party. He first rescued the young woman from the ruffian who held her, and then attacking the band, he desperately wounded some, and put the rest to flight. His spirited conduct on this occasion gained him a high and deserved reputation, and inspired others with resolution to follow his example. He formed a body, consisting of officers and others of his acquaintance, to patrol the dangerous streets of Dublin at night, and so gave that protection to the citizens which the miserable and decrepit watch were not able to afford.

But he was not fated long to preserve the high character he had acquired. His physical temperament, impossible to manage, and his moral perceptions, hard to regulate, were the sport of every contingency and vicissitude of fortune. The peace concluded in 1763 reduced the army, and he retired in indigent circumstances to London, where he soon lived beyond his income. In order to repair it, he paid his addresses to a Miss Pitt, who had a fortune of £4,000. On the anticipation of this, he engaged in a career of extravagance that soon accumulated debts to a greater amount, and the marriage portion was insufficient to satisfy his creditors. He was arrested and cast into the prison of the King's Bench, where various detainers were laid upon him, and he was doomed to a confinement of hopeless termination. Here his mind appears to have been completely broken down, and the intrepid and daring courage, which had sustained him in so remarkable a manner through all the vicissitudes of his former life, seemed to be totally exhausted. He submitted to insults and indignities

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with patience, and seemed deprived not only of the capability to resent, but of the sensibility to feel them.

On one occasion he had a trifling dispute with a fellow-prisoner, who kicked him, and struck him a blow in the face. There was a time when his fiery spirit would not have been satisfied but with the blood of the offender. He now only turned aside and cried like a child. It happened that his countryman, Buck English, whom we have before noticed, was confined at the same time in the Bench; with him also he had some dispute, and English, seizing a stick, flogged him in a savage manner. Roche made no attempt to retaliate or resist, but crouched under the punishment. But while he shrunk thus under the chastisement of men, he turned upon his wife, whom he treated with such cruelty, that she was compelled to separate from him, and abandon him to his fate.

At length, however, an act of grace liberated him from a confinement under which all his powers were fast sinking; and a small legacy, left him by a relation, enabled him once more to appear in the gay world. With his change of fortune a change of disposition came over him; and in proportion as he had shown an abject spirit in confinement, he now exhibited even a still more arrogant and irritable temper than he had ever before displayed. He was a constant frequenter of billiard-tables, where he indulged an insufferable assumption, with sometimes a shrewd and keen remark. He was one day driving the balls about with the cue, and on some one expostulating with him that he was not playing himself, but hindering other gentlemen from their amusement; "Gentlemen!" said Roche, "why, sir, except you and I, and one or two more, there is not a gentleman in the room." His friend afterwards remarked that he had grossly offended a large company, and wondered some of them had not resented the affront. "Oh!" said Roche, "there was no fear of that. There was not a thief in the room that did not consider himself *one* of the *two* or *three* gentlemen I excepted."

Again his fortune seemed in the ascendant, and the miserable, spiritless, flogged and degraded prisoner of the King's Bench was called on to stand as candidate to represent Middle-

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sex in Parliament. So high an opinion was entertained of his daring spirit, that it was thought by some of the popular party he might be of use in intimidating Colonel Luttrell, who was the declared opponent of Wilkes at that election. In April, 1769, he was put into nomination at Brentford by Mr. Jones, and seconded by Mr. Martin, two highly popular electors. He, however, disappointed his friends, and declined the poll, induced, it was said, by promises of Luttrell's friends to provide for him. On this occasion he fought another duel with a Captain Flood, who had offended him in a coffee-house. He showed no deficiency of courage, but on the contrary even a larger proportion of spirit and generosity than had distinguished him at former periods.

Returning at this time one night to his apartments at Chelsea, he was attacked by two ruffians, who presented pistols to his breast. He sprang back, and drew his sword, when one of them fired at him, and the ball grazed his temple. He then attacked them both, pinned one to the wall, and the other fled. Roche secured his prisoner, and the other was apprehended next day. They were tried at the Old Bailey, and capitally convicted; but at the humane and earnest intercession of Roche, their punishment was mitigated to transportation.

All the fluctuations of this strange man's character seemed at length to settle into one unhappy state, from which he was unable ever again to raise himself. He met with a young person, walking with her mother in St. James's Park, and was struck with her appearance. He insinuated himself into their acquaintance, and the young lady formed for him a strong and uncontrollable attachment. She possessed a considerable fortune, of which Roche became the manager. His daily profusion and dissipation soon exhausted her property, and the mother and daughter were compelled to leave London, reduced to indigence and distress, in consequence of the debts in which he had involved them.

He was soon after appointed captain of a company of foot in the East India service, and embarked in the Vansittart, for India, in May, 1773. He had not been many days on board, when such was his impracticable temper that he fell out with

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all the passengers, and among the rest with a Captain Ferguson, who called him out as soon as they arrived at Madeira. Roche was again seized with a sudden and unaccountable fit of terror, and made submission. The arroganee and cowardice he displayed revolted the whole body of the passengers, and they unanimously made it a point that the captain should expel him from the table. He was driven, therefore, to the society of the common sailors and soldiers on board the ship. With them he endeavoured to ingratiate himself, by mixing freely with them, and denouncing vengeance against every gentleman and officer on board the ship; but his threats were particularly directed against Ferguson, whom he considered the origin of the disgrace he suffered. On the arrival of the ship at the Cape, after all the passengers were disembarked, Roche came ashore, in the dusk of the evening, and was seen about the door of the house where Ferguson lodged. A message was conveyed to Ferguson, who went out, and was found soon afterwards round the corner of the house, weltering in his blood, with *nine* deep wounds, all on his left side; and it was supposed they must have been there inflicted, because it was the unprotected side, and the attack was made when he was off his guard.

Suspicion immediately fixed on Roche as the murderer; he fled during the night, and took refuge among the Caffres. It was supposed that he ended his strange and eventful life soon after. The Cape was at that time a colony of the Dutch, who, vigilant and suspicious of strangers, suffered none to enter there, but merely to touch for provisions and pass on. The proceedings, therefore, of their colonial government were shut up in mystery. It was reported at the time, that Roche was demanded and given up to the authorities of the Cape, who caused him to be broken alive upon the wheel, according to the then Dutch criminal law of the Cape, which inflicted that punishment on the more atrocious murderers, and the uncertainty that hung about the circumstance assorted strangely with the wild character of the man.

It appears, however, he was tried by the Dutch authorities at the Cape, and acquitted. He then took a passage in a

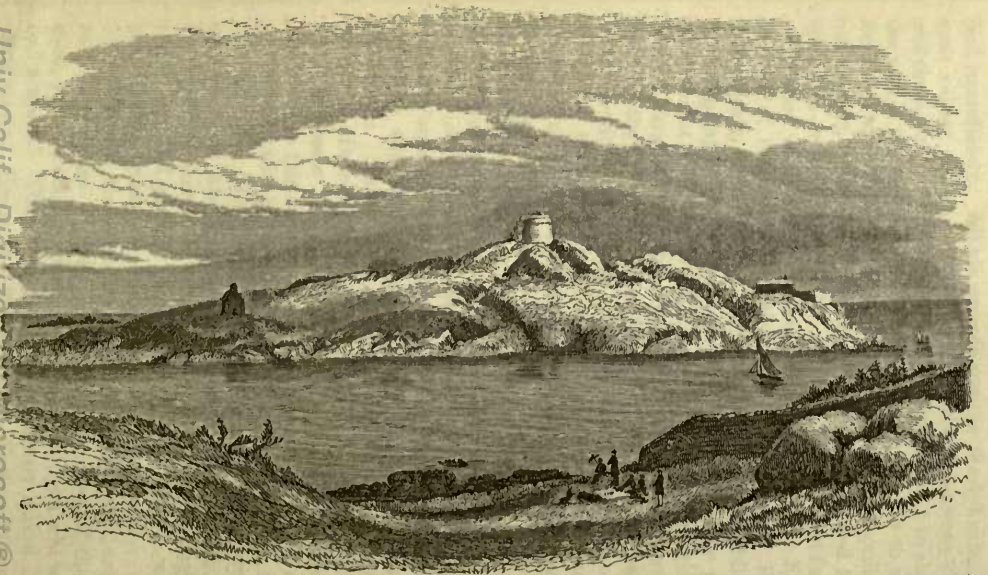
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French vessel to Bombay; but the Vansittart, in which he had come from England to the Cape, had arrived in India before him; information had been given to the British authorities, charging Roche with Ferguson's murder; and Roche was arrested as soon as he landed. He urged his right to be discharged, or at least bailed, on the grounds that there was not sufficient evidence against him; that he had been already acquitted; and that as the offence, if any, was committed out of the British dominions, he could only be tried by special commission, and it was uncertain whether the Crown would issue one or not, or, if the Crown did grant a commission, when or where it would sit. He argued his own case with the skill of a practised lawyer. The authorities, however, declined either to bail or discharge him, and he was kept in custody until he was sent a prisoner to England, to stand his trial.

An appeal of murder was brought against him, and a commission issued to try it. The case came on at the Old Bailey, in London, before Baron Burland, on the 11th December, 1775. The counsel for Roche declined in any way relying on the former acquittal at the Cape of Good Hope; and the case was again gone through. The fact of the killing was undisputed, but from the peculiar nature of the proceedings, there could not be, as in a common indictment for murder, a conviction for manslaughter; and the judge directed the jury, if they did not believe the killing to be malicious and deliberate, absolutely to acquit the prisoner. The jury brought in a verdict of acquittal.

The doubt about Roche's guilt arose on the following state of facts. On the evening of their arrival at the Cape, Ferguson and his friends were sitting at tea, at their lodgings, when a message was brought into the room; on hearing which Ferguson rose, went to his apartment, and, having put on his sword and taken a loaded cane in his hand, went out. A friend named Grant followed him, and found Roche and him at the side of the house, round a corner, and heard the clash of swords, but refused to interfere. It was too dark to see what was occurring; but in a few moments he heard Roche going away, and Ferguson falling. Ferguson was carried in, and

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THE KINGDOM OF DALKEY. 1849.

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one time, an admirable spirit, great humanity, and unbounded generosity; at another, abject cowardice, ferocity, treachery, and brutal selfishness. The vicissitudes of his fortune were as variable as his character: at times he was exposed to the foulest charges, and narrowly escaped ignominious punishment; at others he was the object of universal esteem and admiration.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KINGDOM OF DALKEY—THE DALKEY GAZETTE—T. O'MEARA.

AMONG the singular societies which have existed in Ireland within the last sixty years, was the "Kingdom of Dalkey and its Officers." It was then common, in forming associations, serious or convivial, to adopt, instead of the plebeian name of "club," some more high-sounding title. A society of gentlemen, who established a court of honour to suppress duelling, by the contradictory expedient of making themselves such excellent swordsmen that all others would be afraid to fight with them, called themselves the "Knights of Tara." They originally named themselves the Knights of St. Patrick; but on the institution of that illustrious order, in 1783, by the crown, the anti-duellists changed their title. The latter illustrious order (of Knights of St. Patrick) was founded in compliment to the national feeling, after the establishment of the independence of the Irish legislature. A little later in date, but in retrospective commemoration of the same great event, was founded the Kingdom of Dalkey.

The Kingdom of Dalkey consisted of a small island which lies on the south side of the bay of Dublin, opposite the now populous town bearing the same name. The district then presented a very different appearance from what it does now. There were then no railroads, no taverns, no cottages, no villas, scarcely even a fisherman's cabin, on the solitary shore. One

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small tavern stood on a promontory at Dunleary, occasionally visited by collegians on a Sunday for breakfast, where the primitive fare supplied was a wash-hand basin of sea-gull and other eggs, and a large dish of fried flounders. With the exception of this eccentric hostelry, and the two little collections of cabins then forming the towns of Dalkey and Dunleary, the entire was a deserted waste, till the traveller returned to the Blackrock, then the Ultima Thule of the Dublin citizens. The part immediately opposite the island was called "Dalkey Stone Common;" and the ground, which is now eagerly rented at the foot and inch by money-making builders, was then tenanted by the acre by a few roaming asses. It would be difficult to find any two places presenting so great a contrast as "Dalkey as it was," even so short a time since, and "Dalkey as it is."

Dalkey is not, however, without its historic recollections, but of a much more ancient period than its royal state. On the island there are the remains of a small chapel, dedicated to its patron saint, St. Benedict. The chapel has been in ruins for many centuries. About it were formerly some kistvaens, or stone coffins, and human bones, of which they had been the receptacles. From its seclusion, and the communication with the mainland being cut off by Dalkey Sound, it was selected as a safe retreat during the epidemic diseases which formerly ravaged Ireland. In the great plague which visited Dublin in 1575, the citizens retreated there, and the island was covered with the tents of the refugees while the sickness continued. From the shelter afforded by the island, Dalkey was anciently thought a commodious substitute for a harbour; and several eminent persons are recorded to have landed or embarked there. Sir A. St. Leger, Lord Deputy, in 1540, and Sir W. Skeffington, in 1534, on their way to Dublin, and in 1414, Sir John Talbot, afterwards Lord Furnival, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, landed there. In 1558, Lord Sussex embarked there to oppose the Scottish invaders at Rathlin, on the coast of Antrim. There are several ruined castles—the castles of Bullock—in the immediate neighbourhood; and when they were built, the place must have been of some importance. It had a charter, and there were markets held there about the year 1500,

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and the castles were intended as stores to protect the merchandise from pirates; but for centuries the castles have been ruins, and, since 1600, the trading town of Dalkey dwindled into a few miserable fishermen's huts. There was formerly established, at some distance inland, the Dalkey cotton factory, which was one of the earliest, if not the earliest cotton-factory worked in Ireland. It belonged to a Mr. Costelloe, but was burned down in 1781.

Notwithstanding its historic recollections, the shore was, until within the last twenty-five years, the most secluded and desolate part of the bay of Dublin; and the little uninhabited island, of course, still more solitary. Its only inhabitants were a few wild rabbits, until it was colonized by the Irish government, in 1804, with a couple of artillerymen. In the summer of 1779, when the descent of the French on Bantry Bay was generally expected, rumours of their having actually landed were constantly going abroad. The papers in opposition to the government ridiculed and made light of the alarm. Among the popular squibs published with this object, were cautions against their making a descent on Dalkey, and a proposal to fortify the island to prevent their landing, and Bagotrath Castle to intercept their march to Dublin. The latter was a ruined castle at the end of Baggot Street, the government of which was a sinecure office. The writer of the squib little thought that his proposal would be seriously acted on by the Irish parliament. Bagotrath Castle has been pulled down, and its place is occupied by a handsome street; but the island of Dalkey has been actually fortified to defend us against the French, and an absurd martello tower and battery stand there to this day. They form an agreeable fishing-lodge for two artillerymen, and a depot of plates for pic-nic parties on the island; but are not likely ever to answer any more useful object.

The convivial society,* of which the King of Dalkey was the president, was carried on with a degree of spirit, and attracted a portion of public attention not easily imagined in

* Some notice of this society, as well as of a few other particulars mentioned in the preceding chapters, may be found in "Herbert's Irish Varieties"—a book which the writer regrets he did not see till long after the matter of this volume was published.

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the present tame state of society. They met once in each year on the island. The king was elective, and the professed object of the visit was that he might resign his crown into the hands of his subjects, and a new election be had. There was a paper then published in Dublin called "The Morning Post, or Dublin Courant." It was printed by a man named Cooney, and devoted a column to the proceedings of the society, under the heading of the "Dalkey Gazette." The day of the intended ceremony on the island was duly announced in the Dalkey Gazette, in the form of a proclamation from the king, and the arrangements and ceremonies to be observed officially advertised by the chamberlain. The party usually proceeded from Dublin by water; and the solitary island and neighbouring shore became a scene of great bustle and gaiety, and were crowded by thousands of spectators.

The day selected was a Sunday in the end of August or beginning of September. The general outline of the proceedings was as follows:—The king landed in state, and was saluted by firing shots on the island. He assembled the most convivial members of the society under the names of his principal officers, and the other guests as his subjects, and, in a mock heroic speech, resigned his crown into their hands, and desired them to elect a successor. A re-election always followed, and his majesty, in a second speech, expressed his gratitude, was anointed with a bottle of whiskey, and crowned among the plaudits of the people. He then received their petitions and complaints, which were tendered and spoken upon with comic gravity. The members were all of the popular side in politics, and the entire proceeding was made the groundwork for squibs on the political topics of the day. Then followed a sermon from the chief of the Druids and primate of Dalkey, preached in the ruined church, which was called the Cathedral of Dalkey. This latter proceeding was often not a little objectionable, in treating with levity sacred subjects. An ode composed for the occasion was then sung by all the people, and the whole ceremony concluded by a feast on the rocks, after which his majesty and his officers of state again embarked in pomp, and were followed by his people.

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The last president of this curious society was a convivial Dublin bookseller, named Armitage, who reigned under the title of "King Stephen the First." There is a cluster of rocks near Dalkey called the Muglins, and another called the Maiden; there are also some small islands—one called Magee, in the bay, and the others, Ireland's Eye and Lambay, on the north of Howth. The king's title united dignities derived from all these localities, in the following form:—His facetious Majesty, Stephen the First, King of Dalkey, Emperor of the Muglins, Prince of the Holy Island of Magee, and Elector of Lambay and Ireland's Eye, Defender of his own Faith, and respecter of all others, Sovereign of the illustrious order of the Lobster and Periwinkle." Another illustrious member was "My Lord Tokay," a wine-merchant. The office of primate was filled by a Mr. Gillespie. Beside filling the columns of the "Dalkey Gazette," the proceedings of the society attracted so much attention, and were considered to be conducted with so much humour and cleverness, that their annual meetings were recorded in most of the Dublin papers among the remarkable news of the day.

The politics of "Cooney's Morning Post" were very democratic, and the "Dalkey Gazette" of course was of the same tone. Its merit consisted in being a serio-comic record of the proceedings of the society, and in satirizing the political events of the day, by means of this mimic kingdom—much in the style of a Christmas pantomime. It must have been indebted for its popularity greatly to the feelings of its readers. The paper is now difficult to be met with; and we give the following extract as a specimen. It is from the "Dalkey Gazette" of September 10, 1792, and will give an idea of its general character. It appeared in "Cooney's Post" of September 22.

To understand its point, it is necessary to bear in mind what were the political topics of the day. It was the year of the most violent proceedings in the French revolution. In the preceding month, the King of France had been dethroned, and was then a prisoner in the hands of the Paris populace. Even the most just and rational propositions respecting civil liberty were dreaded by the ultra loyal, as indications of revolutionary

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principles; and not without reason, as they were most frequently in the mouths of persons who used them merely as introductory to more dangerous doctrines. The popular topic in Ireland was the "Catholic claims;" and the Chancellor, Fitzgibbon, had made himself peculiarly odious to the Roman Catholics, by his declaration that their meetings to petition for a redress of grievances were unconstitutional and illegal. Among other bodies, the Dublin Corporation had also incurred their hostility by its declaration in favour of Protestant ascendancy. The radical papers of the day teemed with charges of the corruption of the government and their subordinates; and some of them—particularly the "Morning Post"—broadly insinuated that £20,000 of the public money was missing, through the default of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir J. Parnell. Lord Westmoreland was the Lord Lieutenant; and his parsimony and want of hospitality at the Castle were popular subjects of attack. All these topics appear to have been alluded to at the coronation of his facetious majesty in this year.

The "Gazette" commences with a description in mock heroics of the voyage from Ringsend to Dalkey, during which his Dalkian majesty saluted two ships of his Britannic majesty, which duly returned the compliment. It details the offerings of his majesty's faithful subjects from Lambay and the holy knights of Magee, consisting of rabbits, cockles, and mushrooms; and describes the ceremony of the resignation and coronation as follows:—

"His majesty held a levee at the palace, at which were present several of the nobility of the empire, and a great number of illustrious foreigners from Bullock, Dunleary, Howth, and other parts of the neighbouring continent. His majesty then ascended the great rock—the senate-house where the states of the empire were assembled—and being led to the foot of the throne by the chancellor and primate, and preceded by the lord mayor, as representing the municipality of Dalkey, his majesty declined ascending the royal seat; but, turning round to the assembly, and putting off his royal diadem, he laid it, with his oaken sceptre, on the table, and addressed the assembly:—

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"'My lords, gentlemen, and citizens of Dalkey, I am come this day to commemorate, with my cheerful people, the occasion which raised me to the throne of this realm. I rejoice exceedingly that nothing like hereditary pretensions are quoted in my escutcheon, or ranked among my claims to that dignity, which I hold, not as an inheritance from ancestors who attained it by injustice, rapine, and bloodshed, but that I enjoy it by the most honourable of all claims,—the choice, confidence, and affections of a free, generous, and happy people. It is my glory that I love you all, my pride to have you happy, and my joy that you think so. To manifest my sincerity, I wish to establish in the happy constitution of Dalkey the principle which places its liberty and happiness above the power of permanent tyrants, and depositing in the people the controlling discretion,'" &c.

His majesty proceeded in the same strain at some length, and ended by resigning his regal authority, and desiring his subjects to select a successor, concluding with the following sentiment—

"'I am not an advocate for the prerogative of kings against the rights of the race of Adam. My ambition was always to reign over your hearts and affections, and not above your liberties.'

"The lord chancellor, in a speech of considerable length, disadvised his majesty from soliciting that which must ever circumscribe the rights attached to the crown of Dalkey, and resigning that 'penance from power, prerogative, and patronage' which his predecessors had maintained with dignity, regardless of the notions of that long-eared mobocracy called the people."

His majesty made another rather dull political address, and insisted on resigning; after which—

"The viceroy of Ireland's Eye, King of Arms, went forth preceded by a herald, and proclaimed the king's resignation, and demanded of the people to nominate a king from the great body of the natives whom they would choose to rule over them. The whole, with one voice, named their beloved monarch, Stephen the First. His facetious majesty was then again

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crowned; and after taking the oaths of festivity and public justice on a bowl of grog, was again proclaimed king.

"Lord Minikin, Keeper of the Tower, by order of his majesty, then went forth, and proclaimed that his majesty, in open senate, was ready to hear the complaints, and grant the just desires of his people.

"A deputation from the Order of the Periwinkle immediately came to the bar of the assembly, and presented articles of impeachment against the lord chancellor—first, for corruption in his official capacity; secondly, for violating the solemn obligations taken when he was appointed one of his facetious majesty's most honourable privy council; thirdly, mal-administration of justice; fourthly, his late unconstitutional conduct in using undue influence, as a peer of the realm, at a meeting of the Order of the Scallop, to make them declare, contrary to the known laws of the empire, that the members of the Periwinkle had not a right, individually and collectively, to petition the king and senate for a redress of grievances."

The chancellor makes an affidavit of the absence of several material witnesses, who consist of certain unpopular members of the Dublin corporation, and his trial is adjourned. An impeachment is then exhibited against Lord Glasthule, Tony Laughable, Lord Mayor of Dalkey, and the Lord Chancellor, as guardians of the realm, for neglecting inquiring into the interior departments of the kingdom, whereby his majesty's subjects were oppressed, good humour and harmony interrupted, and his majesty's revenues impaired. The Committee of Finance also exhibited articles of impeachment against the Lords of the Treasury for embezzlement of £20,000, good gingerbread money of the realm.

These are ordered to stand over; and after some more popular speeches on the foundation of a new order called "The Virtuous Citizen," the festivities are detailed as follows:—

"His majesty retired to a sumptuous banquet; the lord mayor and municipality perambulated the franchises. They were met at Stony-gate by a party of the Liberty boys of Dalkey, who, according to custom, took the sword from his lordship's sword-bearer. At the great mole his lordship threw the civic

dart into the sea, and then returned to the civic hall, and partook of a sumptuous repast, in the course of which a plenipotentiary arrived from the Grand Duke of Bullock, with a present of potatoes, ready boiled, which his majesty graciously accepted, and conferred the honour of knighthood on the ambassador."

Songs were sung, thanks returned, and toasts drank, and the whole concluded with a ball on the island, all of which are detailed in the "Gazette," in the same mock serious style. The favourite toasts drank on the occasion were such as "May the will of the people be the law of the land;" "Equal liberty, civil and religious, to all sons of Adam," &c.

This "Gazette" contains a very long political sermon, supposed to be delivered by the primate on the occasion of the coronation. The sermon inculcates many admirable lessons of liberality, generosity, and justice; bnt the vein of levity with which it imitates sacred doctrines and texts is often very objectionable, to say nothing of the abuse and misrepresentation of the clerical character which it conveys. It seems to be an elaborate composition, and to have been prized by the editor of the "Morning Post," who introduces it twice into his paper, apparently as a serious political article. A considerable part of it is occupied by commendations of hospitality and good fellowship, and condemnations of their opposites, made with obvious allusion to the lord lieutenant. The following may be taken as a specimen:—

"The gay flowrets of cheerfulness, the balm of friendship, the jessamine of taste, the myrtle of love, or the sweet rose of justice, never take root in his dull and barren soul. The rue of envy, the abortive savin of distrust, the rank hemlock of murky avarice, and the deadly nightshade of chill penury, are the native vegetables of that ungenial soil."

And the following blessing:—

"The blessing of the beggar and the clerk of the crown attend you in all your adventures in this life, and the last prayer of the recorder and of all the judges of the crown circuit attend you in the next."

In 1796, when political prosecutions were numerous, the government were not very scrupulous in the means of obtaining

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evidence. Toler was the solicitor-general, and had gone as a judge of assize, and tried several of the state prisoners. Toler's well-known failings and the government policy are noted in the Dalkey proceedings as follows:—

"The second sergeant was accused of making puns from the bench as arguments against the prisoner's life; but being absent in another kingdom to fight a duel, he could not appear to answer for himself.

"The opinion of the lawyers was, that evidence obtained by force ought not to attaint the blood of any subject of Dalkey."

The odes composed for these commemmorations had various degrees of merit. The following are three verses of the ode of 1793:—

"If sprung from woman, say,
Did you first know the day,
Without a shirt?
Or must you, like the clown,
Spite of your great renown,
Lay your great body down,
Deep in the dirt?

"Lord of all Dalkey lands,
Chief of your jovial bands,
Are you not man?
With you though peace doth reign,
Nor blood your isle doth stain,
Nor famine here complain,
Are you not man?

"What though the realms rejoice
In your melodious voice:
Kings are but men!
And while each subject sings:
'God made us men, not kings!'
With echo Dalkey rings:
'Kings are but men!'"

The last meeting of the society was held on the 20th of August, 1797. It was the year immediately preceding the breaking out of the rebellion, and the gaols were filled with prisoners accused of treason. The greater part of the country was treated as under martial law, and the soldiers were living at free quarters to assist the sheriffs. The United Irishmen were the great object of suspicion to the government. The

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mutiny at the Nore had ended only a month previously. The Dalkey meeting appears to have been more loyal than usual. The toasts were, "the King," "the Army," &c. The following is an extract from the ode of the year. It is believed to be from the pen of T. Moore, who was a faithful and most convivial subject of his facetious majesty, and it is interesting as one of Moore's earliest poetic efforts:—

"Hail, happy Dalkey, Queen of Isles,
Where justice reigns and freedom smiles.
. . . . .
In Dalkey Justice holds her state,
Unaided by the prison gate;
No subjects of King Stephen lie
In loathsome cells, they know not why;
Health, peace, and good humour, in music's soft strains,
Invite and UNITE us in Dalkey's wide plains.

"No flimsy sheriff enters here;
No trading justice dare appear;
No soldier asks his comrade whether
The sheriff has yet cleaned his feather;
Our soldiers here deserve the name:
Nor wear a feather they don't pluck from fame.

"How much unlike those wretched realms,
Where wicked statesmen guide the helms;
Here no first-rate merchants breaking;
Here no first-rate vessels taking;
Here no property is shaking;
Here no shameful peace is making;
Here we snap no apt occasion
On the pretext of invasion;
Here informers get no pensions
To requite their foul inventions;
Here no secret dark committee
Spreads corruption through the city;
No place-men or pensioners here are haranguing;
No soldiers are shooting, or sailors are hanging;
No mutiny reigns in the army or fleet—
For our orders are just, our commander discreet."

In imitation of the order of knighthood founded by the government, the king of Dalkey founded the order of Druids. The president was furnished with a large medallion, representing the bust of one of those mysterious persons, which he wore on state occasions suspended from his neck.

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Among the persons who took part in the convivialities of the kingdom of Dalkey, was the celebrated T. O'Meara, As the times became menacing, and Ireland infected with French principles, the Lord Chancellor Clare was vigilant in watching every society which was formed, and, among the rest, the kingdom of Dalkey and its Druids attracted his notice. O'Meara was personally known to him, and supposing he could enlighten him, Lord Clare sent for him.

"You, sir," said the chancellor, "are, I understand, connected with the kingdom of Dalkey."

"I am, my lord," said O'Meara.

"Pray, may I ask what title are you recognised by?"

"I am Duke of Muglins."

"And what post do you hold under the government?"

"Chief Commissioner of the Revenue."

"What are your emoluments in right of your office?"

"I am allowed to import ten thousand hogsheads, duty free."

"Hogsheads of what, Mr. Commissioner?"

"Of salt water, my lord."

The chancellor was satisfied without further question.

T. O'Meara was an attorney well known at that time, as many of the same profession were, for his conviviality, spirit wit, singularity, and good nature. Among other anecdotes told of him was one very characteristic. An Englishman of rank and fortune visited Ireland, and accidentally met him at dinner at a friend's house. It was then the hospitable custom for every person who met a stranger at a friend's house to ask him to dinner, and show him every attention. This was done with more than usual attention by O'Meara, who attached himself to the Englishman, invited him to his house in the country, and in the display of his good nature and sense of hospitality, gave up his time and business to make the visit agreeable and instructive to his acquaintance, who left Ireland with many expressions of obligation, for the kindness and attention he had received. Soon after, O'Meara for the first time visited London, and being a total stranger there was well pleased to see one day his English acquaintance walking on the

other side of Bond Street; so he immediately crossed over, and with outstretched hand declared how delighted he was to see him again. The gentleman was walking with a group of others of a high aristocratic cast, and dressed in the utmost propriety of costume; and when he saw a wild-looking man, with soiled leather breeches, dirty top-boots, not over clean linen, nor very close shaven beard, striding up to him, with a whip in his hand and the lash twisted under his arm, he started back, and with a look of cold surprise said—

"Sir, you have the advantage of me."

"I have sir," said O'Meara, looking coolly at him for a moment—"I have, sir, and by —— I'll keep it;" and turned from him, casting such a look of contempt and superiority, as the other did not think it prudent to notice.

The last anniversary of the kingdom of Dalkey was, as we have mentioned, held in August, 1797.

The concourse of spectators on the shore and island on that occasion was estimated at not less than twenty thousand. The popular interest excited by the proceedings of the society and its free political sentiments were considered dangerous in the then excited state of the public mind; and to avoid being suppressed by the strong arm of the government, its meetings were, during the disturbed and alarming crisis of 1798, discontinued, and were never revived.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VISITATION OF 1798—UNITED IRISHMEN—JAMES FARRELL—EXPULSION OF POWER AND ARDAGH—CAUSE OF THE VISITATION—ITS PROCEEDINGS—LORD CLARE—DR. BROWNE—DR. STOKES—ITS EFFECTS—SKETCH OF FARRELL—OF CORBETT.

A VISITATION was held in Trinity College shortly before the outbreak of the rebellion in 1798, for the purpose of investi-

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gating and punishing treasonable associations existing in the college. This visitation was one of the most important ever held in the university, and it ended in the expulsion of no less than nineteen members of the college. But, perhaps, the most extraordinary circumstance connected with it was that the searching investigation failed in discovering, or even affording the least clue to discover, the authors of the act which was the immediate cause of its being held. We have been favoured with the posthumous manuscript of a gentleman who was himself a witness and an actor in some of the stirring events which took place at that stirring period, from which we extract the following curious particulars. We have omitted the mention of a few names and allusions to living persons, which might possibly be painful to them.

I entered college in the year 1791, a year rendered memorable by the institution of the society of the United Irishmen. They held their meetings in an obscure passage called Back-lane, leading from Cornmarket to Nicholas-street. The very aspect of the place seemed to render it adapted for cherishing a conspiracy. It was in the locality where the tailors, skinners, and curriers held their guilds, and was the region of the operative democracy. I one evening proceeded from college, and found out Back-lane, and, having inquired for the place of meeting, a house was pointed out to me, that had been the hall in which the corporation of tailors held their assemblies. I walked in without hesitation—no one forbidding me—and found the society in full debate, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair. I saw there, for the first time, the men with the three names, which were now become so familiar to the people of Dublin—Theobald Wolfe Tone, James Napper Tandy, and Archibald Hamilton Rowan.

The first was a slight, effeminate-looking man, with a hatchet face, a long aquiline nose, rather handsome and genteel-looking, with lank, straight hair combed down on his sickly red cheek, exhibiting a face the most insignificant and mindless that could be imagined. His mode of speaking was

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in correspondence with his face and person. It was polite and gentlemanly, but totally devoid of any thing like energy or vigour. I set him down as a worthy, good-natured, flimsy man, in whom there was no harm, and as the least likely person in the world to do mischief to the state.*

Tandy was the very opposite looking character. He was the ugliest man I ever gazed on. He had a dark, yellow, truculent-looking countenance, a long drooping nose, rather sharpened at the point, and the muscles of his face formed two cords at each side of it. He had a remarkable hanging-down look, and an occasional twitching or convulsive motion of his nose and mouth, as if he was snapping at something on the side of him while he was speaking.

Not so Hamilton Rowan. I thought him not only the most handsome, but the largest man I had ever seen. Tone and Tandy looked like pigmies beside him. His ample and capacious forehead seemed the seat of thought and energy; while with such an external to make him feared, he had a courtesy of manner that excited love and confidence. He held in his hand a large stick, and was accompanied by a large dog.

I had not been long standing on the floor, looking at and absorbed in the persons about me, when I was perceived, and a whisper ran round the room. Some one went up to the president, then turned round and pointed to me. The president immediately rose, and called out that there was a stranger in the room. Two members advanced, and, taking me under the arm, led me up to the president's chair, and there I stood to

* Tone's character justified the opinion of the young physiognomist. A more shallow, flimsy, peevish creature than he appeared to be, did not exist. The only wonder was, that the son of a bankrupt coachmaker, of an ancestry distinguished for levity and folly, whose splenetic patriotism originated from the disappointment of his boyish fancy for piracy, could have been the cause or origin of an association which exercised such a powerful interest on the country. His letters and diary since published are full of the most flippant remarks and exclamations. Who could suppose that the irritable, weak-minded creature who, on the slightest disappointment, would thus express himself—"Rot it, sink it, d—n it;" "D—n those bagpipes;" "Lost a shoe, d—n him;" "Fiddlesticks;" "O Lord, O Lord," &c., &c., could be capable of the energy, even for mischief which Tone exhibited on some occasions?

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await the penalty of my unauthorized intrusion. I underwent an examination; and it was evident, from the questions, that my entrance was not accredited, but that I was suspected as a government spy. The "battalion of testimony," as it was called, was already formed, and I was supposed to be one of the corps. I, however, gave a full and true account of myself, which was fortunately confirmed by a member who knew something about me, and was ultimately pronounced a harmless "gib," and admitted to the honour of the sitting.

I soon after became acquainted with a person named Farrell, who assiduously sought my society. He was the son of a poor man, but showed an early disposition to learn, and was distinguished at the hedge-school at which he was educated, as a boy of more intelligence than his school-fellows. The priests of the chapel belonging to his parish had noticed him, as priests generally do children who display any superiority of intellect. They were amused by his unusual precocity, dressed him in a surplice, furnished him with a censer for incense, and appointed him one of the acolytes who attend the officiating priest at the celebration of the Mass. He was apparently so attached to his employment, that it was predicted he would be a "votheen;" and his clerical friends had determined to have him instructed for the priesthood, in which it was hoped he would prove a shining light. One day, in the sacristy, he said to the officiating priest—

"Father, may I ask your reverence a question?"

"Yes," said the priest; "but take care what you are about."

"Why, then, please your reverence, look at that," said he, taking from his waistcoat pocket a bit of paper, in which was folded a fragment of wafer; "I took it from your pix, and put it in there to try if it would turn to flesh, as I was told it would; but you see it is a wafer still."

"Get out of the sacristy, you profane reprobate," said the priest.

So he was ignominiously thrust forth, and cast off for ever from the protection of the chapel. This, as he used himself to tell, was his first emancipation from the bonds of superstition. He afterwards became a confirmed sceptic.

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He came to Dublin, and obtained the place of foreman to a woollen-draper, and began to mix with the society of his class. He was strongly seamed with the small-pox, and had a very black, bristly beard, and a long, remarkable nose; and, from the roughness of his aspect, he was generally known by the name of "Rugged muzzle." But he afterwards acquired another title. One evening, coming home from a party, a girl rather above his then rank in society, took his arm. Elated by this extraordinary and unexpected condescension, he exclaimed, in ecstacy, "Oh, tundher!" and thus obtained a soubriquet which was ever after attached to him.

He had imbibed the wildest notions of French democracy, as well as infidelity. Among other schemes presented to his excited imagination, was the certainty of an Irish republic under the protection of France. He constantly contemplated a provisional government to receive the various plans of new constitutions submitted for their selection. As he did not think he was quite equal to form a constitution himself, he used to consult me, who, being a man with a college education, for which he had a high respect, he thought must be competent to any exertion of mind, whether in politics or literature. To gratify his oddity, I drew up for him a variety of constitutions, which he actually contemplated presenting to the provisional government when established.

Revolutionary principles began to spread in college, and an incident happened which excited much indignation even among the most loyal. A little previous to the departure of the highly unpopular Lord Camden from the viceroyalty of Ireland, it was announced that the college, in their corporate capacity, intended to proceed to the Castle, and present an address to him. All the fellows and scholars, as members of the corporation, were specially summoned to attend, and generally obeyed the notice. Two scholars, named Power and Ardagh, absented themselves, and, when cited before the board, made some trifling excuses. One said he had no gown at the time and could not borrow one; the other, that he was preparing his lecture and thought it a more important occupation. It appeared, however, that the board had received some secret

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information that their absence was caused by disaffection, and that they were connected with secret treasonable societies then reported to exist in college. It was thought necessary* to make an example; so Power and Ardagh were publicly expelled. There had been a difference of opinion on this measure at the board. Dr. Browne, a senior fellow and member for the university in Parliament, not only dissented from the severe measure adopted by the board, but was so indiscreet as to mention his dissent to some of the students, as he came out of the board-room. Greater importance was attached to this circumstance at that time, for the proceedings of the board were then kept profoundly secret. The two men expelled were of good character, acknowledged talent, and popular manners. Their case excited much sympathy. Their expulsion was considered a very harsh measure, altogether disproportioned to the declared offence, and was generally much condemned.

During this ebullition of collegiate feeling, my extern friend, O'Tundher, came to my rooms. He could hardly speak with rage. When his indignation a little subsided, he proposed that he and I should form a committee, and, in the name of more, express our sentiments on the occasion. The proposal amused me, so I sent to the cellar for some "October"—a beverage of which he was fond—and, under its influence, we drew out what we called the resolutions of "The Independent Scholars and Students of Trinity College, Dublin."

When we had read and criticised the precious document, I threw it on the table, supposing it would lie there, like the embryo constitutions we had drawn up for the provisional government, and, like them, have no more important result than the entertainment of the hour.

A short time after a notice appeared on the college gate, announcing a visitation to be held on Thursday, April 19, 1798, enjoining the attendance, without fail, of all the members of the university. I was reading it when my friend, O'Tundher, passed out, He held down his head, but cast at me a significant glance of intelligence under his eye, and

* The conduct of some of the students who accompanied the deputation justified this.—See the notice of Corbett, *post*.

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holding his middle finger against his thumb, he cracked them with the forefinger, making a report like the lashing of a whip —a mode he had of expressing more than usual glee and satisfaction.

Immediately afterwards I met a lad named E——. He came up to me in great apparent tribulation, and asked me if I knew the cause of the visitation. I declared with truth I did not know it. He began to express himself with great anxiety, and with a confidence altogether gratuitous and unsought on my part; telling me he was deeply compromised and in hourly expectation of being arrested. He expected some confidential communication in return, and was much disappointed when I declared I had no cause of apprehension, and left him, repeating, "let the galled jade wince, my withers are unwrung." In fact, I had abstained carefully from mixing myself with parties, and felt a perfect security from any charge, or even suspicion. I afterwards had reason to believe my reserve towards E—— was most fortunate.

On the day of the visitation we all assembled in the hall. Lord Clare, as vice-chancellor of the university, sat as the acting visitor, with Dr. Duigenan as his assessor, on an elevated platform at the upper end of the dining-hall. Then followed in order the provost, senior and junior fellows, and scholars, as members of the corporation; then the graduate and undergraduate students; and, lastly, the inferior officers and porters of the college. The great door was closed with a portentous sound, and shut in many an anxious heart. I felt mine, however, quite free from care or apprehension.

Those who have seen Lord Clare in his visitorial capacity never will forget him—the hatchet sharpness of his countenance, the oblique glance of his eye, which seemed to read what was passing in the mind of him to whom it was directed. Silence was commanded, and the multitude was still. The vice-chancellor then said:—

The prevalent reports respecting the state of the university had induced the visitors to inquire whether the disaffection imputed to the college was founded in reality, or was a mere rumour or surmise. Appointed to the high office of superin-

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tending the conduct and promoting the welfare of that college, he should neglect an important duty if he were to suffer it to continue stained with the infamous imputation of disaffection and rebellion, if unfounded, or permit any guilty member thereof to poison and destroy the prospects of the uninfected. His duty, therefore, to what he considered the happiness of the students, without referring to the more general consequences to society, from the lettered portion of the rising generation cherishing and acting on those devastating principles which had destroyed the peace, and almost annihilated the morals of Europe, indispensably required of him to investigate and suppress any serious disorders. He found great probability had been given to the reports in circulation by a rebellious publication, purporting to be the resolution of the independent scholars and students of the university, and it behoved all who heard him to acquit themselves of any concern therein. Such members as acted with want of candour, and refused to exonerate themselves from the treasonable charge made against the university, and which the abominable paper he held in his hand so much warranted, he was determined to remove, and adopt the necessary measures to prevent them from contaminating the youth of the several colleges in England and Scotland, by representing to the governors of them their dangerous principles, and so excluding them from admission. In one of those secret societies, the formation of which he knew of in college, a system of assassination* had been recommended, and a propo-

* The charge of advocating assassination, as a means of effecting political objects, was disowned by some leaders of the United Irishmen, and has been repeatedly denied by the modern advocates and memoir-writers of that body. Some have even gone so far as to assert, that the infamous "Union Star," which assumed to be a United Irish organ, and openly advocated assassination and pointed out by name the proper victims to be sacrificed, was a paid government publication! But it unhappily admits of no doubt, that whatever may have been the sentiments of a few of the leaders, political assassinations were looked upon as justifiable and proper by the mass of the Union. The "Press" was, on all hands, admitted to be the favourite and accredited organ of the party and its leaders; and an article appeared in it, on December 2, 1797, written apparently on the expulsion of Power and Ardagh, and which is curious in connection with the above charge of Lord Clare. It is signed "A Sophister." Among others, it contains the following appropriate and classical incentive—"You, my fellow-students, have explored the page of history, where the insect courtier is forgotten,

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sal made to collect arms. The first proposal was considered, but adjourned to the next meeting, when it was negatived by a small majority. The second was carried and acted on. He concluded by a declaration of his intention to punish with severity the encouragers and abettors of sedition and treason, and more especially the miscreant authors of that wicked paper, whom he was determined to detect and punish. It had not only been thrown into every letter-box in college, but audaciously flung at his own head, in his house, by way of menace and defiance.

He read the "infamous" paper, and, to my utter horror and dismay, it proved to be my own "RESOLUTIONS!" I was at the time standing close to him. My seniority had placed me near that end of the hall, but my curiosity and the crowd behind had pushed me even higher than I was entitled to by my standing; and, when he held the paper in his hand and waived it in a threatening manner, he actually seemed to shake it in my face, and fix his eye intently on me as the detected victim. It is impossible to describe my feelings of astonishment at my own indiscretion, or my apprehension of the consequences. I had no more notion that the resolutions we had framed would ever see the light, than that the constitutions we had drawn up would be adopted by the provisional government. I saw myself at once entangled in an awful responsibility, which might compromise my life, and I had not even the support of enthusiasm or participation in what some think a noble cause. I had been fabricating a falsehood without foundation, in which I actually felt neither interest nor concern, and was in danger of suffering the penalty of a traitor, without having the least connection with the treason. When I contemplated the number it might implicate in suspicion, and the confusion and misery it might cause, I felt as if I had pulled down the pillars of the earth and the fragments were falling on my head. When I recovered a little from the first stun of surprise, I attempted to converse with the person next me, as

the despot is blasted in infamy, and the *glorious tyrannicide is immortalized.* Ireland is singular in suffering and in *cowardice. She could crush her tormentors,* and yet they embowel her."

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if to show my unconcern, but literally *vox faucibus hæsit*, my mouth was so dry I could not utter a syllable. It next rushed into my mind to escape from the hall; but I saw at once that this would surely cause suspicion. Once it occurred to me to anticipate discovery, and avail myself of the lenity which the visitors had intimated would be extended to those who confessed their faults and abjured their errors—to acknowledge my share in the authorship, and make a merit of confessing a thing, the detection of which I thought must be immediate and inevitable. But my final and enduring determination was to "bide my time," and bear up, as I best could, against all consequences.

The roll was now called of all the names on the college books, beginning with the provost. Several excuses were offered for absence, some few of which were admitted; but in almost every case personal attendance was insisted on. Among the absent was Robert Emmet, for whom his tutor pleaded hard, but without effect. He was set down as contumacious.

When the examination of individuals commenced, each person, when called on, was first sworn to discover all matters as to which he should be questioned. The provost was the first examined. Among other questions, he was asked if the copy of that paper which had been "hurled at" the chancellor had been sent to him. He replied that it had, and by the same conveyance—the penny post. He was also interrogated with respect to the proceedings of the board in the expulsion of Power and Ardagh, and the number and description of the votes given on the occasion.

The examination then proceeded through the senior fellows, till it came down to Dr. Browne. He was, as I have mentioned, a member of the board, and represented the college in parliament. His politics were in the extreme of liberality, and therefore he was an object of peculiar suspicion. He was questioned touching his vote at the board in the case of Ardagh and Power. He acknowledged he opposed their expulsion and voted for rustication during a year, and stated that there were two other members of the board who voted with him. He admitted that he had gone from the board into the college

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court, and there declared the vote he had given, and said he did so because he thought it was right. The vice-chancellor declared that the conduct of Dr. Browne was highly reprehensible; that it promoted a spirit of insubordination among the students, by exciting discontent against the proceedings of the board, which it was his duty to recommend as just and proper; and that if the board had thought fit to expel him for such conduct, he would have confirmed the expulsion. Dr. Browne was also asked if he was the author of that paper; and when he denied it in a most earnest manner, he was asked did he know any person who was its author, or had any connection with it. He, of course, declared he did not.

Dr. Whitley Stokes, then a junior fellow, was next called on. The vice-chancellor, eyeing him with a stern countenance and with the confidence of a person who was sure of his man, asked him, in an emphatic manner, if he knew of United Irish societies existing in college. Stokes answered, decidedly, "No." The vice-chancellor looked much amazed by the unexpected repulse, and a slight murmur of surprise ran through the hall. The paper was held out to Stokes, and, in a similar manner, he was asked if he knew anything of the authorship of it; and, in a similar manner, to the surprise of all (except myself), he denied all knowledge of it or its authors. The exceeding candour of Stokes, and his known love of truth, induced all to believe that he would at once declare whatever he knew, when asked, and many thought that he knew much. He was then asked if he knew anything of secret or illegal societies in College. He answered promptly, and without hesitation, that he did. He was then called on to explain and declare what they were.

"The only societies of that description which I am aware of," said he, "are Orange societies, and I know some members of them."

If the chancellor had been struck a violent blow, he could not have shown more surprise and indignation. He actually started on his seat at the audacious sincerity of this simple-minded man, and another murmur ran through the hall.

A long examination ensued, during which Dr. Stokes

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answered the questions put to him in a quiet and dignified manner, and with perfect candour and simplicity. He admitted that he had been a member of the society of United Irishmen before the year 1792, when their views were confined to legitimate objects; but stated that he was wholly unconnected with them ever since that time. He admitted that he had since that time subscribed money to their funds, but added that it was merely to supply the necessities of individuals, Butler and Bond, who were in prison. He had, he said, received some account of serious injuries inflicted on a village by the soldiery, which he communicated to Mr. Sampson, a United Irishman, as materials for Lord Moira's information, on his motion in the House of Lords, but had previously made a communication to his excellency the Lord Lieutenant. He admitted he had visited a man who was a treasonable character, but he did so as a professional duty, as the man was very poor and sick; and he had always brought with him a third person, to be present, lest there should be any misrepresentation of his motives. He added, that when the French invaded this country, and their fleets were lying off the shore, he went among the Roman Catholics of the city of Dublin, exciting them to take up arms against the common enemy:—

"This, my lord," said Stokes, in an emphatic manner, "was not the conduct of a disaffected man, nor of one entertaining those principles with which this examination appears to try to connect me."

A Mr. Kerns, a pupil of Dr. Stokes, stood forward and earnestly defended his tutor. He said that temptations had been held out to him to join treasonable societies, and had so far succeeded as to induce him to withdraw his name from the college corps; but, in consequence of the advice and earnest persuasion of Dr. Stokes, he had withdrawn himself from the society of the disaffected, and replaced his name in his company; and that he was not the only person so advised by Dr. Stokes, but that, to his knowledge, several others had been equally influenced in the same way by his persuasion.

Dr. Graves, with similar earnestness and zeal, bore testimony to Stokes's character. He said that atheism and repub-

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licanism were uniformly connected at that time, but that he had the strongest proof, from his writings, that Dr. Stokes was tainted with neither the one nor the other. When Paine's "Age of Reason" first appeared, the earliest and best answer to it was from the pen of Dr. Stokes. His work was dedicated to the students of Trinity College, and was published without any view to pecuniary profit by Dr. Stokes, who gratuitously made earnest and indefatigable exertions to disseminate it among the junior members of the university.

Many others tended their testimony in favour of a man so much loved and respected; and the vice-chancellor said he was happy to find so many respectable and disinterested witnesses standing forward in Dr. Stokes's favour, and that he was now convinced he was a well-meaning man, but had been led into great indiscretions.

The examination proceeded among the scholars and students The most lengthy was the examination of a man named Robinson. When pressed with questions, he admitted that he had lent his rooms on a particular day, but was not aware of the purpose for which they were borrowed. He, however, at last confessed that he was aware that the meeting to be held there was of a disaffected nature. He hesitated and wavered much when pressed by the chancellor's and Duigenan's questions.

A growing disposition was soon manifested to decline taking the oath of discovery in the unqualified form in which it had been at first administered. Of those called on, some declared they were ready to swear as to themselves, and purge their character by an oath from any charge or suspicion of disaffection, but would not swear to inform against or implicate others by answering *all* questions put to them. Others declined being sworn, because, as they said, it would be an example subversive of the best acknowledged principles of the English law, and of justice, to swear to tell what might criminate themselves. The first day closed with about fifty recusants, who declined to take the oath, and were marked for expulsion as contumacious. On the second day of the visitation, the chancellor found it necessary to modify the examination in such a way as to give the recusants an opportunity of redeeming their contumacy. He

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indicated what would be the awful state of the university if so large a proportion of its members should appear to be implicated in the conspiracy; and he explained that the visitation was a domestic court, in which the students formed members of a family, and that the authority exercised was merely parental; that the same oath was administered to all—to the provost himself, and to the youngest student—and was always accompanied by an injunction not to criminate themselves. The chancellor also intimated that if any persons would come forward and confess their own errors, without reference to others, and promise to separate themselves altogether from their imprudent and dangerous connections, the past should be forgiven and forgotten.

Among those who at first refused to take the oath was Thomas Moore. He was then an undergraduate in college, and already distinguished by the early and juvenile indications of his poetic talents. The scene was amusing. The book was presented to him. He shook his head and declined to take it. It was thrust into his right hand. He hastily withdrew the hand, as if he was afraid of its being infected by the touch, and placed it out of the way behind his back. It was then presented to his left hand, which he also withdrew, and held behind his back with his right. Still the persevering book was thrust upon him, and still he refused, bowing and retreating, with his hands behind him, till he was stopped by the wall. He afterwards, however, took the oath, as modified by the explanation, acquitted himself of all knowledge of treasonable practices or societies in college, and was dismissed without further question.

Influenced by the visitor's explanation, many who had been contumacious came forward and confessed their errors. In a few instances the names of the persons implicated were insisted on; but for the most part, the information was given in such a general way as would assist in suppressing the evil of disaffection, without compromising individuals. It appeared that there were four committees of United Irishmen in college, the secretaries to which were said to be Robert Emmet, M'Laughlin, Flynn, and Corbett, junior.

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In the course of the second day, Dr. Browne made an earnest and deprecating appeal to the visitors, in explanation of his conduct, declaring that their condemnation of it would embitter his future life. The vice-chancellor expressed himself satisfied that, had Dr. Browne known the entire extent of the revolutionary practices to which some members of the college had proceeded, he would have taken every means for their suppression, and not have proclaimed his vote and dissent from the salutary measures of the board; and that his doing so arose from his total ignorance of the dangerous situation of the university. Browne expressed strongly his contrition for his conduct, and with a servility little according with the independent spirit he was supposed to possess, humbled himself before the vice-chancellor, declaring his deep sorrow for having incurred the censure of the visitors.

At the conclusion of the visitation, the chancellor adverted to the case of Dr. Stokes. He declared himself gratified to find that the rumour of an eminent member of the university having been connected with a treasonable association, was entirely refuted; but, nevertheless, as he had been drawn into a communication with persons who were inimically disposed to the government of the country, he thought it his duty to prevent him from becoming a governing member of the university for the space of three years, which would be the period until the next visitation. During this suspension, it would be seen whether that gentleman had wholly withdrawn himself from the dangerous and improper connexions in which he had been indiscreetly entangled. He expressed himself gratified at being able to bear testimony to the general good conduct of the youth of the university. He reiterated his assurance that he had positive information of the existence of societies where assassination was canvassed and arms collected, and which he pledged himself he would have been able to prove, had those who contumaciously absented themselves, or refused to be examined, submitted. He expressed his concern at the duty imposed on him of using severity against the few who had acted with determined obstinacy, or were committed by acts of sedition and treason. He then presented nineteen

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names of persons, for whose offences he recommended expulsion.

Lord Clare's direction was immediately acted upon, and the sentence of expulsion was pronounced and executed by the board.

Among the disorders which the political excitement had caused, was one serious evil—a propensity to duelling. One of the young men previously expelled—Ardagh—supposing that a man named M'Carthy had given secret information to the board against him, immediately branded him as an informer, and sent him a hostile message. They met and exchanged four shots, but parted without reconciliation or concession on either side. The examination of Robinson, even during the sitting of the visitation, led to angry recrimination, which went as far as blows, and would have ended in a hostile meeting but for the interference of the college authorities. This bitter spirit had broken out in various other duels.

The occasion of these disorders was submitted to the vice-chancellor, and his direction asked, whether a challenge or a duel was to be punished with expulsion. He replied, that, whatever allowance might be made for young men forgetting their academic in their military character, yet he would think it right, on the first duel that should again occur, to recommend the lord lieutenant to disband the college corps; but he hoped that as all faction was now crushed within the college walls, all cause for such encounters would cease also. He recommended all gownsmen to avoid collisions with the citizens, and ended with an extraordinary promise that, if a gownsman were offered any insult, he would himself take up the case at his own expense, and make such an example of the offender as would prevent a repetition of the offence.

The visitation, which had lasted three days, at length concluded, and the visitors retired amid the plaudits and acclamations of the assembled students.

The impression left on the minds of the auditory by the conduct of Dr. Browne and Dr. Stokes was very different indeed. They saw the latter standing, like Teneriffe or Atlas, unmoved by the assault made upon him; the former bending

and yielding with a weak subserviency, ill according with the independent spirit he was before supposed to possess. The distrust excited by his conduct showed itself at the next election for the college. The then very unpopular measure of the Union was suspected to be in agitation, though not yet declared, and a test was put to Browne, whether, in the event of the measure being proposed, he would oppose it. Instead of declaring his determination in a manly manner, he affected displeasure at the suspicion implied by singling him out to take the test. When pressed for an explicit answer, he at length, after much evasion, declared that he saw no case in which he would vote for a union with England, except it was proposed as an alternative for a union with France. It was on this occasion that John Walker stood up, and with that strange pronunciation by which he always substituted a W for an R, surprised us by saying—"If Iwland lose hew libewty and independence, and we awe to be depwived of ouw wights and pwivileges, it is a mattew of no gweat consequence who awe to be ouw mastews."

I did not learn, until after the visitation was over, some circumstances about it. It seems my friend, O'Tundher, had returned to my rooms and carried off the paper we had composed. He had altered and interpolated many passages, and immediately got five hundred copies of it printed, and with his own hand disseminated them through college. The circumstance which to me rendered the visitation so extraordinary was that, in the searching scrutiny which took place and lasted three days, a principal delinquent—*fons et origo mali*—was never called on or suspected, while his fellow-students all around him were arraigned for offending by a publication in which they had neither hand nor part. It taught me a painful lesson of caution to see the university disturbed, its character compromised, its members endangered, some even expelled from its walls and scattered in exile, and all this perhaps traceable to the silly and idle production of a giddy student and a woollen-draper's shopman.

There is no doubt that much secret information had been given previous to the visitation. A principal agent in collect-

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ing it was said to be E——, who had accosted me in the courts the day previously, and whom I had providentially evaded, without having at the time the slightest suspicion of his motive. Others, into whose confidence he wormed himself, were not so fortunate; and it was reported that through his instrumentality many were implicated. He afterwards obtained a commission in the army. He had entered college as a sizar, and from being an obscure and shabby-looking lad, he emerged from college in full uniform, which he was fond of displaying in the most public streets as long as he remained in Dublin.

Among the expelled men, the most remarkable was Robert Emmet. Those whom I was most intimate with were two brothers of the name of Corbett. The elder was a low, smart little man, a lieutenant in the college corps; the other was tall and delicate, of a mild disposition and very pleasing manners; he was a sergeant in the corps. Immediately afterwards they went to France, and obtained commissions in the French service; and, I believe, one of them joined in the expedition to Ireland in which T. W. Tone was captured. The line-of-battle ship in which Tone embarked and six of the French frigates were taken. Two escaped; in one of which was Corbett. He afterwards perished on the field of battle.* The other brother met, in France, Sweeney, one of the United Irishmen who had been confined in Fort George; they had a quarrel, and fought. After one of the most desperate duels on record, in which they exchanged eight shots, Corbett, who, even after he was wounded, refused all reconciliation, was shot through the heart.

After the visitation, I did not meet my coadjutor in political composition till the evening of the intended insurrection in Dublin—the memorable 23rd of May, 1798. On the morning of that day, I received a pressing invitation from my sister, who then lived in Buckingham-street, to join her family, that we might, as she said, "all die together." I set out in the evening for her house. The streets were silent and deserted; no sound was heard but the measured tread of the different yeomanry corps taking up their appointed stations. The only

* See *post*, p. 169.

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acquaintance I met abroad was my friend O'Tundher. He accosted me in the street, told me it was dangerous to be out, and pressed me to go home and pass the night with him. I was little disposed to join in any plan of his again, even if I had no other engagement, so I declined his offer. While we were talking, we heard the sound of approaching steps, and saw the attorneys' corps, with solemn tread, marching towards us. My companion disappeared down a lane, and I walked up to meet them, and when they had passed me, proceeded on my way. When I reached my sister's house in Buckingham-street, I found a neighbour had called there, and given to my brother-in-law, who was a clergyman, a handful of ball cartridges, bidding him defend his life as well as he could. So great was their alarm, they had, on parting, taken a solemn leave of each other, as people who never hoped to meet again. The only weapon of defence in the house was a fowling-piece, which I charged with powder, but found the balls in the cartridges too large for the calibre. The family were persuaded to go to bed, leaving me to keep guard; and with the fowling-piece on my shoulder, and the large ball stuck in the muzzle, I marched up and down till sunrise in the morning. Meetings of the disaffected were held that night in the Barley Fields (as the neighbourhood of George's Church was then called), and on the strand of Clontarf. The design was, to commence the insurrection in Dublin by the rescue of the state prisoners in Newgate and Kilmainham prisons; but the arrest of Neilson prevented the execution of this plan. More than once, in the still, calm night, I thought I heard the undulating buzz and sound of a crowd, and the regular tread of a mass of men marching, but all else was awfully still.

The companion, my intercourse with whom was marked by such singular results, had many excellent qualities. What I have heard of his subsequent career in life is extraordinary, but I had no opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with him.

The following is a copy, as it appeared in print, of the document which excited such emotion at the visitation:—

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"TO THE INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

"Whereas we have learned with the utmost concern, that the system of TERROR and COERCION, so pregnant with calamity and so unfortunately pursued throughout this kingdom, has been adopted within the walls of our university, and the severest collegiate penalties inflicted on supposed offences, which even to their full conviction would be wholly disproportioned; and that the fundamental principles of justice are violated, by deciding on secret testimony, and refusing to confront the accuser with the accused. Now we, the independent scholars and students, feeling just indignation that the liberty of opinion, which we even yet might claim as members of any other civil society, should be so totally annihilated, that to breathe a sigh for the sufferings of our country, or a censure on those flagitious measures which have caused them, and which our conscience must condemn, is followed by expulsion; and feeling most poignantly, as we do, that state of subordination to which the severity of academic discipline has reduced us, precluding all possibility of redress, or even the imprescriptable right of the oppressed to complain—we yet do resolve that no intimidation shall alter our principles; that we will participate in pursuing, with undeviating aim, that redress which the miseries of our bleeding country demands; and, observing the effect which is ever known to follow arbitrary efforts to suppress opinions, we do hope that the mind, spurning those shackles that would be imposed upon it, will exert itself with increased energy, and the very means directed to suppress it will but diffuse and strengthen that principle, '*unseen though cresceive in its faculty.*' And whereas there has been instituted, as a necessary concomitant (a support that has ever accompanied it), an organized arrangement of spies and informers, tainting the sources of social intercourse, corrupting even to dissolution the bonds of our society, and substituting distrust and gloomy suspicion for unrestrained intercourse and mutual communication, which alone constitute the enjoyment of existence, we feel sensations not unmixed with horror, that the mode of prosecution where the attestations of villains con-

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victed of every crime that deforms humanity were received, so that the glaring and contradictory falsehood of some of them at length compelled the decency of courts to admit a prosecution for accumulated perjury—that mode which developed itself abroad with such public resentment, and was finally exploded with such public execration—should at length be resorted to within our college, and our body stigmatized with furnishing that depravity of character which the most abandoned and infamous class of society had almost failed to supply; we resolve on all occasions to express our utmost detestation of such abominable agents; as they have forfeited all pretensions to the character of gentlemen, which an association with us had allowed them to assume, we will not in future demand that retribution to which a gentleman applies, *though we should not be convinced, as we recently are, that personal cowardice is the attendant of their infamy*, but we will cautiously avoid all contact with the reptiles, as '*of something baneful, that our nature chills at.*' We will hold them to scorn, and illumine by every publicity the character of the ruffians, lest, shrinking in obscurity, they may wound unseen, and incautious sincerity fall a victim of their *hired zeal* or cankered malignity; and if the crust of callous infamy has not so incased their hearts as to render them invulnerable to all contempt and detestation of their fellows, we will finally drive them from our walls, to herd with *Dutton, Murdock, M'Cann*, and those fit and black associates, whose condoling sympathy may lull the pangs or blunt the points of those shafts which returning remorse cannot fail, sooner or later, to infix even in the conscience of the most abandoned depravity."

A dangerous society, which aimed at subverting the government of the country, and introducing the wild excesses of French anarchy, was then progressing in the college. When this publication appeared, it was taken for granted that its authors actually comprised a large number of the members of the university. The audacious boldness of its style and assertions was thought to indicate the strength of the society from which it emanated, and it consequently excited much alarm. As an antidote, the following counter reso-

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lution of the scholars and students was published in the daily papers:—

"We, the undersigned scholars and students of Trinity College, having seen, with the warmest indignation, several copies of an infamous publication, scattered through college—a publication presumptuous in its title, as assuming to be the resolutions of the scholars and students of our university—degrading to gentlemen, as containing assertions of gross and calumniating falsehood—insulting to a loyal body, as being treasonable in the sentiments it breathes—do solemnly declare, that we are not, directly nor indirectly, concerned in said publication, that we despise it as false, and detest it as seditious. We likewise declare that the principles which it intends to inculcate, and the motives from which it is published, are the objects of our utmost abhorrence; and that we are determined, as far as in us lies, to support the cause of loyalty and the constitution."

This disavowal was signed by upwards of three hundred members of the college, including many who afterwards distinguished themselves at the bar and the church, and some who are now members of the governing body of the university.

In the conduct of the visitation, Lord Clare's demeanour was characterized by his usual arrogance. When a student hesitated to be sworn, or to answer, he frequently asked him "if he were a fool or a madman?" and if, in his examination, he indulged in the expression of any democratic or popular sentiment, the vice-chancellor's observation was, "The young gentleman seems to have his reason affected." With all this, he evinced more kindness of heart than his assessor, Dr. Duigenan; and always leaned to the side of mercy when the latter urged greater severity.

In moving the address to the Lord Lieutenant, on the 23rd April, in the House of Lords, Lord Glendore took occasion to express his regret at the state of the university. Lord Clare, in reply to this observation, expressed his satisfaction, with much warmth, at the result of the visitation, in proving that so few in the college were really infected with revolutionary

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principles; and passed a high eulogium on the general loyalty of the body.

We have collected the following particulars of the subsequent career of James Farrell, referred to in the foregoing manuscript, which are so singular and characteristic of the times, that they possess more interest than the adventures of many more eminent politicians.

The night our informant parted from him, he returned to his lodgings in Christ-church yard. This locality is now obliterated, but was then a thoroughfare entered by a dark passage, called "Hell," on one side, and surrounded by houses and shops occupied exclusively by trunk-makers. It was the *refugium peccatorum* for many an unfortunate. His hostess was a worthy person, a Mrs. Bates. Her son was a loyal yeoman, of very different principles from her lodger; but the kindly qualities of Farrell had attached them both to him in no small degree. Among Farrell's associates was N. M., who was arrested on suspicion; and, as it was supposed he could make important discoveries, he was put to the usual question of the triangle, at the station of the old Custom-house yard, near Essex-bridge, close to the woollen warehouse of Tredenick, in Parliament-street, in whose employment Farrell was, and where, at that moment, he was engaged in the business of the shop. M.'s courage failed him after a few lashes, and he consented to discover his associates. The first person he named was James Farrell. It happened that young Bates, with his corps of yeomanry, was that day on duty at the Custom-house yard, and he himself was standing close to the triangle. He heard distinctly the name of his friend, James Farrell, denounced to Major Sirr, who was in attendance. He immediately framed some excuse for his absence, ran off to Tredenick's shop, and informed Farrell of the circumstance. Not a moment was to be lost. Farrell escaped from the house, by a back door, into Crane-lane, as *the* "major," who hastily followed young Bates, entered the shop. From Crane-lane, Farrell made his way, by by-lanes, to a friend's house in Dominick-street, who gave him shelter while pursuit was

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being made after him. After a short sojourn here, he fell ill, and, unwilling to distress his friend's family and compromise their safety, he left the house, and proceeded to a public inn, in Boot-lane, without disguise or concealment, reporting himself as a person from the country, who had just come to town on business. To have the names of all the inmates of every house affixed to the door, was one of the precautionary measures adopted by the government. When asked, Farrell gave his own name, and remained in the public-house with it on the door, unsuspected, while his pursuers were seeking him over the city. From the inn, he retired to his old lodgings, among his faithful friends, in Christ-church yard, where he remained concealed till an accident threw him into the arms of Major Sirr. The major had information that a person concerned in passing forged notes was concealed in the locality of Christ-church yard, and, making diligent search for the offender, he lighted upon Farrell. So remarkable a face could not escape notice; so he was arrested instead of the forger, identified as the person against whom M. had informed in the Custom-house yard, brought to the Castle, and thence conducted to Newgate.

Here his confinement was long, and his treatment severe. He had preferred some complaints as to the prison discipline, and raised a host of gaolers and turnkeys against him. He was, however, liberated by the government, to render them an expected service. Large bodies of rebels yet remained in arms in the county of Wicklow, and it was supposed that the interference of persons in their confidence might induce them to lay down their arms, in the now hopeless state in which their affairs were. Farrell was associated with a fellow-prisoner of the name of M'Cabe, and proceeded to the rebel encampments, to execute this commission. Their interference was fruitless, and so indisposed were the insurgents to enter into any compromise, that their exasperation against those who proposed it nearly cost the latter their lives. Farrell, therefore, returned to his confinement, but his companion, M'Cabe, separated from him, and made his way to England.

Of this M'Cabe Farrell had a high opinion, and told many anecdotes of his sagacity and presence of mind. On one occa-

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sion they had escaped together from some search made after them. M'Cabe got into a house, as he passed, undressed and went to bed in an upper room. He was scarce warm in it when he heard a noise below, and, on listening, found he was discovered, and heard men ascend the stairs to his room. He immediately ran to the window, raised it up, and saw below him a tiled shed, but too low to attempt to drop on it. He snatched something he found in the room, and dashed it down on the tiles, so as to break them and make a clatter, as if some one had jumped down on them. He then ran back to his bed, and concealed himself in the clothes, thrown back and folded over him. The door was immediately after burst open, and his pursuers rushed in. They first ran to the bed, found the sheets warm, as if a person had just risen from it, and then ran to the window. On looking out, they saw the shed below with shattered tiles, of which they had just heard the smash, and took it for granted that M'Cabe had desperately leaped out, and that they would find him below in the shed, with broken limbs. M'Cabe hastily dressed, hurried down stairs, and, in the confusion and eagerness of the search in the yard, quietly walked out and escaped.

After a dreary detention of eighteen months in prison, during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, Farrell and some others were liberated, as soon as the parliamentary session closed, without renewing the Suspension Act. He was enlarged, however, only after giving security that he would leave Ireland, and not return without permission.

While in prison, Farrell had one narrow escape. A man of the same name was convicted of robbery, and executed in front of the prison. Major Sirr arrived at the moment they were carrying the dead body into the gaol, and seeing the remarkable face of Farrell among those looking on "How is this?" said he; "take care that you have not hanged the wrong Farrell." "No, major," said Farrell; "but if you had come sooner it is very likely that it would have been the case." Farrell had an unawed and intrepid spirit, and talked to the awful "major" with an indifference and familiarity which few other prisoners, whose lives were in his hands, would dare to assume.

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On his liberation he proceeded to Liverpool, and arrived there in a situation the most destitute and friendless. He knew nobody, and his whole means of livelihood was a solitary sixpence. With this he repaired to a cheap eating-house, where he happened to meet some Irish labourers who gained their livelihood by working in the docks. In his forlorn condition he had no resource for existence but to adopt the same mode of life, so he walked down with them to the water side, and engaged himself as a day labourer. Here he was seen for some months in winter, bare-legged, up to his knees in mud, earning a scanty subsistence by extreme labour. His mind, however, was unsubdued, and his person robust and constitution vigorous; and he ever afterwards talked of his honest and independent exertions on this occasion as not the least pleasant part of his life to reflect on. When the season arrived, he took a fork, and in the neighbourhood of Highgate obtained employment as a labourer, and worked at hay-making during the summer.

Unwilling to return to the docks in the winter, but without any introduction or knowledge of any person that could aid him, and having something intensely Irish about him, when the Irish of his supposed rank and station were in bad odour in London, he was again uncertain where to turn. He had one recommendation, however—he wrote an excellent hand. Of this he prepared specimens, and distributed them among the law stationers. He was soon engaged in the office of an eminent solicitor, and to this he owed the unexpected prosperity which attended part of his future life. This solicitor did business for an Irish merchant named Murphy, who had been so long in Spain that he retained but an imperfect recollection of English. He, therefore, engaged his countryman, Farrell, to manage his business. He afterwards joined in partnership with a Mr. Gordon, and established a house in London. The talent and assiduity displayed by Farrell, as head clerk, won so favourably on his employers, that in a short time he was admitted into the firm as a junior partner. Having thus engaged in a most respectable connexion, he assumed, perhaps from conviction, the character of a loyal man. He became a

member of the corps of loyal yagers. He was one morning on drill in Moorfields, when he was arrested on parade. His papers at Austen Friars were seized and examined at Bow-street, and he was sent off in custody of a king's messenger. It then appeared that the charge against him was a connexion with Russel, who was implicated in Emmet's insurrection. A correspondent of Russel had addressed letters to Farrell's care, and, on Russel's arrest in Dublin, these letters were found with Farrell's name upon them. It did not appear, however, that he was further implicated than by the indiscretion of having the letters addressed to him, and he was again liberated. He returned to England by the way of his native city, Waterford, and appeared on the quay in his loyal yager green uniform. As his person and his principles were well known, it was immediately concluded he had come on some treasonable message, and his geeen uniform was set down as an audacious and overt act of rebellion. He was accordingly once more arrested; but on investigation, his suspicious uniform was found to be a badge of loyalty; he was again liberated, and returned to London to his mercantile engagements.

The firm of Murphy and Company was now highly respectable and popular. The senior partners had establishments in the west end, but the business was carried on in Austen Friars, where Farrell was supreme director. His hospitality, particularly to his own distressed countrymen, was most liberal. He became a distinguished man in the city, and he, who but a short time before led a miserable existence among poor Irish labourers, by digging, bare-legged, in wet docks, was now an honoured and respected man, looked up to for the influence of his name and the opulence and respectability of his mercantile establishment. He kept an almost open table, where men distinguished by rank and talent in the metropolis met together. Among his countrymen, Irish Johnson, Quin, and Peter Finnerty were constant guests. Among other literary speculations they established a newspaper called "The Day," which did not succeed. It was proposed to improve its appearance by a new and expensive arrangement, and an improved title, which Farrell

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suggested should be, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." The evil day was then given up.

But the house of Murphy, Gordon, and Farrell was like a brilliant meteor, and after blazing for a few years was as rapidly extinguished. Engaged to an almost unexampled extent in Spanish commerce and connexion, sudden and severe losses, arising from the unsettled state of that distracted country, involved the firm in embarrassments. The partnership was dissolved, and Farrell entered into speculations on his own account, which were not successful. He even tried literature, and commenced as an author, choosing a subject somewhat appropriate to the realities of his own chequered life. He called his book "Sketches of Bedlam," making up his facts from the report of a poor man who had been a keeper in a lunatic hospital. About this time he renewed an acquaintance with the widow of an officer, whom he married; but the match turned out unfortunate, and they separated. Misfortune still attended him, and he was declared a bankrupt. After a period of embarrassment and distress, Farrell was enabled, by the kindness of one of his partners, who had retired from the firm in better circumstances, and made a more prudent use of his dividend, to go to France, and he proceeded to Brussels. He was there when the Belgic revolution broke out. He was in the midst of the emeute, and, endeavouring to escape over a wall, received a gun-shot wound. He lingered for a short time, and died at Brussels, where he was buried.

The subsequent career of our informant's friend, Corbett, was as adventurous and much more brilliant that Farrell's. He was possessed of considerable abilities—a good scholar and a fluent speaker. Though his appearance was very youthful, and his manners had the cheerful gaiety of a schoolboy, yet he was distinguished for an energy far above his age, and for the most fearless intrepidity. He had early attached himself to the revolutionary party in college. At the presentation of the address to Lord Camden, a circumstance occurred which, in a degree, justified the strong measures taken by the Board of

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College. Just as the deputation reached the Castle a considerable portion of those who formed it separated from the rest, and, instead of paying their respects to the representative of royalty, proceeded with an inflammatory address to Grattan, and from thence to Francis-street Chapel, where a "Catholic Committee" was sitting. Corbett led the way in this very irregular proceeding. When the party entered the chapel, Keough, who was addressing the committee, broke out into an eulogium on the patriotism of the students who had spurned the discipline of college, and singled out Corbett particularly for his praises.

After his expulsion from the university, Corbett made his way, with others, to France, entered the French service, and joined the corps intended for the invasion of Ireland. He embarked with Napper Tandy and a man named Blackwell, on board of the Anacreon sloop-of-war, to co-operate with Humbert, who had landed at Killala. They were to have landed from the Anacreon on the coast of Donegal, and thence proceeded to join Humbert; but before this could be effected, news was brought that Humbert and his forces had surrendered, and the intended Irish auxiliaries made a precipitate retreat. They were pursued by a British ship-of-war, and with some difficulty escaped to the coast of Norway, and landed at Bergen. Here they were blockaded by the English, and finding it impossible to escape by sea, they set out by land, and reached Hamburgh. On the representation of the British Consul, they were arrested by the authorities, and handed over as revolted British subjects. After a long and rigorous confinement, they were remitted prisoners to Ireland, and committed to Kilmainham gaol. From this prison Corbett and Blackwell escaped, after sundry perilous but unsuccessful attempts. The last was nearly fatal to Corbett. The cord by which he surmounted the high wall of that prison was found too short to reach the ground at the other side; so, after remaining suspended by his hands till he was exhausted, he let go, and was lifted up by his friends from the ground in a state of insensibility. When sufficiently recovered, he went to Liverpool, assumed the disguise of a Liverpool merchant, and, under it, obtained a passport, and

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found himself once more in Paris, after so many perilous adventures.

He afterwards obtained the rank of general in the French service. He accompanied the French armies to Spain, and took a distinguished part in the great battles of the peninsular war—at Salamanca, Almaida, and Cuidad Rodrigo. He fought for Napoleon also at Dresden and Leipsic with much credit. Who can tell what a trifling circumstance might have otherwise directed his early life, so that the genius and courage which achieved such brilliant success, instead of being coupled with the name of a rebel and proscribed fugitive, might have placed him high in the records of honourable men, who deserve well of their country?

CHAPTER XIII.

LORD CLARE'S FUNERAL.

Our informant, from whose manuscript we extracted the foregoing account of the visitation, concludes his notice of it with the following sketch:—

I never again saw Lord Clare. Long before the next college visitation he had died. I was, however, present at his funeral, and was a witness of the abominable scene which then took place.

He died at his house in Ely-place, Dublin. An immense crowd collected in the small street, in expectation of his funeral; and the scene was a melancholy exhibition of some of those traits which unfortunately mark the Irish as a peculiar people. In every other nation, however uncivilized, there is a solemnity attached to death which awes and, as it were, humanizes the heart, awakening a kindred feeling in all who contemplate the common lot of humanity. But with an excited Irish mob this impression is not made; death is no atonement for past offences, and the bitter feelings of prejudice and passion pursue the

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offender even in his grave. The mob assembled there was not the serious assemblage usual at a funeral. They were excited to yells and shrieks of the most appalling kind, curses loud and deep, and ribaldry the most revolting and disgusting. They followed the funeral procession to Peter's Church. It was hoped that the solemn sight of graves and coffins—the awful thought of death and judgment—would give some check to their passion. But no; they seemed to think the grave would only too soon shelter the body from them, and the earth would hide it before they had glutted their malice and revenge. They showered mud and dirt on the burial-place, and at last one ruffian hurled a dead cat on the coffin. Lord Clare was reputed to have used some expression to the effect that he would make the seditious as tame as domestic cats, and this ruffianly retort was received by the mob with shouts of applause. The circle of honourable and generous men who attended the funeral out of respect to this great and talented man, however they might differ in political opinions, could not contain their indignation and disgust. Truly did the lines * suggested by the occasion express their feelings—

Cold is thy heart and still thy voice,
While round thy sacred urn
Rapine and fraud and guilt rejoice,
But truth and virtue mourn.

The thought suggested by this scene was horror at the peril of letting loose on society such a horde of everything that was wicked, base, and cruel. The excesses of the French Revolution never displayed a scene of more heartless depravity. The infidel rabble of Paris having once removed their victims by a death comparatively free from suffering, allowed their remains to be committed to the earth with decency and respect. But their imitators in Ireland followed no such example; their victims were slowly suffocated in a burning barn, or their quivering limbs rent with pikes and exhibited on a bridge, in protracted and agonizing suffering. Even death did not snatch

* These lines were repeated extempore by Edward Lysaght, and taken down in writing by Peter Burrowes.

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their victims from their pursuit. They were followed by outrage, curses, and blasphemy to the grave. That the authors of such horrors did not succeed in Ireland was mainly owing to the sagacity, energy, and activity of Lord Clare, and hence the persevering malignity with which this great man was pursued, even in the tomb.

This is a melancholy picture by an eye-witness in Ireland not fifty years ago. It is fresh in the recollection of our readers that a similarly atrocious scene occurred at the funeral of Lord Limerick a few years since. The calendars of Tipperary and some other counties bear terrible testimony to what excesses even yet the populace of these districts is capable of being excited. Such things are now, after the progressive improvement of half a century, happily of rare occurrence and limited extent in Ireland; but were it possible for those who laud the *heroes* of '98 to again succeed in letting loose those fierce and merciless passions on the land—*væ victis!*

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GIBS' PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES—FIRE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FROM the manuscript before referred to, we extract also the following sketch:—

The Irish House of Commons was a rotunda, the most ill-contrived in point of convenience that ever was built, Round it ran a narrow circular gallery for spectators. This was enclosed by a high partition, having behind it a passage opening into the seats in front, which looked down into the body of the house below, but were so narrow that a very few spectators filled them. The greater number who were admitted were squeezed together behind the high partition between it and the wall, where they could neither hear nor see. The incon-

venience and danger in case of fire was fearful; the whole of the persons shut up in this gallery must have perished of suffocation before they could extricate themselves. Admission to this place was obtained by a member's order only, except by students of the university, who were always admitted.

The student's passport was his gown. He rapped at the wicket, and the porter looked through a grating; the applicant held up his gown, and the door was opened, admitted him, and again closed. This was a privilege always abused. The students' gowns were lent out indiscriminately to friends and acquaintances, and the gallery appeared sometimes half full of gownsmen, not half of whom were members of the university. When I first entered college I was very fond of using this privilege. It was a proud thing for a "Gib" to present himself to a crowd round the door, hear many a cry, "make way for the gentleman of the college," pass the avenue made for him, find the door expand to the "open sesame" of his gown, and himself admitted alone to the great council of the nation, while the suppliant crowd were excluded.

Some of the hot-headed members of the "Back-lane Parliament," as the society of United Irishmen who met in Dublin were called, had committed themselves on a point of privilege with the House of Commons. The most prominent was James Napper Tandy. It had been determined by some of them, that if anything offensive was said by a member of the House of Commons, the individual offended should seek personal satisfaction from the offender. Tandy became committed thus with Toler, then solicitor-general, and it was supposed that a hostile meeting must ensue between them; but it did not take place; for Tandy, apprehensive of arrest by a messenger of the speaker, made his way out of a back window, and absconded. He was afterwards arrested, and imprisoned in Newgate with other distinguished leaders of the United Irish Society. It was currently reported that these men intended, after a very seditious publication which they avowed, to present themselves in the gallery of the House of Commons, dare the arrest, and so try the question of privilege with the speaker. As this became a subject of

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universal excitement and deep interest, I was determined to be present if possible.

On the 27th February, 1792, a group of collegians, of whom I was one, sacrificed our commons, and were seated from an early hour, in breathless expectation, in the gallery of the house. Between five and six o'clock, just as the speaker had taken the chair, after prayers, a voice was heard issuing from the roof, shouting down "fire, fire!" Smoke was seen rolling down, and in a short time filled the space between the roof and the gallery. An immediate rush was made, and notwithstanding the comparatively small number of persons in the house at that early hour, the avenues were nearly choked up. I found myself jammed in the narrow winding passage between the high partition and the wall, in total darkness, and with a sense of suffocation coming over me; and it was not till a rush was made along the avenue, and I was carried in the current, and found myself pushed into the open air, that I breathed freely. A vast crowd of spectators were collected outside, and the scene appeared to me unspeakably grand and awful. The fire had by this time run round the base of the dome, and appeared to raise it up and support it on a column of flame. For a short time it appeared to remain suspended above its base, and hovering in the air, when suddenly the fiery columns appeared to give way, and the vast dome sank, with a crash, within its walls. The circle of the wall was one hundred and seventy-five feet in circumference, and a volume of smoke and flame seemed to issue from it as from a crater, and exhibited the aspect of a natural volcano. The flames ascended in a cone of fire to a considerable height, with a roaring sound, and the vibration seemed to shake the houses in College Green, like the accompaniment of an earthquake. After some time the smoke and flame sank within the wall, the torrent of molten metal from the covering of the dome pouring down like a stream of lava. It was the most magnificent imitation of nature that was ever artificially displayed.

Among the crowd that filled College Green were seen prominently some of the most violent demagogues of the day. A rumour was spread that the fire was not accidental, but the

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result of a premeditated design to crush at once the members of the House of Commons, take advantage of the confusion that would ensue, and instantly proclaim a provisional government, independent of England. This sudden conflagration, while the house was sitting in secure debate within, seemed so like the design and attempt of the "gunpowder-plot," that many yielded readily to the conviction that the motives and actors in both were similar, and the escape equally providential. It turned out, however, on a close inspection and strict examination of the circumstances, that the fire was purely accidental. It was caused by the breaking of one of the flues which ran round the walls to heat the house, and by which the fire was communicated to the wood-work supporting the roof. The massive walls of the rotunda protected the other part of the magnificent building, and the damage of the fire was entirely confined to the seeming volcano in the centre.*

After the fire the business of the house was adjourned to the speaker's chamber, and the students of Trinity College were particularly favoured. At the end of the apartment, behind the speaker's chair, there was a deep and convenient gallery, which was exclusively devoted to the gownsmen. They were instantly

* It is a remarkable fact that a fire, under similar circumstances, nearly burst out in the House of Commons in London a few weeks previously. On the 9th of January, 1792, at eight o'clock, at an early and unexpected adjournment of the house, while the clerks in the several offices were engaged in concluding their business, they were alarmed by their rooms being filled with smoke. A search for the cause was immediately commenced. After long seeking in vain for the spot where the fire originated, they at length discovered that a closet at the bottom of a small staircase was so filled with dense smoke that a candle would not burn in it. On opening a small window, and admitting sufficient air to somewhat clear away the smoke, it was discovered that it was issuing from a space behind the ceiling of the closet and the floor of the rooms above. On exploring this, a bundle was discovered of something tightly rolled together, intensely heated, and ready to burst into a flame. On unrolling this, it was found to be a pair of old corduroy breeches, saturated with a preparation of phosphorus. Trifling as this cause may seem, it was considered well adapted to effect the design of an incendiary. It would cause a slow combustion without much flame, and when the adjacent wood was thus heated, once the fire burst out it would spread with great rapidity. The nearly simultaneous fires thus appearing in both houses, were thought to be very suspicious and more than the effect of mere accident, and confirmed the apprehension of those who attributed both events to the same cause—disaffection.

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admitted here, on presenting themselves, and listened to the debate at their ease, while the public in general now found it difficult to obtain passes, and when they got admission, were confined to a narrow strip of a gallery, from some parts of which they could neither see nor hear.

This proud distinction the gownsmen, however, soon forfeited. Lord Fitzwilliam had been sent over as a popular viceroy, and, on his sudden recall, a strong feeling of disappointment prevailed. On a night when the subject was brought before the house, our gallery was full, and I remember well the irrepressible excitement that seemed to actuate us all. At length it broke out. Grattan rose to deprecate the measure as one calculated to cause the greatest disturbance in Ireland, by what was considered the perfidy of the government, first exciting the high hopes of the people by promised measures of liberal policy, and then dashing them, by the sudden removal of the man who had been sent over expressly to accomplish them. At the conclusion of Grattan's inflammatory speech, the enthusiasm in the gallery was no longer capable of restraint. We rose as one man, shouting and cheering with the boisterous tumult of a popular meeting. When this subsided, Foster's peculiar voice was heard through his nose, ordering the student's gallery to be cleared, and a sergeant-at-arms, with a posse of messengers, entered among us. We were pushed out in a heap without the slightest ceremony, and were never again suffered to enter as privileged persons.

The speaker had counted on the loyalty and propriety of the students of the university, and this display of what he considered riot and sedition, at once changed his estimate of their character. Many a penitent memorial was presented, and solemn promises were made of better manners in future, but Foster was inexorable. No student ever after found his gown a passport to the house, till the Union removed the parliament, and extinguished the hope of recovering the lost privilege for ever. Groups of us were constantly seen in the passages, waiting to intercept the speaker, or entreating, with uplifted hands, a passage to the gallery; but stern Charon passed in at the door, leaving us, like ghosts on the banks of the Styx casting

wistful and unavailing looks on the Elysium on the opposite side of the house.

On the 13th of October, 1796, the House of Commons was re-opened—a renewed edifice, risen like a phœnix from its ashes.

THE END.

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THE SLINGSBY PAPERS.

THE SLINGSBYS IN GENERAL.

THANK God I am once again in the country! Here in my own sweet, quiet, old home. No crowded thoroughfares, no rattling of carriages, no flaring shops, no morning cries, no midnight tumults, no stifling smoke to disturb and offend me. All is peace, solitude, and purity. Nature above me and around me.

"Here, dear Bridget, take my over-coat; and stay, you may as well carry this new city garment with you too, and be sure you leave them both all night before the smouldering turf in the kitchen grate; they have a villainous odour of coal gas upon them that sickens me. There now, give me my old 'Newmarket,' and I will run out for a few minutes, to see all the dear old things smiling a welcome on me before the sunlight fades away below Knockduvh. Then, hey, for dinner and an evening of pleasant thoughts by my own fireside!"

In the name of all that is preposterous—so ran my musings, as, in the luxury of after-dinner indolence, I stretched out my legs till my feet touched the billet of bog-oak that was blazing brightly on the hearth—in the name of all that is preposterous, what could have induced mankind to build cities and dwell therein? The first murderer was also the first builder of a city! And what marvel. He had gone "forth from the presence of the Lord," and the ground would not yield unto him her strength when he tilled it; and he feared to be in the solitude of the holy earth—alone with God and his own soul.

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So he built Enoch and gathered his race around him. And thus cities arose and multiplied, and human souls and human bodies grew, like trees in the dense forest, close and sweltering together, shutting out the glory of heaven, the fresh breeze and the soft rain; rubbing and chafing each other, and wearing away bark and leaf in their ceaseless struggle, and generating rank, noxious vapours as they died and putrified where they fell. But the country is man's true inheritance—conferred by God, renewed by Nature: all-delighting, all-sufficing. Then I repeated some verses from Philemon, which you shall have in English, lest you should call me a pedant.

"The country is man's most congenial home. The olive, and the fig, and the vine, corn and sweet honey—these man needs and Nature gives him in her fields; but vases of gold and silver, purple and fine linen—these are for the pageantry of the world, and not for the wants of life."

We Slingsbys are, almost to a man, country folks. Some of our women, to be sure, in obedience to the social obligation of the great marriage contract, have gone off at various times and settled in towns with their husbands; but they, too, contrive to keep the flavour of the country about them, renewing it from time to time by visits to the ancient family seat, and every now and then manage to adjust matters so as to give their progeny the privilege of a rural birth. We boast, likewise, of being an ancient and respectable clan; but, like many other families, our origin, either through the carelessness of chroniclers or the unambitious characters of our ancestors, is lost in the mists of antiquity. Whether we be descendants of any of the Yorkshire Slingsbys I know not, though I am disposed to think, from the remarkably defective development of the organ of acquisitiveness and caution in our Irish craniums, that we cannot claim any ethnological affinity with the very acute inhabitants of that celebrated shire; yet, certes, we have on our armorial bearings a chevron between two leopard's heads, and two hunting horns in base argent. But what of that? These be things which any one may have by some means or other. I never yet knew a man with so much as a silver spoon who was at fault for a heraldric hyrogliph to display upon it. If he have not arms of *Concession*, or *Adoption*, or *Assumption*, he

is pretty sure to have those of *Pretension*, as our sovereigns once quartered those of France on their shields. But give me the true heraldry that God blazons on man. The conscience, spotless as a field "*argent*," the heart sterling as, "*or*" the brow clear as "*azure*," the cheeks ("the sinister and dexter chiefs") ruddy as *gules* with health and good humour, the affections verdant as "*Vert*," and no sable about him except it may be a glittering dark eye of intellect. Give me such a one and I will wear him in my heart of hearts, and do homage to him as one of Nature's nobles. And let the herald's officers pluck him down if they dare.

One fact, at least, with regard to us is certain. We came to Ireland with somebody or other, Strongbow, or Oliver Cromwell, or William of Nassau; and, for aught I know, we may yet have to go out with some other adventurer, migrating with broken fortunes to more promising regions, though hitherto we have contrived to struggle through the pestilence and the famine which the wisdom of God has sent upon us.

Somehow we have acquired the reputation of being humourists. Perhaps in our way we are so. If keeping ourselves aloof from the petty cabals and little feuds, the intrigues and jobs which occupy human nature even in the country—if having souls that rise above the contemplation of dogs and horses—though we relish field sports with the keenest zest—if cultivating tastes that lead us to seek for better mental food than is to be found in works on farriery or the racing calendar; if these things constitute humourists, then do our good neighbours stand fully acquitted of slander in so designating us. True, it is, too, that while we neither shun nor decline the social kindlinesses of others, we congregate chiefly amongst ourselves. And if our collision with strangers is not so close nor so constant as to rub off all the queer angles and salient points that form our family characteristics, we are all the more picturesque and sharp in our outlines, and can throw off such light as falls upon our more numerous if not more polished surfaces, for we contrive, by converse with some better spirits and more cultivated intellects to keep our minds from stagnating, and our rusticity from degenerating into clownishness. For myself, when I shut

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to the door of my closet, and abandon myself to the pleasures of a choice book, or let my fancy go a-drift as she lists upon the stream of memory or speculation, I deem myself the happiest bachelor in creation; and if a pleasant friend drops in upon my solitude, to exhilarate me with his spirits, or illuminate me with his wit, or instruct me with his wisdom, I feel, if possible, happier still. Then I have the endless occupations which the ever-varying requirements of a country life bring with them. Preparing the earth to receive the seed within her bosom; then sowing in hope, and watching in trustfulness the mysterious and beneficent operation by which Nature works in our behalf,—seeing the clouds dropping their fatness and the winds drying our saturated soil; the sun warming and cherishing the young vegetable life; the dews refreshing the plants exhausted by the parching heat of summer. Then comes the glorious time when the earth yields her increase, when the kine luxuriate in the rich pastures, and the swinking mower is hidden to the knees in the deep meadows; and after that comes the reaping of the yellow corn and the gathering of the apples in the orchard; and then we bring home the sheaves and pile them in the haggard; then comes the broken wintry weather, when we turn to in-door work, and the muffled beat of the flail is heard in the barn, and the rattling of the winnowing-machine, as its revolving fans drive the light chaff in a dusty shower upon the wind; and so on to ploughing again.

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS.

I WAS strolling one morning, a few days before Christmas, through my plantations, knife in hand, lopping off decayed branches, pruning irregular and excessive growth, and here and there consigning to the woodman's hatchet some dead tree, which, having now ceased to contribute its quota of ornament or utility, received its sentence—"cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground?" or dooming to a like fate some over-ambitious

denizen which struggled for an undue share of place and greatness in the woody republic, and crushed and bowed down its weaker companions, and robbed them of the free gifts of nature, the sun-light and the air of heaven—the juice and fatness of the earth—the dew and the shower. Then I fell into a train of musing, as indeed my wont is. Truly, the man who spends his life "exempt from public haunt," and converses much with others of God's creatures than his own species, will learn a lore that the dwellers in cities know not of. He will "find tongues in trees," and his spiritual sense will hear strange words that never fall on the ear of flesh—words of knowledge, of reproof, of correction, of instruction in righteousness, for which these scriptures of God, written on the tablet of the earth, are profitable, even as is that "Scripture given by inspiration." I have somehow got the habit, as every thoughtful, solitary man does, of making companions of the insentient things about me. I love to endue them with thought, and to fancy that they understand my sensations, and I theirs. Thus I have my friends and favourites—ay, and my loves too. I have my harem of flowers,—beauties whose loveliness is not veiled from the light, but brightens and glows more and more in the sunshine—whose charms neither sate the heart nor vitiate the soul. I have my community of plants and shrubs, my aristocracy of forest trees; and much pleasure have I as I "consider how they grow." The flowers speak to me of joy, and peace, and love; and their odorous breath whispers of purity of soul. The low-lying brooms, the laurestinas spreading along the ground, the laurels and hollies, with their thick, trim, shining foliage of ever-enduring green, tell of humility, and the well-ordered beauty of holy living. The oak shows forth the fortitude that stands before the storm; and, like the martyr of old, bends not to tribulation or trial, though it will fall rather than bend. The pliant sallow admonishes me of that gentleness of spirit that will "give place unto wrath," bowing under the hand that buffets, and, as it rises again, showing no mark or memory of the smiter. The fir and the pine, green and warm when the trees around them are sapless and bare, spread their sheltering arms above some tender nurselings, meet remem-

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brancers of heavenly Charity. Then Faith has its representative in the ash, that strikes its roots deep and clingingly even into the rock; and Hope in the hazel, that drops its nut confidingly into the earth; and Patience in the slow-growing and late-matured walnut. And the tapering larch, that shoots right up to the light and the air, calls to mind the Piety of earnest souls that ever look and struggle up heavenwards. Have we not, too, trees that bear their fruit of righteous works, and others fruitless, but with their leaves abundant—mere professions and words of much promise; and the cankered heart, and the dead, withered branch, and the diseased or distorted limb, that must be cut off and cast away to insure the health or the beauty of the tree? If at any time I weary of the face of man, or chafe at his folly, I can betake myself to the woodlands, and hear the leafy things around whisper wisdom and truth as they bend their branches towards me, while I lean against their trunks with my book, and re-absorb the peace of God's nature :—

"For where
I have my books,
I have old friends
Whose cheering looks
Make me amends
For coldnesses in men: and so
With those departed long ago,
And with wild flowers and trees,
And with the living breeze,
And with 'the still small voice'
Within, I would rejoice,
And converse hold, while breath
Held me, and then—come death."

A clattering of hoofs on the gravel attracted my attention, and I saw Uncle Saul's little post-boy "Shawneen," riding on his donkey at full canter down the avenue towards the house. I stepped forward to intercept him, but he flew past me with unabated speed, notwithstanding his utmost exertions to bring the beast to a stand-still. The animal, though but an ass, seemed to be a philosopher of the Baconian school, and having, according to the precept of his master, proposed to himself, in the commencement of his career, one great and final object, he

pursued it steadily without pause or deviation; and so having left his own stable with the fixed determination of reaching mine, he was indisposed to fall short of his purpose, no matter what pressing solicitations were used to induce him. At length, however, Shawneen, by dint of sawing the bridle with both hands, contrived to turn the donkey right round: but with change of direction came change of purpose, and accordingly he set off again, wriggling his tail and sticking down his head with the evident intention of returning to his own apartments. This I was determined to frustrate, so I seized the bridle as he was cantering by me, and in a moment or two our united exertions were successful. After a few graceful retrograde movements, not unlike the backing of a steamer when she reverses her paddles, the donkey swung round to his moorings beside me.

"Well, Shawneen, what's the matter?"

The boy was too much "blown" to speak; but he pulled a letter out of his pocket and handed it to me. I opened the envelope, and in its folds were these words in my uncle's handwriting:—"Good news—read and return, S.S." The letter itself I perused with much interest: it was from my worthy godfather, Jonathan Freke, of New York, full of love and kindness: you can imagine the pleasure with which I read the following passage:—"Notwithstanding the great prosperity with which God has blessed me, and for which I humbly trust I am not ungrateful, I always pine for the dear friends from whom I have been so long severed; and I have never seen the return of Easter or Christmas that my heart did not yearn after them, and the wish arise that I was sitting in your hospitable mansion, dear Saul, in the midst of all whom I love. But the home-sickness has of late grown so strong upon me that I can no longer support it, and so I am winding up my affairs, and will leave the firm to younger hands, while I haste away to sit beside your hearth at Christmas, and grow young again in the light of so many dear faces."

I despatched the boy and fell into a train of sweet musing. ——Thrice blessed and happy influences of that religion which accommodates its ordinances to the nurture of our social

affections as it gives its graces to sustain our spiritual life —whose sabbaths recruit the body while they refresh the soul—whose festivals are not only spiritual rejoicings, but potent bonds to bind together the human family in the brotherhood of love! The Divinity of Christianity, had it no other proof, would stand confessed in this — that it is the most sublime, the most perfect, the most lovely social system that the world has ever seen, wondrously adapted to cherish and develope all that is good in man's nature, to repress all that is evil, to make him the best citizen, the truest friend, the tenderest parent, and the most duteous child. I hold it, therefore, to be an obligation, equally social and religious, to maintain in all their ancient integrity the joyous observances of those festive seasons; they are stages in the great journey of human life, when man pauses for a moment from the intent and absorbing selfishness with which each is pressing onwards, to forget self and to look lovingly on his brother. And pre-eminent above all others is the Festival of the Nativity. The wondrous event which it commemorates influences the soul with a grateful happiness, and opens the heart to the reception of all kindly affections. I love to see it kept in all its glory. I love it for its holy charities, for its humanizing influences, for its generous cheer, its wassail-bowl, the tale, the song, and the dance. I love it for the recollections of childish delight with which it is associated; but in chief I love it for this, that it brings back to home the feet that have been wandering away from it during the year—that it unites again in one common family those who have been scattered abroad amid strange scenes and in diverse pursuits, renovating the affections that distance or time may have weakened, drawing us all together round the one holy well of love, to drink of it and strengthen our hearts, and fill them with stores of kindliness, that may sustain us when we go forth into the arid deserts of life.

There is something, to my thinking, profoundly affecting in the appearance of external nature with which Christmas is usually ushered in. Everything around is suggestive, as if by a wise arrangement, of the havoc which sin has wrought on the world. The earth—how unlike to the vernal glory of her

primal sinlessness!—lies torpid and exhausted, stripped alike of the verdure of spring, the bloom of summer, and the richness of autumn. With the shroud of snow upon her bosom, and the ice upon her heart beneath, she looks the emblem of physical death. And then it is—when the curse laid upon man is upon her too, for man's sake—that He who had walked the bowers of Paradise in the majesty of a king and the benignity of a parent, now revisits the earth, in her desolation and abasement, as a lowly feeble child; yet potent to reconquer His kingdom from the usurper, and to found a system calculated to revolutionize the world to its extremest limits.

The recollections of Christmas during my childhood are still the dearest and holiest memories of my life, and I cannot even yet recall them without mingled feelings of pleasure and pain. My eyes grow dim with tears, and my heart is stirred, when I call to mind four children, with impatient wakefulness, awaiting the dawn of morning, that they might dress and hurry down—stealing on tiptoe to the door of their parents' chamber—then artlessly singing their Christmas hymn; and, when it was ended, springing into the room with gay clamour, claiming their Christmas-boxes, and wishing a happy Christmas, and receiving the kiss and blessing. And those parents—where are they now? And we—where are we? One, the loveliest and meekest of souls, sleeps in peace, wearied of the world before it was well entered on; and the others have gone, each his different way, and now meet but rarely; for we have no father's house to reassemble us, and I often ask in thought, "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?"

But ye, who still have that priceless blessing, a father's home, know that it is a holy temple to which all should, like the Jews of old, go up at seasons to worship. Make it the focal point to which all your hearts and feet, no matter how distant ye be, shall at seasons converge; where all your affections, like rays of light which the glass draws together, shall meet and commingle in a glow of love, intense and ardent. Let no cold philosophy sneer down for you these honoured festivities; nor let the children of a utilitarian age deem themselves wiser in their generation than their simpler sires, who

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failed not to call the annual muster-roll of glad hearts and joyous faces, to see that none were wanting in their places—that none had fallen away or lagged behind in the journey of life.

CHRISTMAS DAY AT CASTLE SLINGSBY.

CHRISTMAS morning is come, and the sun shines down with a cheerful brightness upon the white fields and hard, frosty roads, and from many a kindling hearth the blue, vapory smoke rises straight up into the clear, still ether without meeting a breath of air to disturb or deflect it, reminding one of the incense of holy prayers which no earthly thoughts dissipate or distract as they mount warm from pious hearts to heaven. The heart is glad, one pauses not to think why, for it seems to be so by an instinct which anticipates any reasoning on the cause for its gladness, and the world all around wears that holiday look of peace, tranquillity, and love, so unmistakeable, yet so impossible, to describe. Christmas, too, has brought home good old Jonathan Freke to his native land, and he is now housed, to his heart's content, with the companion of his youth in the snuggest bed-chamber of Castle Slingsby. Thither, then, as the sun was half-way down his short winter day's journey, did I bend my steps from my own quiet nook of Carrigbawn, to join the festive family gathering which invariably congregates there at Christmas; and while I am on the way, I may as well give you some notion of the host with whom we are to eat our Christmas dinner, my Uncle Saul Slingsby.

If there is any zoological specimen more worthy than another of being hermetically sealed in a glass case, or corked up in a bottle of spirts of wine, it is an old bachelor without bile or bitterness—one who is at the same time fond of children and of their grandmothers—the playfellow of the young, and the counsellor of the old—who flirts with young girls, and squires old ones—who can dance, play whist, drink tea, sing

songs, or ride a fox-hunt—who is all things to all men, and everything in the world to every woman. Just such a specimen is my good uncle, Saul Slingsby—the delight of all who know him for miles round—the grand projector of pic-nics and steeple-chases—a steward at every subscription ball, and *croupier* at every club dinner. How Saul escaped matrimony is a marvel to every one, for he was a good-looking and a manly fellow. I think myself that he owed his safety to the immensity of his philogyny; the lover of all womankind could never afford to incarcerate his affections within the sphere of one of the sex. Had he lived in Turkey, he would have been the happy husband of a thousand wives. But he lives in Ireland, and is, therefore, a bachelor. The Slingsbys all cluster about Uncle Saul at all the great festivals, as bees about thyme flowers, or butterflies in a sunny meadow. He is the sole survivor of a multitude of younger brothers and sisters, and has a large ancient house all to himself—as large as his heart, and as ready as that heart to take every mother's son of us into its warmest corners, and cherish us with true parental love.

The sun was approaching the horizon, shining redly through the frosty air, as I stood before the ancient entrance into Uncle Saul's demesne. In the apex of a semi-circle, which swept inwards from the road, rose two high, square pillars of limestone of rusticated masonry, surmounted by antique urns of the same material; but the stone, though unbroken and carefully preserved, had lost its original colour, and looked dark and weather-stained, and the tooth of time was visible in that appearance, which architects have denominated "vermiculated." From these piers swung an enormous gate of iron, the rails of which were all arrow-headed, and between the cross-bars you could see many a fantastic scroll, elaborately wrought, according to the fashion of by-gone times. At either side, the sweep of coped stonework was terminated by a pier, similar in style to those I have mentioned, beyond which stood a square, stone lodge, with a high slated roof that ran to a point in the centre, topped by a wooden ornament. I swung open one valve of the gate, and passed up the long, straight, formal avenue of beech trees till I reached the house. My approach

was not unnoticed, nor unannounced, for a multitude of dogs, of all sizes, ages, and species, broke out into a clamorous salutation, ranging through every note of the canine diapason, from the deep bay of the house-dog to the shrill, snappish challenge of the little, wiry-haired terrier. But I was a friend amongst that honest-hearted population, and the storm soon sank down to pleasant whinings and caressing gambols. And thus escorted, I mounted the flight of broad stone steps that led to the door of one of those fine old mansions which are still to be seen in the interior of the country—none of your gingerbread things, that you see at Kingstown and Dalkey, with their gables and gazaboes, and little windows stuck in all sorts of queer places in the roof, young Elizabethans, just come from nurse, with their white, shining faces, and flaring green-painted doors—but a noble, square pile of solid masonry, not ashamed to show its honest face without a mask of whitewash upon it, pierced with innumerable windows, too narrow, I admit, for more modern taste, yet large enough withal to afford a pleasant look-out for a couple of young lovers (if they cared for a look-out), and to let in sunbeams and air enough for the low-ceiled rooms within, while on the eastern flank rose the still strong shell of a square, massive castle, whose dark weather-stained sides, contrasted very picturesquely with the more modern mansion that had grown up beside it. Well, the door opened, and there stood the worthy master, with outstretched hand and smiling face, welcoming "the last of the Slingsbys," for all the others had arrived before me.

I shall not trouble you with an introduction to all the Slingsbys. First, it would be a tedious ceremony, for they are very numerous; next, it would be a profitless one, for you would only find amongst the mass of them the same characters (always bating the family peculiarities, which are developed more or less in all of them) which you see gliding noiselessly and unobtrusively through the world, taking the least thronged sides of the streets in town, and the sheltered by-ways in the country, rather than encounter the jostling, and the heat, and the dust of life's crowded thoroughfares; there is the lazy man that loves his ease, and the taciturn man, invaluable as a

listener, and the talkative one that runs you into a corner, and transfixes you with a pun, or tortures you with argumentation, and the shy little fellow that is sure to blush if a young lady looks him straight in the face, and to stammer if, upon a sudden pause in general conversation, he unfortunately hears his own voice in solitary distinctness. And so likewise with the lady Slingsbys—the staid sober matron, that pays attention to her dinner, and likes to have her glass filled by a gallant neighbour; and the literary lady, that reads romances; and the notable housewife; and the dear young girls that sing, and play, and talk sentiment, and do worsted work in Berlin patterns, and draw themselves up straight, and throw back their shoulders when mamma looks at them, and flirt innocently—bless their young hearts!—when mamma is *not* looking at them.

Amongst the guests at Christmas, there is one whom I must not omit to notice, for none holds a more honoured place than our worthy parish pastor. He is Saul's domestic chaplain on all occasions, and the friend and counsellor of every Slingsby. He has christened every boy and girl of the present generation. He has ministered consolation by the bed-side of all of those who have passed away, and committed their dust to its kindred dust, where they now sleep in the old churchyard. He has known the trials from which none who live long escape; widowed and childless, he bears his cross with the fidelity of a disciple, and waits his summons with the hope of a Christian.

Nor shall I detail all the good things that passed into our mouths or out of them during dinner. Imagine us, then, the last dish having disappeared, the plum pudding demolished, and the dessert laid on the table, sipping our wine and toying with the fruit in all the languid fastidiousness of sated appetite. If there is one half-hour in the twenty-four more delectable than another, believe me it is the half-hour that succeeds to a good dinner. If "the half-hour before dinner" is proverbially the most *triste* and formidable of the day, the half-hour after dinner is the most delightful. A delicious lassitude steals over the body. The beat of the pulse is full, regular, and tranquil, telling that every function plays smooth and cheerily, with as

little creak or friction as the cranks and pistons of a steam-engine after the engineer has gone round them with his tin oil-kettle, and lubricated the joints and pivots. A pleasant haze rises around the brain, through which every external object is conveyed to the sensorium in *colêur-de-rose*, and every thought is mellowed in the intellect. And surely our after-dinner half-hour was a happy one. Jest and banter went round gleefully; incidents of former merry meetings were remembered with a smile, and the absence of some loved one, a participant of them, was noted with a sigh—aye, and a glistening tear in the eye of a fair sister or cousin. Were the departed spirit watching about us, as I fondly and fully believe, those tears would be to it precious and holy. Then after the ladies retired, we had toasts and sentiments, and all the old-world fashions and gallantries of the good old times. At last some one drank to the health of Uncle Saul, coupled with the name of a once fair belle, to whom he was supposed, according to a tradition in the family, to have paid *almost* particular attentions, now a buxom widow of two defunct husbands, and as many comfortable jointures.

Saul was nearly overpowered with the roar of applause that followed, but he rallied with admirable dexterity. He returned thanks with great good humour for the intended honour, which he modestly declined availing himself of, and proceeded to make a "confession of faith" upon the subject of matrimony, by which he had always been guided. "I hold it," said he, "that where parents have discharged their obligations to the state by rearing up a very large family, some of their progeny may take it easy, and not push population forward too rapidly. Now, in such cases, I think the good old adage of 'first come first served' entitles the eldest child to rely on his privilege of primogeniture, and claim exemption from the cares and responsibilities of married life. Upon this principle I have acted, and I have no reason to complain, nor has society either; for I have vicariously rendered to it all that it could reasonably demand, in the fine family of nieces and nephews around me. (Great applause). Besides, I am somewhat of Sir Boyle Roche's opinion. I don't see what posterity did for me that I should

put myself to any trouble for posterity, who, I am certain, will be very inferior, physically and intellectually, to our ancestors. So convinced am I of the constant deterioration of our species, that I would infinitely prefer, were it in my power, to reproduce my grandfather, and so turn the progress of generation back upon its source, till, becoming better and better each move, we should at last come back to our first parents, who, I have no doubt, would agitate a 'repeal of the fall,' as folks now-a-days do a 'repeal of the union,' and with as fair a chance of success."

Loud plaudits and hearty laughter followed the delivery of Uncle Saul's eccentric oration. After he had sat down, and taken breath for a few moments, he was on his legs again, glass in hand.

"Come, lads," said he, waving the replenished glass, "fill up! As master of the revels, I will give you the charter-toast of the Slingsbys, 'The friends we see around us!'"

We "took the fire" from the old man, and drank as devotedly, if not as uproariously, as any metropolitan club of good-fellows could have done. When silence was resumed, Uncle Saul commenced, as was his wont at every festival, any time these twenty years past, to sing, with such voice as time had left him, what he called his charter-song:—

"THE FRIENDS WE SEE AROUND US.

"Fill high the cup—
Ay, fill it up!
And brothers pledge me truly;
With rosiest wine
E'er pressed from vine
The toast let 's honour duly.
Not woman's smiles,
Nor woman's wiles
We 'll name, though oft they 've bound us
The tried, the true,
The chosen few,
The friends we see around us!

"The stars, they say,
Shine bright all day,
But no one sees them burning;
At fall of night
They show their light,
And glow till morn's returning.

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The cares of life,
Its glare and strife,
By day may still surround us;
At night, how shine,
'Mid mirth and wine,
The friends we see around us.

"The goblet send
From friend to friend,
A chain around us twining,
Whose links are wrought
Of bright-souled thought,
Like diamonds purely shining.
As lightning's fire
Along the wire
In playful flame runs round us,
Shall song and wit
Electric flit
From soul to soul around us.

"The wizard's hand
With magic wand
A mystic circle traces;
And from its line
Each sprite malign
The spell mysterious chases:
So, friends, to-night
A circle bright
Of truth and trust draw round us,
And drive afar
All gloom and care
From those we see around us.

"Love's fitful flame
May fiercely beam,
While young Life feed's its burning,
But ah! its light
Must fade in night,
And leave us dark and mourning,—
For Age's damp
Will dim Love's lamp,
When Time's cold chain has bound us,
But Friendship's truth
Shall outlive Youth
In those we see around us.'"

Uncle Saul's song was as well received as his speech; indeed, we had all from habit learned to praise it, and I doubt if a newer or a better composition would have been as acceptable.

"And now," said our host, seeing that the decanters were no longer circulating, "I think we may as well be moving, as the bottles have ceased to do so. Suppose we go to the ladies?" So we all rose and went to the drawing-room

When we entered the drawing-room we fell in, as people usually do, with those of the other sex, whose ages or tastes suited best with our own. The kind old parson, who never forgot his sacred mission, quickly sought out one of the oldest female Slingsbys extant, whose age and infirmities confined her to the house, and as he listened to the complaints which the poor soul, in the querulousness of old age, confided to his patient ear—now bemoaning her deafness or her rheumatism, now declaring that the cold was intolerable, and the seasons a thousand times more inclement than when she was a little girl—the good man, as was his wont, administered such consolation as the occasion suggested, delivering himself in the formal and somewhat didactic style, which the constant habit of preaching and thoughtful study had made quite natural to him. Upon those occasions, we were all in the habit, as soon as we heard his gentle, solemn tones, to remit the occupations which we chanced to be engaged in, and to collect round the pastor and listen to his 'homily.'

"It is all very true, as you say, my dear Madam; but, after all, is it not wise 'to make the best of everything,' as the good old homely saw advises. Everything," he continued, addressing himself to the auditory now congregated around him, "everything, as one of our old English divines has quaintly observed, has two sides and two handles. Let us always look at the fairest side, and lay hold of the proper handle, and we shall find that there are few objects which will not afford us some advantage or pleasure to contemplate, and few burthens that we cannot bear all the lighter, that we lift them in the right manner. December is not all gloom and desolation and cold without. If the sunshine be not long and sultry, yet it often blinks out cheerily between the cold sleet-showers, or glitters pleasantly on the icicle and the snow-wreath. If the pinching frost and the blustry autumn winds have left the forests leafless and the gardens desolate,

there are yet a few trees and flowers, true old friends, that cheer us on through the winter with the fidelity of genuine affection, looking gaily and lovingly on us till the children of the spring come laughing to us with the sunshine. The crisp, bright holly shows still its pleasant, shining, green leaves; the yew and the pine and the fir are still verdant, and the ivy, evermore green and lovely, that emblem of faithful hearts, clings to the ruined arch, or mantles round the winter-stripped tree, covering its nakedness with loving and reverent piety. And have we not still the rose, that flushes with a sweet and healthy brightness, even while the white snow is lying beneath it? and does not the nightshade flower in the hedges, and the crysanthemum in the parterre? And, above all, have we not this holy Christmastide coming at the very season when it is most welcome? As Almighty Wisdom brought physical illumination out of the night of chaos, and Almighty Love brought spiritual light out of the darkness of sin, so out of the dreariest portion of the year, when days are contracted to their shortest, when the gloom and the fog that dim the heavens weigh down and darken our spirits also, and the frosts that pinch our outward members would creep almost chillingly upon our hearts, then dawns this bright, festive, glorious day, with its solemn, religious glory, its holy charities, its blessed memories, its cheerful institutions, its heart-flowing kindlinesses, its merry meetings, and its mirth. A day whose very anticipation makes the heart glad for days before, and leaves it so through the rest of the dying year, creating, as it were, a twilight of love and joy that precedes and follows it, and dissipates the darkness of sorrow and care. So may it be while the world lasts, and the name of Christ is named each coming year more widely over the regions of the earth!"

"Jonathan," said my uncle Saul, after a pause of a few minutes, "what have you got for us this Christmas in the way of a carol? You must know, my dear Freke, that your godson is the laureate of the family; and I can assure you, between festivals and merry-makings, births, deaths, and marriages, he has no sinecure of it."

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"So, then, you are a poet, Jonathan," said my godfather, in

a bantering tone that had, nevertheless, a little severity in it. "Ah! boy, this comes of your moping by yourself in a solitary house, and spending a lazy life over your books and your pianoforte, as I am told you do, instead of taking to some trade or profession. Well, it's not my fault, Jonathan; I took care that you learned the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments before I went away, as I promised my reverend friend here; but you have been your own master a long time now, and I suppose have followed your own devices."

A host of Slingsby's came to my defence; indeed, nearly all the younger members, and, I am proud to say, there was not a young lady who did not range herself on my side. Uncle Saul, too, having a taste for rhyming himself, stood to me manfully, and my godfather, not being a man much given to verbal contentions, speedily gave way, and was effectively silenced. For myself, I maintained a neutrality, as becomes one who felt the divine mission of the poet, and was determined not to compromise the high position of my order. When peace was re-established I thus delivered myself: —

"My thoughts turned the other night upon the first Christmas carol that the world ever heard, chaunted, not by mortal tongues, but 'by a multitude of the heavenly host,' and I tried to picture to myself the shepherds, as they lay in the dark cold night, on the plains beneath the cliff on which Bethlehem stands, when, 'lo! the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.' Then I could fancy their fear turned into joy at the good tidings of a Saviour's birth, and the rapture that filled their hearts as suddenly the heavenly anthem 'Glory to God in the highest, and peace, good-will towards men' swelled on the night-air, and then came floating down, fainter and fainter still, from on high, as the angelic choir winged their way back to the empyrean, till at last it seemed to their entranced ears like the sweet, dreamy sounds that memory conjures up in a vision. And then I remembered that once before, the minstrelsy of heaven was heard upon earth, at the birth of the first Adam, even as at that of the second, 'When the morning stars sang together

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and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.' But never again shall human ears hear the strains of heaven till that sublime and terrible day when shall be heard the golden harps of angels and the 'new song' of cherubim and elders, borne to the throne of God upon the odorous incense of saintly prayers. I have essayed to fashion these thoughts in verse, which I shall submit to your kind criticism.

THE THREE ANGEL-HYMNS.

I.—THE CREATION.

THERE was a song in Heaven—mystic, sublime—
That filled the universe: the primal song
Whose thunder-tones rolled surgingly along
Through the infinitude of space. What time
The MASTER-HAND in weltering chaos piled
Earth's deep foundations; when th' obedient light
Glowed instant at GOD'S Word, and startled Night
Fled from her ancient throne, and Eden smiled.—
Then sang the morning stars that wond'rous hymn
With awful music like to rushing fires;
And all the sons of God, the angelic choirs,
Shouted for joy. Cherub and Seraphim
Caught up the anthem;—but the words that fell
Upon Creation's ear, no human lips can tell.

II.—THE NATIVITY.

There was a song on Earth,—when she had run
Four thousand courses round her central light,
That poured upon the ravished ear of Night
The holiest strains heard since the world begun.
What time a Light, more pure than of the sun,
Down from the SOURCE OF LIGHT was borne along
On wings of angels, 'midst adoring song;
'Till o'er Death's gloomy realms its radiance shone.
Then sang the hosts of heaven this joyful hymn—
"Glory to God within the Heavens most high—
Peace upon Earth—to mankind amity."
Thus chanting sweet, Cherub and Seraphim
Rose on the midnight air to heaven again,
As soars the morning lark upon his blissful strain.

III.—THE CONSUMMATION.

There shall be yet one other song,—when Time
Is over. Round the Iris-cinctured throne—
Whereon ONE sits like to a jaspar stone
Or sardine,—day and night that hymn sublime

Shall vibrate ceaseless, 'mid the lightning's fire
And thunder-peal. Creatures of awful guise,
Six-wingèd each, and full within of eyes,
Angels and holy elders form that choir.
Then shall they sing a new and wond'rous hymn
Unto the Lord Almighty and the Lamb,
Tuning to golden harps the glorious psalm,
Each casting 'fore the throne his diadem.
"Worthy of honour, glory, power, alone
Art THOU, that wast and art, and shall be, HOLY ONE!"

"Amongst the many good old customs," observed my uncle, "which Christmas brought, there is one which has passed away. For days before its advent, the sounds of music and the voice of minstrels used to be heard upon the night air, playing sweet airs and singing their joyous carols. Right welcome, I wis, were these minstrels at every door. The elder folks would turn themselves round from the blazing fire close by which they were sitting, and stop for a season their interminable old world gossip to listen; the younger people would steal over to the windows, and draw back the curtains, or, if the night were fine, even venture to open a little of the casement; while at the tale of love, the maiden's eye would melt, and her hand would fling down the bright silver piece, the guerdon for the grateful song. Often, too, the youth would slip down to the door, and draw in from the wintry air these sons of song, and treat them delicately, and give them of the best, and hear all their minstrelsy, and then dismiss them with thanks and bounty."

"I think," said I, "Jack Bishop has a song about these same old Christmas waits,—and I'm sure he'll sing it."

Jack was an old college chum of mine, and a man of the world in every sense of the word. He is a prime favourite at all the metropolitan musical soirées and the choice spirit of convivial clubs. In addition to one of the finest voices in the world, which he manages with exquisite taste and skill, he has wonderful dramatic power, an inexhaustible fund of drollery, a fine flow of spirits, and unfailing good humour. I need not say he was a welcome visitant at Castle Slingsby.

"Such a song truly have I," replied Bishop, and you shall have it with all my heart, and thereupon he commenced in a pleasant chanting voice:—

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I.

God give you joy these Christmas times;
Gentles, listen to our rhymes.
Fleecy snow-clouds now are sailing
In the chill and clear moonlight,
And the wintry wind is wailing
To the ear of lonely Night.
Snow drifts on the roofs lie heavy,
Ice-drops glisten from the eaves;
Boughs in autumn that were leafy,
Now are clad with snow-born leaves.
God give you joy these Christmas times;
Gentles, listen to our rhymes.

II.

Hark! from out the ivied steeple
Clangs the jocund peal of bells,
Waves of sound, like billows, ripple
On the night in solemn swells.
See, with merry pipe and tabor,
At your doors we play and sing;
Listen to our grateful labour,
Deign to hear our carolling.
God give you joy these Christmas times;
Gentles, listen to our rhymes.

III.

We have songs of pride and glory
For the ear of lord and knight;
We can sing a true-love story
To the heart of maiden bright.
We have ditties sweetly tender
That will make you pleased, tho' sad;
Deftly we know how to render
Eyes more bright, and hearts more glad.
God give you joy these Christmas times;
Gentles, listen to our rhymes.

IV.

Lusty youth and manhood able,
Matrons gentle, maidens dear,
Crippled age and childhood feeble,
Each and all our carols hear;
At this festive time, to cheer you,
We have culled the sweetest lays;
Kindly call us to come near you,
Yield us largesse, yield us *praise.*
God give you joy these Christmas times;
Gentles, listen to our rhymes.

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"I love these old-world customs and ceremonies still," said the parson, "with the same fondness that I felt for them in my childish days, and I cannot help lamenting that they have all nigh passed away. We are wiser beyond our fathers, doubtless, in this age of mighty revelation of the power of man over physical nature; but are we better? Have we not lost something amidst this constant acquisition—something which we cast from us as a useless burden impeding our rapid progress, but which we may yet find we would have done well to have borne with us in our journey, even to the grave—things that kept our hearts childlike, our affections warm, our souls pure and fresh. I sometimes think that the influence of science and civilization upon our natures is not unalloyedly good. It reminds me of those beautiful pictures which men transfer to stone by encaustic colours. Every rich flower, and bright sunshine, and every lovely landscape which we admire, have burned away the surface that receives them. Ah! May it not be, that the accomplishments, and the illumination, and the knowledge which this wonderful age has brought us, has seared our hearts and cauterized our feelings, and destroyed the smoothness and the tenderness of both in the very process of acquiring them?"

"By no means, my dear Parson; by no means," cried my godfather. "Elevate the soul and enlarge the mind, and, take my word for it, the heart will participate in the improvement. There is nothing like the go-a-head system of the day. Telegraphs that will start with the lightning, run round it in the race, and be in first at the winning-post—tubes and tunnels that leap across straits of the ocean or burrow under mighty rivers—telescopes that poke their noses, or their eyes, into the parlours of the men in the moon, and show us what they have for dinner, and air-ships that will shortly take us to dine with them! That's what I call getting up the steam of human nature, and making the old lass go along at a slapping pace. Aint it?"

"Bravo! Freke," said Uncle Saul.

"Bravo!" cried I; "all sober prose and *no poetry*."

"Bravissimo!" shouted half a dozen applauding voices.

The parson smiled blandly but somewhat sadly, shook his

head, and was silent. My godfather had evidently routed his forces and made sad havoc of his old fashioned philosophy; but one might see the old man clung to his own notions still.

"Well," said he at length. "Be it so. Knowledge is the birthright of man since first he purchased it with the sacrifice of his obedience, and he will go on for ever plucking more and more fruit from the tree. Happy, if the food which he feeds upon so eagerly does not yet vitiate his palate. Yet may it not be allowed an old man like me to say a word in favour of those dear old customs which were the best promoters of the domestic charities of life—those charities which sanctify our hearths, and at seasons like the present especially solicit us to cherish them. They come to us, as the angels came to Abraham when he sat in the tent door. Ah! let us, like him, 'run to meet them,' and constrain them that 'they pass not away;' let us honour them and entertain them with the best cheer that we have, that so they may bring to us and to our household, love, and joy, and peace.."

THOUGHTS ON THE OLD YEAR.

CHRISTMAS is gone! Gone is the glory of plum-pudding; and mince-pies maintain but a precarious and tolerated existence. Garlands have come down, and the wassail-bowl is *gone* down, —the way all good bowls ought to go; while the holly and the ivy are turning crisp, and curl up into wry shapes. Christmas is gone: but the fond hearts that this sacred season has brought together part not thus soon again. Ah, no! they have not for this left their distant homes, disentangled themselves from their world-born cares, and come clustering once more around the hallowed hearths of childhood, that they may rush back into the bustle and coil of life, and seal up again the sweet springs of affection that welled forth from their hearts, touched by the wand of Love, as the living streams gushed from the rock at Meribah, beneath the rod of the law-giver of

Israel. In the remote regions of the country, the spirit of primitive hospitality is, thank heaven! too potent for such a rapid disruption of the social union; and the friends who assemble at Christmas are sure to see the waning year to an end in each other's company, and let the new year dawn upon and sanctify their friendship. Well, then, you may be sure Uncle Saul's mansion is thronged: every chamber has its inhabitant, as every cell in a hive has its particular bee. Each one, during the day, does as he likes, or, if he likes, does nothing at all. There is a greyhound for the hills, if you love coursing; or a rod for the streams, if you are an angler or a day-dreamer. Old Jonathan Freke will join you in a cigar, or rather half-a-dozen of them, and talk transatlantic politics. My uncle will stroll with you through the now leafless woodlands. Will you read? There is a book in the study; but be sure you replace it when you are done. Naomi will sing for you in the drawing-room, Abigail will canter with you on the sward, and all the girls, God bless them! will talk with you by the hour, anywhere and everywhere! Thus, by day each is master of his own time, and may form such combinations as his fancy dictates; but in the evening, when the chairs are drawn nearer around the fire, and the log burns its brightest, then we are all common property, and each contributes his share to the general stock of pleasure and good humour. Such is the way in which we spend our Christmas holidays in the country.

And who, pray, are Naomi and Abigail?

Oh, they are daughters of my deceased uncle, Sampson, and they have just returned from town, where their education has received the last finish which young ladies are thought capable of acquiring. They draw and execute all sorts of useless and ornamental needlework. They dance all sorts of modern dances, the revolving waltz, the hopping *deux temps*, the ambling polka, and the impetuous galop. They are musicians in every sense of the word, from their sweet ripe lips *jusques au bout des doigts*,—that is, they will give you all manner of charming airs, and give themselves almost as many at the same time, whether they be delighting you with vocal or instrumental performance. And yet the city has not quite spoiled them. Its air has not

altogether blenched the roses on their cheeks, nor its affectations destroyed the simplicity of their hearts. So that Naomi has not lost all her romance, nor Abigail learned to restrain entirely all her native vivacity. There is now our friend George Herbert, for instance, who will have it that Naomi is just what she ought to be,—neither too much of a city *belle* or a country maiden. Well, may be he is right. George has himself been travelling through all parts of the Continent east of Calais, and has acquired Gallic and Germanesque tastes,—wears a red casquette, with a long black tassel, on his head, two thick rings on the middle finger of his left hand, and a moustache on his upper lip,—and he has paid his first visit, on his return to his own country, to his father's old friend, Uncle Saul.

Last evening, we were all circling the old-fashioned fireplace in the drawing-room. The conversation paused for a moment, and somehow a feeling of momentary sadness seemed to creep in amongst us. I know not to what I should attribute this, unless to the announcement which my friend Herbert and myself had just made, that we should leave "the Castle" next day. A gentle sigh from a young lady that shall be nameless, responded to by an expiration from Herbert, which he adroitly strangled by a cough, tended not a little to confirm my suspicions.

"Well," said Uncle Saul, at last, "if you must go, there is no help for it; but you will be back soon. We shall meet by New Year's Day, at farthest."

"Most assuredly," said I. "Eh, Herbert?"

My friend assented emphatically. A deep, long sigh attracted general attention to the pastor; he was slowly coiling his heavy watch-chain with the left hand round the fore-finger of the right one. We all knew the old man's habits, and were aware he was ruminating, and would shortly "come out with a homily," as Saul phrases it,—and so we at once assumed the attitude of reverent attention.

"We shall meet by New Year's Day at farthest," said the old man, repeating the words, half in musing, and half in observation to those around him. "How many, in all ages, have so spoken upon whom no New Year's morn ever dawned

again! How many who have begun the year in joy and health and hope, who have assured their hearts that it shall be as those that went before it, and even 'more abundant,' have found it a treasury of sorrows and trials—its sunshine overcast with cloud and tempest—its flowers of hope withered and dead—its fairest promises the forerunners of life's heaviest dispensations! Yes, let us pause a little, and think upon the year that is now passing away, ere we rejoice in the prospect of that which is so nigh at hand. Look in upon the homes of your dearest friends *now*, and count the chairs that were drawn around that most blessed sanctuary of sweet affections,—the evening fireside,—on last New Year's Day. Are any of them now untenanted—standing lonely against the wall? Father! is thy honoured form absent? Mother! does thy sweet face of love beam still upon us? Children! are ye all—all there, smiling and prattling, and shedding light upon our hearts, like star-beams in a serene midnight? Alas! alas! it may not be—some one is gone—and we moisten even our festive bread with tears as we think upon the departed. At whose threshold has not Azrael stood within these short twelve months? whose house has he not entered? Many a one, erect in strength and high in hope when the year was young, is now bowed down in sickness and shattered in his fortunes, whose light of life flickers and burns lower hourly, and will scarce struggle through the few days of this old year that still remain. And then, too, what opportunities have been lost, what blessings unvalued, what monitions unheeded, what lessons of God's own teaching unread! Ah, let us think of all this when we welcome in the new year, and our gratulations shall be tempered with a profound sense of the responsibilities which this recurring cycle of time brings with it."

"You speak truly, my dear old friend," said Saul. "It should be in no spirit of unreflecting gaiety that we should see the old year out, or of heedless festivity that we should usher the new year in: but still it is permitted us to look forward to it with joy as one period more added to that gift of long life which the instincts of our own being, as well as the Word of our Creator, assures us is a blessing."

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"Ay," said the pastor, "it is one talent more given to us to be laid up in the napkin, or to gain other talents. Let us take heed how we use it, for we shall have to account when 'the Lord cometh and reckoneth' with us. The recurrence of a new year is in this, too, a subject of thanks and rejoicing, that it enables us, as it were, to balance the account with the inexorable past, and to bring over into the new leaf the debts against us which would otherwise remain undischarged for ever. We have thus an opportunity afforded us of improving the future by the experience of the past, of setting the advances which we shall make during the new year against the shortcomings of the old one, and cancelling, by God's help, the debt that was marked against us. If we shall not thus use the years that are vouchsafed to us, we shall have occupied our allotted space of time in vain, or worse than in vain, though we may count our fourscore years and ten; and we may say with Simonides, when asked to what time of life he had arrived —'I have lived a very short time, though a great many years.'"

A thoughtful silence of a few moments succeeded the parson's "homily." The spell was broken by Herbert.

"Pray, Miss Naomi, will you let me hear that song which I saw upon the pianoforte this morning, after you had gone to put on your shawl for a walk?"

"Indeed," said the girl, with the faintest blush in the world, "I sing it shockingly. I have n't half learned it yet."

"'Fie, Naomi! you know you practised it for a whole hour after breakfast, and you sung it like a—like a"——My godfather's American hyperboles did not at the instant furnish him with an adequate simile for a young lady's singing; so he finished with what came first to hand—"like a flash of lightning."

Poor Naomi's blush deepened; and, for very safety, she sought the instrument, and began to sing the song:—

"MEMORY.

"Soft as rays of sunlight stealing
On the dying day;
Sweet, as chimes of low bells pealing,
When eve fades away;

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Sad as winds at night that moan
Through the heath o'er mountains lone,
Come the thoughts of days now gone
On manhood's memory.

"As the sunbeams from the heaven
Hide at eve their light;
As the bells, when fades the even,
Peal not on the night;
As the night winds cease to sigh
When the rain falls from the sky,
Pass the thoughts of days gone by
From age's memory.

"Yet the sunlight in the morning
Forth again shall break,
And the bells give sweet-voiced warning
To the world to wake.
Soon the winds shall freshly breathe
O'er the mountains purple heath;
But the Past is lost in Death—
He hath no memory."

"Heigho!" said Herbert, "what a chequered region is memory! One enters its shadowy portals with a solemn fear lest the departed things with which he is about to hold converse may sadden more than they will rejoice his spirit; lest remorse and sorrow, rather than complacency or pleasure, shall be the companions of his wanderings through these visionary domains."

"It depends altogether," said Bishop, "upon the furniture which you have laid up during the past years in the old curiosity shop."

"Not altogether," said the parson. "As a mirror reverses the position of objects, so memory often reverses pleasure and pain. That which in the fruition gave us joy, brings sadness with it when reproduced by memory. And so the recollection of past affliction is often sweet and sanctifying. 'Jucunda et suavis est præteritorum malorum.'"

The parson was a scholar, and fond of his classics, so that now and then he indulged in a line from the poets or the moral philosophers, even in the presence of ladies.

We broke up shortly after. And as Herbert and I were to leave at an early hour in the morning, we took our leave before

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retiring. We shook hands cordially with all friends; and I thought, but it might be only fancy, that Herbert's farewell of one young lady was wonderfully tender for an absence of a few days.



THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Herbert contrived to despatch his business more speedily than I expected, and we were once again at Castle Slingsby before the end of the month.

Upon the last evening of the old year. The tea things were removed. The deaf old lady was wheeled into a snug corner near the fire-place. Naomi stept quietly from the table where she had been "officiating," as the phrase goes, and sat down on the ottoman, not so retired, however, that the wide-awake eyes of my Aunt Sampson, as we call her, had any difficulty in observing the approach of Herbert, who seated himself beside her. My godfather had just entered the room, for he despises tea, and by the ambrosial odours that exhaled around him, it was manifest he had been indulging in the more masculine refection of varinas or kanaster. Uncle Saul was sitting right opposite the fire, in the very centre of the new hearth rug—a feat that a bachelor alone dare perform, and that, too, only in his own house. There he sat, his legs stretched out close together at their full length, so that his heels rested on the fender, and his person on the extremity of the chair; his left hand supported the elbow of his right arm, which was elevated so as to enable him to screen his face from the fire with his right hand, and in that position he seemed to be enjoying as much bodily ease, combined with as little mental exertion, as contrived just to keep him from falling asleep, and enabled him to justify himself, to any one who ventured to hint that he was comatose, upon the plea that he was "thinking." And where was Abigail? Ah, I declare, there she is standing before the worthy old parson, looking as demure and sly as a young nun, her downcast eyes raised now and then quickly to the gentle face

of the old man, who is evidently trying to lecture her for some escapade, with an expression of mock humility and humorous contrition, that no one but an old man could resist. A joyous burst of laughter from the girl, who can hold out no longer, sends the doctor's sermon to the winds, and wakes up my Uncle from his meditations.

"Bless my heart!" said he, "how time flies. Here I have been musing this half hour (worthy soul, he was twice that time at it,) and the night is slipping over our heads. Wonderful."

"Wonderful, indeed," said the parson, stepping a little forward, and taking up the subject for instruction.

"Wonderful—wonderful, indeed. And while we are thus employed, time moves silently on, and a new year will soon surprise us. Yet nothing in the material world around us gives warning when one more cycle is completed. Smooth and silently the orbs move ever in their pathways; the earth, as she swings round, emerges from the old year and enters the new without a hitch; not a click in the mighty machinery by which old Time registers his transits, tells that the great wheel has gone round once again; the stream flows evenly over the boundary without murmur or ripple; one wave more of the great ocean rolls in upon the shore of eternity, sinking as noiselessly upon it as the swell of the tide subsides upon the velvet sands of some sheltered bay. Ah! how awful is this stealthy pace of Time—a thousand fold more awful than if he entered upon each new stage with a sound or a shock that, like a trumpet-blast, would wake us, or, as an earthquake, make us start to our feet. If the wheel, when its revolution was completed, sent forth its sound to the ends of the earth, if the stream fell over the ledge down—down with the thundering roar of a cataract, if the billow broke upon the shore with the boom of mighty waters, then, indeed, it might be 'that men would number their days, and apply their hearts to wisdom.'"

"My dear Doctor," said my godfather, "I beseech you spare our nerves. Is this the way you mean to wish us a merry new year? Why, you will have us howling and weeping at the birth of the babe, like the ancient Egyptians."

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"Ah, my dear sir, you must not forget that we have first to lay our old friend in the grave."

"Yes," said Bishop, in a dramatic voice, and throwing himself into a theatrical *pose*—

"'Yes, the year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared!
Death with frosty hand and cold,
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely, sorely.'"

"Do you remember Tennyson's 'Death of the Old Year?'" said Herbert. "It is full of a racy and joyous spirit that pleases me well:—

"'He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er;
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste;
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own.
The night is stormy and cold, my friend,
And the New Year blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.'"

"Better still to my thinking," said I, "is Longfellow's 'Midnight Mass for the Dying Year?' Listen to a verse or two:—

"'Through woods and mountain passes
The winds like anthems roll,
They are chanting solemn masses,
Singing, 'Pray for this poor soul,
Pray—pray.'

"'And the hooded clouds, like friars,
Tell their beads in drops of rain,
And patter their doleful prayers;
But their prayers are all in vain—
All in vain.'"

"There's a Yankee for you!" said my godfather, proudly. "I tell you the Americans are great people. In everything that advances civilization and adorns life they are behind no nation in the world. It always 'raises my dander' to hear one of the old country abuse them."

"They are all you say," said Uncle Saul, "though they

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have their faults; and what nation has not? These mainly arise from their anomalous position—an old people transplanted into a new soil. While they have imported the knowledge and civilization of the parent country, their physical condition has forced them to reject many of our social institutions and feelings, which, while they give stability and dignity to a nation that has reached its climacteric, tend, it must be confessed, to cramp the energies and impede the action of a country whose great object is still progress. But this will be all rectified in good time!"

"Do you know, Saul, they are not unlike the large ash trees that I saw you transplanting the other day into the hedge-rows. Trimmed and pollarded up pretty bare in the branches; not much grace or ornament about them just now, and looking tarnation queerish; but wait for a year or two, till they fix themselves firmly in the soil, and get comfortable and used to it, and then you will see how they'll shoot out and go-a-head like a flash of lightning."

My godfather's eulogy was received with a hearty cheer and a laugh.

"Bravo, friend," said Uncle Saul, "you are half Yankee yourself. I long to get amongst this fine people, and I hope the time is not far distant when we shall think as little of a trip to New York as we did in my young days of a trip to London. But come, nephew Jonathan, you are the first on the list to-night for a contribution."

"Here I am, Uncle, all ready.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

I.

"The light of day
Has passed away,
And midnight's hour draws near;
When next the light
Shall break on night,
'Twill bring us the New Year.
The New Year—the New Year,
Welcome be the New Year—
With pealing chimes,
And merry rhymes,
Let's welcome in the New Year.

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II.

" Ah me! it seems
Like last night's dreams,
That, gathering gaily here,
With laughter light,
We passed the night
That brought in this Old Year.
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Farewell unto the Old Year—
Check laugh and smile,
We'll chant the while,
The requiem of the Old Year.

III.

" Now rest in peace!
No more thy face
Shall shine amongst us here.
Thou'st wrought thy fill
Of good and ill;
God give thee rest, Old Year!
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Place him on his cold bier.
Thy deeds are done,
Thy race is run,
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

IV.

" 'Thou little child,
So gay and wild,
A moment draw thou near.
Say art thou glad,
Or art thou sad,
To lose the poor Old Year?'
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Place him on his cold bier:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

V.

" 'From morn till night,
My heart was light,
And smiles dried up each tear.
But let him go—
I hope to know
Full many as gay a year.'

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The Old Year—the Old Year,
He was a gay and bold Year:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

VI.

"'Come to my side,
Thou fair young bride,
From thee I fain would hear,
If thou art glad,
Or if thou'rt sad,
To lose the poor Old Year?'
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Lay him on his cold bier:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

VII.

"'The Old Year brought
A chequered lot,
But still I loved him dear—
With all its pain
I'd live again
The days of this Old Year.
The Old Year—the Old Year,
I'll drop o'er him the cold tear:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

VIII.

"'A joyful bride
I stood beside
A man who loves me dear;
But ah! I mourn
A father torn
From me by this Old Year.
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Place him on his cold bier:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

IX.

"'Yet will I greet
With welcome sweet

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The morn that now is near;
I hope to claim
A mother's name,
In time, from thee, New Year.'
The Old Year—the Old Year,
All thy days are told, Year:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

X.

"'Thou reverend sage
Of ripe old age,
Thy words I now would hear;
Say, art thou glad,
Or art thou sad
To lose the poor Old Year?'
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Place him on his cold bier:
Toll the bell,
Ring his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

XI.

"'Ah! one by one
The year that's gone
Took all I loved most dear,
And now I wait
In hope my fate,
To die like this Old Year.
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Shed o'er him the cold tear:
Toll the bell,
Ring the knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

XII.

"'Thus, day by day,
'Mid graves I stray,
While still I linger here;
Each year that's past
I deem my last,
Yet welcome each New Year.
The Old Year—the Old Year,
Place him on his cold bier:
Ring the bell,
Toll his knell;—
God give thee rest, thou Old Year.

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XIII.

"'Long life is given,
A boon from heaven,
We've work to do while here;
And there's a voice
That cries 'Rejoice,
Bless God for each New Year!'
The New Year—the New Year!
All hail unto the New Year!
With pealing chimes
And merry rhymes,
Let's welcome in the New Year!'"

It does not become me to say how well my ode was received. Kind friends are rarely good critics; and you may be sure the failings in my composition were dealt with very tenderly, while its merits had more than their deserts of praise.

"Mr. Herbert," said Uncle Saul, "I hear you are a great admirer of everything German; I am sure you can give us a German song. Naomi tells me you have brought home a trunk full of German music, and prints, and books, and I know not what else."

"I am certainly rather Germanesque in my tastes, sir," said Herbert, stroking his chin, upon which was sprouting one of that sort of stubble beards which, with a certain class of young gentlemen, is becoming fashionable; as if appealing to that ornament to verify the truth of his observations. "They are great thinkers, and they express their thoughts with force and originality in every mode in which thought can be expressed—by the rhythm of sounds and words, by the pencil and the pen. What music can surpass that of Mendelssohn or Spohr? what poetry that of Göethe or Schiller? What sketches can approach Retzch's in vigour, truth, and conception? Mere outlines,—yet more forcible than the most elaborate finish of light and shade, they have all the effect of sculpture; they are statues in the flat."

"And their divinity," said the parson, "pray, what can you say for that?"

"I can't say much, sir, in favour of those who would reduce Christianity to a system of myths; but I can assure you they write some capital novels and romances."

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"No doubt," said the parson; "I should expect as much from the samples of their divinity I have met with."

"Well, sir," said Herbert," I will enable you to judge for yourself, if it be agreeable to all our good friends here, through the medium of my indifferent translation of a little tale that is appropriate to the present season, and has not, I believe, as yet found its way into England."

The proposition was assented to by acclamation, and Herbert, after a moment's absence, returned with a small manuscript, from which he read as follows:—

THE BELLS OF ST. BRUNO.

There never was a colder night known within the memory of the oldest man in Suabia than the night of the 31st of December 17—. The snow lay thick in the little valley of St. Bruno, and the frost had set in with unusual severity. The goatherds had all come down from the lowest chalets on the mountain sides, and thronged the village, and not a soul that had a grain of common sense showed his nose out of doors since sunset. It had gone one quarter past eleven by the old church clock, when a sharp, impatient knock at the door of the little "Bierhaus," dignified by the name of "Die drei Engel," as might be seen by the sign of the three angels over the door, kept by old Caspar Schwemmen, made that worthy start from the chair in which he was dozing before the fire, and attend to the summons.

"In heaven's name, gossip Caspar, open your door and let me in."

"What! is that you, neighbour Hans Klingel? You must have pressing need to be out such a night as this: the bears and wolves will hardly leave their dens this weather."

"Pressing need," grumbled the little old man, as he stepped in and sat down by the fire. "Ay, pressing need, truly. Do you forget that to-morrow will be New Year's Day? and don't you know that I am the bell-ringer of St. Bruno's, and that I must peal the chimes at midnight to rouse honest folks from their sleep; and get the ague, and the rheumatism, and be frost-bitten to boot in the bell-tower. Marry! if I don't, the township will stop my salary, I'll warrant them."

"Faith," said the vintner, "I think they would; and hang thee out of the steeple, moreover, if thou should'st be guilty of such a crime as to let the new year steal in upon us without the welcome of a merry chime."

"Ay, hang me. A dog's life is sure to find a dog's death at last. But, I say, Caspar, let us have a tankard of thy strongest, gossip. My old bones are so stiff with cold, that I have hobbled across the way just to thaw them at thy rousing fire, while we toss off a pot or two, and talk over old times."

Hans, or as he was more generally called, Hännschen, was, if the truth must be told, an old toper, and as fond of his flagon as any one in the village, with one exception, and that was mine host of "The Three Angels;" and the two old men had been toping it together I know not how many years. It is wonderful how difficult it is to please thirsty people in the matter of the weather. It is always too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry for them; and accordingly they have to be cooled or heated, dried or moistened, as sure as the sun rises in the heavens; and all this is done by the aid of the tankard. Now, as I said, this was a terribly cold night, and the two old fellows stood in need of an unusual amount of caloric: so they sat down right heartily, and they mulled their ale, and they smoked their pipes, and they made themselves as happy as they could by grumbling at their own lot and envying their neighbours.

"I tell thee again, Caspar," said Hännschen, "I lead a dog's life; day and night digging in damp graves and ringing of bells; exposed to all sorts of weather—ah! the weather is not now what it was when we were boys—broiled and baked in summer, and drowned and frozen in winter. But the worst of all is ringing these chimes at Easter, and Christmas, and New Year's Day, and I know not what other days. If a lord is married, or a lady bear a little one, why I get a thaler or two for a merry peal, and even the poorer folks will not forget to give me a florin for a toll or two at their wedding; but I have not a kreutzer for all this holyday work, you see, and so I have no love for it."

"You say true, neighbour," said Caspar, "so far as the matter of love; but the chimes go in your year's work, and you

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have your salary. If it is small, it is certain: you are not like me, depending on chance custom. Ah! Hans, people are changing, and not for the better either, and if things don't mend, I must shut my door and take down my angels."

The old fellows talked and sipped away, and time passed on unheeded, till they were in a state, it must be confessed, not very becoming either a Christian vintner, under the protection of angels, or a reverend bell-ringer on the eve of a great festival. At last the clock chimed out in the silence of the frosty night, and Hännschen rose up in trepidation.

"Holy angels!" said he, somewhat confusedly, "how many quarters chimed, Caspar?"

"Well, I didn't count them, Hännschen, but I think only two,"

"Nay, I'll be swore it was four."

"Thou'rt drunk, man, and see'st double," said the vintner, laughing sottishly.

But Caspar had toddled off with what speed he might, and was soon at the tower hard by, where he fumbled at the lock with the key, and at length let himself in. By the time he had struck a light, he found that it still wanted near a quarter of midnight; so he sat down at the bench in the porch with the intention of resting a moment, and then returning to finish his stoup. But the rapid exercise and the night air had their usual effect, and he was in a state that might be pronounced ——. Well, well, all men have their failings, and the less we say about Hännschen's state the better. He began to think, if not with great precision, at least with great assiduity, and even attempted a prayer, or a hymn, or a drinking-song; he was not sure which, for he had a great stock of each sort, and he was, moreover, a poet in a small way himself. By degrees things seemed to change around him, and he found himself somehow before the great clock above in the belfry, with its big white face staring upon him, as it was lit up by the moonlight. There were to be seen the twelve Apostles in their niches, who came out to strike the hours daily, and above them all was the image of their Master. And Hännschen stared at the clock-face in turn with all his might, till at length the figures seemed to

fidget, and shift, and change beneath his gaze, as if he were putting the saints out of countenance. While he was yet staring, the tongue of the clock-bell swung, and swayed to and fro within the great mouth of the bell, and, hark! crash went the first stroke of midnight. Then one of the figures stepped forth from its niche and stood before the image which was above; and when Hännschen looked up at the image, behold it was altogether changed. The halo that encircled its head was enlarged till it became a mighty ring encircling the whole figure, and upon it were inscribed, in letters of fire, the word

"Ewigkeit."*

And the figure that stepped forth from the niche bowed down before the other, and Hännschen heard them speak thus:—

First Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the first month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell, and my brethren await thy call."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

First Spirit. "From the hands of thy servant, Time, in the darkness of the night, received I the young year. I wrapped him in my snow-wreath till the morning light broke on the world, and then I showed him to men, and they sang with joy when they saw his face: and I told him of his appointed work —how he was to raise up and hurl down nations; to slay with the pestilence and famine; to save souls and to destroy them; to teach men to cope with angels in knowledge and power; to career amid the clouds upon the wings of the winds; to bid the fleet lightnings do their errands, and the light of heaven paint the hues and images of all visible things for them: and I watched as he grew and strengthened and wrought his work, and then I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the first Spirit passed away back into its place, and, lo! the second stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity, and again Hännschen heard voices, and they spake thus:—

* Eternity.

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Second Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the second month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Second Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. I melted away the ice that crippled his young limbs, and I bathed him with rains. I filled for him the deep rivers, and I made the springs to gush forth, and the streams to rush down a thousand hills. For him I prepared the earth's bosom for the goodly seeds, and I told him of his appointed work to prepare the heart of man for its seed likewise, and he grew, and increased, and wrought his work, and then I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity.—"Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the second Spirit passed away back into its place, and, lo! the third stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Third Spirit.—"I am the Spirit of the third month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity.—"Render thy account."

Third Spirit.—"From the hands of my brother received I the year. I dried up for him the moistened ground. I opened the earth's bosom, and I placed therein the seed, the corn, and the pulse. I planted the vine and the olive, and I covered it in again, and I told him of his appointed work, how he should watch over the seed sown in the heart of man wherein were the issues of life; and I gladdened him with early flowers, the primrose, the daisy, and the violet; and I brought out the young lambs to sport in the fields, and the small fish to throng the rivers; and I gave him the song of the throstle and the hum of the bee; and in hope and joy I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast done well. Go hence and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the third spirit passed away back into its place, and, lo! the fourth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came

another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Fourth Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the fourth month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Fourth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. I warmed him with sunshine. I refreshed him with showers. I fanned him with the fresh breezes. I flung the light clouds around him. I made the seeds and the tender plants germinate and swell before him, and the green herbage spring up beneath his feet, and I spoke to him of the showers of divine grace, and the sunshine of divine love, that quicken and increase the good seed in the heart of man. I bid the cuckoo sing to him from the trees, and the lark from the heavens, and he waxed strong and vigorous and lovely, and so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast done well. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the fourth Spirit passed away back into its place, and, lo! the fifth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another form from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Fifth Spirit. "I am the spirit of the fifth month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Fifth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. I called forth young men and maidens to give him welcome. I crowned him with flowers. I cheered him with the carols of a thousand birds. With the sound of the pipe and the tabor I led him to the dance where the beech spread out its sheltering arms, and the thick-leaved mulberry flung the perfume of its white flowers on the evening air. I gave him bright days and balmy nights. I breathed around him and in him the divine essence of love and joy. And I told him of his appointed work, to speak to man of a love and joy diviner still; and so I left him to my brother."

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Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast done well. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the fifth Spirit passed away back into its place; and lo! the sixth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Sixth Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the sixth month of the year that thou hast given to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Sixth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. I made the buds swell and burst for him on the trees. I bid them put forth their many-coloured blossoms, and caused the green leaves to deepen in the forest. I made the long day ring with melody, and the blue heavens beam with sunlight. I waked the joyous songs of young maids and their lovers, as they spread the fragrant hay where the heated mower whetted his scythe in the deep thick meadow. I loaded the air with odours by day, and with silver dew by night, and for him I made the tender blade to shoot upwards, and spread its green mantle over the earth. And I told him to show forth His praise of whose glory the heavens and earth are full; and so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the sixth Spirit passed away back into its place; and lo! the seventh stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Seventh Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the seventh month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Seventh Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. For him I sent cool winds to wander at hot noon over the waving corn, and to shake the thick-leaved woods. I fed him with the early fruit of the apple and the golden honey of the toilful bee. For him I made the grain swell, and bow its yellow head, and ripen to the harvest, and I filled the grape

with juice, and painted it purple and amber. I made the meteor flash by night. For him I made the lovely earth teem with life and beauty, and the waves of the ocean glow in the sunlight; and shimmer in their silvery sleep, when the moon smiled down upon them; and I made the heavens flush with gold and crimson, as the sun rose and sank in their illimitable expanse; and I told him of the wisdom and love of Him whose minister I was; and so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the seventh Spirit passed away back into its place; and lo! the eighth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Eighth Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the eighth month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Eighth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. I sustained his full-grown and lusty life with all the rich, ripe fruits of the teeming earth, the luscious fig, the juicy grape, the ruddy apple and the mellow pear. I made glad his heart with wine, and with corn and oil I satisfied him. For him the maiden sang, as she followed the reaper's steps, and bound up the heavy-headed sheaves, or danced with the toil-freed swain in the moonlight. I gave him cooling brooks and shady bowers; and I told him how that as man sows and plants in anxious hope, so should he reap and gather in thankful joy. I bade him make known to man the goodness and the bounty of Him who holdeth the earth in the hollow of his hand; but I showed him too the snow bursting from its chains on the mountains, and the avalanche thundering down into the valleys, slaying and laying waste, that men might learn His terrible power. And so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the eighth Spirit passed away back into its place; and lo! the ninth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came

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another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Ninth Spirit. "I am the Spirit of the ninth month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity.—"Render thy account."

Ninth Spirit.—"From the hands of my brother received I the year; and I, too, tended him, but with a shortened hand and more frugal gift, for the latter fruits of the earth alone are mine. And the splendour of the heavens was passing away, and the beauty of the fair earth was beginning to fade. To admonish him, I withered the flowers. I stripped the trees of their beauty. I sent away the cuckoo and the swallow, and I hushed the wild song of the skylark. I tempered the heat of the sunbeams, and the breeze crept with a mournful sigh through the changing leaves, And I told him that life was on the decline and how man should, out of the abundance of his prime, make provision for the wants of his old age. And so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity.—"Thou has well done, Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the ninth spirit passed away back to its place, and lo! the tenth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Tenth Spirit. "I am the spirit of the tenth month of the year that thou hast given to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account,"

Tenth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the year. He was yet hale and strong, but the beauty of his prime was waning, and the flush of his brown cheek was growing pale. Then told I him how all should fade and pass away. I bade him watch the many-coloured tints of the seared foliage, brown, and umber, and scarlet, and orange; the shrivelled berry; the leaf bitten by the frost, and scattered by the chill and gusty wind; and to learn his own fate, and that of all creation. I sent chill mists at morn and evening, and grey

clouds by day, and white hoar frosts by night; and I left him, saddened and thoughtful, to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast done well. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the tenth spirit passed away back to its place, and lo! the elventh stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Eleventh Spirit. "I am the spirit of the eleventh month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

Eleventh Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the declining year, and I preached to him the vanity of all things. How nature puts off her garb of beauty ere she lies down to take her rest. I bared the branches of every tree, and stripped the elm of its vine-trellis. I stilled the tongue of every bird. I hushed the chirp of every grasshopper; and I sent the mole and the dormouse to their slumber within the earth. I brought gloom by day, and deep darkness by night; the yellow fog, and the sickly vapour. I drove the black clouds scudding through heaven, blotching out the pleasant light of the sun. I poured out the sheeted rain and the howling storm. I swelled the rivers, and made the sea heave in white billows beneath the tempest. And I told him, such is life when its pleasures are past; and I said, happy are they who can turn from the gloom without them to the sunshine within. And so I left him to my brother."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

Then the eleventh spirit passed away back to its place, and lo! the twelfth stroke of midnight rang out, and forth came another figure from its niche, and bowed before the Spirit of Eternity.

Twelfth Spirit. "I am the spirit of the twelfth month of the year that thou gavest to man. Lo! I am here at the summons of the bell."

Spirit of Eternity. "Render thy account."

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Twelfth Spirit. "From the hands of my brother received I the aged year. I laid my cold, cold hand upon him, and enfeebled him. I shortened his days, and made his nights long and dreary. I made the blood flow sluggish and chill through his veins. Black frost, driven by the north-east wind, pierced his frame. I sheeted the earth with snow beneath his feet, and glassed over with ice the deep rivers. I quenched the sun's fire with the sleet shower, and made the stars glitter cold in the frosty night. And I told him, such is the end of all; blessed is he who is prepared for it. Then I sent the chill of death into his heart, and he is dying, dying; behold, now he falls into the arms of thy servant Time. In the darkness of night my eldest brother received him in his young life; in the darkness of night I render him back whence he came, old and dead—gone, gone for ever."

Spirit of Eternity. "Thou hast well done. Go hence, and write it in the Book of Life."

And the twelfth spirit passed away as the rest; and then the form of an old, old man, bowed down and tottering, stood in the presence of the Spirit of Eternity, and said:

"I am thy servant, TIME. What wilt thou?"

Spirit of Eternity. "Bear hence the old year, and place him with the years that have gone before, that when all shall be made alive again he may bear witness among the accusing spirits when thou thyself shalt be no more."

Then the Spirit of Eternity looked upwards into the deep immense of the night-sky, and his serene eyes were filled with ineffable splendour, and he reverently asked, "Is the end of all things come? Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

Then was heard a voice, sweet as the plash of waters on the golden sands at eventide, and soft as the rustling of the heavens when the Boreal lights spread their pale coruscations through the sky at midnight, and it came gliding down, down from the empyrean heights, till it fell on the ear as the dew falls on the flower, and the voice said,—

"Not yet—not yet. I will not yet arise to shake terribly the earth!"

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And the Spirit of Eternity bowed down his ambrosial

head in submissive worship, and said, "Even so, Lord; be it unto me according to thy word;" and he turned to TIME and said, "Proceed on thy way." And he stretched for his hands and waved them slowly around, and said to the earth and to the heavens, "Vorwärts!" And behold, there was heard low solemn music, like to that which the wind makes when its wings sweep over thin plates of metal, and set them trembling, and the roll of mighty wheels, and the swing of spheres innumerable in the illimitable expanse of universe, and the sounds took a vocal shape, but the poor little bell-ringer could not understand the language, save that ever and anon recurred in solemn chorus these words:—

"Heilig, Heilig, Heilig ist Gott, der Herr Allmachtige, der da war, und der da ist, und der da kommt." *

Hännsehen fell down on his face to the earth, as if smitten with the hand of a giant; and a voice as of thunder broke on his bewildered brain,—

"Swine and sot that thou art, thou wilt be the ruin of me and my children. Get up and rouse thyself, or thou mayest sleep on for ever. Dost hear, drunkard? The clock has tolled midnight I know not how long since, and not a note has pealed of the New Year's chime; and here I have come out this cold night to see what has befallen thee."

The rattle of the domestic thunder, alas! too familiar to the bell-ringer's ears, restored him quickly to his senses.

"Peace, good Gertrude, I have seen a vision—I have been with the angels."

"I'll warrant me thou hast," said Gertrude. "Ay, the angels of your crony, Caspar Schwemmen. Thou spendest more time with them than is good for thy soul's health. Marry, I wish thou would'st leave such company to thy betters."

Hännsehen sprang at the bell-rope with a desperate resolution to drown his wife's voice, if the clapper of a bell could accomplish that feat. So he pulled away lustily, and rang out

* "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

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such a thundering brattle of bells as was never heard before or since from the clock-tower of St. Bruno's. There was not a man in the town that it did not rouse from sleep, nor a woman that did not spring bolt upright in bed, thinking that "the crack of doom" was come. Nay, so emphatic was the chime that Worshipful Herr Klaus Grosbauch, the Bürgermeister, next day complimented Hännschen highly on his performance, and actually put a silver thaler into the hands of the astonished bell-ringer in token of his approbation. Hännschen kept the cause of his successful chiming to himself, and did not spend one kreutzer with "the Angels" till night, when he confidentially communicated to his friend Caspar, over a pot of his favourite mulled beer, the whole of his wonderful vision. From that day forth Hanns Klingel was an altered man—to some extent. He never again was known to go to the Beirhaus—when he had any bell-ringing to perform. He gave up quarrelling with his wife—more than once in the week; and never cuffed his children—except when they *would* put themselves within the reach of his hand. Time still went on, and Hännschen lived to commit, in his professional capacity, his old friend Caspar Schwemmen to the worms, and as "The Three Angels" about the same time took their departure, to the entire satisfaction of many a good wife of St. Bruno's, poor Hännschen was unable to bear up against the double loss of his terrestrial and celestial friends, and shortly followed the former: but whether he found him in the company of the latter is a question upon which there is a great difference of opinion. The story of the vision, however, leaked out before his death, and you may now hear it, as I did, from the lips of his son Hans, a man much advanced in years, who still digs the graves and rings the chimes upon the bells of St. Bruno.

It was a late hour—as we look on the hours in the country—when Herbert had concluded his tale.

"Your story is sufficiently visionary," said Uncle Saul, "whatever may be its merits in other respects."

"And it has a dash of the genuine Teutonic mysticism in its theology," said the parson, with a slight sneer.

"I like it very much," said Naomi, smilingly. "Pray, Mr. Herbert, can you oblige me with the original. I do *so* love German."

"Upon my word," said Herbert, "I fear I cannot comply with your wish just now. I did not bring it with me."

"Who is the author?" said I.

"The author—why—ah—I don't think he has put his name to it."

"No matter," said my uncle; "I dare say we shouldn't be the wiser if we heard it. I make no doubt it begins with 'Von,' and ends with a congregation of unmanageable consonants."

"I understand," said I, with a look of masonic intelligence at Herbert, who, however, did not condescend a reply.

What criticisms might have been pronounced upon it cannot now, unfortunately, be known, for Uncle Saul looked at his watch, and exclaimed:—

"I protest we have almost seen the year to an end! It is half-past eleven."

There was a solemn pause; for all felt how solemn a thing it is when one year more passes irrevocably from us. At last my godfather said, cheerily:—

"Well, God be with the good old year, and send us many another like it."

"You do well to call it a good old year," said the parson. "Have we not much cause to love it? Has it not given us many a joy and many a blessing, even though we may have had sorrows and trials with them? Have we not cause, too, for mourning over its death, for who can acquit his own conscience of precious hours wasted, golden opportunities neglected, good undone, evil committed. And as we look our last upon this old year, and place him with his brethren in the sepulchre of our memories, let us remember that each of them shall stand forth at the last day to testify for or against us, let us in spirit review them all for warning—for edification—for instruction. Let us bethink us of the famine that has wasted our people

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and desolated our fields, thankful to the mercy that brought us through it, provident, that a like visitation may not find us unprepared. Let us contemplate the spirit of revolution that swept over Europe, shaking the kingdoms of the earth to their very centres, overturning ancient dynasties, hurling monarchs from their thrones, and snapping asunder the bonds of law and of order as easily as a giant would rend a rope of gossamer; and while we do so, let us feel a grateful joy and an honest pride in the strength of those noble institutions which stood the shock of the storm immovably, loving our liberties as dearly as our lives, resolved to uphold and cherish them, and watch over them with the loyal devotion of free-born hearts. Let us think of the flood of light that arts and sciences have forced in upon us, and glory in its illumination; each in his own sphere, and according to his ability, giving to his own intellect the highest polish of which it is susceptible, that so it may become a *reflector* of that light, and multiply it through the world. So shall we best honour the old year, so shall we best prepare ourselves to meet the new."

The household was now assembled for prayers, and the parson proceeded to discharge his duties as chaplain. Then each retired to repose, wishing the others a happy close to the old year, and a joyous opening to the new.

TWELFTH-DAY; OR, THE LAST OF OUR HOLIDAYS.

YESTERDAY ended our Christmas holidays, and to-day finds me once more in the solitude and repose of my own study, communing in spirit with *one* friend, when so many others have been withdrawn from me in their bodily presence. But those joyous associations cannot last for ever, and well is it for us that they cannot. Though man is a gregarious animal, and has few joys that are not heightened by the sympathy of friends, and multiplied a thousand-fold by being reflected from the faces that he loves; yet, believe me, there are times and

seasons when the spirit seeks repose from excitement, and pants for solitude as the hart does for the water-brooks. I am thoroughly convinced that most of the mighty events which have revolutionised society, and changed the destinies of mankind, were devised by man, not amongst his species, but apart from them; and though, at first sight, this may appear somewhat paradoxical, both in regard to man's physical and psychological being, yet he who looks deeper into the matter will see that such is not the case. Though man be social in all his instincts and qualities, still is solitude as needful to his well-being as sleep is necessary to the refection of an existence which seems *a priori* to abhor the negation of activity, mental or bodily. As the giant rises refreshed from sleep, so the soul comes forth from its silent, secret chamber, re-invigorated by that communion which it holds with itself—ay, and with a greater than itself—that primeval fountain of all thought—the Father of Spirits.

In all ages and in all countries solitude has had its lovers and its eulogists. The heathen philosopher and the Christian moralist have alike proclaimed its holiness and its dignity. Were I to quote half that occurs to my memory, I should exhaust your patience long before I should find the end of my materials. Seneca has many fine reflections on the subject; but be of good courage—I shall not inflict one of them upon you. Petrarch, in one of his elegant Latin epistles, which were as famous in his own days as they are neglected in ours, draws a most eloquent contrast between the man who dwells in the city, and he who cultivates a solitary life in the country; this, too, I shall spare you:—but I know not how to defraud you of the sentiments of one of the great lights of the early Christian Church, whose compositions are as redolent of the odour of holiness as was his solitary life of the spirit of devotion. Thus writes St. Jerome:—"Sapiens nunquam solus esse potest, habet enim secum omnes, qui sunt et qui fuerint boni, et animum liberum quocunque vult, profert et transfert, et quod corpore non potest, cogitatione complectitur: *et si hominum inopia fuerit, loquitur cum Deo.*"—"The wise man can never be alone, for he has with him all the good spirits of the present

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and the past, and he sends abroad his unfettered soul wherever he desires: what he cannot accomplish in the body, he embraces by the power of thought, and if he finds any want of man's presence, *he can converse with God.*" This last thought discovers the real source of the moral elevation which solitude confers upon man. And so it has ever been; the more he is withdrawn from the creature, the more he is in converse with the Creator. When one human being alone stood on the earth, God was ever present with him. When he found a companion to share the world with him, even still "they heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden." Then, as the race multiplied, the visible Deity was rarely amongst them; but He ministered by His angels; and so, from time to time, as man mingled more with his fellows, he communed less with his great Spiritual Head; and it is still the primeval yearnings of the soul for purer food than it finds in the world around it that has driven ardent and meditative men to deserts and mountain tops, to cells and caves. But a truce with these reflections. I sat down to tell you all about our last merry meeting at Castle Slingsby, and here I am lauding solitude like a hermit or a disappointed lover.

Despite of occasional defections from our band of friends, the main body held together up to "Twelfth-day"—that day which usage has long sanctioned as "the last of the Christmas holidays;" and now we were all assembled for the last time around the festive board at "the Castle." Somehow insensibly, perhaps not unnaturally, a slight tinge of melancholy, or rather of pensiveness, spread amongst us; for the endearing pleasures of social converse were dashed by the ever-recurring reflection that they were so shortly to end. Still the ever-joyous voice of Uncle Saul kept us all from flagging, and every sigh was chased away by his bantering laugh and trustful hope in the future. And now the ladies had retired, the superabundant leaves of the table were removed, and the diminished portion was rolled nearer to the fire. The wind had risen high and gustfully without, and the rain pattered on the windows, while within, a little knot of true friends sat together, segregated, as it were, from the world and its storms—each bound to other,

more or less closely, by those bonds of love which form the dearest, as they are the most enduring of existence.

Uncle Saul sent round the wine, and then threw a log of bog-deal on the fire that sent the burning peat in a thousand sparklets up the ample chimney.

"Well, old friend," said he to the Parson, "Twelfth-day is not now what you and I recollect it when we were youngsters. Ah! I remember the great plum-cake, with its mighty surface of frosted sugar, the drawing of characters, the choosing of King and Queen, charades and dancing, and I know not what. I protest it almost rivalled its great antecedent, Christmas-day. But now 'Little Christmas' is but the shadow of the substance, the ghost of the goodly festival which the Gregorian Calendar so unceremoniously thrust out of its place."

"You say truly, my dear sir," said the Parson, "these things you mention seem but as of yesterday; but how entirely are they passed away. Who now of those around us would recognize the truth of the picture of choosing the king, which is so well described in the old rhymes with which our boyhood was familiar?—

'Then also every householder
To his abilitie,
Doth make a mighty cake that may
Suffice his companie;
Herein a pennie doth be put
Before it come to fire—
This he divides according as
His household doth require.
And every peece distributeth,
As round about they stand,
Which in their names unto the poor
Is given out of hand;
But whoso chanceth on the peece
Wherein the money lies,
Is counted King amongst them all;
And is, with showtes and cries
Exalted to the Heavens.'"

"Ay, ay, dear Parson, I may say to each of those youngsters here, as good Justice Shallow said of Falstaff, 'Ha! Cousin Silence, that thou had'st seen that that this knight and I have seen!'"

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"Nay," said the kind old man, smiling good-humouredly at the rakish character with which my uncle had thus invested him, "I do not think I can respond with the knight; 'we have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.' But if Twelfth-night has been shorn of some of its festal splendour, it has lost nothing of its interest to the Christian as the Feast of the Epiphany. It has been ever one of the chief festivals of the Church; and in its earlier ages attached itself most strongly both to the affections and the imaginations of the people. And no wonder! Can there be any event more suggestive of a thousand interesting thoughts, more picturesque and dramatic —let me say so with reverence—than the wonderful one which the day commemorates?

"Let us for a few moments, in imagination, transport ourselves from beside those blazing logs to the arid sands of the desert, and exchange the wild storm and the drenching rain for the stillness of the air breathing with the spices of Araby.

"Not far from the banks of the fleet-flowing Tigris, stands one of those structures of which travellers speak with awe and wonder; those pyramids which, ere Abraham left his native land, were raised, that man might watch the stars of heaven.

"'Tis evening—one of the kingly priesthood, who rules that land, enters the pile to worship, as is their wont, the heavenly host, and study the laws by which they are guided. Hours pass on while he is so engaged, while 'the heavens declare the glory of God.' At length a star unknown, unseen before, shines forth to the priest — brilliant as the star of the morning, and baffling the lore of Melchior. With hurried steps he hastens to where others of his caste are seeking repose, and, awakening them from sleep, shows them this wondrous sight. Long and anxiously they gaze on this portentous light; till Gaspar, at length, breaks the silence, and, turning to Balthazar, exclaims—'Is not this the star thus spoken of by our forefather, Balaam?'—

'I shall see him—but not now;
I shall behold him—but not nigh.
A star shall come out of Jacob,
And a sceptre arise out of Israel.'

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"And long and anxiously still they gaze and commune with themselves, and ponder over the occult lore of Egypt; and, at length, the word goes forth amongst their followers, to prepare for a distant journey.

"And now behold these venerable sages setting forth, star-directed, towards the royal city of David, to visit 'the King of the Jews.' Swift-footed dromedaries bear on their backs the richest products of the country—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. A chosen band of followers attends them. How picturesque their appearance in the long and monotonous desert! —their striped *rafieh*, with its varied colours, bound round their heads by the *azal*, and the party-coloured *abayeh* thrown round their shoulders. Thus furnished, they traverse the wastes of Arabia, undeterred by its toils and dangers. After many days, they cross the Jordan, and soon are within the walls of Jerusalem. But they look there in vain for the star-announced King. They are desired to seek him diligently in Bethlehem, and they quickly leave the City of David. And now see them descending from Zion's heights, leaving behind them its gorgeous palaces and gilded domes. Mark them now crossing the narrow valley, and ascending the sloping plain which hides Bethlehem from their view. Beneath lies the little peaceful humble village. Ah! sure this is not the birth-place of a King. They are filled with perplexity and doubt, when—lo, the star!—the star! once more shines bright as when first it glittered upon them in Araby, and guides them through the streets of Bethlehem, till at length the 'lamp unto their feet' burns fixedly over the shrine that they have been seeking; and what do they find in the gloom of that mid-winter night? A hovel!—and within, a poor mother with her little babe! Ah! but *they* know Him; their purged eyes and enlightened spirits see deep into God's mysteries; aad they behold Omnipotence in the feeble infant, and kingly splendour, and majesty and glory; and so they fall down and worship, and offer their precious gifts, and then those mysterious kings and priests depart content to traverse again the toilsome way, for they have paid, their homage to the King of kings. 'They appear and disappear, as did Melchisedech, the king and priest of old, having

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waited as shadowy guests upon the true Melchisedech.' Is there not something touchingly sublime in all this? What '*situations*' for the painter—what material for the poet—what an absorbing study for all mankind!"

The worthy parson was firmly seated by this time on his "hobby," and he rode as pleasantly as did mitred abbot of olden time ever slip over the ground on his ambling mule. Pausing for a moment, he seemed as if his spirit was contemplating the picture he had been painting, and then he resumed:—

"How thoroughly, in what are called the dark ages, did people understand and appreciate these striking points in the Epiphany! What a hold did it take upon their feelings and affections—what a mass of legends has grown out of the wanderings and the worship of 'the Three Kings!' What mysteries and miracle-plays, in which Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar are the prominent actors, grew up under the sanction of the Church!"

"I remember," said I, venturing somewhat audaciously to slip in an observation, "to have read somewhere a curious mode half dramatic, half religious, in which 'the offerings of the Magi,' were exhibited in some of the churches in early times. Three boys, clothed in silk, with golden crowns upon their heads, and each a golden vessel in his hand, represented the Magi. Entering the choir, and advancing towards the altar, they chanted these lines:—

'O quam dignis celebranda dies ista laudibus,
In qua Christi genitura propalatur gentibus,
Pax terrenis nunciator, gloria cœlestibus;
Novi partûs signum fulget Orientis patria.
Currunt reges Orientis stella sibi previa,
Currunt reges et adorant Deum ad præsipia
Tres adorant reges unum, triplex est oblatio.'

"Then the first boy lifted up the vessel which he held, and said—

'Aurum primo;'

and the second did likewise, saying—

'Thus secundo;'

and the third—

'Myrrham dante tertio.'

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Then the first again—

'Aurem regem;'

The second—

'Thus cœlestum;'

The third—

'Mori nutat unctio.'

"Then they pointed to the star hanging from the roof, proceeded to make their offerings, and withdrew into the sacristy."

"Before we leave the subject," said the pastor, "I will repeat to you the beautiful application of delectable old Jeremy Taylor, for it lives in my memory. 'God,' he observes, 'has drawn all the world to himself by one star or another; by natural reason or by the secrets of philosophy; by the revelations of the Gospel or by the ministry of angels; by the illuminations of the spirit or by the sermons or dictates of spiritual fathers;—and hath consigned this lesson to us, that we must never appear before the Lord empty, offering gifts to him by the expenses or by the affections of charity; either the worshipping or the oblations of religion; either the riches of the world or the love of the soul;—for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Arabians, we may, with the poor shepherds, come and 'kiss the Son lest he be angry,' and in all come and serve him with fear and reverence, and spiritual rejoicings.'"

The good old parson paused again. Whether he purposed a further excursion I cannot say, for Uncle Saul, after a respectful interval of silence, cried out cheerily:—

"How is this? I protest, the bottles have somehow all congregated about me. Here goes for another round of the table!"

And, accordingly, he sent them sliding along the polished surface of the mahogany with great energy. This was, in a manner, holding the parson's hobby by the head; but Saul did it, as he did everything, kindly and gently, and the good old chaplain dismounted as graciously as if Saul had bowed down with uncovered head and held the stirrup. The bottles performed their circuit undiminished by a single glass; so we all rose and went to the drawing-room.

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Do you know, it is quite a magnificent sight to my mind to see the after-dinner entry of gentlemen *en masse* into the drawing-room. As the eagle flutters the sweet inmates of the dove-cote, so the triumphant advance of the male sex breaks into the formal row around the fire, invades the sanctity of the sofa or the ottoman, though every inch of it be garrisoned by the fair ones, penetratiug into the most remote corners to which young ladies may have withdrawn themselves, and sitting down before the most inaccessible prudes and holding them in a state of siege. As the chess-board, which looks dull enough while the white and black pieces keep guardedly asunder, becomes an object of interest to every looker-on when the hostile colours are intermixed in a general *mêlee*, so the animation and picturesqueness of the drawing-room is infinitely heightened when we see in every part of it the pantaloons *chequering* the petticoats, and the black dress of the men interposed between, and by contrast setting off, the lighter hues in which the fair sex delight to array themselves. Then what charming groups one sometimes discovers, if he has only the luck to steal in unawares, and keeps a sharp look out about him. Here a couple of girls beside a small table poring over prints, and, it may be, the arm of one thrown over the neck or round the waist of the other; or some languid and pale-faced woman reposing on that couch withdrawn a little from the fireside, while seated beside her on a low stool is a bright-eyed little one, who looks up laughingly in her face till she wins from her graver companion a smile or a caress; and then the pianoforte is sure to have its swarm of the sweetest clustering about it,—for I have ever observed that they who love music most are themselves the most loveable; and though musicians are not necessarily beauties, yet, trust me—and I flatter myself I know something about the matter—that musical women, in nine cases out of every ten, have deep, full eyes, gentle faces, and pleasing manners.

When I entered the drawing-room, I cast my eyes around me, as my wont is, to select the party to which I should attach myself. The elderly ladies, buried in the deep-cushioned chairs, were not particularly attractive; but I heard Abigail's

voice in very earnest discussion, and I instinctively made my way towards it. I found her and Naomi in a warm debate on the subject of music, and I was instantly appealed to as an umpire.

"Jonathan," said Abigail, "I maintain that we can enjoy music better in the daylight and sunshine than at any other period. Of course I am right?"

"And I, cousin," said Naomi, "believe that the shadows of evening, or the glimmering of the moon, or the starlight, is the hour when we can most keenly appreciate sweet sounds. What say you?"

"A difficult question to answer, truly; and yet, you are each right in part."

"How so, most sapient cousin?" cried Abigail.

"There is a class of music, my dear Abigail, which sympathizes best with light and life, with sunshine and animation. Such in general is the music of animate life. The carol of jocund birds, as they rise on the wing, or greet the sunbeams from thicket and tree. Such, too, is military music—the braying of the brazen trumpet and the cheery sound of the shrill fife—for they speak of bustle, and things that stir the spirit; and such too was, I doubt not, the pipe of the shepherd upon the plains in the days when shepherds piped in good earnest. But," I continued, turning to Naomi, "there is a music deeper, intenser, more spiritual, which claims no kindred with the grosser things of day, which shrinks from glare and noise, and needs subdued light and holy silence to make itself felt. A music that, like the stars, comes out only in tranquil night. Shakspeare, who knew nature by instinct better than any other human being did by education, was of my mind. Remember how he places Lorenzo and Jessica:—

> 'The moon shines bright—in such a night as this,
> When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
> And they did make no noise.'

"And again Lorenzo says—

> 'How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank;
> Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
> Creep in our ears. Soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony.'

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"Portia, too, when she hears the strain, exclaims—

'Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.'

"And Nerissa replies—

'Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.'

"And so it is in truth, my fair cousin. There is a music that is essentially of the night. Such is the pealing of bells, the wind that wanders through tree-tops, and strays upon lyre-strings, making wild melody. Have you ever chanced to be at night near a line of railway along which an electric telegraph runs? if so, and that the wind is strong, you may have heard strains of the wildest, sweetest, most unearthly music. It is the soul of a mighty Æolian harp, whose strings are the wires of the telegraph, stretched from post to post. Such melody, too, is the plash and surging of waters; the cry of night-fowl; and the song of the nightingale, who owes so much of her celebrity to night and silence:—

'I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.'

"Ah, Jonathan, I am quite of your notion," said Herbert, who had joined us a few moments previously.

"Oh, to be sure you are," said Abigail, with a toss of her pretty head that made Naomi blush like a peony.

"Nay, I shall prove that I am in the right," replied he. "Listen to this little German song on the subject, and be convinced."

So saying, he sat down to the piano, and sang a wild and original air to German words, which in English are something like these:—

THE SPIRIT OF THE NIGHT-SONG.

I.

"Tongues of sweet bells on the air,
Deep shadows stealing along,
While through the skies
The daylight dies,
And wakes up the Spirit of Song.
Fair Night-Spirit, say
Where is thy lone home,
Where hid thro' garish day,
'Till sweet Night bids thee come.

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II.

"Where the wind shakes the green leaves—
Where the stream dances and sings—
Where slow the bee
Wends hummingly
At eve on his home-bound wings:
Where stormy gales
Over the deep rush along,
And the wild sea-mew wails,
There is the Spirit of Song."

Herbert's song was no sooner concluded than a general movement towards the tea-table indicated that the mystery of cake-cutting and ring-seeking was about to take place. Uncle Saul, as *pater-familias*, gallantly led up his sister-in-law, Mrs. Sampson Slingsby, to the table, and, placing a knife in her hand, she cut the goodly cake into a multitude of substantial slices. Every one of us—man, woman, and child, benedict, celebate, wife, widow, and widower—took a piece; for he or she who coveted not the ring, rejected not the citron, the frosted sugar, and the fruit. Ah! could you have witnessed the examination of each morsel—how eagerly some scrutinized—how slily others: how one laughed, and another pouted, and a third blushed; but at last it happened, that in the midst of the excitement, Naomi, in the quietest manner in the world, held up a tiny gold ring, and the next moment was assailed by the shouts and laughter of all the rest. Abundance of smart things were said by us all, and received with good humour by the young lady; and, indeed, with a great deal of grace, too, till Herbert paid his compliments, which he did in so awkward a fashion, that the poor girl was somehow quite embarrassed.

"Well, well," said Saul, "I must confess I have no objection to this good old custom, and all the gallantries that it leads to. But, bless my heart! in my early days we had infinitely more devotion, and young fellows were down on their knees to young ladies on the slightest provocation."

"Ay, ay," said I, "uncle; and with perfect impunity. They generally got up again quite heart whole."

"Sir," retorted my uncle, "a true knight was as ready to die in the service of his lady love as he was to sing her praise."

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"Well, uncle, I will give you a song of the sort you speak of, as it illustrates one of those sentiments which are not uncommon in the mouths even of our peasants, when in love. Did you ever hear amongst them that phrase, the most expressive of amatory thraldom imaginable, 'I love the ground you tread on.' It is not only highly poetical, but has a dash of orientalism about it that pleases my fancy."

"Ah!" said Jack Bishop, "who does not recall Lover's sprightly allusion to this expression, in his delightful song of 'Rory O'More,'" and he sang the lines—

"'The ground that she walks on he loves, I'll be bound—
'Faith,' says Rory, 'I'd rather love you than the ground.'"

"Let us have it, then, Jonathan," said Saul.

"With all my heart. Listen, Herbert: I call it

'I LOVE THE GROUND YOU TREAD ON.'

I.

'I love the ground you tread on,
As flowers the dew they 're fed on;
I deem the shade
Your form has made
Bright as where sunbeams spread on.
Your voice brings deeper pleasure
Than music's softest measure,
Yet still untold,
Like miser's gold,
My hopeless love I treasure.

II.

'As lamps within the tomb, love,
Unseen 'mid damps and gloom, love,
With faithful light,
Through endless night
The worshipped dead illume, love;
So in my heart for thee, love,
Though lone and dark it be, love,
The flame burns on,
Still turned to one
That 's as the dead to me, love!'"

"That is a *love* of a song," said Jack Bishop. "Is n't it, Miss Naomi?"

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"Ah! my dear Jack, you are too flattering. Spare my blushes."

"Upon my honour I am sincere, Jonathan; I counted the word '*love*' no less than six times in the last verse."

"Oh! spirit of Grub Street, what a smashing criticism!—But what can one do when he must eke out the measure?"

"Well," said Jack, "I will give you another real Irish sentiment, which will try your sensibilities; so, young ladies, get your pocket-handkerchiefs ready."

Jack sat down to the piano, which he touches admirably, and delivered himself of the following song, to the fine old Irish air of "Jack, the Jolly Ploughboy," with that rare combination of humour, pathos, and dramatic power in which he is unrivaled.

"WON'T YOU LEAVE US A LOCK OF YOUR HAIR?

I.

"'The night is fresh and calm, love,
The birds are in their bowers,
And the holy light
Of the moon falls bright
On the beautiful sleeping flowers.
Sweet Nora, are you waking?
Ah! don't you hear me *spaking?*
My heart is well nigh breaking
For the love of you, Nora dear.
Ah! why don't you speak, mavrone?
Sure I think that you're made of stone,
Just like Venus of old,
All so white and so cold,
But no morsel of flesh or bone.

II.

"'There's not a soul a-stir, love—
No sound falls on the ear
But that rogue of a breeze
That's whispering the trees
Till they tremble all through with fear.
Ah! them happy flowers that's creeping
To your window where you're sleeping—
Sure *they're* not chid for peeping
At your beauties, my Nora dear.

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You've the heart of a Turk, by my *sowl*,
To leave me perched here like an owl;
'Tis treatment too bad
For a true-hearted lad
To be served like a desolate fowl.

III.

"'You know the vow you made, love—
You know we fixed the day;
And here I'm now
To claim that vow,
And carry my bride away;
So, Nora, don't be staying
For weeping or for praying—
There's danger in delaying,—
Sure maybe I'd change my mind:
For you know I'm a bit of a rake,
And a trifle might tempt me to break,—
Faix, but for your blue eye
I've a notion to try
What a sort of old maid you'd make.'

IV.

"'Ah! Dermot, win me not, love,
To be your bride to-night:
How could I bear
A mother's tear,
A father's scorn and slight?
So, Dermot, cease your sueing—
Don't work your Nora's ruin;
'Twould be my sore undoing
If you're found at my window, dear.'
'Ah! for shame with your foolish alarms—
Just drop into your own Dermot's arms:
Don't mind looking at all
For your cloak or your shawl;
They were made but to smother your charms.'

V.

"And now a dark cloud rising,
Across the moon is cast—
The lattice opes,
And anxious hopes
Make Dermot's heart beat fast:

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And soon a form entrancing,—
With arms and fair neck glancing,—
Half shrinking, half advancing,
Steps light on the lattice sill:
When—a terrible arm in the air
Clutched the head of the lover all bare;
And a voice, with a scoff,
Cried, as Dermot made off,
'WON'T YOU LEAVE US A LOCK OF YOUR HAIR!'"

A peal of laughter, loud and long, followed the unexpected *denouement* of Jack's song, and the handkerchiefs were applied to wipe away the tears which mirth forced from the eyes of his fair auditory.

"You must give me that song," said my godfather; "I think I could make a tolerable shift to sing it."

"Not for the world," said Uncle Saul, "let it be Jack's song alone. There's not another man in the kingdom could do it justice."

It was now far in the night, but we still lingered, unwilling to break up, for we knew it was the last of our holidays.

"A plague of this parting," said my uncle, "but for the hope of many another joyous meeting it would be grievous indeed."

"Ah, yes! 'tis that hope that sustains us. Is it not, Herbert?"

My friend made no reply to me, but he looked more than he said, and so, if I am not mistaken, thought one of the young ladies.

"Come," I resumed, "do not disavow your own sentiments, I have them here in black and white. Deny your own handwriting if you dare!" And, thereupon, I drew forth a neat sheet of gilt-edged letter paper, which Herbert, in a confidential mood, had, a few hours before, submitted to my critical inspection. "Listen, my friends, to his 'Confessions:'"—

I.

"There is an hour when the sad, sad heart,
Throbs wild and deep to the bursting sigh;
When the bosom's pang no words impart,
And grief sits fixed in the tearless eye;

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" When the blood from the pale damp brow retiring,
Falls freezing and dull on the heart below;
Fears undefined and sorrows conspiring
To darken the gloom of this hour of woe.

II.

" 'Tis the hour when hearts that would grow for ever
In verdant affection, nor know decay,
Are riven in twain, as the rude winds sever
The circling vine from the elm away:
Each form the other long retaining,
One fond and enduring embrace to share,
As if each heart were madly straining
To stamp the other's impress there.

III.

" There is an hour when the heart beats high,
And the cheek is flushed with pleasure;
When joy beams out from the tearful eye,
As it doats o'er a long lost treasure:
When feeling's flood is freely flowing,
Forgetting each sorrow and fear gone by,
No thought, no care, no hope bestowing,
Beyond this hour of ecstacy.

IV.

" 'Tis the hour when hearts, long wandering,
In fond embraces meet,
When grief and absence lose the sting
That poisoned affections sweet:
Bosom with bosom in rapture twining,
Each face reflecting the other's smile,
As the mirror is bright when the sun is shining,
Though dark when his light was hid the while.

V.

" The hour of parting from those we love
Is like the decline of a glorious day,
When the sun sinks down from his throne above,
And chillness and gloom succeed his ray:
Like morning's burst is the hour of meeting,
That beams o'er the darkness and clouds of night;
The terrors and grief of absence fleeting,
Like vapours away from the sunbeam's light.

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VI.

"Oh! how could the bleeding heart endure
To be torn from all that is dear,
Did no sweet sustaining hope insure
A glad re-union near:
Like the vesper-star, still mildly streaming
O'er the waste of night when the sun has set,
That hope o'er the lone heart 's ever beaming,
To cheer till some bright re-union yet."

"Hey-day! young ladies," said Saul, "at your pocket-handkerchiefs again! I protest Jack Bishop will not value the compliment if you are thus ready to bestow it on a rival bard."

"Nay, check them not, my dear old friend," said the good parson, in a voice tremulous with feeling, "they will not have the less firm hearts for the duties and trials of life for yielding to emotions that are an honour to our nature. Trust me God has given us all those finer sensibilities for good and holy purposes, and I love not to see man or woman without them. Only let us be heedful that by over indulgence they do not degenerate into weak and sickly sentimentality. Is it not meet that our spirits should feel a momentary disturbance at the thought of a separation, when we have all been so innocently happy? When the band that has tied this little bundle of hearts together is cut, and we are scattered loose again on the world, say who shall collect and bind us up again as we were before—no bough that is now green and pleasant, withered, or stript, or broken! It may be that His hand who can bind and can loose may bind us up again more closely even here; but at all events He can re-unite us hereafter in a company never to be severed. And so let us now carry away this thought each to his own chamber."

In this solemn frame of mind the chaplain addressed himself to the duties of his calling, and we separated lovingly, sadly, but hopefully.

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SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY.

Carrigbawn, Feast of St. Valentine.

We men in the country watch the vicissitudes of the seasons with an anxiety of which town gentlemen have no notion. With them it is merely a question of umbrellas and dry flags; with us it is one of life and death. The heavy rains during the earlier portion of this month, arrested all out-door labour, and left us sadly in arrear in our ploughing and sowing. This morning we are all as busy as bees, for fine weather has set in most opportunely. I was out early in the fields, to set the day's operations fairly agoing. The mists of the morning were lazily rolling away in heavy vapour from the marshy ground along the river side, and the white hoar-frost of the night was lying on the green sward and the brown furrows. As I passed an old ivy-clad gable, the rustling and twittering of innumerable little birds, flying and chasing each other from branch to branch, reminded me that the spring was coming, and that Nature was beginning to stir in her heart's core. And then, too, I spied the crocus and the snowdrop, and I caught faintly the odour of the violet; and I knew that the Divine agency, which renews all things, was again putting forth its potency. And now I watched the sturdy team drawing the plough through the heavy glebe, and the busy crows following in the furrow; and further on, the sower, with his bag slung before him, scattering the seed over the well-prepared ground, in the hope that it would bring forth abundantly, "some ten-fold, some fifty-fold, some an hundred-fold."

I was returning homeward with the buoyant air of the fresh morning breathing around, and the bright lustre of the now up-risen sun upon me, when just as I reached the door of my porch, I beheld the conjoint animal of a man on horseback bearing down upon me. As the mass came near to me its identity was unmistakable. An aged bay horse, with a white star on his forehead, a poke of the nose and a contemplative gait, bestridden by a lanky figure in black habiliments, announced the good parson, mounted on the companion of his

parochial rambles during the last ten years. Assisting my worthy friend to dismount, and committing his beast to the lad whom I had summoned for the purpose, I led the chaplain into the house.

"My dear Jonathan," said he, "I wish you all the happiness that attends this auspicious morning, and am come to breakfast with you."

"For the latter favour, my dear friend, I am truly grateful," said I, "but I am at a loss to understand the peculiarity of your greeting."

"What!" said he, "do you not remember this is Valentine's Day?"

"Not I, indeed," I answered.

"Ah, Jonathan! when I was a young man it should not have come upon me unawares."

"Perhaps not," said I, "but I have little sympathy with the mode in which the festival is honoured now-a-days."

The parson looked at me for an explanation.

"I do not despise, my dear sir," I continued, "the customs of simple times, nor the manner in which this day was anciently celebrated, when young men and maidens drew their Valentines by billets, and the life-long happiness of many a couple commenced with the true-hearted gallantries of the day. But I do abhor, with a hatred as intense as the postman, the present practice, contemptible, heartless, and affected, to say the least of it, which sends a thousand silly and impertinent rhymes flying through the length and breadth of the land; corrupting the taste and depraving the judgment. You have no idea how the sentiment of love is vulgarized and debased by the daubed prints of hearts, and darts, and Cupids, and the frippery missives which, by the abused license of this day, find their way to eyes and ears which would droop with shame, and tingle with indignation, were the stuff these *billets doux* contain spoken to them by living lips. Look at the windows of the stationers' shops in town, and tell me if I am not justified in what I say. And then, are you aware of the enormous sums which silly coxcombs, who cannot indite for themselves, pay for those borrowed sentiments. I assure you, the price of some

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of them would supply the food of many a family for a month, or purchase volumes of sterling literature. Shame befall the man, say I, that has recourse to such a sneaking mode of courtship, and cannot express, as a man should do, his own feelings of love in his own words."

"My dear Jonathan," said the Parson, "you are unjustly severe. I fear you have never received a Valentine."

"Nor sent one," said I, "thank heaven."

"We are told," observed my friend, "that they had their origin in a pious device of the early Christians who substituted these for the pagan practices of the Februata Juno."

"I do not believe it," I replied. "I think the usage springs from a higher and truer source. Nature is herself our divine instructress. Listen," said I, throwing open the window of the room in which we sat, and letting in the fresh air of the pleasant morning, and the chirping of the birds that thronged the woodbine and rose-tree trelliced around it. "The earth's bosom is already putting on her robes of green; the vernal flowers are bursting into life; the birds carol and mate, and God, who is love, speaks of love to and through all animal existence." How beautifully has Donne expressed this thought:—

> "'Hail Bishop Valentine! whose day this is,
> All the air is thy diocese
> And all the chirping choristers
> And other birds are thy parishioners.
> Thou marryest every year,
> The lyric lark and the grave whispering dove;
> The sparrow that neglects his life for love,
> The household bird with his red stomacher;
> Thou makest the blackbird speed as soon
> As doth the goldfinch or the halcyon.'

"And again, with what truth of nature and grace of poetry does Tasso celebrate these mysterious influences of the nascent spring:—

> "'La dolce primavera,
> Ch'or allegra e ridente
> Reconsiglia ad amare
> Il mondo e gli animali
> E gli uomini e le donne: e non t'accorgi,

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Come tutte le cose
Or sono innamorate
D'un amor pièn di gioja e dì salute ?
Mira la quel colombo
Con che dolce susurro lusingando
Bacia la sua compagna :
Odi quel usignuolo
Che va di ramo in ramo
Cantando *Io amo io amo*——.'"

"I believe you are in the right, Jonathan," said the Parson; "and I will give you an illustration more beautiful still, and sublimer than any profane poetry can afford." And so saying, he drew forth from his ample pocket, the companion of all his hours—his well-worn Bible. "Listen to the prophetic language in which He, of whom love is the essence, and not the attribute, speaks of the holy influence. What is spoken to the Church we may in all reverence apply in a less exalted sense :—

"'Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
The time of the singing birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land:
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs;
And the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell.
Arise my love, my fair one, and come away.'"

"Beautiful, indeed! my dear pastor. There is no poetry like that we find in Holy Writ. How sublime its sentiments; how grand, and yet how simple often, is its imagery; how lofty its teaching; how tender its pathos. Every day I feel this truth more deeply. It is the great well whence modern Poesy draws all that is pure, healthful, and life-giving in its waters."

"And why should it not be so?" said my friend. "Remember its inspiration and its theme. Remember whence Isaiah and Ezekiel, — whence Solomon, and David, and the solitary of Patmos, had their mighty missions. God their inspiration—the Divine mind their 'mens divinor' — His Spirit their Helicon,—heaven, and hell, and earth, the unseen mysteries of Nature, the undisclosed councils of God and the future destinies of man,—these their wondrous themes. Think on all this,

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Jonathan, and you will know how the fabled frenzy of the Pythoness under the influence of her god can but faintly shadow forth the divine rapture of those whose spirits held direct and intimate communion with the Great Spirit. As the face of the Jewish lawgiver shone with the light of Deity, that still lingered on it after he left the presence, so the tongues of prophets, touched with the fires of heaven, poured forth their burning words when the vision had pssed away from their spiritualized sight."

"Confess then," said I, "that good Saint Valentine has little reason to be proud of the honour we now give to his name; and were he to rise from his grave, would as indignantly rapudiate his followers, as would Epicurus reject his luxurious disciples of ancient Greece and modern Belgravia."

With such pleasant converse did we pass away the half hour of breakfast. When the meal was over, the Parson said:—

"Well, Jonathan, notwithstanding all you have said, here am I the bearer of a Valentine to you."

I do not know why it was, but I confess I felt myself blushing like a girl in her "teens."

"Don't be alarmed, Jonathan," said the Pastor, with a smile of the slyest humour on his solemn visage. "Do I look like Cupid's messenger?"

"Why, not exactly," I replied, recovering a little from my embarrassment. "So let us have it."

The Parson, without more ado, drew from his pocket a large packet.

"It is no light matter," I observed, "and will require consideration, or I am mistaken."

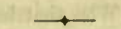
"You are not mistaken; but I must say a few words before I open it.

"You remember poor Somers. He was left an orphan to my care, when heaven had taken from me my own dear ones. I did my best for him in the way of education, and seeing that he had good abilities, I sent him to our University. He obtained a sizarship, and was a studious, steady lad, of an imaginative and melancholy temperament. I heard with joy

of his having got a scholarship; but the next post dashed my pleasure by the intelligence of his dangerous illness. I hurried to town, too late to find him alive. Over-application was too much for a constitution naturally feeble, and he sank as soon as he had grasped the prize for which he had toiled. I committed him to the grave, discharged the few shillings he owed to his laundress and baker, surrendered the key of his chambers, and possessed myself of his scanty library of books and papers. Among the latter I found one which I chanced to take up last night, and thinking it not without interest, I have brought it over to submit to you."

"Let us have it then, dear Parson," said I.

Thereupon my friend opened his budget and read the following:—



A LEGEND OF ST. VALENTINE.

"Martyrium est delictorum finis, periculi terminus, dux salutis, iter patientiæ, magister vitæ; quo perfecto, ea etiam accedunt quæ in futuro discrimine potuissent tormenta reputari. . . Magna sublimatis ante ora Domini, aspectumque Christi, potestatis humanæ tormenta contemnere."—*Cyprian de laude Martyr.*

Moonlight in the city! What a striking and solemnizing sight; how suggestive of thoughts that daylight never stirs within us; Life locked for a season in the arms of Death! The stony giant lies outstretched before us, snatching from the turmoil and excitement of day, a short repose to invigorate him for the same ever-recurring and ever-wasting turmoil and excitement to which the first ray of morning awakes him. The wanderer in the silent street hears the echoes of his own footfalls, where a few hours before the tread of a thousand steps, the rush, the roar, the struggle of life, stunned and distracted him. Houses gleam, silent and bleak, in the pale, cold light from which, in day, the tide of animation incessantly pours out upon the thoroughfares of existence. Not a throb without tells that the pulse of life is beating, but the blood has

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flowed back upon the heart of the city, as though it lay in a trance. Grief and joy, passion, avarice, and ambition, all seem at rest amid the scenes where, by day, they reign and revel.

> "Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
> Open unto the fields and to the sky,
> All bright and glittering in the smokeless air."

The calm breath of night comes with renovating freshness upon the brow, as if it stole in from the pure country upon the unguarded slumber of the city, unpolluted with the reeking vapours, and smoke, and steam of the thronging human hive.

> "The river glideth at his own sweet will:
> Dear God! the very houses seem asleep,
> And all that mighty heart is lying still."

Moonlight in Rome! Who that has seen it may forget it ever. The Rome of our own time should so be seen. The garish sunlight suits not best the spectral city. She is a city of past memories, of faded glories, of devastated grandeur. And so—if you would rebuild her shattered walls, rear up her prostrate columns, restore her ruined fanes and renovate her palaces—wander through her regions when the moon is at the full, that the things and beings of to-day may not mar your spirit as it goes back into the past. Then will Rome the Imperial arise before you; then will you truly understand how, though she be fallen from her high estate and shorn of her world-wide dominion, still she is Rome the Eternal. Eternal in her glorious memories; Eternal in her influences upon all nations, for all share in the borrowed light of her arts, her wisdom, her learning and her laws; Eternal in her history, which yet fills the foreground of the world's annals.

It was midnight, a few days before the Ides of February, in the year of the City 1023, and the 270th of the Redemption. The moon was then nigh its full, and poured down in a flood of mild and luminous glory upon the peerless city of Rome—the Rome of the Cæsars—ere the Goth or the Vandal had sacked her palaces, or kings of Christendom, more destructive than the Barbarians, filched away her precious monuments, her marbles,

and her statuary; ere the fury of the Bourbon swept away in a desolating tide over all that Alaric and Geneseric had spared, that Charlemagne and Robert of Sicily had left uninjured.

Passing along that portion of the Subura that lay between the Esquilian Cœlian Hills, a figure, wrapped closely in the coarse woollen toga which was worn by the meaner citizens, wended his cautious way north-westward, till he stood before the Flavian Amphitheatre, in later times known as the Colosseum. It was a sight that at such a moment might arrest the attention of the most indifferent or the most pre-occupied. Of this latter, it would seem, was he who now checked his steps, and flung from off his head the portion of his gown which had been drawn from his right shoulder so as to form the ordinary substitute for the *pileus*. The act disclosed a head singularly venerable; a few scant locks of long, white hair flowed down from the back portion along his neck: save these, the head was bald. A face, strongly marked and stern, bore traces of the grief and suffering which the conflict of powerful feelings with controlling principles ever leaves on the features; but his eye was still keen, black, and full of animation. On the first glance you would have pronounced him old, but a second look would have assured you he was old before his time, and had seen many sorrows and trials.

The old man threw back from his head the lappet of his gown, and gazed long and intently upon the pile before him. It was a glorious sight, that stupendous mass of buildings, as it then stood in all its integrity. An oval of the most graceful form and magnificent dimensions, covering an area of ground as extensive as that upon which the largest pyramid of Egypt reposes, and faced with travertina stone, rose to the height of more than a hundred and fifty feet. The four stories of which it was composed exhibited each order of architecture in their proper succession, the basement being the severe Doric, the upper the florid and graceful composite, surmounted by an attic. The light of the moon, falling slantly athwart the face of the building, exhibited a chequered superficies of light and shade, whose picturesque effect could not be surpassed. In the ground story, the open archways, or vomitories, which, to the

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number of eighty, gave access at equal distance all round to the interior, were filled, some wholly, some partially, with the moonlight, according to the aspect they presented to the planet, and some lay buried in deep, black darkness; and so in the two succeeding stories, the light, as it fell upon the corresponding arches, displayed, more or less, the huge statues, to which they served as niches; and as the shadows of the projecting columns which sustained the entablatures crossed the forms or played flickering upon the massive features, when light clouds passed athwart the moon, the stone seemed endued with life, as if realizing the fabled story of Pygmalion. Spectral and cold, they stood in their places, and it required no stretch of fancy to believe them the ghosts of those who, within the area of this beautiful circus, had fought and bled, and died in a savage and unprovoked conflict with their fellow-men, or had fallen beneath the lacerating jaws of furious beasts.

Something of this sort appeared to cross the mind of the man, as his eye in its circuit passed along those marble effigies, whose features, as the shadows stirred along them, seemed at that moment trembling and twisting, as with the contortions of suffering. A spasm as of pain passed along his brow, and his lip quivered as he spoke in low emphatic tones of passion:—

"Oh, drunken—drunken with the blood of saints and of martyrs! What marvel if their mangled bodies be suffered to haunt the scenes of their slaughter, and to testify against their murderers, as their souls cease not, day and night, to cry to God for vengeance on those who have spilled their righteous blood. Yea, the very gore-soaked stones might cry aloud against them and thee, thou den of unclean beasts! How long, O Lord! holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!"

The old man shook his hand denouncingly; and his utterance was choked with passion. In a moment, however, and by a violent effort, he mastered his feelings, and looking sorrowfully up to heaven, he struck his breast and cried:—

"'Miserere mei Domine.' Have mercy upon me, O Lord! miserable sinner that I am! Who am I that I should invoke

Thy wrath, to whom vengeance alone belongeth? Father, it may be that Thou reservest this place for a vessel of mercy and not of wrath. Haply, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Thee, as the waters cover the sea, that the cross of Thy dear Son may be planted in this unholy circus, and the life-blood of Thy martyrs be worn away from its pavement by the feet of pilgrims and the knees of supplicating thousands. Even so, Lord, let it be, if it is Thy will."

The Christian bowed his head with a sigh, and reverently making the sign of the cross on his forehead, drew the lappet again over his head, and proceeded upon his solitary walk. Skirting the southern and western circuit of the Flavian amphitheatre, the old man passed on through the small archway for foot passengers in the eastern portion of the Arch of Constantine, and reached the space before the temple of Venus and Rome. But the solitary paused not to contemplate the scene before him, but, with a passing glance, pursued his mission. Yet well might that scene win more than a passing glance. Raised on its ample platform, and reached at each angle by a flight of marble steps, between which rose a stately colonade of white pillars, stood the Temple, its fluted Corinthian columns of Parian marble supporting a roof sheeted with bronze-gilt tiles, which caught the pale, modest rays of the moon, and sent them back blushing and ruddy from the rude, ungenial contact. Close to the Temple stood the colossal figure of bronze, one hundred and twenty feet high, from which the head of Nero had been removed to make way for that of Apollo, now radiant with mimic sunbeams, while nearer to the Arch of Constantine spread the spacious basin of the Meta Sudans. A fair and a tranquilizing sight was it to look upon the jet of plenteous and pure water that flung itself out of the high conical fountain upwards into the clear moonlight sky, and then disparting circularly in every direction as it reached its highest elevation, it fell back into the broad marble basin, and, as the filmy threads of water glittered in the moonlight, it looked like the silvery plumage of some giant helmet. And sweet and most soothing, too, was the low monotonous chant of the falling waters in the silent night, as they met the still waters of the

pool beneath. One could fancy it the gentle, joyous greeting with which fair spirits, that have left heaven to wander awhile upon earth, throw themselves again into the bosoms of their sister spirits, when their wandering is over. Perhaps these sweet sounds did unconsciously break in upon the reverie of the old man, for he looked up for a moment and opened the fold of his gown, as it were to let the grateful freshness of the vapour to his bosom. But it was not for sights like these, beautiful though they were, that the old man was abroad to-night. Onward he hurried by the Sacred Way, passing through the Arches of Titus and Fabius, and between the Roman Forum and the Forum of Cæsar. Heeding not the wondrous congregation of arches, temples, and graceful columns that shot upwards into the heavens, the old man pressed forward still, till passing near the Arch of Septimius Severus, and the Temple of Concord, he stopped at the base of a strongly-built and gloomy edifice, that even then bore the marks of great antiquity. This was the Mamertine prison. Ascending a flight of stone steps, cut through the hill, that led to an entrance on the second story, the person whose course we have been tracing stepped softly up to a door of solid oak, studded with huge rivets of iron, and smote the wood gently with his hand, repeating the act twice, at intervals. After the third signal, a voice from within asked—

"Who cometh hither?" To which he outside replied :—

"Peace be with thee."

Then the door was cautiously opened, just sufficiently to allow a man to pass through, and was again as cautiously closed when the old man had entered.

Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοὶ μου οταν πειρασμοις περιπέσητε ποίκιλοίς, γινῶσκοντες οτι το δοκιμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πιστεως κατεργαζεται ὑπομονήν· ἡ δε ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω.—*James i.* 2.

AT the time we write of, the ancient prison of the Mamertine, which Ancus Martius had built in what was once the

centre of the city, was still made use of for the reception of criminals charged with more than ordinary guilt; and amongst these were many Christian converts, as the "Acts of the Martyrs," in which it is frequently mentioned, abundantly testify. The upper story of this dismal prison had now its tenant, and towards it two persons were directing their steps. One was a young girl just entering upon womanhood; the other an old man—him whom we have been following through the silent streets of Rome. The girl held in her hand a small lamp, and was evidently the guide to the gloomy passage they were traversing. Her step was firm and unhesitating, and she carried the light apparently rather to guide the feet of her companion who followed her than her own, for she held it above her head, and rather behind her, so that its rays fell just before his face, leaving hers in darkness, while the old man, even with the aid of the light, stepped unsteadily and doubtfully. At length they reached the strong oaken door of the dungeon, and paused for a moment, for the voice of one from within was audible. He was sustaining his spirit with the memory of familiar and beloved words, and the old man, as he caught them, joined with moving lips, which gave no outward sound.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto the Lord.

"Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

"I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning."

There was a pause of a moment, and then the sounds were resumed:—

"Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance and my God."

The voice of the prisoner ceased, and the girl, committing the lamp to her companion, drew forth from her girdle a large key and unlocked the door, then, withdrawing the bolts, they

entered the chamber. The faint rays of the lamp, struggling through the gloom of the prison, showed the form of a man seated on a straw pallet, and fettered, both hands and feet. At first he moved not; but the voice of his visitor quickly aroused him.

"Valentinus," said the old man to the prisoner, in solemn and gentle accents—"Valentinus, my brother, the peace of the Lord be with thee."

The prisoner sprang upon his feet, the chains clanking upon his limbs as he moved forward.

"Callistus, beloved friend and master! is it indeed thyself? God, then, has blessed my efforts, and thou art safe. But tell me quickly, who has escaped beside thee?"

Callistus turned hesitatingly towards the young girl, but replied not. Valentine understood the meaning of the movement.

"Brother, thou mayest speak freely before this dear child; a light is even now arising to her out of darkness. Look at her and doubt not."

Callistus now, for the first time, bent a scrutinizing look upon the maiden. She stood retiringly near the door, as if ready to depart, yet loth to do so undismissed. Her arms were crossed upon her bosom with an air as meek as it was gentle. Her head was slightly inclined forward, and her thick black hair fell in long showers to her shoulders, displaying, as it parted in front, a face thin, pale, and pensive, though not unhappy; but the fixed expression of her open eyes, and the countenance slightly upturned, told the poor girl's doom—she was blind.

"Thou mayest indeed speak all thy mind before our good child Nerea. She knows all that has befallen me, and by her aid it is that I have been able to communicate with thee."

"If this be so," said Callistus, "I will speak freely. Know, dear Valentinus, that the timely intelligence thou gavest to thy friends has saved them. When Calpurnius, the prefect, sought them beyond the Esquiline Gate, he found none. Alas! I fear thou did'st purchase their safety with thy own peril."

"It is even so," said the other, "but I repent it not. Cal-

purnius and his guard came upon me in the burial ground of the people. My intercourse with the Christians was proved, and I answered not falsely the questions of one in power, nor denied the name of Christ, and so I was haled hither, for what doom I know not."

"Alas! alas! we are at our wits' end, and in great peril; our souls are always in our hands. But say, how dost thou fare, in this sad dungeon, my Valentine?"

"God hath raised up friends to me even here, and when I had almost said the darkness should cover me, then indeed was my night turned into day. My sufferings, and it may be my patience, have found favour with the keeper of my prison, Asterius, the chief officer of the prefect. He has eased my chains, though he cannot unloose them, and supplied my bodily wants, though he may not remove me from this gloomy dungeon. But, above all, my dear Callistus, it hath pleased our Great Master to give this poor lamb to me, to lead her into the fold; her ears have greedily drunk in the divine truth, and God hath given her a soul of light within her darkened body. Is it not so, dear Nerea? Tell the good Bishop Callistus, my child."

The girl moved reverently forward as she heard the holy title of the stranger, and sinking down on her knees, at the spot whence she heard his voice, said very gently, yet fervently:—

"It is indeed so. Venerable father, and thou, my dear teacher, pray for me."

"She is a catechumen," said Valentine, "and earnestly desires fuller admission into the Church. I will answer for her; and at a fitting time I would that she receive the rite of baptism at thy hands. Meantime, I beseech thee to perform that ceremony which our Church designs should teach catechumens to confess their sins, and to review their consciences."

Deeply moved, Callistus said, "Be it even so, brother."

Then he stooped down, and taking up a portion of the damp clay, he touched her eyes with it, and laying his hands solemnly upon the head of the still kneeling girl, said—

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"The Lord enlighten thee, my daughter! And now leave us for a season. We have that to speak of which must be discussed in private, and thou, too, should'st retire, and meditate in secret upon the ceremony which has admitted thee into the higher state of catechumens."

Then the girl rose from her knees and departed.

Long and earnest converse did the two Christian men hold during that lonely night. The prospects of the persecuted Church of Christ occupied the hearts of these faithful and courageous men, and the imminent peril of the one, and the uncertain and scarce less perilous state of the other, were well nigh forgotten in their deeper anxiety for the welfare of the dispersed and afflicted band amongst which they had both so recently communed and worshipped. The hours passed sadly and silently by whilst they were thus occupied. At length Nerea's low knock was heard at the door, and she came in and warned them of the danger to which Callistus's longer tarrying would expose them. And so the venerable bishop arose and embraced Valentinus, then blessing them both, he resigned himself once more to the guidance of the sightless girl, and left the dungeon. The moon had long set, and the grey cold light of morning was dawning along the summit of the Esquiline Hill, when Callistus made his way towards the country through the Subura and the gardens of Mæcenas.

Ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμιν, ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως, ἐρεῖτε τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ Μετάβηθι ἐντενθεν ἐκεῖ, καὶ μεταβησεται· καὶ οὐδὲν ἀδυνατησει ὑμιν.—*Matt.* xvii. 20.

THE sun had set cloudlessly on the day succeeding the night in which Callistus and Valentinus held their conference. As his last rays fell upon the city, ere he sank beneath the Janiculum, they lit up the winding course of the yellow Tiber, the mausoleum and circus of Adrian, and the imperial gardens lying at the foot of the Vatican Hill; then leaving these in twilight, the golden flush spread along the horizon, touching the lofty ridge of western hills along their summits, and throwing out

against the clear sky the grey ruins of the Arx Janiculensis, the most ancient fortress of Rome, built by Ancus Martius, to protect the river from the depredations of Etruscan pirates. Night quickly followed upon the still short twilight, and the light, scant and dim even at noon, which struggled into the dungeon of the Mamertine, through the single small opening high up near the roof, had become fainter and fainter to the eye of the solitary watcher, till, at length it vanished altogether leaving him in utter darkness. He was not, however, left much longer to his solitary meditations. The bars of his prison door were shot back, then it was softly opened, and Nerea's lamp again illuminated his darkness. The girl bore in one hand a lamp, in the other a basket containing a small flask of wine, some fruit, and a loaf of fine bread, and moving with unnerring foot to the low stool which stood by the wall, she placed them upon it.

"Dear master," said she, turning her face in the direction where the clank of the fetters told her Valentine was sitting, "pardon me that I am somewhat late this evening. I tarried not willingly, but of constraint; but now I bring you somewhat to refresh you. Ah! that I dared do more for your comfort!"

"My ever kind and good child, thou hast procured me all that is needful; what my great master and his blessed Apostles often wanted. Truly God has sent thee to minister strength to my body, as his holy angels are ever about me to sustain my soul when it faints and is distrustful. God will surely bless thee, who ministerest thus even to the most unworthy of his servants!"

The maiden took the hand which the priest had laid kindly upon her head, and carrying it to her lips, kissed it with reverent gentleness ere she released it. After a moment she put her hand into the folds of her vesture, and drawing forth a few flowers, she said:—

"Dear father, I have brought you the earliest violets of Rome. I plucked them this morning on a bank beyond the Tiber; their fragrance caught my senses as I wandered in the fresh morning air, after I left thee last."

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The priest took the flowers, and rubbed them in his hands; then inhaling their odour, said:—

"Now, dear Nerea, are they not doubly sweet? As the broken spirit is the sacrifice that God best loveth, so is the odour of the crushed flowers sweetest to the sense. Our Heathen wise men exhort us to be patient in tribulation; but the wisdom that cometh from above teacheth us to rejoice in it. Is not this a gracious revelation that shows us how to extract joy from sorrow, as our old fable tells of one who turned everything he touched into gold?"

"I know already," said the girl solemnly and sadly, "that sorrow and privation teach us patience. When I wander with any of my companions in the gardens beyond the Tiber, and hear their joyous exclamations at the beautiful hues of flowers, the green of the fields, and the golden light of the sun, I understand them not, save that those hues must be sweet as the scent of flowers and herbs, and the light of the sun like the song of birds. Ah! well do I remember when with a young playmate I first sat by the side of a fountain, and she laughed out gleefully, and cried, 'See, see, Nerea; oh, beautiful! there are thou and I in the fountain, dancing and glittering like Naiades.' Then said I:—

"'Nay, thou art mocking me, Glycera. We are both here together on the bank, and yet thou sayest we are in the water. It cannot be, silly one.'

"But she persisted and said—'It is even as I say, Nerea.'

"Then was I angry; and I thrust my hand into the fountain, and I found nought but the fleeting waters, that moved to my touch; and I said, 'Now know I of a surety that thou deceivest me.' But others of our playmates came up, and Glycera asked them was it not so; and they said, indeed it was. But one whispered softly, yet not so softly as to escape my ear, 'Hush, Glycera, thou dost forget Nerea is blind.' Then I felt what it was to be blind; and I wept sore that night when alone in my chamber. By degrees I grew tranquil: and I sported again with my companions, and learned to believe that the world had many lovely things which I could never know, and to bear my fate with patience. Ah! will the time come,

dear teacher, when I shall learn to rejoice in my afflictions, as thou sayest a Christian ought?"

"Even so, my Nerea, will it yet be, I trust, that thou shalt say, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' I have prayed for thee without ceasing, through the watches of the night, my daughter; and it may be that I shall find favour with the Lord, and that thou shalt taste and see how gracious God is. But thou must have faith, and I, too—I to work, and thou to believe in the name of Him through whom I work."

The priest arose, and stood for some moments buried in profound contemplation. At length he said:—

"And now, daughter, leave me for a season: I would be alone; and take thou again with thee the fruit and wine, for this kind goeth not out by prayer and fasting. When it is mid-night, come to me again."

The girl did as Valentinus desired her, and, passing from the prison, he was again left alone.

How the priest was occupied during the hours that intervened, we may not say, for none have recorded it. That he spent the time in earnest prayer and holy meditation, it may be well believed, for when Nerea again sought the cell at mid-night, she found Valentine on his knees beside his couch of straw, absorbed and motionless. Neither the drawing of the bolts, nor the grating of the door had touched his senses, or roused him from his ecstatic reverie. When at length he arose from his kneeling posture, the face of the priest shone with a heavenly lustre of one who had been in communion with his great spiritual Master. Then he took from his bosom a parchment roll, wherein were recorded, by the Holy Evangelists, the things which Jesus had done when on earth. And he sat down on his pallet, and the girl on the low stool before him, and he read to her how Christ had opened the eyes of the blind Bartimeus, and had given sight to the man who was blind from his birth, and whom he sent to wash in the pool of Siloam. And the saint discoursed long and ardently to the listening girl, opening the mysteries of the wondrous faith for which he had forsaken all that earth holds dear, and was even then willingly in bonds and imprisonment. Hours passed thus in ex-

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hortation, mingled with prayer and words of comfort. And now Valentine paused, and once again his spirit was wrapt in divine communion. Then he arose and stood up, and the girl knelt down, and he cried:—

"Oh Lord my God, let this child receive her bodily sight, as thou hast shed thy light upon her spirit."

The dim lamp shed its flickering rays upon the upturned face of the maiden, as she fixed her sightless orbs, suffused with tears, on the saint. Then he touched her eyes and said:—

"According to thy faith be it unto thee."

A shudder passed over the pallid features of the excited and awe-touched girl, when lo! the light of the lamp sank in the exhausted vessel, and they were left in darkness.

"*Bottom.*—Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you everything right as it fell out.
"*Quince.*—Let us hear, sweet Bottom."—*Shakspere.*

It was about the hour of noon, on the day following the events we have last recorded. The sun that looked down on the Forum Romanum, beheld a sight of surpassing splendour and architectural magnificence. Temples reared their beautiful porticoes of white marble on every side—triumphal arches spanned the ways, and graceful columns shot up into heaven. Halls where justice was dispensed, and ambassadors met to discuss treaties—spots where the people assembled, and rostra whence orators addressed them—all were there still. Beneath the porticoes that ran round this wondrous mart, were the shops of tradesmen and goldsmiths, and money-changers. While on the hills that rose above it, on either side, were the imperial residences of the Cæsars, and the citadel and temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Where now are all these? Some still stand, weather-stained and defiled, doing battle bravely against time and fate, the flame and the earthquake. Some show a ruined shaft or tottering pediment, and others have perished utterly, and antiquarians and historians delve and plod through the desolate rubbish, and quarrel about the site of things that once filled the eyes and ears of mankind.

But to-day the Forum Romanum was thronged, as usual, with crowds of inhabitants, some hurrying to and fro on their various avocations, some entering the different temples, some pacing the arched porticoes. Here were groups of merchants, there knots of idlers retailing the news of the day, discussing the merits of a popular orator, or criticizing the newest play or poem, while in another place might be seen venders of goods displaying their wares. Upon the steps of the Comitium, half a dozen persons were collected in earnest conversation, and their number was constantly augmented by loiterers, who were attracted to the spot by the gesticulations of the speakers. A spruce little barber was engaged in an animated discussion with a burly soldier, while the crowd gathered around them, listening with wondering attention.

"I tell thee, Thraso," said the little man, "it is no fable, but as true as that I am Fabius, the barber of the Subura. I had it from one whom I shaved this morning, and who had it from Drusus, the slave of Asterius."

"Thou hast too many vouchers for thy story, good Fabius," said the soldier. "Hadst thou seen it with thine own eyes, instead of through the tongues of so many, I might make shift to believe thee. *Credat Judæus*, say I."

"Hear him now, my masters," said the little barber, appealing to the bystanders, "Those men of war are no better than infidels. They will scarce believe in Jupiter, unless they see him brandishing his thunderbolt."

"What is this marvellous news, good tonsor?" said one who had just come up to the group. "I am but newly come from the country, and would fain learn what is stirring."

"Worshipful Lysippus," replied the barber with an obeisance, "thou shalt hear it on the instant, and judge if I have not good warrant for what I relate. By Castor and Pollux," he continued, eyeing the soldier askance in the confidence of being under the protection of one of his best customers, "he is no true man who doubts the word of an honest citizen."

A shout of laughter from the crowd followed the sally of the valiant barber, while one of his neighbours slapped him on the back, crying:—

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"Well said, brave Fabius. *Habet.* Thou hast given the soldier a home-thrust. By Bacchus, I will stand a flask of Sicilian wine that thou hast the best of it. The shears against the sword any day."

"Peace, friends," said Lysippus, "and let us hear the story."

"Well, then," said the barber, "you must know that as I shaved a certain personage this morning, an honourable gentleman, and a notary of fair report as any in the city, he asked me, as usual, what was the news, whereupon I replied I had not as yet had any, for it was early. Nay, then, said he, thou hast not heard"——

"Oh, Venus! have done with thy babbling. To the point, friend, in the name of Jupiter."

"Well, then, in brief, the notary told me that Drusus told him that the daughter of Asterius—thou knowest poor Nerea—the blind girl, had got her sight by the favour of I know not which of the gods, and can now see as well as you or I."

"Papæ!" cried Lysippus, "a marvel truly. Why the maid was blind from her birth. Good Fabius, I fear the notary has been putting a jest upon thee. Away, man, and mind thy stall, or thou mayest get into the hands of the prefect, and scarce come off with a dose of hellebore."

"Who is right now, my masters?" said Thraso, exultingly. "Come, Simo, and pay me that flask of Sicilian: thou hast lost it fairly."

The laugh was now turned relentlessly against the little tonsor. He slunk away discomfited and grumbling; the group dispersed, and each one joined some other party, to loiter or to labour, as their tastes or duties dictated.

But the tale of the barber fell not altogether upon unfruitful soil. There are few stories that will not gain credence with some one. By degrees, the rumour spread through other channels, and gained confirmation from quarters more faithworthy than a loquacious barber of the Subura: and ere the sun had set, the wonderful tale was noised about throughout Rome, as a fact beyond all controversy, and a matter that had been brought under the prefect's notice.

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And indeed there was good foundation for these reports.

The situation which Asterius held, as the chief officer of Calpurnius, the prefect of the city, made concealment, if it were sought for, a matter not easily to be accomplished. But in truth, such did not seem to be the object of him or his family. The father loved his child tenderly, for she was an only one and motherless, and that tenderness was infinitely augmented by the poor girl's calamity. Her blindness, while it made her an object of solicitude and dependence to her parent, increased his love by keeping her constantly in his thoughts and much in his presence, and the devotion with which she returned his care, added to the gentle and almost cheerful patience with which she endured her privation, served to draw more closely around the heart of the father those bonds of affection which nature had originally tied with no weak hand. Nerea, as she grew up, was able, in some sort, to repay the kindness of her parent. She had learned to traverse the Mamertine prison, and to aid her father in his custody. She knew each cell, and could reach it with speed and certainty in the hours of darkness, and though her nature was sensitive, yet was it kind and compassionate, and so she took a deep interest, if not a pleasure, in visiting the cells, and supplying comforts to its inmates, as far as the prison discipline would allow. Nerea was, therefore, well known in her own locality, and when at early morning, or eventide, she passed towards the Palatine Bridge, on her way to the gardens on the further side of the Tiber, or even, on rare occasions, ventured to thread her way across the Forum, there was always sure to be a ready hand to remove from her path any casual obstruction. Many a commiserating and respectful look was turned on her, and many a kind greeting was offered to the blind girl of the Mamertine.

When Valentine was thrown into the Mamertine prison, which was some weeks previous to the visit of Callistus, Nerea's occupation brought her acquainted with him. His resignation under his trial quickly interested the girl in no ordinary degree. Her kind and compassionate attention to him excited on his part a corresponding interest in her. And the Christian found, unexpectedly, that Providence had afforded him, even in his dungeon, an opportunity of preaching the faith for which he

was then in bonds, that occupied his mind and alleviated his sorrow. By degrees he opened to her the sublime truths of his religion, and in his auditress he found a willing disciple. The infirmity of the poor girl, while it shut her out, in a great measure, from the contemplation of sensible objects, left her mind free for the reception of the things that lie beyond and above the senses. And so, from day to day, she listened to the disclosure of the unseen realities of spiritual life, and her soul meditated upon them in the hours of that bodily darkness which was ever present to her. Thus it was that when, by her assistance, a sure message was conveyed to the Christian band which was then suffering from the recently revived persecution in Rome, and that Callistus visited the cell of Valentine, she had so far advanced in the knowledge and belief of the true faith as to be accounted fit for the ceremony of imposition of hands and anointing of the eyes, which the bishop, on the assurance of her catechist, had administered.

Who shall describe the sensations of awe and amazement, of delight and holy thankfulness, which agitated the soul of the once blind maiden, when the light of day, beaming upon her eyes, disclosed to them the innumerable wonders of the fair world around her? Who shall tell the joy of her father's heart at the marvellous and to him scarce credible event? Weeping upon the bosom of her parent all was told. Asterius hastened to the cell, and poured forth his gratitude in disordered words. And Valentine lost not the opportunity which the occasion offered. In profound and humble adoration, the saint first poured out his heart before the Father of light and life, and then directed the agitated heart of his keeper to the knowledge of him by whose power the miracle was wrought. And then the young maid silently joined them, and the three remained together for many hours, the priest teaching, the parent and child listening. So the work of conversion went on, and two more souls were added to the Church of Christ.

Meantime the strange event was noised abroad, first in vague and conflicting rumours, and then more circumstantially, till at length the fame of it reached the ears of the prefect of the city. The jurisdiction of that officer was, at the time we

write of, most comprehensive, embracing not only matters of police, but almost every civil and criminal case. Duty cast upon him the investigation of the report. A rigid inquiry followed, which resulted in the establishing of the fact, and the manner in which it had taken place. It was too momentous, both as regarded the religion of the state and the position of the Christians, to be dealt with by the prefect, and, in the absence of the Emperor Claudius (then in Pannonia), the magistrate referred without delay to the Senate an occurrence which he deemed involving the crime of sorcery. Asterius and Nerea were summoned to the presence of that august tribunal. Proof of the fact was easy, for many were there who could attest that she who tranquilly, almost fearlessly, raised her mild intelligent eyes to look on her judges was indeed the blind daughter of the keeper of the Mamertine. But proof was needed not: father and daughter avowed the fact, and declared that they, too, were Christians. The double crime of being disciples of the false religion, and implicated in practices of forbidden arts and sorcery, was established against Valentine, Asterius, and Nerea. The former was condemned to death, and the two latter were removed, and cast fettered into the prison where they had so often tended others, and ministered to the comforts of the suffering.

"Effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ob omnibus iniquitatibus vestris, et ab idolis vestris mundabo vos."—*Ezek.* xxxvi. 25.

MORNING dawned upon the Imperial City, and the rays of the sun shone down upon the palaces of the Cæsars, the domes of temples, and the summits of triumphal arches and lofty columns. It was the 16th day of the kalends of March, being, according to our computation of time, the 14th of February.

As the rays of day penetrated through the opening high up in the wall of one of the cells in the Mamertine prison, it diffused through the dungeon a dim and partial twilight, which fell upon the figures of four persons. With three of these we are already familiar. Valentine lay in profound meditation on his pallet, and near him were seated, also in bonds, Asterius and

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Nerea; the fourth wore the garb of a soldier of the prefect's guard,—the watch who had been set on the prisoners during the night; but, as he turned his face, the light fell upon the features and revealed those of Callistus. Through the agency of some friends of Asterius, the bishop had contrived to assume the dress and take the place of the soldier whose duty it was during that night to keep watch upon the prisoners within the cell, and thus was he enabled to minister comfort and spiritual consolation to them during this season of sore trial, and for the last time to partake of the sacred elements with Valentine. And now Callistus advanced towards Valentine, and touching him with his hand, said:—

"Brother, I may not tarry much longer; the light of morning is growing strong, and the watch will soon come to relieve me."

Valentine arose, and answered:—

"It is, indeed, even as thou sayest, and my time draws nigh. I am now ready to be offered up. Shall I not rejoice that I am accounted worthy to suffer, even as did our beloved Paul and Peter, who lay in chains and darkness in this very dungeon where we now are?"

"Is there, then, no hope of escape?" said Asterius. "Hast thou conveyed my message and the ring to him whom I mentioned, O Callistus?"

"I have so done," replied the bishop; "but hope of aid in that quarter is vain,—the Senate may not be interfered with on this point."

"Yet is there one other chance of life left for Valentine. Say thou wilt permit it? Ah, will not I and mine joyfully peril life and limb for him who has given me and my Nerea light and life!"

The bishop shook his head dissentingly; but Valentine arose, and said almost sternly:—

"Is this, then, Asterius, the fruit that thou bearest of my teaching? Would'st thou violate the law, and oppose thyself to the powers that are set over us? Surely I have shown thee that they are ordained of God, and that obedience to them, in all things that God permits them to enforce, is the Christian's

duty. Grieve my spirit no more with such thoughts, but let the few moments that remain for us to pass together be employed to a better purpose. Father," he continued, turning towards Callistus, "what hinders that these should be baptized? I have already instructed them thereunto, and I would the more joyfully leave this earthly tabernacle knowing that these my children in the Lord had received the gift and grace, and that, in the day when He maketh up his jewels, they too may be His."

"I will do thy desire in this matter, dear brother," answered the bishop. "I may the more safely dispense with the longer probation which the church in ordinary cases wisely directs, seeing that the hand of God hath visibly worked in their case, and also that they are themselves in peril of their lives, and a more convenient opportunity may never arise."

Saying this, the good bishop took the vase of water which stood beside the pallet, and pouring forth some of it into the drinking cup, prepared himself for the solemn rite. Meantime, Asterius and Nerea, having been previously instructed by Valentine as to their deportment and duty, stood forward before the bishop, turning their faces towards the west, and stretching out their fettered hands, each in turn said:—

"*I renounce Satan and his works, and his pomps, and his service, and his angels, and his inventions, and all things that belong to him or are subject to him.*"

Then they struck their hands together to denote more emphatically by gesture their abhorrence of their great spiritual adversary. After this renunciation came the vow or covenant of obedience to their new Master. As in the former ceremony, the early Christians turned towards the west as the region of darkness, whose power they renounced, so in this they changed their position, facing the east,—the region of light, the place of the rising sun, which was the type of the Sun of Righteousness whom they now sought, and by this change symbolizing their turning from darkness to light—from Satan to Christ. Thus turning, and with hands and eyes lifted up to Heaven, the parent and child made their profession in the appointed words:—

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"*I give myself up to thee, O Christ, to be governed by thy laws.*"

Then Callistus put to them several questions with regard to their belief in the summary of faith contained in the creed, which when they had answered, he took the water, and making over it the sign of the cross, consecrated it by the prayer used in the liturgy of the ancient church. After this he divested them of their garments, so far as their bonds would permit, and performed the rite of baptism by aspersion, or sprinkling, which was, on extraordinary occasions, then allowed to be substituted for the more general practice of immersion, and signing their foreheads thrice with the sign of the cross in the name of the Persons of the Trinity, he admitted them into the visible Church of Christ.

The sacrament was scarce administered when the measured tread of feet without the door warned those in the prison that the time for relieving the watch had arrived. Callistus, lifting up his hands, bestowed on the three the benediction which was given to Christains:—

"*The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee and bless thee.*"

Then he flung himself upon the neck of Valentine, and cried, "Alas! my brother, the Lord support thee." And Valentine replied:—

"Surely, I know he will; but weep not for me, for I feel to die is gain."

Upon this the clank of the opening door was heard, and Callistus said softly—

"The Lord keep thee in all thy ways. Assuredly I will be near thee at the last."

Then placing on his head the helmet, and concealing his person in the folds of his robe, he advanced to the entrance of the prison, and passed forth.

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"Pro corona non marcenti
Perfer brevis vim tormenti.
Te manet victoria.
Tibi fiet mors, natalis—
Tibi pœna terminalis
Dat vitæ primordia."

Adam St. Victor.

THE dawn of morning had brightened into broad daylight, Rome had shaken off her night-sleep, and life was again astir in her. By degrees the busy crowds were again pouring into the streets; the forums began to fill with occupants; the waggons were entering the city from the country, and the bustle of daily traffic was once more resumed. Groups of persons began insensibly to congregate about the Arch of Septimius Severus, and the Temples of Concord, of Fortune, and of Jupiter Tonans. Others might be seen ranged in tiers along the steps that wound round the Mamertine prison from the eastern angle of it, and ominously named the *Scalæ Gemoniæ*, from the groans of those who thus ascended to the dungeons; while more began to perch themselves between the pillars which formed the long colonnade of the Tabularium, whence they looked down upon the scene below. It was manifest, from the expectant looks of the people, and the disposition to take up their position on the highest steps they could attain, that some spectacle had drawn them together. Every favourable spot for observation was now occupied by dense masses of people, when a little man forced his way hurriedly up the flight of steps leading to the portico of the Temple of Concord. Touching the foot of a man who stood above him, the new-arrived addressed him in a breathless tone:—

"I beseech thee, by all the gods, dear Simo, give me thine hand that I may climb up beside thee."

"Impossible, Fabius," said he who was thus earnestly entreated "Were I to stoop down to aid thee, I would lose my balance and fall from my place; besides, there is not room here for a lizard."

"Nay, but indeed thou must not desert me in this strait, Simo. I will not take much space, thou knowest; and I promise thee we shall have a cup of wine together when all is

over. I will repay thee that thou lost to Thraso the other day, and with usance." This last argument was not without effect. Simo made shift to give the barber his hand, and with some difficulty and disturbance of his neighbours at both sides, who did not fail to vent their annoyance in that choice phraseology in which the Roman populace were adepts, the little man was hoisted up by the side of his friend.

"How happens it, Fabius, that thou art so late to-day? It is not thy wont to be the last where aught is to be seen or heard."

"Thou sayest true, Simo. I was just stepping out of my shop, a good half hour since, when one who would not be denied entered, and sitting down, forced me to shave his beard. But hast seen aught yet?"

"Nothing: but tell me, what knowest thou of this matter?"

"What know I? Much, my masters,"—for the little barber always made it a point to address himself to every one within hearing. "This Valentine is one of the most obstinate of this Jewish sect, and, like his creed, bears no loyalty to Cæsar, or love to the gods. Not only did he refuse to do sacrifice to the gods, but he blasphemed and contemned them, and averred there was no God but he who raised the insurrection in Judea at the time of our Emperor Tiberius."

"They are truly an arrogant sect, and disturbers of public tranquillity withal," said one of the group.

"Ay," responded another, "'tis a malignant superstition; they hate mankind, and practise in secret loathsome rites. I have heard that they partake of Thyestean feasts, devouring young children and drinking their blood."

"But you have not yet heard the strangest piece of this fellow's audacity," resumed the barber. "You all know, doubtless, how that it pleased the gods to give sight to the blind girl Nerea, when she was lately praying in the Temple of the goddess Fortuna hard by. Well, this Valentinus, hearing of the miracle, gives out that it was he wrought it through the power of his God. And he hath so bewitched the girl with his spells and potions, that she would not gainsay him, though it is

alleged there were many witnesses present in the Temple when she was cured."

"Hush," cried Simo, "here comes the prefect's guard; they will pass near us presently."

As he spoke the eyes of all were turned in the direction in which he pointed. A strong guard of soldiers were seen moving from the base of the steps leading to the Mamertine prison. Presently they came opposite the spot where Fabius and his auditors were collected. In the midst of the company of soldiers walked one on whom all eyes were fixed—a man about the prime of life, and of the middle stature. His bared head was erect, and the brown hair fell adown it in light curls. His full blue eyes were turned slightly towards heaven, as in contemplation of things beyond the earth. Full of sweetness and love was his whole countenance, and there played around it a soft and almost radiant expression, which resembled less a smile than the influence of some rapturous feeling. Firmly and calmly he walked along; and when the shouts and revilings of the brutal populace from time to time assailed him, he looked up at his persecutors with unperturbed eyes, that had more of pity than of anger in their placid survey. Such was Valentine, the Christian priest, who, by the sentence of the Senate, was now led forth to his execution. The band of soldiers, with their prisoner, moved slowly onwards through the crowds that pressed upon them on every side, and, winding along the base of the Capitoline Hill, they passed the forums of Augustus and Trajan, and through the ancient wall of the city, built by Servius Tullius, into the Flaminian Way. The populace in the forums, as soon as the party had passed, rushed forward, by various ways, through the Campus Martius, to gain the Flaminian Gate, and the whole of that long road which now forms the magnificent street of the Corso was lined with a dense mass of human beings as Valentine and his guards passed along. At length they reached the gate in the walls of Honorius and Valerian, which then formed the northern boundary of the city, and passed into the open space beyond it. Here was the spot upon which preparation had been made for carrying into execution the sentence against the Christian. Being placed in

the midst, the prefect of the city came forward, and, for the last time, put to him the question which was to decide his fate,—for it was the established custom, even at the last moment, to remit the sentence, if the condemned renounced his faith and sacrificed to the gods.

"Valentinus, art thou a Christian?"

And Valentine said:—

"I am."

Then the prefect again addressed him, and said:—

"Wilt thou renounce Christ, and swear by the name of Cæsar?—wilt thou do sacrifice to the gods?"

Whereupon Valentine replied:—

"Thy gods are the work of men's hands, and thy religion the device of their corrupt hearts. There is no god but the God whom Christians serve."

At a sign from the prefect two men came forward, and they stripped Valentine of his outward robe, so that he stood in his tunic. At this moment an old soldier from behind touched him, and said softly:—

"Courage, Valentine. Be strong in the Lord."

The face of the priest beamed with joyful alacrity as he recognized the voice of Callistus.

"Dominus illuminatio mea," cried he, looking up. "The Lord is my light in this hour of my trial with the powers of darkness. God is our refuge and strength,—a very present help. In him have I put my trust; I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

The soldiers were then proceeding to tie a bandage around his eyes; but Valentine said gently:—

"Suffer me to depart with unmuffled sight. I would willingly look my last upon the heavens."

The men, apparently moved by his entreaty, looked towards the prefect, who suffered his request to be granted, being contented that his hands should be bound. While this was doing, the Christian priest seemed to lose sight of the things around him, and to be absorbed wholly in spiritual contemplation. His eyes were intently fixed on the bright sky, to the eastward, and his lips moved with words which the multitude

understood not. But one there was, nigh at hand, who knew them, and rejoiced in the midst of the trial of his brother, as he heard these ejaculations:—

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

"In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.

"Neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Callistus bowed his head in resignation and hope.

"Father," sighed he, "not our will, but thine, be done."

A swaying of the multitude, and a shout, caused him to look up; and the headless and bleeding trunk of the martyr, Valentine, lay before him!

"THE blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." The blood of God's saints was not shed in vain on the soil of pagan Rome. Scarce a century elapsed before a Church, bearing his name, stood on the spot where Valentine had suffered; and in later time, another was erected to his memory, near the Ponte Molo; and when Christian emperors swayed the Roman sceptre, the Flaminian Way and Gate, through which the saint passed to his martyrdom, were known as the Via and Porta Valentiniana.

The stranger who now visits Rome may wander over the scene of our story; yet how changed its aspect and fortunes! He can enter through the magnificent gate, the "Porta del Popolo," which the genius of Canina has constructed, and pass down through the palaces that line the Corso on either side. He may wander through her forums; but he will look in vain for the living grandeur of the imperial city—

"tra l' erbe
Cercando i grandi avanzi e le superbe
Reliquie dello splendor latino."

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Her temples are prostrate; her palaces unroofed and in ruins; her arches and columns defaced and broken. All so changed that the antiquarian pauses often in doubt, amidst the lonely and half-unburied ruins around, before he will venture to pronounce to what temple belong the still beautiful shafts that meet his eye, or fix the spot where the citizens met in their assembly, or the orators pleaded for their clients.

Yet over the pagan ruins and the pagan memories rise on every side the Christian shrines. Many a cross is now planted, and many a pilgrim prays in the area of that circus which drank the blood of Christ's saints, as it flowed in rivers on its stones. And if the memory of Valentine arise to the mind, as the visitor lingers near the Roman Forum, let him turn his footsteps to the Church of San Pietro, in Carcere, and he will be shown the Mamertine prison, with some of its steps still remaining; and the cell where Paul lay in chains, and Valentine made converts.

"Well," said the Parson, laying down the paper, "what do you think of it, Jonathan?"

"I protest," said I, "I am the worst judge in the world of such matters. I presume there is a great deal in it for which no authority can be adduced."

"Very likely there is," replied the Parson, "but that does not appear to me to furnish any valid objection to it. There is nothing contradictory either to history or tradition in it."

"Are you sure of that," said I. "For instance, was not Saint Valentine a bishop?"

"There was, no doubt, an African bishop of that name; but he who suffered martyrdom in Rome had not attained to that rank in the Church. I admit, he is called a bishop in some of the modern calendars, but the ancient historians of the Church, and all the martyrologies which I have been able to consult, call him simply 'presbyter.'"

"In that case, I have nothing to say against the tale, on the score of historical correctness. But what say you as to the tradition?"

"That such a tradition has been handed down through ages."

"But do you require me to believe it?"

"I require nothing of you on the subject. I am content to insist it justifies the tale."

"Will you lend me the manuscript?"

"Certainly; but for what purpose?"

"Why, I have a friend in town on whose judgment I place great reliance. I wish to have his opinion."

"Who is that, Jonathan?"

"Mr. Poplar."

"Good; but will he keep it to himself? I would not have the poor boy's composition scanned and criticised by your city literati."

"I must confess he has a most unjustifiable habit of making public anything that hits his fancy."

The Parson mused for a moment, as if undecided; at length he said:—

"Well, be it so, Jonathan; send it to him, and let it take its fate. Poor Somers is now beyond the reach of earthly criticism."

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN MY OWN PARLOUR.

If you were like Asmodeus, my dear reader (though I am far from insinuating that you resemble him in any respect), and had the gift of looking into another man's dwelling at your desire, and that it chanced to be your fancy to look into mine on the evening of the 17th of March, in a certain year, you would have seen me, about the hour of half-past six o'clock, seated at my fire-side, evidently in a state of expectation.

A glance at my table would have showed you that I had dined—not that any vestiges of dinner were to be seen on the table, but it was in the occupation of a force whose presence always announces that the eatables have been driven from the field, or, as Jack Bishop would say, that the flesh had given

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way to the spirit. In a word, certain flasks of blue and amber stood upon the board, with a few long-necked, graceful bottles, whose transparent glass was rivalled by the limpid liquor within them. Some dishes of dried fruits were scattered around, with glasses and doyleys for, it might be, half-a-dozen persons, and in the midst lay a square box, from which issued an aroma that breathed "Havannah" upon the grateful senses. Upon a distant table that stood against the wall might be seen a tongue, a few cold chickens, and some trifles of that sort, modestly awaiting the time when a sufficient interval should elapse from the hour of dinner, to render their nearer approach to the scene of action, a matter to be desired. But I was still alone. The *pendule* on my mantelpiece had chimed seven when the door was softly opened, and the quietest step imaginable—such as a man with his heavy gait can never accomplish—stole across the apartment, and placed a small brass kettle on the hob. I scarcely noticed the presence of her who entered till she came up to where I sat, and placing her hand lightly on my shoulder, she looked gently into my face, and said with an affectionate freedom:—

"Well, now, I do believe you are going to sleep?"

"Nay, dear Bridget," said I, "I was only musing."

And then I turned up my eyes to that sweet countenance.

Now, dear reader, I know very well what you think, and how you turn up *your* eyes, and what you are going to say, but I must request you to keep your thoughts and your suspicions to yourself, and hear me out at all events. I turned, I repeat it, my eyes to that sweet countenance, and saw it beaming with love for me, a love which I returned with all my heart. Dear Bridget!—thine eye may have lost some of its brightness, but none of its benevolence, and the wrinkles that are gathering on thy old face mar not its placidity; the lily is not purer than thy coif, nor the snow than thy hair, and yet I love thee better than when thy cheek was brighter and thy tresses were black. And now, sir, what have you to say against my loving my old nurse?

"I think, Bridget, they ought to be here shortly; I'll just step out and see if they're coming."

And so I passed out and stood before the door.

How beautiful was the scene around me! The sun had set nearly an hour before, and not the faintest tint of twilight in the west left, as it were, a memory of his brightness, but yet were the heavens filled with a light so pure, so tender, so holy, that one might almost wish that day should never come again to flout its pallid lustre with his bright hot flushes. The moon was at her full, and had already climbed up some degrees in heaven; for she rose at sunset; and as she glittered down in her serene glory on the outstretched earth, her beams, as if endued with a celestial mesmerism, threw all that they smote into a delicious repose. The stars winked far away and feebly in the deep blue impermeable heaven; the mountain tops faded mistily away into the vapour; the stream gleamed in a silvery slumber, and field and forest had a dim, distant, drowsy look, like the landscape that passes over a sleeper's vision, or the pictures that are produced by a camera obscura. Sound there was none to break the spell, save the faintest of breezes that crept over the leaves of the early rose, the gurgling of the streamlet, like the murmurings of a child as he stirs in sleep, and the solemn distant boom of the ocean waves as they broke against the rocks, or rippled fretfully up the sloping sands.

Ever restless Ocean! life-pulse of Nature! Thou, like thy great Maker, knowest neither sleep nor slumber. All things rest save thee, and rest refreshes them, but rest would be to thee what a pause would be to the heart—stagnation and death. And so when the wearied world lies with her giant limbs relaxed in repose, thy heave is still seen and thy throbbing heart still heard, to tell that she "is not dead, but sleepeth!"

Not more naturally does the flame, kindled on the earth, mount up towards heaven, or the vapour on her bosom float skyward, than do the thoughts, which have their origin in the contemplation of terrestrial things, rise by an almost natural necessity to their mighty primal Creator, "who dwelleth in the heavens." So from the moving ocean my thoughts passed to Him whose power first stirred it with life:—

"The sea is mighty; but a mightier sways
His restless billows. Thou, whose hands have scooped
His boundless gulfs, and built his shore, thy breath,
That moved in the beginning o'er his face,
Moves o'er it evermore. The obedient waves
To its strong motion roll, and rise and fall.
Still, from that realm of rain, thy cloud goes up,
As at the first, to water the great earth,
And keep her valleys green."

My contemplation was broken by a heavy, measured pace near me, and a figure emerged from a path in the shrubbery, and entered into the moonlight. Ere he stood by my side, the light threw out his form, and revealed every feature as clear as in day, and I welcomed one of my oldest and kindest friends, the priest of the parish. Let me describe him to you, for he belongs to a class that is passing rapidly away.

Father Dionysius O'Kelly, as he loves to hear himself called, or Father Denis, as every one persists in calling him, is a fine specimen of the good old priest which was common enough fifty years ago, A man that was often an honoured guest of the lord of the soil, and the rector of the parish, who eschewed political rancour and polemical bitterness, who loved his own flock, and sheared them duly at Easter and Christmas with a shepherd's care, and loved his neighbour's flock too, though he thought they were wandering out of the way, and might be all the better if penned up in his own fold, and clipped by his own shears; one who cared not to read deeply of modern theology, but was often tinctured with Latin, and even French classics, and had generally a knowledge of Irish literature. All this had Father Denis in common with his class: and now for the individualities that made up the man. Physically he was a favourable specimen of an extensive human area, cultivated upon a judicious system of animal husbandry. Above the middle height, massive and rotund, he stood about five feet ten, and weighed well nigh fifteen stone. He invariably dressed in black broad-cloth; the knees of his smalls were closed with silver buckles, while his legs were lost in long jack-boots, which shone not with the lustre of modern blacking, but had a rich, unctuous look withal, that showed the leather was

nourished with a more congenial lacquer. The countenance of the good priest was pleasing to look upon, weather-beaten and florid, plump and oleaginous; and the facial landscape, though very well diversified with the elevations of all the prominent organs, had not anything approaching to an angle upon it; all was round and swelling, from the top of the frontal bone to the chin, which latter repeated itself again and again in the waves of fat that encircled his neck, and were supported by a white cravat, or rather series of cravats within each other, forming what was long ago familiarly denominated a "pudding." But the eye of Father Denis was his crowning charm; it was grey, large, and in general somewhat languid, and swam in an atmosphere of moisture that proved the priest could, always within proper limits, enjoy the good things of life, both liquid and solid, as well as his neighbours; but once set the eye of Father Denis in motion, and it was something worth looking at, rolling restlessly about from one object to another, sparkling with intelligence, or twinkling with fun, as by turns it sought food for information or humour.

Our greetings were scarcely exchanged when the distant sound of wheels was heard. Have you ever listened to this sound in a still night in the country? The continuous roll and ringing tone which the wheels make upon the hard dry road, with the measured beat of the horse's feet as he slings along, have something quite musical in them, and I never hear them without involuntarily attaching to them some pleasant chanting melody. And now the noise suddenly ceased; the clear, sharp clank of iron told that the latch of the gate has been raised; the wheels came on ringing and singing again, and in a few minutes more a dog-cart, with its freight, drew up at the spot where we were standing. Uncle Saul descended leisurely from the front, and threw the reins to "Shawneen," who was in attendance. My godfather jumped down from beside him somewhat more briskly, and Jack Bishop, who sat behind, vaulted lightly over the back of the vehicle, and, executing an aërial gambol, descended to *terra firma*. Everybody shook hands with everybody else, as Dickens says; added to which Jonathan Freke slapped the priest upon the back by way of

emphasis, for they were old friends, and so we proceeded, without loss of time, to the parlour, Jack bringing up the rear, trolling the appropriate melody of "Patrick's Day in the Morning."

I have always observed in social meetings, if there be in company intelligent and good-humoured men, willing alike to listen and to communicate, that conversation, no matter how trifling and desultory it be at first, is sure, ere long, to cast off its commonplaces, to concentrate and intensify itself upon some worthier subject, and become pleasant and interesting always, and often instructive. Accordingly, after a few colloquial skirmishes, which usually continue during the time that is occupied in selecting each his particular refection and compounding the same, taking up the position at the fire or the table which is most agreeable to the individual, and, in a word, "making one's self comfortable," the conversation insensibly turned upon the subject of the national festival and the saint whose memory we were that night assembled to honour. Father Denis, not only in his clerical character, but also as being a tolerable antiquary aad a great Irish scholar, naturally took the lead, and recounted passages of the history and life of the great apostle and missionary of Ireland, with which his mind was well stored both from tradition and reading. Sooth to say, however, some of his accounts of Saint Patrick, in his encounters with the Pagan Irish, bordered so closely on the marvellous, that we were disposed to hold them as rather apocryphal, though we did not care just to tell the priest so. At length he narrated to us a smart brush or two which the saint had with the Irish Magi, and the miracles with which he discomfited them.

"Phew!" responded my godfather, in a subdued but lengthened whistle.

Now the narrator and his auditory interpreted this sibilation, each in his own fashion. The latter considered the sound as decidedly indicative of dissent and incredulity. And indeed the utterer, when afterwards questioned in private, admitted that it might be justly translated into "what a whopper!" The former looked upon it as a becoming expression of belief and admiration, such as a peasant would give utterance to in

the words "Glory be to God, see that now!" And so being gratified and encouraged he raised his glass to his mouth—a silent oblation to his beloved saint—and, after a moment's pause of an ardent and devotional character, he proceeded:—

"Gentlemen, I'm now going to give you a treat such as you won't meet every day nor from every one, I can assure you. What do you think of an original hymn composed by St. Patrick himself in the Irish language, and which he sang with his monks when they were approaching the royal palace of Temoria, or Tara, and were surrounded by their Pagan enemies? It was first given to the world by the learned Dr. Petrie, whom I have the high honour of knowing."

"The best hand living at an Irish air on the violin," interposed Jack, "and has the finest collection of Irish music extant. I wish he would publish it."

"And," continued the priest, "extracted from an Irish manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin, that is, at all events, twelve hundred years old. It is even now but little known, and I believe no metrical English version of it has ever been made except that which I mean just now to recite to you. But first listen to the hymn in the original."

Hereupon the priest threw himself back in his chair, and fixing his eyes steadily upon a little statuette of the "Apollo Belvedere" that stood on a bracket against the opposite wall, thus commenced:—

Ατ comnuc indiu munc chéin, cozaim Trinoit.
Cnecim cheodacaib foirin oendacad in bulemain bail.

"In the name of the blessed St. Patrick and all his holy monks, dear Father Dionysius, spare us the vernacular," whined Jack Bishop in a tone of most ludicrous supplication. "I never could pick up as much of Irish as would carry me through Connemara. Remember this is no night of penance, though it is in Lent."

The priest came to a dead stop, and looked at Jack with an expression of surprise and mortification in silence; but in a moment his eye began to twinkle, and he said with a smile:—

"You're quite right, Mr, Bishop, the Irish is not the thing at all for such as you are. I deserve the rebuke. *Ne date quod*

sanctum est canibus. Nec projicite margaritas vestras coram porcis. 'Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again, and rend you.'"

"Bravo! Father Denis," said Uncle Saul, "that's a hard hit you have given Jack Bishop."

"And convicted him of being a great *boar* on his own showing," added I.

"*Peccavi, peccavi,*" cried Jack in a penitential voice, "I submit, good father, to wash away my sin in an extra tumbler."

"By no means," replied the priest, "I shall not inflict so disagreeable a penance; I will be content with condemning you to strict silence till I have recited the English version of the hymn."

Jack bowed in dumb submission, and the priest thus proceeded:—

HYMN OF SAINT PATRICK.

I.

At Temoria, on this day,
To my aid I humbly pray
The Almighty potency
Of the blessed Trinity.

II.

In the blessed Trinity,
Under the form of unity
Of elemental Deity,
I believe most steadfastly.

III.

At Temoria, on this day,
Betwixt me and all ills, I lay
Sacred things whose virtues be
Of the holiest potency:

IV.

Christ's birth, his baptism in the wave,
His crucifixion and his grave,
His rising and ascent on high,
His coming to judgment finally.

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v.

At Temoria, on this day,
Betwixt me and all ills, I lay
The virtue of seraphic love,
Obedience angels yield above;

vi.

The virtue that the hope affords
Of resurrection to rewards,
In noble fathers' fervent pray'rs,
In prophecies of ancient seers;

vii.

In preaching of the Apostles blest,
In faith by dying saints confest,
In holy virgins' chastity,
In good men's deeds of piety.

viii.

At Temoria, on this day,
Betwixt me and all ills, I lay
The strength of heaven, the sun-beam's light,
Whiteness of snow, of fire the might;

ix.

The lightning's dread rapidity,
The speed of wind, the depth of sea,
Earth's stableness that bides the shock,
The hardness of the flinty rock.

x.

At Temoria, on this day,
God's strength be pilot of my way;
May God's pow'r, preserving, reach me!
May the wisdom of God teach me!

xi.

May the eye of God still view me!
May God's ear incline unto me!
May the Word of God be sent,
My speech to render eloquent!

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XII.

May the hand of God protect me!
May the way of God direct me!
May the shield of God still ward me!
May the host of God all guard me;

XIII.

From demon's snares, from sin's temptations,
From the mind's bad inclinations,
From all who think on ill to me,
Far, near, alone, in company!

XIV.

All these powers I place between me
And evil powers, 'gainst them to screen me,
Who their deadly arts employ
My soul and body to destroy;

XV.

Against false prophets, incantations,
Against black laws of Pagan nations,
Against false laws of heresy,
And treacheries of idolatry;

XVI.

'Gainst women's spells and every charm
That smiths and Druids work for harm,
'Gainst all forbidden lore that can
In blindness steep the soul of man.

XVII.

From death by poison, or by fire,
By drowning, or by wounding dire,
May Christ to-day my person guard,
Until I gain a great reward!

XVIII.

May Christ be with me and before me,
After me, in me, 'neath me, o'er me!
Christ at my right and left abide,
Behind, at this, and at that side!

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XIX.

May Christ be in the heart of each
To whom this day I speak or preach!
Christ in the mouth of each one be,
Who on this day shall speak to me!

XX.

May Christ be in the eyes of all
Whose eyes this day on me shall fall;
May Christ be in each listening ear
That shall this day incline to hear.

XXI.

At Temoria, on this day,
To my aid I humbly pray
The Almighty potency
Of the blessed Trinity.

XXII.

In the blessed Trinity,
Under the form of unity,
Of elemental Deity,
I believe most steadfastly.

XXIII.

God the Lord is our salvation!
God the Lord is our salvation!
Christ the Lord is our salvation!
Oh! may thy salvation be
Always with us, Lord, pray we.

"That is a very curious composition, no doubt," said my uncle, when the priest had concluded his recitation; "but are you quite sure that you are right in attributing its authorship to Saint Patrick?"

"There are persons," replied the priest, "who are sceptical enough to suggest doubts on this point, as they do on every other; but for my part, I feel a thorough conviction that the hymn was written by the saint himself. I think there is quite as good evidence of its authorship as that Ovid or Horace wrote the verses attributed to them, and much better than that Thomas of Celano wrote the 'Dies Iræ.'"

"Or that Sir Philip Francis wrote the Letters of Junius," said I.

"Let us hear his reverence's proofs," said Jack Bishop, who owed the priest a grudge, and would not be sorry to find him fail in establishing his position.

"In the first place," said Father Denis, dogmatically, "it is known to be a hymn of the highest Christian antiquity, being mentioned in several of the oldest manuscripts, and contains within it strong internal evidences from the fact of its being, as Dr. Petrie observes, so tinged with Pagan allusions as to indicate a period for its composition anterior to the full development of the Christian doctrine in the country."

"It may then be as old as the time of St Patrick," said I.

"Undoubtedly," resumed the priest, "and we have next the fact of its being considered as his composition so far back as the seventh century; indeed, the manuscript from which it is taken states it distinctly to have been written by the saint, and declares:—'And this is a religious armour to protect the body and soul against demons, and men, and vices. Every person who sings it every day, with all his attention on God, shall not have demons appearing to his face. It will be a protection to him against sudden death. It will be an armour to his soul after death. Patrick sung this at the time that the snares were set for him by Leogaire, that he might not come to propagate the faith to Temur; so that it appeared to those lying in ambush, that they were wild dear and a fawn after them.' And now, Mr. Bishop, can you give me as good evidence that Shakspere wrote some of the plays attributed to him, though he lived ten centuries later than St. Patrick?"

Whether right or wrong in his conjectures, the priest had the best of the argument, for none of us were able to gainsay him; he remained in possession of the field.

"Ah," he continued, "it must have been a grand sight to see the saint at the great assembly at Tara, associated with bishops, and kings, and legislators, revising the Brehon laws, and engrafting the noble precepts of Christianity on the code of Paganism; and in after times rebuking even a king on the authority of his priestly power; yet, with the humility of a fol-

lower of Christ, designating himself, '*Patricius peccator, indoctus.*'"

"They say," said my uncle, "that the improved code contains a license for priests to take a double potation in honour of the saint on his natal day, so prove your obedience, my worthy friend, by replenishing your glass, which I see is empty."

"'Tis a truth," said the priest, taking the hint, "and I yield a willing compliance, though I am no advocate for the excesses with which Irishmen are even still to apt to honour, or rather dishonour, the festival. And now, as I am in the vein, I will give you a poem of a more recent date. There is no people who feel more deeply, or describe more passionately, the sentiment of love than the Irish. The poem which I am about to repeat was composed in the sixteenth century, and will illustrate my observation. It commences thus.—Don't be afraid, Mr. Bishop, I shall give you only the first verse of the original."

"Well," said Jack, "let me light a fresh cigar, and get a mouthful of something hot to fortify me, and I shall bear it with Christian resignation."

Thereupon Father Denis proceeded with his poem.

Mairg dúinn d'ar dáil
A cúl na dtaé fial
Rí[bh]i cur ar gcúl
A norg lúi[th]leargg liaé.

"Here is my translation, which, on the word of a priest, you may take to be faithful. I call it

"THE LOVER'S COMPLAINT."

I.

Alas! that my destiny bids me depart
From thee, loved Finola, thou star of my heart!
O lady, whose clust'ring locks airily flow
Like sunbeams in showers o'er thy bosom of snow.

II.

Must I turn my sad steps to my home far away,
From thine eye of light blue, with its soul-piercing ray?
Those glances that wounded wherever they fell,
Like death pangs now pierce as I bid thee farewell.

III.

Oh, pulse of my heart! that throb'st deep in its core,
As sweet as the harp-strings thy fingers stray o'er!
Oh, thou of the fair bounteous hand, and the face
Where mantles the blood of thy generous race!

IV.

I mourn my far pilgrimage now with vain sighs
To the shrine of thy beauty, adored of all eyes.
Ah! would that *mine* never had looked upon thee,
Or seen thy long tresses so floating and free!

V.

In the north and the south, through the deep pastures stray
Many herds of fat kine in my lands far away;
All these would I give that I never had known
Thy beauties, or, knowing, might make them my own.

VI.

Oh sad is my journey of life here below,
In this world of fleet joys and of thick-crowding woe,
And dismal the fate I was doomed at my birth,
To live but in grief till I'm laid in the earth.

VII.

One feeling alone can a solace impart,
To lighten the mist that hangs over my heart;
The feeling that death comes with speedy relief,
To strike down his victim, and end all my grief.

VIII.

Since thou, my adored one, hast guided the dart
That mortally pierces my love-stricken heart,
The balsam, oh, give, thou alone can'st supply,
And heal with thy lips the deep wounds of thine eye.

IX.

But if to my pleadings obdurate thou prove,
If sternly thou close thy hard heart to my love,
Death the crime of my eyes and my heart will repair,
That I saw and I loved one so peerless and fair.

Father Denis's effusion was received with acclamation by us all, and our praises were duly acknowledged by the good priest, who was now in the highest state of complacency.

"And yet," said Saul, "it has the fault of most of the amatory compositions of poets of every age and country. It has too ostentatious a parade of feeling to be genuine. I doubt that the writer felt all the woes he deals with so prettily, and I daresay he lived to a good old age, notwithstanding his repulse, and would be very slow to accept the boon of death which he courted so earnestly in his verses."

"I am much of the same opinion," I remarked, "and poets have not been wanting to ridicule the love-pangs of their brother bards. I remember some verses of an Irish poet who lived about the same time, Cueonnacht O'Cleary, in which the affected woes of lovers are very humourously commented on, and contrasted with the pleasurable and healthy emotions by which the writer describes himself to be inspired under the influence of love. All the points of the poem would, I have no doubt, be better understood if we had the love songs of his contemporaries before us, in some one or other of which it is probable we should find the symptoms described which O'Cleary laughs at."

"I did not know you were a proficient in Irish, Jonathan," said my godfather.

"I got the poem from my esteemed friend, Eugene Curry, of the Royal Irish Academy, the most indefatigable of Irish scribes, and perhaps the greatest repertory living of those old Irish songs and ballads that are rapidly perishing from the land. We shall not fully estimate his value till Time shall force us to know it when he takes him away from us."

"You say truly," said the priest, "but let us have the poem, Master Jonathan. I am entitled to a call, am I not, gentlemen?"

Father Denis's right was pronounced to be undeniable, and I acknowledged it.

"You are heartily welcome to the poem through the medium of my translation, such as it is. I only fear that much of the humour of the original has evaporated in the process."

"Let us have it, then, without farther preface," said Jack Bishop; "I hate your apologies; they never make matters a whit the better, and always savour of mock modesty."

"You shall be inflicted with the first verse of the original for your discourteous observation. Thus sings jolly Cuconnacht O'Cleary:—

Neiṁéinn an ġalan é an ġnáṫ,
Ḃnéaġ aṁaṫ, cáċ ḋa ṫuiṫ
Aoiṁṫean riaṁ ní naiṫ rían
Aiġe náċ naiṫ ġnáṫ ḋo ṁnaoi.

"Now, then, for my English rendering of—

"LOVE IN REALITY."

I.

Away with the nonsense of vain poetasters,
Their sighing and dying's all lying and fudge,
They say love's a disease full of woes and disasters:
I deny it point blank, and I think I'm a judge.

II.

I boldly assert by my manhood that no man
Is all that he should be who is not in love;
And Providence, sure, sent us beautiful woman,
The joy, not the plague, of existence to prove.

III.

For myself, I'm in love head and ears at the present,
With a maid like a young swan, so graceful and fair,
And the symptoms I find on the whole very pleasant,
And just the reverse of what poets declare.

IV.

I shed not a tear, and I ne'er think of sighing:
I moan not, I groan not in fanciful woe;
And, if truth must be told, I am so far from dying
Of love, but for love I'd have died long ago.

V.

I keep flesh and blood up for the sake of this beauty;
I make it a point to be sound wind and limb;
I eat well, I drink well, I sleep as a duty;
For then of my love all sweet things I can dream.

VI.

I can listen to music and still feel delighted;
It shakes not my spirits to hear a sweet song;
My pace is quite steady, not like one affrighted,
Or a tree down a torrent swept swiftly along.

VII.

I've my voice at command, and my words are ne'er wanting;
And if half of the clothes in Conn's northern domain
Were heaped on my back, with their heat I'd be panting,
And fire is much hotter, I grant, than my skin.

VIII.

If I stood 'neath a torrent, or plunged in the ocean,
I'd come out rather chilly and not over dry;
If robust health and strength can cause death, I've a notion
I'm just in the very condition to die.

IX.

I'm not swollen out with grief till a long rope won't bind me;
My mouth is more moist than the touchwood, no doubt;
And I'll give you my oath, that you never will find me
Drinking dry a deep lake to extinguish my drought.

X.

I can tell night from day without making a blunder;
A ship from a wherry, as well as the best;
And I know white from black, which you'll say is a wonder,
Despite all the love that is lodged in my breast.

XI.

A mountain I never mistake for the ocean,
A horse I can tell with great ease from a deer,
Of great things and small I've an excellent notion,
And distinguish a fly from a whale very clear.

XII.

And now, to conclude with a stiffish conundrum—
"A part of the stern of a boat o'er the wave,
Seven hazels whose barren twigs cast no fruit under 'em,"
Is the name of the fair one who holds me a slave.

XIII.

Not one in a thousand that try will make out of it
The name of the maid most beloved of my heart;
And though Love touch my brain, yet the sense 'twon't take out of it,
For I swear there's no poison or pain in his dart.

"Before we discuss the merits of the poem, Master Jonathan," said the priest, be so good as to expound the riddle of the poet. What was the name of the lady that made him so happy?"

"Ah! that's the puzzle; I wish you could aid me to its solution. My good friend, Eugene Curry, has turned it over again and again, and though he has suggested a name which he considers fulfils the conditions, I am not quite satisfied with it. We were puzzling over it one day at the Academy, when a most erudite member of that body, himself a distinguished Irish scholar, and an expounder of all sorts of cyphers, came up to us. We at once took him into council, and asked his assistance. After a moment's cogitation he observed, with his usual practical good sense, 'I think it probable enough that I should discover the name ultimately, but I have great doubt that I would be repaid for the time and toil I should expend upon it."

"I entirely agree with that wise scholar," said Bishop, "'*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.*'"

"Well," said the priest, "give me the verse in the original at any rate, I'll take it home and amuse myself with it."

"Ay," cried Jack, "give it to his reverence, by all means; I'll warrant you he'll find himself as much at sea as the ship, and as fruitless as the hazels."

"I suspect these hazels have nuts, however, Mr. Bishop, that are too hard for your jaws to crack," retorted his reverence.

"I shan't break my teeth trying to crack nuts that I'd be sure to find blind," returned the other.

"A drawn battle—a drawn battle!" cried my godfather, in high delight at the smart, yet not unfriendly, sallies of the combatants.

"But now to the merits of the poem," he continued. "Saul, I consider you—meaning no offence to his reverence or Jack Bishop—as the best judge amongst us, upon matters of love. From the first moment that you spread your wings till you burned them to the stumps, you have been fluttering about the candle."

My uncle laughed heartily.

"Ah, Freke, Freke, the days when we were young! Well,

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then, as you have appealed to my experience, I must say that honest Cuconnacht was not much astray, in my judgment. The passion of love, acting on a manly nature, a healthy temperament, and a brave heart, is sure to elevate and improve, not to depress and deteriorate. When I see a young fellow, with his head high, his eye bright, his cheek warm, his step elastic, his speech vivacious, with a little dash of sentiment in it, and his dress displaying just so much careful arrangement as shows that there is some one in particular in whose eyes he wishes to find favour; when I see such a man in such a *status*, moral and physical, I set him down, without a moment's hesitation, as being in love, heartily, and hopefully, and with a worthy object. I admit, that when the course of a man's love does not run smoothly, he may chafe at his crosses, or even, now and then, lose half-an-hour's rest o' nights, but he doesn't go sighing and moping all day long. He neither shuts himself up in his house, and lets his beard grow, nor prowls about amongst his acquaintances with a woe-begone visage, and his apparel hanging slovenly about him. No, he bears up with a brave and constant heart, and is all the surer to gain his object. 'Tis only your fellows fed upon goat's milk, like Sylvius, that whine and fawn the more they are spurned, and ill-treated; or your coxcombs, like Malvolio, that cut antics, and trick themselves out in yellow stockings, and go cross-gartered. By the way, how admirably does Shakspeare make Phœbe disdainfully reprove the lying hyperboles of Sylvius's sneaking courtship:—

" 'Thou tellest me there is murder in mine eye:
Tis pretty, sure, and very probable,
That eyes,—that are the frailest and softest things,
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,—
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murderers!
Now I do frown on thee with all my heart;
And if my eyes can wound, now let them kill thee;
Now counterfeit to swoon; why now fall down;
Or, if thou can'st not, O, for shame, for shame,
Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers.
Now show the wound mine eye hath made in thee:
Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains
Some scar of it; lean but upon a rush,
The cicatrice and capable impressure

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Thy palm some moment keeps; but now mine eyes,
Which I have darted at thee, hurt thee not;
Nor, I am sure, there is no force in eyes
That can do hurt.'"

"Bravo! bravo! Saul, you discourse of love like a professor; I subscribe to your dogmas, with all my heart. When we were youngsters, Mr. Bishop, we had our flirtations and *affaires du cœur*, like our neighbours. Had n't we, Saul?"

"Ay, old friend, that had we," responded my uncle, while something like a shadow flitted over his face, that he drove away with a cheery smile. "When I look back upon the scenes of youth, chequered with their lights and shadows, I sometimes feel almost a sadness steal over me, because they are past for ever; but I am soon myself again when I call to mind the truest of all philosophy, to make the best use of the present, and the best provision for the future. And so, to carry out the first part of the maxim, I'll chant you something to the very point with such a voice as is still left me; and I hope you 'll all deal tenderly with

"THE BACHELOR'S MEMORIES."

I.

Ah, the hours I've lost and lavished!
Ah, the years I've lived in vain!
Ah, the graces Time has ravished
Time will ne'er restore again!

II.

Hot blood, welling, like a fountain,
Briskly through each youthful vein;
Manly sports o'er moss and mountain—
Limbs that toiled yet felt no pain.

III.

Spirits light and temper plastic—
Courtly feats and revelry;
Rustic dance, with feet elastic,
By the village hawthorn tree.

IV.

All are gone! like dreams at morning,
Fading in the cold grey light—
One by one—and give me warning
How Time pilfers in his flight.

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V.

Drinking toasts and courting lasses,
These are things that cannot last,
And the joys I found in *glasses*
Are, I fear, for ever past.

VI.

One but yields me now dejection;
All its bright wine drained apace;
And the *other* brings *reflection*,
When I look into its face.

VII.

Raven locks, I find, are whitening,
Crows' feet gather round my eyes—
And my figure needs some tightening,
As 'tis growing out of size.

VIII.

If I feast I grow dyspeptic,
And my temper's put astray;
If I drink I 'm hot and hectic,
With a headache all next day.

IX.

Dancing makes me now quite giddy,
I 'm too stiff to twirl and twist;
So, I 'm placed with some old lady
At a quiet game of whist.

X.

What! is nothing left at fifty
But the yellow leaf, and sear?
Has my youth been so unthrifty
That my age finds nought to cheer?

XI.

Ah! not so—there's still some pleasure
Left of joys I loved so dear;
Like the bee that hoards his treasure
For the winter drawing near.

XII.

Though the days so bright and sunny
May return to me no more,
Still I've kept a little honey
Hived up for my winter store.

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XIII.

Like soft music heard at even,
When the winds are all asleep;
Like the starlight, showered from heaven
On the still face of the deep.

XIV.

Sweet, yet sad, the mem'ry o'er me
Comes of joys in youth and prime
Yet, in hope, I'll look before me,
And enjoy the present time.

XV.

I have friends still firm and steady,
All the dearer that they 're old,—
As this wine, that is not heady,
Cheers and warms me when I'm cold.

XVI.

With them I can still talk over
All our happy days again;
Be once more a youthful lover!
But no longer feel love's pain.

XVII.

Though the belles I loved at twenty,
I can dance no more with these,
They 've got young ones all, in plenty,
That I dance upon my knees.

XVIII.

I 've my books, my thoughts, my rambles
By the river-side and wood;
And I learn, though full of brambles,
Life has fruits both sweet and good.

XIX.

To repine at fate is folly;
Brightest flowers are first to fade,—
I would be the trim, smooth holly,
Green when every rose is dead.

XX.

Let me live, while life is given,
Wise not sadly, sagely gay,
Thankful for the gifts which Heaven
Shall assign from day to day;

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XXI.

Till at length, my old trunk withered,
All my branches in decay,
Trunk and branch, by kind friends gathered,
Are laid in their primal clay.

XXII.

And the Lord of tree and flower,
Who to each gives growth and bloom,
Ah! may he—in that last hour,
When my life he shall resume—

XXIII.

Plant me by that holy river,
Whose streams make God's city glad,
There renewed to flourish ever
In undying verdure clad.

When my uncle began his song, my godfather gently drew over to him a high-backed chair, and placed the extremity of his legs on the highest part of it, so that they acquired an elevation above his head that would have satisfied the most luxurious Yankee. Then he lighted a fresh cigar with the stump of the old one, which he threw into the fire, and, as he puffed away, gave himself up to the pleasant or saddening recollections that his old friend's verses called to mind. You might have known from the puffs how his feelings fluctuated; now a long, straight, cylindrical column stretched out as from the pipe of a pair of bellows; next, a succession of quick, vigorous puffs; anon a large placid volume rolled languidly from his mouth, and then came the moderated breathings of the vapour at measured intervals, till, as my uncle finished, he took the cigar from his lips, and deposited it upon a plate with a gentle carefulness that did not disturb the white top of ashes that had gathered on it.

"Ah! Saul, Saul, how many sad and pleasant thoughts you have awakened within me, my old friend—what we have been, what we are, and what we shall inevitably come to; fiery and fervent at first, then burning slowly down, and at last clean smoked out and laid down in ashes."

"*Quæ est enim vita nostra? Vapor enim est ad exiguum*

tempus, apparens et deinde disparens," said the priest, solemnly. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

"Come, come," cried Jack Bishop, "this will never do. No moping upon the festival of good Saint Patrick. Fill up your glass, Mr. Freke. I protest you are looking downright melancholy for once in your life. Father Denis, let us see the light of your countenance once more. Remember this isn't Ash-Wednesday, but the day of our own illustrious tutelar Saint of happy and joyful memory. Come, I'll give you a song which Jonathan wrote expressly for me to sing this blessed evening:—

"Not yet, not yet," said I, "it is high time to have a few minutes' respite. Come over here, Jack, and aid me in anatomising these roast fowls and slicing the tongue."

"With all my heart," cried Jack; "your reverence has no objection, I hope, to a morsel of meat?"

"None in the world," said the priest, "it is not fast day."

"For my part," said Jack, "I have always been too bad a Christian to cultivate the practice."

"And yet," retorted the priest, "for all your sneer, Mr. Bishop, there was a time when your own reformers enforced the rule of abstinence from flesh as rigidly as we Catholics."

"I can give you," said I, "a very amusing and veritable instance of the truth of my worthy friend's remark, and as soon as you are all fairly at work, I shall read it for you."

It did not take many minutes, you may be sure, to accomplish that object, and I took down a book from a neighbouring shelf from which I read the following historical fact:—

"Thomas Freburn's wife, of Paternoster Row, London, longed for pig. Fisher, a butter-woman, brought him a pig ready for the spit, but carried a foot of it to Dr. Cocks, Dean of Canterbury, whilst at dinner. One of the Dean's guests was Garter King-at-Arms, Freburn's landlord, who sent to know if any of his family were ill, that he ate flesh in Lent. 'All well,' quoth Freburn, 'only my wife longs for pig.' His landlord sends for the Bishop of London's apparitor, and orders him to take Freburn and his pig before Stocksley the bishop. Stocks-

ley sends him and his pig to Judge Cholmly, who, not being at home, he and the pig were brought back to the bishop, who committed them both to the Compter. Next day, being Saturday, he was carried before the Lord Mayor, who said on Monday next he should stand in the pillory, with one-half of the pig on one shoulder, the other half on the other. The wife desired she might suffer, as the pig was on her account. A string was put through it, and it was hung about his neck, which he thus carried to the Compter again. Through Cromwell's intercession the poor man at last gained his liberty by a bond of twenty pounds for his appearance. This mischief-making pig was, by order of the Right Reverend Father in God, the Bishop of London, buried in Finsbury Field by the hands of his lordship's apparitor, and Freburn was, by his landlord, turned out of his house, and could not get another in four years."

"Thank heaven," cried Bishop, "these times are gone by. A Jewish synagogue could not have punished the poor fellow more severely."

"By the way," said Uncle Saul, "if I mistake not, our patron saint whose festival we are now celebrating was himself once sorely tempted by swine's flesh; but he got out of the matter much better than the poor devil Freburn. Am I not right, Father Dionysius?"

"Indeed you are," replied the priest; "and I will tell you how it happened:—When the blessed Saint Patrick went from Britain into France, while yet a young man, he attached himself to a holy bishop named Germanus, and continued many years with him, making wonderful progress in Christian faith and learning, and finally assuming the monastic habit and rules, and then it was that this trial was sent to him—but I'll give you the narration of it in better words than mine." So saying, he drew forth from his coat pocket a greasy-looking black-letter volume. "'Tis the veritable history of Father Jocelyn of Furnes—ay, here 's the very passage:—'At Patricius nunc monachus'"——

"Hollo! Father Denis, could n't you contrive to let us have the story in common English?" cried my godfather. "I pro-

test, I know as little of Latin now as they say the devil does."

The priest tried to look grave; but the ludicrousness of the simile was too much for him, and he burst out a-laughing.

"Well, Mr. Freke, I'll make shift to translate the Latin as I go along." And the worthy priest accordingly thus proceeded to render the narrative of the Cistercian monk, in a quaint style that smacked much of the terseness of the Latin idiom.

"But Patrick having now become a monk, forgetting all things that were past, applied to the future; and, as if little accounting his former conversation, hastened to the height of perfection. For by incredible abstinence, by his lengthened fasts, and by the exercise of his other virtues, he afflicted himself, and continually bore in his heart and on his body the mortification of that cross which his habit displayed. But the most high Pastor, who intended to raise him to the head of the holy church, that he might learn to think humbly of himself, to walk with the lowly and to bear with the weak, permitted him to feel his own inferiority: so that the more deeply he was fixed on the foundation of true humility, the more firmly he might stand in the height of perfection. For a desire of eating meat came upon him, until, being ensnared and carried away by his desire, he obtained swine's flesh, and concealed it in a certain vessel; thinking, rightly, that he might thus satisfy his appetite privily, which, should he openly do, he would become to his brethren a stone of offence and a stumbling-block of reproach. And he had not long quitted the place, when, lo! one stood before him having eyes before and eyes behind; whom when Patrick beheld having his eyes so wonderfully, even so monstrously placed, he marvelled who he was, and what meant his eyes fixed before and fixed behind, did earnestly ask; and he answered:—'I am the servant of God. With the eyes fixed in my forehead I behold the things that are open to view, and with the eyes that are fixed in the hinder part of my head I behold a monk hiding flesh-meat in a vessel that he may satisfy his appetite privily!' This he said, and immediately disappeared. But Patrick, striking his breast with many strokes, cast himself to the earth and watered it with a shower

of tears, as if he had been guilty of all crimes; and while he thus lay on the ground mourning and weeping, the angel *Victor*, so often before mentioned, appeared to him in his wonted form, saying, 'Arise! let thine heart be comforted, for the Lord hath put away thine offence, and henceforth avoid backsliding.' Then St. Patrick, rising from the earth, utterly renounced and abjured the eating of flesh-meat ever through the rest of his life; and he humbly besought the Lord that he would manifest unto him his pardon by some sign. Then the angel bade Patrick to bring forth the hidden meats and put them into water, and he did as the angel bade; and the flesh-meats being plunged into the water and taken thereout, immediately became FISHES! This miracle did St. Patrick often relate to his disciples, that they might restrain the desire of their appetites. But many of the Irish, wrongfully understanding this miracle, are wont, on St. Patrick's Day, which always falls in the time of Lent, to plunge flesh-meats into water; when plunged in to take out, when taken out to dress, when dressed to eat, and call them 'fishes of St. Patrick.' But hereby every religious man will learn to restrain his appetite, and not to eat meat at forbidden seasons, little regarding what ignorant and foolish men are wont to do."

"That was a very marvellous metamorphosis which the swine underwent," remarked Bishop, when the priest concluded his reading and put his little book again into his pocket—"Very marvellous indeed."

"And proves your favourite theory," said I, "that the Irish waters have always abounded with fish."

"Pray, Father Denis," asked my godfather, "has not this miraculous power of transmuting flesh into fish come down to you, the true successors of St. Patrick?"

The priest laughed good humouredly.

"I know what you mean, Mr. Freke, very well, about the leg of mutton upon Friday—'tis all a fabrication of you heretics to bring scandal upon mother church."

"With your leave," said Bishop, "I'll give you a specimen of *my* hagiology, and add one chapter more to your 'acta sanctorum.' There is a legend of St. Patrick and Dumbarton rock

which I picked up once on a time, when rambling through Scotland; and I do not see that it is a whit more apochryphal than many of those which are generally accepted."

"Let us hear it," said Uncle Saul, "and we will judge for ourselves."

"Well, then, every one who has sailed up the Clyde remembers Dumbarton Rock, with what a bold effect it rises sheer and picturesque out of the water. But every one does not know how it came there. It was in this wise. St. Patrick had been preaching with great success throughout Scotland, insomuch that he put to rout magicians and devils and all their works of darkness, in every direction; and he was now returning down the Clyde towards his native place, namely, a certain village called Taburnia, near the town of Empthor, not far from the Irish Sea. Just then, some of the evil spirits whom he had so sorely discomfited happened to be prowling about on the top of the hill on the right bank of the river, in a very desolate condition, not well knowing what work to cut out for themselves, so completely had the saint spoiled their trade. One of them chanced to look down towards the river, probably with some suicidal intentions, when he caught a sight of the ship in which the saint was making his voyage.

"'May I be d——d,' exclaimed the fiend (they were terrible swearers, Father Denis, and had no sense of religion), 'if that chap that's standing on the forecastle, with the crook in his hand, is n't that canting monk, Patrick, the psalm-singer. There he goes, after kidnapping every soul in the country from us.'

"A howl of rage and hatred from a legion of devils followed the recognition; they who heard it looked up in affright, and wondered at the sudden storm that sprang up on the hill-tops, and rushed brattling and echoing down their sides.

"'Fling a wave over him,' cried one of the demons, 'and wash him down into the lee-scuppers.'

"'Catch the bald-headed gaberlunzie up in a guffaw of wind, and pitch him headlong into the water,' said another.

"'Fling down a rock upon the ship," added a fourth, 'and sink him and his crew to the d——'

"This last suggestion took the fancy of the company mightily, and was adopted by acclamation. So they whipped the top off the hill as easily as one might snatch a Scotchman's bonnet off his *pow*, and down they hurled it at the little vessel. They were capital fellows at throwing a stone—you would meet no such hands now-a-days at the gatherings at Inverness or Blair Athol. Many a one who saw the huge boulder flying through the air took it to be a thunderbolt, and ducked down their heads in terror till it passed over. The skipper caught it with the tail of his eye, and mistaking it for a cat's paw, he sang out to the steersman to put the helm hard up, and reefed all sail. But there were holy eyes watching and holy hands ready to check the course of the demon-impelled rock, and so it fell short of the ship and flopped down into the water, which it crushed into spray that fell in a white shower upon the boat's crew; and when the roar subsided and the mist cleared away, there stood Dumbarton rock, one half of it rising above the tide, and its base still lashed by the troubled waters."

"I am greatly beholden to you, and so, I have no doubt, is Saint Patrick, Mr. Bishop, for this grave and most faith-worthy legend," said the priest

"Come," said my godfather, "we have had enough of legends for one night. I'll sing you a song as well as I can, as a set-off against Saul's, which nearly put me in the blues, but mine shall be all *coleûr de rose*. If 'bachelors' memories' have a tinge of sadness, there should be no gloom about

BACHELORS' JOYS.

I.

I still have my relish for jovial society,
Mingling with gay laughing friends by my side;
I can revel still wildly through pleasure's variety,
Beauty around me and Love to preside.

II.

Come Daphne, and Phillis too, blooming Myrtillis too,
Sit by my side with your soul-loving smile;
Though my locks are now growing few, turning to white, 'tis true,
My heart—oh, my heart's young and warm all the while.

III.

Look at this lyre that my fingers stray over,
Old mellow Anacreon touched it of yore;
'Tis a magical shield, with whose broad shell I cover
My heart from the sorrows that life has in store.

IV.

The bard, smiling kindly, thus said, as he gave it—
"This talisman ever keep close to thy side;
Life's storm may rave round thee, thy firm soul shall brave it;
Thus guarded, ne'er fear, whatso'er may betide."

V.

And still, as I wake the soft notes in love's wooing,
The fond doves of Venus, allured by the strain,
Flutter round the sweet strings, ever billing and cooing
Their rosy beaks joining again and again.

VI.

And if, as oft haps in their amorous playing,
They peck at my head or my breast from the lyre,
I feel through my frame love's soft influence straying,
My locks shine with youth—my heart glows with desire!

"My dear Freke," said Saul, "you are a very Anacreon in your sentiments."

"And an Apollo in your singing," added Bishop. "I never heard a voice of greater firmness and rectitude in my life. It has neither a shake nor a turn in it."

"I appreciate your compliment, Mr. Bishop," said the other. There is nothing like being straightforward in everything one does."

"Mr. Jonathan," said Father Denis, "you have not yet given us a song."

"I shall willingly do so," said I, "if you promise to follow."

"Ah, my dear boy, my singing days are over, 'Lupi Mœrin videre priores!' I can't now make shift to do more than chant a verse or two from my breviary."

"You shall stand absolved," said Saul, "from singing, in consideration of the many marvellous legends which you have contributed to this night's entertainment. Go on, Jonathan."

"I will follow my godfather's good example, and give you an Anacreontic also."

I.

Take this cup, my friend, and fill it
With the glowing wine,
Let no sigh of sorrow chill it—
Chill the draught divine.
Beauty's eye may beam more bright
To the lover's cheated sight,
And Beauty's lip have balmier dew
Than the goblet's brim for you;
Yet take this cup of mine.

II.

Raise the wine-cup high and drain it
With devotion deep,
Though joy has fled, 'twill soon regain it,
And brighten eyes that weep.
Beauty's joys are quickly past,
Our's will flow while wine shall last;
When Beauty frowns we sigh in vain,—
The vine bunch pressed, soon foams again;
Then drain the wine cup deep.

III.

Take this lyre, my friend, and string it
When thy soul is free,
Night's foot is slow, and we will wing it
With sweet melody;
Women's fingers never woke
Songs of love upon its wire;
Women's lips have never broke
The slumber of this midnight lyre;
Take this lyre from me.

IV.

Sweep the thrilling chord and make it
Breathe the poet's soul,
As the Teian bard would wake it
O'er his sparkling bowl;
Love has fleeting joys 'tis true,
With lasting pangs and sorrows too,
Love betrays and makes us slaves,—
Wine frees, and music ne'er deceives
The minstrel's kindling soul.

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V.

Take these leaves, my friend, and bind them
In a wreath to-night,
Women's hand perchance might wind them
With flowers fair and bright.
For thee the palm Apollo gives
The olive and the laurel leaves,
And Bacchus grants the fig and vine,
The ivy and the fir to twine
Into a wreath to-night.

VI.

Lift the chaplet high, and wreath it
Round thy temples now,
No treach'rous thorn can lurk beneath it,
To pierce thy gloomless brow.
'Tis Love weaves in the flower that grows
For Venus fair, the thorny rose,
'Tis Beauty's smile and Beauty's art,
Not wine or music, wound the heart
And dim the brightest brow.

VII.

Take this cup, my friend, and fill it
With the glowing wine,
Sorrow's sigh no more shall chill it,—
Chill the draught divine.
Strike the lyre to lays of yore,
That old Anacreon loved before,
Still wear the chaplet on thy brow,
No thorn can reach to wound thee now
Mid music and mid wine.

"Now, Bishop," said Saul, "we wait for your song, for I hear you have got one fabricated specially for the occasion."

"'Tis a fact. Jonathan has provided me with a few stanzas to be sung to our national melody in honour of Saint Patrick. Open the piano, Jonathan, till I strum a few chords by way of accompaniment,"

Jack sat down to the instrument, and dashing off a light prelude, full of spirit, continued:—

"And now for my song. By the way, you must know, the saint and myself were born on the same day, so I have a natural right to be doubly festive.

AIR—*St. Patrick's Day.*

I.

The white and the orange, the blue and green boys,
We'll blend them together in concord to-night;
The orange most sweet amid green leaves is seen, boys—
The loveliest pansy is blue and white.
The light of the day,
As it glides away,
Paints with orange the white clouds that float in the west,
And the billows that roar
Round our own island shore
Lay their green heads to rest on the blue heaven's bosom,
Where sky and sea meet in the distance away.
As Nature thus shows us how well she can fuse 'em,
We'll blend them in love on Saint Patrick's Day.

II.

The hues of the prism, philosophers say, boys,
Are nought but the sunlight resolved into parts;
They're beauteous, no doubt, but I think that the ray, boys,
Unbroken, more lights up and warms our hearts.
Each musical tone,
Struck one by one,
Makes melody sweet, it is true, on the ear—
But let the hand ring
All at once every string—
And, oh! there is harmony now that is glorious,
In unison pealing to heaven away;
For UNION is beauty, and strength, and victorious,
Of hues, tones, or hearts, on Saint Patrick's Day.

III.

Those hues in our bosoms be sure to unite, boys;
Let each Irish heart wear those emblems so true;
Be fresh as the green, and be pure as the white, boys,
Be bright as the orange, sincere as blue.
I care not a jot
Be your scarf white or not,
If you love as a brother each child of the soil;
I ask not your creed,
If you'll stand in her need
To the land of your birth in the hour of her dolours,
The foe of her foes, let them be who they may;
Then "FUSION OF HEARTS, AND CONFUSION OF COLOURS!"
Be the Irishman's toast on Saint Patrick's Day.

As Jack concluded, Saul exclaimed:—

"Give us the last two lines again, and we shall join you in a chorus of hearts and voices."

Then Bishop repeated them, and we made my little parlour ring with the sentiment:—

"Then fusion of hearts and confusion of colours
Be the Irishman's toast on Saint Patrick's Day."

When the song was concluded, the singer and the writer received all the praise that good-natured friends, especially after supper, are sure to award.

"Mr. Bishop," said the priest, addressing Jack in the heartiest manner, "I like your song, and I like the sentiment of it. It would be well that Irishmen would do what every other nation under heaven does, *pull together*. With all their talk about nationality, they have as little of this indispensable attribute of nationality as any people in the world. May the time come, and soon, when it shall be otherwise."

"Amen," said Saul, and his aspiration was repeated by all present. The priest held out his hand to Jack, who, not content with this moderate demonstration of good will, dramatically flung his arms around the portly person of the old man, exclaiming, "*Embrassons nous.*"

In a few moments the silver bell of the pendule began to sound; Saul reckoned its peals, "one, two," and so on, till at last he said:—

"Bless me, 'tis eleven o'clock—who would have thought it?"

"And you may add one more to make it the dozen," added Bishop, as the last stroke tolled.

Then Saul rang for the dog-cart, which was at the door by the time we had finished our glasses. I shook hands heartily with each, the party mounted the cart, Jack amicably making room for the priest beside him, and I was once again alone in the moonlight.

THE END.

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