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# OLD·IRISH·LIFE



J·M·CALLWELL



IRENE DWEN ANDREWS



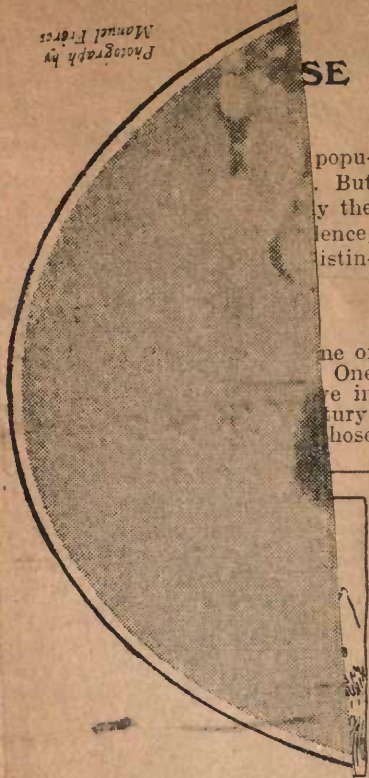
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1924 -

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Executive Council by the Government and  
 people of the United States and in the  
 equally enthusiastic reception accorded to  
 the Secretary of State during his visit to  
 Dublin.  
 "It will be my earnest endeavour to  
 develop still further the cordiality of  
 these relations."  
 President Hoover, in reply, said:—"The  
 greetings and messages of goodwill which  
 you have so felicitously expressed in the  
 name of the Irish Free State and its  
 people are most cordially reciprocated, and  
 bear gratifying testimony to the unusually  
 friendly relations which have always ex-  
 isted between the two peoples, who are  
 closely connected both by blood and senti-  
 ment, as was exemplified in the welcome  
 to the President of the Executive Council  
 of the Irish Free State in the United  
 States and to the Secretary of State of  
 the United States in Dublin.  
 "The relations of friendship which have  
 so been established and maintained through  
 I am confident, be augmented through  
 your mission in Washington, and  
 will ever conduce to the advancement of  
 the common interests of the two nations  
 and to mutual goodwill and understand-  
 ing between us."



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Photograph by  
 Manuel Flores



J. J. Kelly  
1930

## HEGON O'REGON AND HIS SQUICKETS.

Chicago, March 10.—Who says the Irish are not funny? On March 17 they will celebrate the natal day of a man who was born on Aug. 15. A number of the Irish will be proud when they are called "Celts."

March 17 is the birthday of Hegon O'Regon (Heogeogheon Or'Reogeogheon) the first known European to circumnavigate the globe. He was a Gael. There never was a nation that lived on the face of the earth that were called Celts any more than there is a race known as Anglo-Saxons or Scotch-Irish to designate certain immigrants to the United States that came by the way of Ireland.

There is abundant proof by the number of squicket stones scattered all over Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Greenland to bear O'Regon's statement that he "visited the top of the world," or the north pole. Chinese historians and the squicket stones in China bear witness to O'Regon's visits there. There are references to the old Gaels in the Old Testament and it is now accepted that the "lost tribes of Israel" were nothing but the bands of Gaels who returned home.

Wherever a squicket stone is found, you can be sure that it marked the spot of some ancient Gaelic settlement, for the stone was erected on a spot selected by O'Regon as a seat of learning.

Further proof of O'Regon's visit to northern Europe can be found in the fact that students of the ancient Gaelic can today converse with residents of Iceland and Finland and in parts of Norway and Sweden. O'Regon left copious notes of his discoveries, explorations and colonization and these can now be read in English in the books called "Voyages of Hegon O'Regon."

How St. Patrick came to be connected with the shamrock is a mystery, for this should belong to O'Regon, who, being the Luther Burbank of his day, evolved the shamrock. March 17 is O'Regon's birthday and it also marked the opening day of the ancient feast of Tara.

So next Monday the "Celts" will observe a holiday in honor of a man who was born in August. They will laugh at the "dumb" Swedes and Norwegians, not knowing that in Norway and Sweden, in the shape of the sagas, are preserved the purest of ancient Gaelic folklore and that the present day Eskimos are full blood brothers to the ancient Gaels. For people who brag so much of their race, the Irish in America know less about themselves than any other people.

RAYMOND S. KELLY,  
President, Illinois Squicket Club.

# AN

# IRISHMAN

*The Italian School : Story*

*The Spider's Web : :*

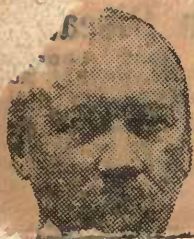
*Swan*

Hour.

for a train at a certain  
 the other day, I was afforded  
 display of railway activity  
 were railway porters, four in  
 Number one procured a milk  
 and it at a drinking-water tap,  
 the help of number two, trans-  
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OLD IRISH LIFE









"HUMANITY DICK."  
COLONEL RICHARD MARTIN, M.P., OF BALLINAHINCH

*From portrait in possession of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.*



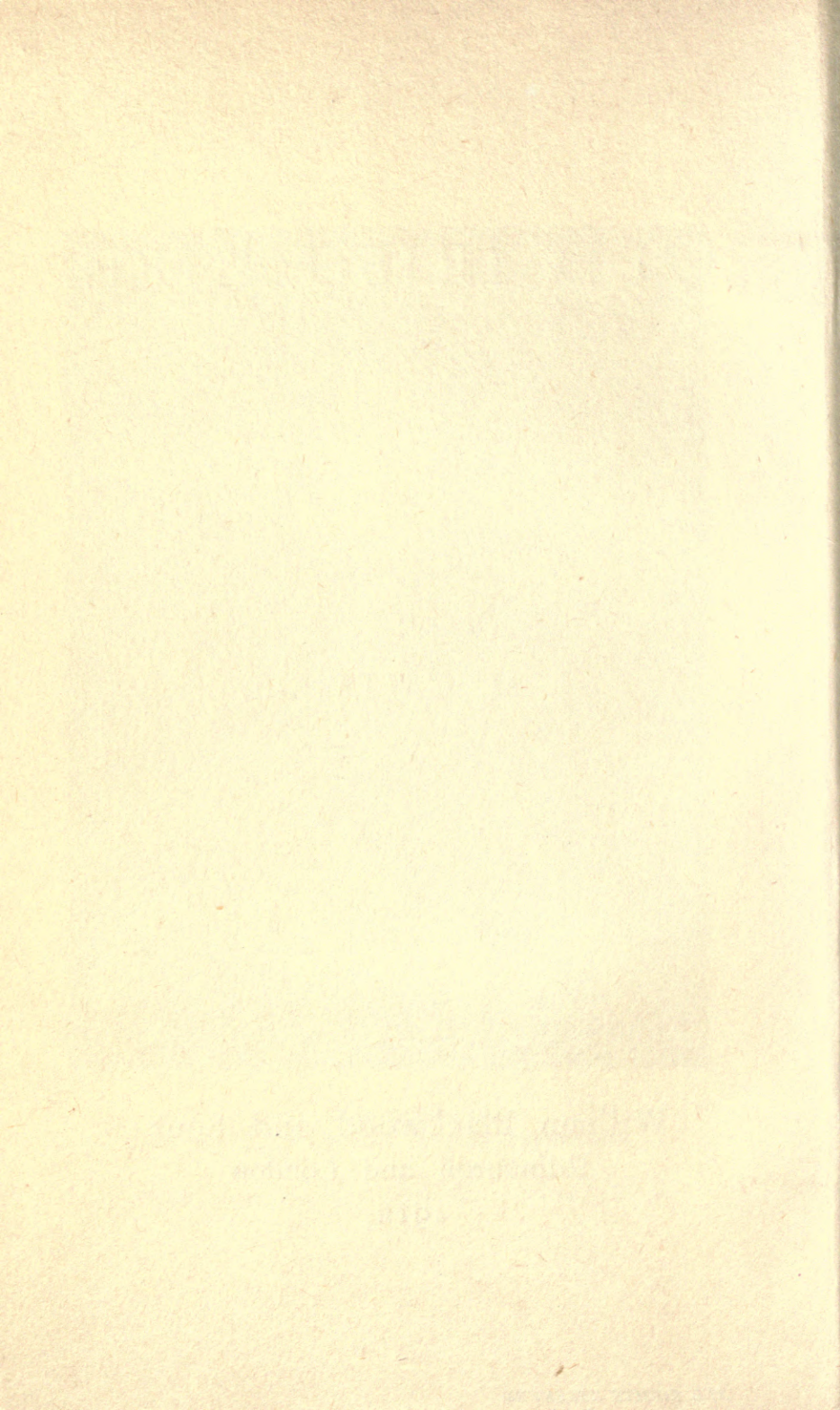
# OLD IRISH LIFE

BY

J. M. CALLWELL

William Blackwood and Sons  
Edinburgh and London

1912





## PREFACE.

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A PORTION of the following pages has already appeared in the form of stray papers in 'Blackwood' and the 'Cornhill.' They are now republished, together with much additional material, by the kind permission of the proprietors of those magazines.

For the earlier portion of this work innumerable authorities have been consulted, including both the periodic literature of the day and the State papers in the Record Office in Dublin. In especial I have availed myself of Hardiman's 'History of Galway,' Roderick O'Flaherty's 'History of Iar-Connaught,' Dutton's 'Topography of Galway,' Sir Jonah Barrington's 'Personal Sketches of His Own Time,' Oliver Burke's 'Anecdotes of the Connaught Circuit,' D. O. Madden's 'Revelations of Ireland,' and Phillips' 'Curran and his Contemporaries.' I also wish

to accord very grateful thanks to Archer Martin, Judge of the High Court of British Columbia, for much valuable information given me concerning the earlier history of the Martin family.

The latter part of this book has been related to me personally, and I have reproduced it in the form that seemed best calculated to give a vivid picture of bygone days and to make the dead past live.

J. M. CALLWELL.



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# OLD IRISH LIFE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE TRIBES OF GALWAY.

THE Irish antiquarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries held hot debate as to whence the town of Galway had its name. The earliest pronouncement on the subject was by one of the Four Masters, who declared it to be derived from Galva, the daughter of an Irish chieftain, who was drowned in the swift-flowing river that brings the waters of Lough Corrib down to the sea. In confirmation of this theory the great map of Galway, to be further alluded to hereafter, marks a rock in the river where the disaster was said to have occurred. Roderick O'Flaherty, the historian of Iar-Connaught and one of the dispossessed under Cromwell's iron rule, whilst disbelieving in the hapless lady and her fate, yet held that the river

had given its name to the town that grew up on its eastern bank. Another and a much more probable theory, however, was advanced a hundred years later by General Vallancey, who was an enthusiastic student of all things Irish and of the Irish language, which he believed to be coeval with the world, and the tongue wherein Adam and Eve had conversed in the Garden of Eden. This theory was that instead of the river giving its name to the town, it was the town which had given it to the river, and that both were called after the Gaels, or merchant-strangers, who had penetrated to that remote region, and that the ancient name of Galway was Galimh, pronounced Galwa, and meaning in Irish the town, or stronghold of the foreigners.

Be this as it may, there is no doubt whatever that at a very early period, shortly after Strongbow's invasion, a colony of English merchant adventurers, how drawn thither we know not, made their way across the island and established themselves at the mouth of the river that falls into Galway Bay. Of their coming we know nothing; the earliest authentic records show them already firmly ensconced there, a busy, thriving community, sheltered at first under the powerful protection of the De Burgos, Earls of Ulster and overlords of Connaught, struggling later on, and successfully, to throw that domination off and to be masters in their own house. To most people nowadays Galway stands for all that is



typically and essentially Irish, the very quintessence of Hibernianism. The daring spirits who built up that early Galway were English, and they desired nothing less than to be mingled with the inhabitants of the land and to learn their ways, they regarded them indeed much as Clive and the rest of John Company's servants did the dusky subjects of Shah Sujah, or as the Hudson's Bay Traders looked out from behind their stockades upon the prowling Blackfeet and Iroquois. The ancient arms of Galway were a galley that bore, suspended on the mast, a shield with the leopards and fleurs-de-lis of England, and when, long afterwards, the descendants of those early settlers pleaded piteously and in vain to the Government for redress against the Cromwellian soldiery, they grounded their appeal upon the fact that they were "an ancient colonie of English planted in this nook of the country."

The English sovereigns from the first favoured that sturdy little colony, which formed the farthest outpost of empire, and the key, so said Richard II., of those parts of his lands of Ireland. They therefore granted charters to "the bailiffs and good men of Galway," giving them large powers of self-government, and the right to make war on Irish enemies and English rebels alike, the right, too, to levy tolls and taxes upon all articles brought into the town for sale, whether by land or water, these tolls to be expended in raising walls and towers for self-defence

and in keeping the same in repair. From these charters we gather much of the life of these merchant-strangers within their narrow walls, and of the commodities wherein they dealt. For Galway was the busy mart where the native products of Ireland were exchanged for luxuries from beyond the seas. From the earliest times the importation of wine was the principal business of the traders of Galway. During the reigns of the Angevin kings the English drank the vintages grown in their oversea possessions of Aquitaine and Gascony, but as regarded Ireland, it was supplied by Galway with the wines of Spain and Portugal. A hundred years ago the wine-vaults which the merchants of Galway erected at Athboy in Meath for the convenience of their trade were still standing, marked by the distinctive architecture of Galway. The common import was from twelve to fifteen hundred tuns in the year, and Edmund Lynch—one of the earliest of the provosts of Galway, before it had been raised to the rank of having mayors of its own—under whose direction the great western bridge across the river was built, was commonly called *Emuin-a-Thuain*, or Edmund of the wine, from the quantity of that article which he brought in. Next in importance to wine came salt, also imported from Spain, and of the utmost consequence for curing the fish that formed Galway's chief export. A later mayor, John French, was styled *Shane-na-Sallin*, or John of the salt, from his large dealings in that commodity, and

a special bye-law decreed that no boatman or horseman—who would both be of the mere, or native, Irish—who brought goods into the town should be paid his hire in salt, nor was he to be paid therein for the sacks that contained the goods, nor might as much as a present of salt be given him, but he must buy what he had need of. Besides these two staple commodities there were brought into Galway wood-ashes and alum for the tanning of the hides, which formed another principal export, rich silks and gold-wrought tissues to deck the prosperous merchants and their wives, or to be converted into altar hangings and vestments, glass, both white and painted, for the adornment of the churches and houses of Galway, pepper, ginger, and other spices, iron, cordovan leather, and other commodities innumerable.

The royal charters laid down explicitly the tolls that might be charged not only on these imported wares, but also on all those that were gathered in from the surrounding Irish. Thus a ship bringing merchandise to Galway paid threepence for the entry to that port. Fourpence was the tax upon every tun of wine or honey or ashes. A crannock paid a penny whether it contained corn, meal, malt, or salt. The crannock was a basketwork measure, lined with hide, and supposed to hold the produce of seventeen sheaves of wheat. A crannock of woad, however, paid twopence, and twelve crannocks of “every kind of coal,” meaning thereby the wood and turf that were brought in across Lough



Corrib, one penny, whilst for the same quantity of lime only a halfpenny was charged. A boatload of timber or brushwood paid its penny, and so did ten sheep or goats, or pigs, if they were brought in for sale. Every millstone that came in paid the same sum, but only a halfpenny was demanded for the pair of handstones, or querns, wherewith the Irish ground their meal. Each hide of ox or cow, horse or mare, fresh or tanned, paid a farthing, a rate that seems high, seeing that if the animal were brought in alive it cost but a halfpenny. A halfpenny, too, was the toll upon every hundred skins of wolves, squirrels, wild cats, or hares, the fur of the Irish hare being specially prized in those days. Every horseload of fish that came into the town for sale was charged a penny, and a man's load one farthing, but upon the lordly salmon and the highly prized lamprey a farthing apiece was levied. A penny was demanded for a hundredweight of scalpyn, oysters to wit, or of dried or salted fish, but the mease — five hundred — of herrings paid only a farthing. A penny was the tax upon twenty ells of cloth, whether it were linen or woollen, Irish, English, or foreign made, but a cloth of silk or baudekyn, the length of which is not stated, cost but a halfpenny to bring in. Ten felt caps paid a penny and so did a thousand sandals, the rough brogues worn by the poor, whilst a halfpenny a dozen was the charge upon the more dainty and elaborate footgear that was made of cordovan leather.

A thousand wooden dishes or platters also paid their halfpenny, and a thousand hinges only a farthing, which sum was also demanded for twelve ropes for the tackling of ships. Ten gallons of lamp oil were charged a halfpenny, but the same quantity of olive oil for medical purposes cost a penny, and upon all articles not specially enumerated, and which exceeded five shillings in value, a toll of a farthing was to be levied. This was in 1361, in the reign of Edward III. Even reckoning the penny as equivalent to a shilling of our present money, these charges cannot be considered heavy, and it was clearly laid down, and reiterated in all subsequent charters, that all the pence so raised were to be applied exclusively to the defences of the town, and the paving thereof.

Defences were needed, no doubt, seeing the wild hordes who dwelt all round, and with whom the English settlers were at feud. To the east were the O'Maddens, who were wont to gallop suddenly and wildly into the town, pillaging and carrying off all that they could lay hands on. To hinder such forays a chain was hung across the street, the place where it was fastened being still visible upon an old house that was standing less than a hundred years ago. The O'Briens inhabited the southern shore of Galway Bay and the Aran Islands that lie across its mouth, but with them the traders of Galway had entered into an alliance, paying their chieftain a yearly tribute of twelve tuns of wine, in return for which he was bound to protect their trade and



harbour from all pirates and sea-robbers, and to maintain an efficient fleet for that purpose. One may heave a regretful sigh over the small outlay for which maritime security could be purchased in those days. Somewhat later, however, the merchants of Galway of their own free will made the O'Brien of that date an additional grant of wine in consideration of the expense to which he had been put in defending Galway Bay, and of the efficiency with which he had performed his task. The most dreaded of the hostile forces were the fierce O'Fflaherties, who dwelt along the Atlantic coast and in the wild and pathless mountains to the west. One of their chieftains, Murrough O'Fflahertie, who had his castle at Bunown on a crag that overhangs the sea, was wont to ascend the hill above, and standing there to declare war solemnly and comprehensively against "all the potentates of the world, but especially against that pitiful, pettifogging town of Galway." Upon which occasions his tribesmen used to mutter amongst themselves, "Murrough is angry and there will be bloody work." The citizens of Galway, upon the other hand, inscribed over their western gate which guarded the bridge across the river and the passage to the region where Murrough and his like dwelt, "O God, deliver us from the ferocious O'Fflaherties."

From the very earliest times of which there is record fourteen families from amongst the English colonists—those of Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne,

D'Arcy, Deane, Faunt, French, Joyce, Kirwan, Lynch, Martin, Morris, and Skerrett — attained a supremacy over the rest and formed a close oligarchy by which the town and its affairs were ruled. To a later age they became known as the Tribes of Galway. So closely were the tribes knit together by intermarriage that they formed as it were one great family, acknowledging kindred and affinity with one another wherever they might meet the world over. Tradition asserts that the progenitors of the tribes were Anglo-Norman knights, crusaders for the most part, who had come over in Strongbow's following and pushed westwards across Ireland to this farthest outpost of civilisation. If that were so, they speedily beat their swords, if not into ploughshares, then into yardwands and other implements of commerce, and settled down into a race of energetic and successful merchant folk. Thus it is affirmed of the Martins, with whom these pages are in large part concerned, that they descend from Sir Oliver Martyn, who held high command in Richard I.'s army, and having clung loyally to that monarch when evil fate befel him, was imprisoned with his royal master and died in the Austrian dungeon ere yet Blondel had come singing his rondels beneath its window—a story curiously confirmed by the finding of recent years, within one of the ancient fortress monasteries of Bohemia, of a manuscript wherein the name of the solitary attendant who accompanied Richard, when he

endeavoured after his shipwreck to make his way in disguise across Europe, is given as Martin. The earliest mention of the family in the records of Galway, however, is when Joan de Sepishend, chief miller of the mills of Galway, upon the 2nd of June 1365, made over all her rights in the said mills to Thomas Martyn and his heirs, to hold as quietly and freely as she, her father and grandfather before her, had held them of the Lords Walter and Richard de Burgo, late Earls of Ulster and Lords of Connaught. A very valuable possession, no doubt, was the ownership in chief of the mills that turned in the rapid river sweeping past the walls of Galway, as is evidenced by another Thomas Martin, two hundred years later, a descendant, no doubt, of the former one of that name, being willing to have the site of the mills regranted to him on condition of his building a gate and fortification at the western end of the great bridge across the river. The inscription upon a stone inserted in a wall in Galway still records this fact, and the grant also bestowed the right of spearing salmon from the buttresses of the bridge, a right exercised almost within living memory by representatives of the family.

How the tribes won the ascendancy which they indubitably possessed is not altogether easy to understand, seeing that there were many others in the town—Coppingers, Berminghams, and so forth—who could boast the same Anglo-Norman



blood, but who were styled non-tribes, and who were seemingly content to carry on their own trade and business, and to leave the management of public affairs to the tribes. The old records of Galway prove conclusively that from the days when the De Burgos still held sway and nominated the seneschals or portreeves to whom they delegated their authority, down to the ruthless suppression of the old Galway Corporation by Cromwell's soldiers four hundred years later, the mayors and the twelve masters, or mayor's peers, who composed the council, and who had mostly already filled the civic chair, the sheriffs and the representatives returned to the Irish Parliament, practically one and all bore tribal names. There are indeed but two mayors upon the long roll who were exceptions to this rule, and of those two one was Sir Thomas Rotheram, Governor of the fort without the walls and of the King's soldiers who lay in it, who was appointed because in the year 1612 there was no man to be found within the walls who would take the oath of supremacy, or acknowledge that the King was head of the Church.

There seems to have been little or no resistance to a governance which, whilst drastic enough at times, was at others almost grandmotherly in its concern, not only for the morals, but also the manners of the people under its rule. Doubtless the citizens found that under that rule their little

community prospered and throve exceedingly, so that in the year 1461 a mint was set up, and Edward IV., by letters patent, granted to one Jermyn Lynch the right to make "monies and coignes, and do all things that shall nede or long thereto" within the town of Galway, though such coins were not to exceed a groat, or fourpence, in value.

The policy that inspired the tribes and council of Galway was the same that animated most guilds and corporations of that day, the determination, namely, to keep all advantages which their situation conferred upon them, or which their energies had acquired, for their own body-politic, and rigorously to exclude outsiders. Thus almost the earliest enactment upon the old statute-book of Galway runs: "That ne merchant, ne maryner, ne shipman shall not lade ne transport over the seas no unfremens' goods, but only fremens' upon paine to lesse the said goods and the just vallouer there of, and to forfayte one hundred shillings, the said goods and forfayts to be divided into three several parts, one part to be to the reparacions and building of the town walls and works, the second part to the reparacions of the church, and the third part to the officers for the time being," which last provision was calculated to make the officials keen in hunting out breaches of the regulation. The church referred to was the old collegiate church of St Nicholas, dedicated to that saint as the

protector of mariners, and of those who do their business in the great waters. This statute is immediately followed by another which decreed that: "No manner dweller, of whatsoever degree he or they be of, shall not sell nor set no lande or tenement within the same town of Galway to no Irishman, without lycense of the Counsaile," under similar penalties to be similarly expended. Another decree which throws a vivid light upon the conditions at that time prevailing, ordained that if any inhabitant of Galway in revenge for any "discord, variaunce, hattred, or ingerous — *i.e.*, injurious, wordes or language spokin, movid or moshioned betwixte anny brother or neighbour of Galway," should cause that neighbour and brother to be captured by any outlandish man or enemy of the inhabitants—whereby the surrounding Irish were meant—the individual at whose instigation the seizure had taken place, if it could be proved against him, should "ramsion and restore" the captive, and make good to him all loss and damage that he had sustained, whilst the rest of that evilly disposed person's goods were to be forfeited to the prince and the officers for the time being.

The officials of Galway did indeed take good heed both of their own interests and their own dignity. For the behoof of "evill persons," who we may presume were unwilling to render this unrewarded homage, it was decreed that upon Michaelmas Day, when the new mayor was in-



stalled, all the different estates of the town should escort him from the tholsel to his door, but that no man should enter unless he were bidden, and of one mayor, who died upon the morning of his inauguration, we are quaintly told, "It pleased God Almightye to call him out of this transitorie life to the everlastinge, and oute of the chiefe chaire of this town (whereof he was to take possession), unto a better and more glorious seat in heaven." Another by-law declared that the mayor and bailiffs and the warden of St Nicholas, the highest ecclesiastic dignitary within the town, should be served first with fish and flesh both at the market and at the shambles, and that after that it should be first come first served. By the "wholle assent of the Counsaile," so we are told, it was determined that if any person should speak any "ingerous" or slanderous words or "cheke" to the mayor, he should forfeit a hundred shillings and his body be put in prison. A similar indulgence of temper towards a bailiff cost the offender half that sum, and cheek towards those who had previously filled the office of mayor or bailiff was punished by fines of 26s. 8d. and 13s. 4d.—two marks and one mark—respectively. Another statute "orderid, statutid, and established for ever" that if any person, no matter what his degree might be, should disobey or break the arrestment of the mayor and his officers, he should pay two hundred shillings, to be divided as usual between the town works and

the officers, and his body be put in the lowest prison, there to remain eight-and-forty hours.

Other edicts ordained that no boatman or "dryveman," carman namely, should by sea or land draw or drink any merchant's wine. Those who did so were to pay for filling up the butt, or hogshead, or pipe again. Every cooper was to give two tunhoops and three hoops for hogsheads or barrels for a penny. Carpenters and masons were not to have more than twopence a-day for their hire with meat and drink. The shearmen or cotteners, those who finished the native-woven cloth by clipping the nap from it, were to give five, six, or seven baunlac of frieze for twopence, and eight, nine, or ten baunlac for threepence. The baunlac or bundle was an Irish measure of two feet in length, but whether these very varying prices were for different widths or qualities of cloth is not stated. A somewhat later law, however, forbade the weaving of frieze or linen of less than three-quarters of a yard in width. The fishermen of Lough Corrib were to bring fish into the town three days a week, and to sell a hundred eels for twopence. Butter sellers were more stringently dealt with. "That no butter be sold above one penny the pound and no dearer, on pain to lose 12d., and his body to be put in prison that doth the contrary," ran the regulation. Any one who indulged in such idle games as quoits, or "horlinge of the littill balle" with hockey sticks, instead of

acquiring useful skill with the longbow or cross-bow, or in the flinging of spears and darts, was to be fined eightpence for each offence. Playing with "the greate foote balle" outside the walls was, however, an authorised pastime. If any were found playing cards, dice, tables, or other unlawful games for money, and more especially if such persons happened to be either apprentices or Irishmen, they were to forfeit the money they were playing for, and whoever had permitted the gambling to take place upon their premises was to be mulcted of twenty shillings. For fear of fire it was strictly forbidden to roof any house with straw or thatch, or to burn or scorch corn in any house within the town. This was the ancient Irish method of ridding the corn of its outer husk, in preference to threshing it. One early regulation most sensibly interdicted the utterance of party cries, such as Crom-aboo or Butler-aboo in the streets. These were the war-shouts of the Fitzgeralds and Butlers, whose feuds were distracting Ireland at that time. Instead men were enjoined to call upon St George and the king. Weapons drawn in any quarrel or brawl were to be impounded and nailed up in the pillory, their owners to make good any hurt or harm that they had done. Every man was, however, to possess a "feansabull"—i.e., defensive—weapon of his own, and if he did not appear with it at one of the town gates immediately the cry or "skrymishe" was raised, he was to pay twelve pence.



Sundry of the old tribal regulations might with advantage have been enforced in Galway at a very much later date. Such were those which commanded every householder to clean the street in front of his house once a week, and forbade his placing his manure-heap there. Those who owned cows were directed to keep them at home in their own houses and not perambulating the streets. Pigs and goats might not be kept in the town above a fortnight, on pain of summary execution, the owners thereof to be responsible for any "hinderances" which they might have done. If any one built the stairs to their house upon the public street, they were to be forthwith broken and "overthrown down," staircases being at that time very generally made outside instead of within doors.

The by-laws against the Irish were numerous and stringent, and framed with a redundancy of negatives and vagueness of grammar that but made them the more emphatic. None the less an occasional lapse into Irish, as when it was decreed "that no boucher shall take no cnaye goulle nor skeinglac—whereby the tripe and other internal delicacies were meant—oute of no cowe that he selleth," or a gloss in that language to make the meaning of an edict more clear, reveal that Irish was at least as well understood within the walls as English. No man, however, might be a freeman of Galway unless he could speak English, and

shaved his upper lip weekly, the heavy moustaches of the Irish being a mark that distinguished them from the English. No Irishman might go on board any ship that came into the port, nor might any man belonging to the town lend or sell to an Irishman galley, boat, or barque, long, small, or great, nor any furniture or necessaries therefor, such as pitch, rosin, canvass, ropes, or iron, without the permission of the mayor and council, on pain of losing boat, barque, or stuff, and one hundred shillings in addition, no mean sum in those days. A similar penalty was decreed against those who should sell to the Irish, or to any persons suspected of rebellious intentions, any "invincions," such as handguns, calivers, powder, lead, saltpetre, or even longbows, crossbows, bowstrings, or yarn to make the same, whilst the lending to an outlandish man of a shirt of mail, a "skoll" or helmet, or any other piece of armour, cost the offender twenty shillings. Any one who brought an Irishman to brag or boast upon the town was to be fined twelve pence, and one most forcible rescript of the year 1518 decreed: "That no man of this town shall oste or receve into their houssis at Christemasse, Easter, nor no feaste elles enny of the Burkes, MacWillams, Kellies, nor no cepte elles, withoute license of the Mayor and Counsaill for the time being, on payn to forfayt V li—five pounds—and that neather O nor Mac shall strutte ne swaggere through the streets of Galway." This famous and often quoted resolution was, how-

ever, aimed quite as much at the De Burgos, who had by this time become Burkes and "*Hibernis Ipses Hiberniores*," as at the native-born Irish. The heads of the De Burgo clan had long previously shaken off their allegiance to the English Crown, and taken the Irish titles of MacWilliam Eighter and MacWilliam Oughter—meaning the Upper and the Lower, from the position of their territories in Galway and Mayo—from whom the Earls of Clanricard and Mayo respectively descend. They had also discarded English speech and apparel, so that we are told that the MacWilliam Oughter of 1575, who came into Galway to make his submission to the Lord-Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, could speak Latin, but could not speak English.

Another statute, framed a year later than the one above quoted, in 1519 that is, prohibited an Irish judge or lawyer from pleading any man's cause in the law-courts of Galway, "for it agreeth not with the King's laws, nay yet the empor's in many placis." This last reference was of course to Charles V., with whose Spanish subjects, seeing the large trading interests involved, there was probably much litigation. The law expounded by Irish lawyers, and which did not agree with either king's or emperor's, would have been the Brehon law, for English laws were only in force within the Pale, and in the cities of Galway, Waterford, and one or two others. This decree notwithstanding, when some dozen years later William Martin, mer-



chant, claimed "saut," or compensation, from the town for the slaughter of his father under circumstances not related, of the two arbitrators appointed to decide the matter one was MacEgan, a hereditary Brehon, or Irish jurist. By their decision William Martin was granted a reduction of three and fourpence yearly in the rent of a tenement that he held from the town, in return for which he undertook to hold the town and commons of Galway quiet and clear for ever as regarded both saut and slaughter.

Instances occur upon the statute-book of Galway where the franchise was granted to Irishmen, but it was generally for some special and particular purpose. Thus it was granted to Richard Begge upon condition of his keeping an inn for the entertainment of strangers, and to Donell O'Nolan, a goldsmith of the town, at the request of his father-in-law, himself a freeman, who was old and impotent, and whom the said Donell undertook to maintain. Others, Hallorans, O'Dowans, O'Trehies, and so forth, gained their freedom by serving a seven-years' apprenticeship to one of the merchants of the town. Inasmuch, however, as such indentures are carefully recorded upon the statute-book of Galway, where no mention whatever occurs of the innumerable apprenticeships that must have been entered into by the sons of the Anglo-Norman settlers, we may infer that such cases were rare, and were only permitted under peculiar conditions.

Sometimes, too, when the young citizen was enrolled after serving his time, a special reservation was made that the freedom was only to descend to his children in the event of his marrying a freewoman of the town.

The hospitable instincts of the Galway ladies manifestly caused the city fathers some concern, for, descending to more domestic matters, they solemnly enacted that no woman, be her degree what it might, who had occasion to celebrate the advent of a new arrival in her family, should keep "common bancks," open house in other words, or make great expense as in times past, though she might invite any of her friends to visit her whilst she kept her chamber, and any one who went "unpraied and unbidden" into such a house was to be fined six and eightpence.

Usurers and moneylenders have ever been unpopular with the rest of the community, and the devastating wars of the sixteenth century, wherein all Ireland had been laid waste, caused a cessation of trade and scarcity of money that must have been severely felt in Galway. The council wax absolutely incoherent in their wrath when denouncing the practices of the Shylocks of those days, who, we learn incidentally, were accustomed to take their exactions in kind. "Manye and sonderly gredy, detestable and inordinatly gayns of levyng of intrestes and cambies<sup>1</sup> after the rate

<sup>1</sup> A usurer is still called a gombeen man in Ireland.

of a peacke of wheat or a good hyd for the mark by the yeare hath been reared and taken up by all such as lent money, both to the utter ruyne and decay of the publique wealth, and also clear forgettinge of all good concience, godly or neighbourly love, but rather in most contempte of hir Majestie's laws, do by all cullorable practizes and decite under covert use the same." The prices of the two commodities named varied so much from year to year that it is not possible to form any certain estimate of the rate of interest which called forth this outburst of righteous indignation.

All their fatherly solicitude notwithstanding, the ordinances of the city council do not seem to have produced as good an effect as they desired, for when in 1584 Sir John Perrot, Lord-Deputy, the most able and most popular of Elizabeth's lieutenants, visited Galway, that body took counsel with him concerning the many disorderly practices prevailing in the town, and under his advice framed a new series of by-laws, or rather of fulminations which censured most classes of the inhabitants. "That the young English tailours and ther boys be varagraunts," ran the first of these pronouncements, "the most in the town using all unlawful pleis and lacivious expenses both by day and by night. That none be suffred to use any kind of unlawful games or plays to disceive and make the people ydle and shun to erne ther lyving by good and lawful means." The next article continued in



much the same strain. "That no young man, prentiz or otherwise, shall weare no gorgious apparel, ne silks, either within or without ther garments, ne yet fyne knit stockings either of silke or other costlie wise, weare no costlie long riffs thick and started, but be content with single riffs, and that also they shall weare no pantwoffles—dainty and embroidered footgear—but be content with showse."

The younger generation having been thus suitably admonished, the Council next turned their attention to the shopkeepers and working men. They found that the artificers in general, both craftsmen and common labourers, exacted far more for their work than the assize of the town permitted them, and that besides their demands in money they insisted on being given aquavita—whiskey no less—meat and drink, bread, broth, flesh, candles, flax, and many other things. The seamen and fishermen were peremptorily forbidden to take in hand plough, spade, or harrow, lest they should be tempted to forsake their proper calling, "to serve themselves and the common wealth with fyshe." In compensation therefor it was, however, ordained that they, their wives and families, were to be served with all necessary sustenance and provisions that might come into the market before all others, to enable them the better to earn their living, and that they "might have the better hope." No working men were to wander or wag

idly about the streets during working hours; if any special reason took them abroad, they must carry some tool or other token of their craft in their hand. Shoemakers and glovers were accused of not tanning their leather properly, nor selling their wares at market rates. They were exhorted to make good stuff in future and to dispose of it according to the market. The candlemakers were in even more parlous condition: they sold neither light nor sight, neither good tallow nor good thread, nor any good stuff at all for candles. The goldsmiths had seemingly made efforts to set their house in order without waiting for rebuke from the Council and Deputy, for qualified praise is bestowed upon them. "That the new statute made by the goldsmiths is commendable, so as they shall observe the same and mend their former faults."

It was, however, upon the vendors of edible wares and liquid refreshment that the vials of the Council's wrath were in chief measure outpoured. All the aquavita sold in the town might more fittingly be called aquamortis, they declared, for it was more likely to poison the people than to comfort them in any good sort, and the beer was no better, wherefore the officers whose business it was to look to such matters were enjoined to be more vigilant and inquisitive in future. There was no good bread made in the town, neither well made nor well baked, nor even as cheap as it

should be. The Council therefore recommended that men and women skilled in the baking of bread should be appointed, and that it be sold at market rates, as the officers should fix them. The keepers of eating-houses came in for a yet more sweeping indictment. "That no victillinge-house seller or shoppe, where any victaille, wyne or aquavita is, be not in any honest sort keapte cleane, wherein ther is neither sittinge-place, clothe, dish, nor any other service, which have great nede of reformation. That all the meate that is thoughte to be either sodde or roasted by the bowcherous cooks of this towne is not worth the eatinge, and therefore is not suffrable, which also hath nede of reformation, so as all to be cleane and retayiled by penny, halfpenny, farthing, and weare all ther cleane aprons, and that ther be no horns suffered wher the meate is adressing."

No one probably would disapprove of the enactment that "accordeinge thauncient statuts" hogs were not to be fed upon the streets, and especially not within the market-place, nor yet with the one that followed, which forbade the drawing, or plucking of the wool off live sheep after the Irish manner, but ordered them to be shorn at the proper season.

These and other malpractices having been thus denounced, the Council turned once more to the social life of the town, and it was now the turn of the female portion of the community to receive reproof and admonition. It was ordained that, like



the young men, they should wear "no gorgiouse apparell," but such as became them according to their calling. With commendable reticence, however, the city fathers did not animadvert upon the ladies' underwear, but confined themselves to strictures upon their millinery. They were commanded absolutely to forego the wearing of coloured hats and caps, and to content themselves with black ones, and even upon these there were to be no expensive hat or cap-bands, such as were made of gold thread. Perhaps it was a well-grounded fear of the reception likely to be accorded to them in their own homes which caused the worshipful councillors to add a clause to this mandate exempting the "mayorasses" from compliance therewith. This title comprehended not only the wife of the mayor, but also the wives of the "mayor's peers," as the twelve colleagues who composed his council were termed, who all therefore remained free to tire their heads as they pleased. It was further enacted that no merchant's wife should frequent any tavern or alehouse, on pain of forfeiting twenty shillings, *toties quoties*, every time, that she did the contrary, meaning presumably the same. "But let them be occupied in the making of cloth and linen," said the Council magisterially. The previous injunction against excessive hospitality would seem to have failed of its effect, for a fresh order was issued forbidding porters, harpers, butchers, bakers, and more especially nurses, from going to any

man's house at festival times to demand offerings in money, food, or drink. With even-handed justice it was decreed that he to whom was given and he who gave should each lose a crown. If, however, any honest man's wife had received an invitation to a banquet she might bring in her train one friend, who apparently had not been similarly honoured, but no more, otherwise she too must pay a crown.

The last regulation framed with Sir John Perrot's assistance concerned the burial of the dead and the funeral customs of the Irish. It was commanded that "no woman shall make no open noise of an unreasonable chree, after the Irishrie, either before, ne yet after, the death of any corpses. We mean," added the Council in explanation, "ther singing songs, songe to the praise of men, both dead and also alive, and not to God everlyvinge."

## CHAPTER II.

THE CURSE O' CROMWELL.<sup>1</sup>

ONLY once throughout its long continuance do we find any revolt against the tribal rule. Upon the 2nd of June 1600, the citizens of Galway met in full conclave and complained bitterly of "the ymminent loss which the corporation doe dayly sustain for want of the administration of justice in the counties and shires of the province abroad." By the corporation the inhabitants in general of the town were meant, not its ruling powers, as that term would be understood at the present day. The complaint proceeded that for want of such administration of justice, and also "by means of the obstinacie, wilful disobedience, lyinge and deceit of the country gentlemen and inhabitants," no remedy could be had against them for any debts they might have contracted, much less for any robberies and spoils which they had committed. The mayor and council could hardly be held ac-

<sup>1</sup> The bitterest malediction which to this day an Irish peasant can call down upon his enemy.



countable for the lawlessness that existed beyond the walls, but the real gravamen and burden of the charge brought against them by the malcontents was that these ill-conducted persons were "supported and upholden by the mayor and his associates," and that when they visited the town the mayor granted them his word and protection to enable them to come and go unmolested, so that neither without nor yet within the walls could justice be had against the inhabitants of the country, who were represented as void of all charity, and little regarding either their duty to God, nor the goods of the poor merchants. A solemn resolution was therefore passed by the meeting that from thenceforth neither the mayor nor any one else in authority should issue such safe-conducts.

An accusation of undue partiality or tenderness towards the inhabitants of the surrounding country, whether gentle or simple, would appear at first sight the very last that could with any show of reason be brought against the council of Galway. For the preceding half century or more, however, the merchants of Galway had been venturing beyond the walls and investing their accumulated wealth in lands acquired from the Irish, either by purchase or on mortgage. By the end of the sixteenth century the whole of the region round about, excepting only the lands belonging to the Church and to Lord Clanricard, had passed into their hands, and they had become the founders of a new Anglo-

Irish aristocracy. The revenues of the town began to suffer severely from this practice, and about this time complaint was made of the number of merchants and others who had built themselves country residences and abandoned their town mansions, ceasing also to pay scot and lot, tax and tallage. It may therefore have been that amongst the reprehensible persons whom the mayor and council were charged with protecting—though, let us hope, not amongst those who committed “roberies and spoiles”—were some of their own tribal kindred, dwelling now without the walls and converted into country gentlemen.

Notwithstanding any such defections, however, Galway, at the opening of the seventeenth century, had become a place of no small importance. It was admittedly the third town in Ireland, Dublin and Waterford alone being of greater consequence. Its streets were broad and well laid out, according to the standard then prevailing, and its architecture was an astonishment to all who visited the town, being unlike any other to be found within the British Isles. The houses were all of hewn stone, built after the Spanish fashion round a central courtyard, with wide arched entrance doors and stone staircases. They were adorned without with a wealth of magnificent carvings—coats of arms, heraldic emblems, and the grotesque creatures and interlaced designs that Celtic art delighted in—fragments of which look down upon us still from

tottering walls and crumbling doorways, or else, wrenched from their ancient settings, adorn the lintels of taverns and drapers' shops. So extensive were these dwellings that they were frequently held in part ownership, a floor in one of these mansions, or even a single room, being considered no unworthy portion to bequeath to a child.

"As proud as a Galway merchant" became a proverb. But if the Galway merchants were proud, it was not only of their own high standing and prosperity, but of the city that owed its importance entirely to the energy and the business instincts of "that ancient colonie of English" established in the far west. Most of the mayors signalised their year of office by adding to or adorning the church of St Nicholas, the most venerated edifice in Galway, or in founding or endowing other charitable institutions, the most noteworthy of which was St Brigid's Hospital for the maintenance of citizens who had fallen on evil days. Every burgess was bound in his turn to send round his maidservant, neatly attired and bearing a silver cup, to collect alms for it on Sunday afternoons, it being supposed that after the greater excellence of the mid-day repast men's hearts would more incline to charity and goodwill towards their poorer brethren. Other mayors occupied themselves, not less usefully, in strengthening the walls and fortifications of the town. "As Jerusalem seemed to the Prophet Jeremiah the princess of provinces, the beauty of



Israel, so thou, O Galway, dost to me appear of perfect beauty," cried John Lynch, author of '*Cambrensis Eversus*,' as he looked back longingly at his native city from the exile into which Cromwell had driven him and all other Irish priests.

We realise best, however, in what estimation those old citizens held their town from the inscription which, in doggerel Latin verse, they placed under the great map of Galway, already alluded to. Seven hills has Rome, so this lucubration begins, seven mouths has old Nile, seven glittering planets circle round the pole. Galway, Connaught's Rome, twice equals these, and then there are enumerated the many twice sevens whereof Galway could boast. Fourteen noble families, those of the tribes, stand first, thereafter come the fourteen towers that guarded her walls, and the similar number of castled gateways by which admittance was to be had, whilst passing mention is made that every house within the town was built of marble. The river flowed beneath fourteen bridges, twice seven altars were reared in St Nicholas' Church, each dedicated to a different saint, and the praises of God ascended daily from seven convents and seven monasteries. It must be admitted that even poetic license was somewhat exceeded in these high-sounding vaunts, and when after long years of neglect the map was at last completed, the condition of Galway was most pitiably far from warranting such boasts. For the history

of this map was a very curious one. During the Civil War Galway espoused the King's cause, and in 1641 Lord Clanricard, President of Connaught, intent upon obtaining a much-needed supply of ready money for his royal master, entered into negotiations with the Duke of Lorraine to advance £20,000 upon the security of Galway and Limerick. The map was prepared duly to impress the Duke with the value of the pledge which it was proposed to make over to him. But the negotiations came to nothing, and the map lay thrust away and forgotten till after the Restoration.

In 1654 Galway was invested by Sir Charles Coote, and sustained a nine months' siege both by sea and land, being indeed the last place within the three kingdoms that held out for the King. The ancient "Citie of the Tribes" only yielded at last under stress of famine, and on terms highly favourable to the besieged. The inhabitants who had made such valorous resistance were guaranteed not only their lives, but the undisturbed possession of whatever houses and lands they might own within the town and its liberties. No sooner, however, had the enemy got possession of the town than these terms were shamelessly violated. In defiance of the articles of surrender a forced contribution of a hundred pounds weekly was laid upon the hapless and impoverished town, and Saturday became a day of dread, for at the appointed hour the soldiers were mustered with

trumpet and drum, and if the levy was not paid to the last farthing they rushed into the houses, demanding money with threats and violence. If none was to be had they seized what they could lay hands on, even to the clothes of the women, and brought their spoils into the market-place, to be sold for whatever they would fetch. The very resting-places of the dead were not respected, for the soldiers broke open the coffins and tombs, and tore the shrouds off the corpses, in the hope of finding jewels buried with them, leaving the poor mortal remains to be dragged about and devoured by dogs. The commandant, Colonel Peter Stubburs, whose original vocation had been that of a pedlar, and who seems to have retained his commercial instincts, converted one specially magnificent monument, which had cost a vast sum, and was, we are told "guilted with gold," into a chimney-piece for his own residence, and shipped the rest of the carved stonework to England to be sold. This worthy's deputy, Lieutenant-Colonel Humphrey Hurd, who had been a carpenter, and had been elected Mayor of Galway by the suffrages of the soldiers, was pleased to forbid the wearing of the Irish mantle, the customary outdoor garb in Galway, an order which the soldiers carried out with such good-will that on the following day the whole town seemed peopled by masqueraders, or a squalid troop of strolling players. Even ladies of quality appeared in the streets attired in men's



coats, or with pieces of tapestry, or bed-curtains thrown over their heads and shoulders, whilst other women were fain to cover the rags which were all that the rapacity of the soldiers had left them, with blankets or sheets, or anything else they could procure, the soldiers the while jeering at them, or holding their sides laughing at the ludicrous spectacle which the poor despoiled people presented.

But worse was still to come. A few months later Fleetwood, the Lord Deputy, visited Galway, and notwithstanding all engagements to the contrary he ordered all the inhabitants to be summarily expelled. The mandate was obeyed with such expedition that within three weeks Coote was able to report to the Government in Dublin that the required clearance had been effected, and that none of the former inhabitants remained within the walls save a few who, either from sickness or old age, together with the inclemency of the weather—it was the month of November—had been unable to remove, and to whom he had therefore granted a gracious permission to remain. In reply to this communication another despatch came down from Dublin, desiring that even those few to whom dispensation had been given should be removed as soon as the season permitted.

Then, indeed, had proud Galway fallen and lay desolate. "At this time you might see whole streets not having six families in them," laments

John Lynch, the writer, who was eyewitness of the ruin of his native town, "the soldiers that would before content themselves with cellars and cottages, had now houses to live in, until they burnt all the costly lofts and wainscots and partitions, and then would remove to other houses, until they almost destroyed all the fine houses, and left them so full of filth that it was poisoning to enter one of them, though formerly fit to lodge kings and princes, being the best fitted town in the kingdom, and the inhabitants the most gallant merchants in Ireland for their hospitality, liberality, and charity at home and abroad." Henry Cromwell, who had become Lord Deputy, drew a glowing picture of the town, thus left empty and forlorn. He writes of it as "a town consisting of many noble buildings, most of them of marble, and that for situation, voisenage, and commerce which it had with Spaine, the Strayts, West Indies, and other places, noe town or port in the three nations (London excepted) was more considerable." His object was to induce the inhabitants of Liverpool and Gloucester to accept the houses and lands of the dispossessed proprietors of Galway, in lieu of compensation due to them for losses they had sustained in the Civil War, and no doubt this high encomium was framed with the view of making them willing to accept of the proffered exchange.

And meanwhile those gallant merchants of the old Anglo-Irish race, the owners of those palatial

mansions, were sheltering themselves in thickets and thorny brakes from the wildest of winter weather, thankful indeed if they could find refuge in some wretched, smoky cabin. Even there, however, they were not secure, for under the pretext that the country was invested by vagabonds and idle men, Colonel Stubburs sent his soldiers out in skirmishing parties to roam the country and apprehend all whom they chose to consider vagrants. Many of the poor country folk, going out of doors to attend to their cattle, or crossing harmlessly from one field to another, were seized, thrust on board the hulks that lay in Galway Bay, and shipped to Barbadoes, where they were sold as slaves, to toil in the sugar plantations. So many were swept off in this fashion that the country was wellnigh depopulated, and wages rose to an alarming height. A ploughman demanded a yearly hire of £4, 10s. besides meat and drink, and the most ordinary maidservant could not be had under thirty shillings, an unprecedented rate in those days, and one that added grievously to the difficulties which those of the old proprietors who still clung to their possessions had to contend with. Pestilence followed swiftly in the wake of the war, and so great was the general wretchedness that we are told the people took no pains to avoid the infection, being indifferent whether they lived or died.

The Restoration brought a brief gleam of hope to the souls of these poor harassed folk. During



their days of stress and siege, Charles II., from his mock court at Jersey, had sent them a letter under his own hand assuring them that he was fully sensible of their services, and that he would not fail to recompense them in due time, when it should be within his power. They did not doubt that now that he was happily restored to his father's throne, he would make good to them all that they had suffered in the royal cause. As a silent but eloquent reminder of those sufferings the map of Galway was brought forth from its hiding-place. It was adorned with sundry equestrian portraits of Charles himself, and with a Latin inscription, wherein he was styled a lily among thorns, a cedar in Lebanon, a tree planted by the waters, and some other more or less apposite Scriptural tropes. Having been further embellished with the Royal Arms of England, Scotland, Ireland, and France, and the armorial bearings of the tribes and non-tribes of Galway, the map was engraved and solemnly dedicated to the king. As far as fair words and gracious utterances went Charles did not prove lacking. He issued an order to the Lords-Justices of Ireland commanding that the ancient inhabitants of Galway should be at once restored to their houses and lands. There, however, the matter was allowed to rest; no effort was ever made to put the order in execution. It is sad to relate that the only active part which the Merry Monarch took in the affairs of Galway was to present the revenues of that town to one

of the Court favourites, Mrs Hamilton, from whose representatives they had subsequently to be repurchased at heavy cost by the townspeople. Over the gates of Galway Ichabod might from henceforth have been inscribed. The glory of the Citie of the Tribes had departed: it was never to return.

## CHAPTER III.

## NIMBLE DICK.

THE reign of law and order, as evidenced by the holding of assizes, had not been established in Connaught—known comprehensively as “The Wild Territories”—till after the accession of James I. That monarch commanded his judges to go circuit there, as in all other places within his newly acquired dominions. Accounts of some of the hardships which those early ministers of justice had to endure on their progresses through the western wilds have come down to us. Inns were unknown, and they had to depend on such hospitality as was proffered them, and which was not always, it would seem, very gratefully received. Thus a certain Judge Jacob who went circuit through Connaught in 1613 found quarters at the house of some person of quality, where he was well entertained, though we are told “after the fashion of the country.” From this we may infer that, though the viands were abundant, the manner of dressing and serving them was of the simplest. In particular there would



appear to have been a lamentable lack of condiments, either because the chatelaine was not versed in the higher culinary arts, or because there was a difficulty in procuring such savoury adjuncts in those remote regions. The worshipful judge took the matter much to heart, and exclaimed wrathfully, "Oh, misery of miseries, must I eat my venison without the proper spices,—a thing which never happened me before!"

Another judge, named Speke, travelling through Connaught a few years later, had to take up his abode for one night at a house the owners of which were far from wealthy. They did their utmost, however, for their illustrious guest, and provided him with a sumptuous supper. But when the judge sought his chamber at night, he found that the bed-clothes, instead of being of the fine and delicate texture to which he was accustomed, were coarse and rough. He refused indignantly to lie underneath the shaggy coverings, and sat up all night beside the turf fire that blazed upon the hearth, bewailing his hard fate, and consoling himself from time to time with the ejaculation, "O my king, what do I not suffer in thy service!"

Occasionally, however, the trouble was more serious. In 1629 John Lynch FitzRichard, the Mayor of Galway, failed to meet the judge upon his arrival in state at that town and to escort him to his lodgings. The assizes were held in the dis-endowed abbey of St Augustine, just without the

walls, which had been given over to the judges of assize and jail delivery for that purpose. The angry judge, much incensed at the insult to himself and his high office, immediately upon taking his seat upon the Bench fined John FitzRichard £100 for his non-attendance. Now, as will already have been gathered, the Mayor of Galway was a great personage in those days, being not only chief justiciar of Galway and of the Liberties that extended some miles round about, but also Admiral of the Port and Bay with all its creeks and harbours, even to the Isles of Aran, and entitled to have a sword borne before him on all public occasions. Furthermore, a new charter, which had been granted to the town by Queen Elizabeth not long before, specially decreed that if any one should speak "undecently and unreverently" of the Mayor, he should be punished "according to the quality of his fault and offence." John FitzRichard, no doubt, considered the judge's high-handed action extremely "undecent and un-reverent," for he was no sooner informed thereof than he came out hotfoot to the abbey, and after rating the offending judge soundly for his temerity, he fined him £200 for presuming beyond his office. History does not relate whether either or both fines were paid.

The assizes so late begun did not long continue. From 1641 till 1660 Ireland was given up to civil war, anarchy, and bloody reprisals; and though commissions were from time to time issued to the

judges to go circuit as in more peaceful times, yet with commendable prudence they refrained from penetrating beyond the Shannon. One of Charles II.'s first acts after his restoration was to appoint judges to go circuit once more in "The Wild Territories." Even then, however, the course of the western judiciary did not run altogether smooth. Sir Jerome Alexander and Sir William Anson having both been elevated to the Bench upon the same day, a violent dispute as to precedence took place between them, and proceeded to such lengths that Sir Jerome sent Patrick D'Arcy, the doughty leader of the Connaught Bar, to challenge his rival to mortal combat. D'Arcy was a man of some renown, for he had represented Galway in the Irish Parliament of 1640, when Protestants and Roman Catholics sat upon the same benches and legislated together. Later he had been one of the supreme council of the confederate Catholics of Ireland, which assembled at Kilkenny in 1642. Sir William, on the other hand, had commanded one of Cromwell's far-famed regiments of Ironsides, and inasmuch as the Irish legal profession was noted from its earliest inception to within living memory for its readiness to fight duels, we may feel convinced that D'Arcy went upon the behest very willingly. Instead, however, of displaying the martial spirit to be expected of one of his high military record, Sir William declined the combat, and applied to the Court of King's Bench for an



information against D'Arcy. The information was refused, and D'Arcy, infuriated at such contemptible behaviour, declared his intention of horsewhipping his lordship upon the first occasion of their meeting. Sir William was so alarmed by the threat that he deemed it prudent to put the Channel between himself and his fiery opponent; nor did he return to Ireland for several years, till stout Patrick D'Arcy lay in his grave and his horsewhip was no longer to be feared.

Among the despoiled of Galway was the whilom head of our family, Robert Martin of Ross, whose lands had been acquired by purchase from the O'Flaherties a century before. His town mansion in Galway had been bestowed upon a certain Edward Eyre, who had been Advocate-General under Coote, and was now Recorder of Galway and member for the borough. Recognising that he had a formidable opponent to deal with, Robert Martin deemed it advisable, in addition to his Majesty's general order, to obtain a special warrant, under the king's own sign-manual, directing that his property should be given up to him. With this important document in his pocket, he waited upon Eyre and demanded immediate possession. According to his own account of the interview, however, Eyre laughed him and his pretensions to scorn, and roundly declared that he did not value the king's order at eighteen-pence. Foiled in his first attempt to recover possession of his property, Robert Martin hastened to lay

information of this treasonable utterance before the Lords Justices of Ireland, and Eyre was forthwith summoned to appear at the bar of the Irish House of Commons, of which he was himself a member, to answer for what he had said.

Eyre duly appeared, and made defence that the words attributed to him had been distorted out of their proper meaning, and had only been spoken in jest; and after some delay and consultation, his brother members not only acquitted him of the charge laid against him, but passed a handsome eulogy upon him for his integrity and his loyalty to his Majesty's person. Of the restitution to Robert Martin of the property which was lawfully his, however, no word was said; and Eyre, whose appraisement of the king's order would appear to have been a very just one, remained in undisturbed possession thereof.

The feud between the Martins and the Eyres was destined to go down to the third and fourth generation, and to break out with increased acerbity and bitterness nearly a century later.

Robert Martin had three sons, who do not seem to have been held in very high esteem by their contemporaries, since there was a saying current concerning them, "From Jasper, James, and Nimble Dick, good Lord, deliver us!" Of these, Jasper inherited what remained of the family possessions and became our forebear, whilst James died and left none behind him. Richard, the youngest and the

most able, was more commonly known as Nimble Dick, and tradition asserts of him that his agility and his "cleverness" as a swordsman were such that "no matter what blow was aimed at him, he would defend it with the sole of his foot." He made up in amplest measure for all that had been reft from his father by the vast domain which he in his turn, in the hurly-burly of confiscation and spoliation, secured for himself.

The wilds of Iar-Connaught and Connemara, lying between the Atlantic and the great lakes of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, cut off from all the rest of the world, and nearly as pathless and untravelled in those days as the central deserts of Africa, had belonged time out of mind to the O'Fflaherties—"the ferocious O'Fflaherties," for deliverance from whom the citizens of Galway used in ancient days to pray. The last chieftain of the old race had borne a part in the bloody deeds of 1641, and was therefore hunted down within his own territories, when the hour of vengeance came, like a beast of prey. He was discovered hidden, with his wife, in an underground burrow within a wood, both in most miserable plight. He was dragged out and conveyed to Galway, where he was put to an ignominious death, whilst the huge tract that had belonged to him and his people was sequestered by the Government, and granted, almost in its entirety, to Richard Martin, on the understanding seemingly that he should bring the tribesmen into subjection.



The task was the more easily accomplished, as between civil war and tribal feuds those mountain fastnesses had been wellnigh depopulated. Richard Martin thus became possessed of a huge dominion, extending over more than a quarter of a million acres,—a wild and barren region of towering mountains, moorland wastes, lakes, and deep inlets from the Atlantic, so tangled together that, when viewed from one of the loftiest summits within it, the prospect has been likened to a sea full of high mountains and ridges of land. He and his descendants ruled over this great tract for close upon two hundred years.

When James II. landed at Kinsale on his last forlorn venture to retrieve his crown, Richard Martin was over fifty years of age. None the less he accepted a captain's commission in the regiment which Lord Bofin raised in the west of Ireland for that prince's service, and fought for him at the Boyne and elsewhere. Strange to say, he rode knee to knee in the regiment with his enemies the O'Fflaherties, and the first intimation of the final disastrous overthrow at Aughrim was conveyed to the farthest west by the horse of one of these O'Fflaherties returning riderless to its stable. Nimble Dick was one of the very few who were so fortunate as to be granted a full pardon by Dutch William for their espousal of the fallen monarch's cause, and was also confirmed by him in the possession of his vast estates. It is commonly

affirmed that he was thus signally favoured because during the earlier hours of the battle he had saved the lives of some English officers of distinction who were taken prisoners in the Bloody Hollow on the hillside at Aughrim, when the English gave way before the Irish, and for a while it seemed that victory would incline to the Irish side.

Yet, however successful Nimble Dick was in winning and holding his vast domain, there was none the less a bitter price to be paid for it, even the life of his first-born. He married Katherine French, of another of the old Galway tribal families. She and her eldest son, "Robin the Brave, Robin the Beautiful," as he is called in an old Irish ballad that tells of his tragic fate, were specially devoted to each other, with a bond of the closest and tenderest affection. Richard Martin had made a home for himself at Birch Hall, within his newly acquired estates, whilst the O'Fflaherties, dwelling some half-dozen miles away at Lemonfield and Aghenenure, upon the edge of Lough Corrib, looked on with sullen ill-will at the stranger ruling over their ancient patrimony. More than one attempt is said to have been made upon Nimble Dick's life; but as he never went abroad without a guard, mounted and well-armed, he was able to render a good account of himself, and to give back as good as he got. It came to young Robin's ears, however, that O'Fflahertie of Lemonfield, head of the clan, had spoken insultingly of his mother; and on the spot,

hot-headed and impetuous, he mounted his horse, and without telling any one of his purpose, he rode off alone to the home of his enemies to demand satisfaction. The O'Flahertie of that day was an old man, but he was to the full as ready to accept the challenge as Robert Martin was to give it; and it was decided that the duel should take place then and there, and should be fought, as duels were customarily fought at the time in Galway, on horse-back, and with the sword, the combatants being stationed some distance apart, and riding at each other full tilt when the signal was given.

Robin took up his station with his back to a shrubbery, which he deemed screened him from attack in that quarter. Unknown to him, however, and also, it would seem, without the knowledge of his adversary, an illegitimate son of old O'Flahertie's crept in amongst the bushes, and just as the combat was about to begin, he leaped out and stabbed Robin deep in the back. The hapless young fellow fell forward on his horse's neck, and the frightened animal galloped off for home. Mortally wounded though he was, Robin contrived to cling to the saddle till more than half the distance was covered, but there his hold relaxed, and the horse tore on riderless. Its arrival at Birch Hall with empty saddle and trailing reins naturally created alarm, and a search-party, headed, it is said, by his mother, came out to look for the young heir. They found him lying dead where



he had fallen, stabbed traitorously from behind. His mother, frantic with grief, raised an altar upon the spot where he was found, a portion of which remains to this day, and which is still called *Leacht-Kathleen-na-Frinsie*, or the monument of Katherine French. Upon it she caused to be graven her bitter malediction on those who had slain her darling :—

“ May there be neither luck nor prosperity, but ever wailing and distraction, and may there never be a rightful heir in the place where the murder of young Robert Martin was perpetrated.”

Another humbler memorial arose beside this record of a mother's passionate love and of her despair. According to an ancient Irish custom, every wayfarer who, upon the anniversary of the deed, passed the spot where a noted murder had been committed, cast a stone upon the place where the dead had lain, and passers-by at other times would also add to the heap in token of their sympathy, so that before long a goodly cairn was raised.

Nimble Dick himself sought a more practical revenge. Warrants were issued against all who had had a hand in the murder, but, secure in those western wilds, they laughed legal process to scorn, and went out on their keeping, as the phrase was. It meant, not that they maintained themselves, but

that they lived at free quarters upon those who either sympathised with them or were afraid to refuse the shelter and supplies demanded. Two years later, being still at large, they were solemnly outlawed, and the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, at the instance of Richard Martin, issued a proclamation against them upon the 10th of October 1707, which may still be read in the Irish State Records. Twenty pounds reward was offered to any one who should apprehend and secure the bodies of Bryan Flaherty Fitzdonnel, Edmond Flaherty, Patrick Flaherty, and John Joyce, or any one of them. All Queen Anne's loyal and loving subjects were commanded to use their utmost endeavours to assist in bringing them to justice, and dire penalties were denounced against any who should thereafter entertain, harbour, or receive them.

The altar and the cairn were still standing some eighty or ninety years ago. Somewhere, however, in the earlier years of the last century a Captain O'Flahertie, marching with his men from Oughterard to Galway, was told of the existence of the monument, and turned aside up what had by that time become an old and unfrequented road to visit it. His ire was great on reading the inscription—a true case of the cap fitting not his own but his ancestors' heads, since Katherine French's vehement denunciation named no names and brought no charge against any specific individual. As the

readiest means of getting rid of this evidence of his forebears' guilt, he ordered his men to demolish the memorial and to throw the fragments into an adjoining bog. The peasantry, to whom the altar was sacred, looked on in horror at the work of destruction, and after the soldiers were gone a young girl went down into the bog and recovered a fragment of the broken stone that had a portion of the inscription still legible upon it. She kept the relic hidden under her hearthstone for many years, and gave it up at last, when she herself was an old woman, to a descendant of Nimble Dick's, who came to visit the spot, in whose possession it still remains. Yet to this day the Irish-speaking country folk dwelling thereabout can tell in their own tongue the story of young Robin's murder and his mother's curse upon his slayers, corroborating with most singular accuracy both the family traditions and the legal documents that exist concerning the tragedy.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PENAL LAWS.

NIMBLE DICK lived to a patriarchal age, being upwards of ninety when he died. He was succeeded by his second son, Anthony, who left no record behind him save his name and coat of arms over the altar in the ruined and roofless chapel of Killanin, where the generations of the Martins lie. After him came in due course his son, another Robert Martin, who was a mighty troubler of the peace in his day.

The Penal Laws were enforced in their fullest rigour in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, and of the many grievous disabilities which the Roman Catholics in Ireland laboured under, none was more oppressive than the enactment which forbade any Catholic either to keep a school or to teach in one. It accordingly became the custom amongst Catholics of position and wealth, all legal prohibitions notwithstanding, to send their sons to be educated upon the Continent. Young Robert was sent abroad like the rest, and received most

of his schooling at Louvain, that seat of learning being no doubt chosen because another member of the family, of an older generation, Francis Martin of the Augustinian Order, had already found a refuge there. He had been banished from Ireland, like all priests of the Roman Church, by Cromwell, and having entered the University of Louvain, he had become Regius Professor of Holy Scripture there. We are told of him, however, that he was not only distinguished for his learning, but also for the contentious qualities of his race, the litigious Martins being famed amongst the tribes of Galway, and that he was always in legal hot water of some sort or other. At Louvain Robert Martin fell under Jacobite influences, and became an ardent adherent of the house of Stuart. His education being completed, he went the Grand Tour, an indispensable undertaking for every young man of fashion in those days, and returned to Galway when he was just of age. A handsome, hot-headed, gallant young beau, and a very considerable dandy, he made himself remarkable in his native county by affecting French fashions of dress and of speech. He was even then a noted duellist, and was afterwards accounted the best swordsman of his day in Ireland,—no mean praise at a time when every Irish gentleman wore his sword at his side, and was ready to use it on the smallest provocation.

There was quartered at this time in Galway the

6th Regiment of Infantry, now the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. According to the fashion of the day of calling a regiment after its commander for the time being, it was known as the Hon. General Dormer's Regiment of Foot. This gallant corps had originally been a Dutch regiment,—that is to say, it had been raised in England for service in Holland, and had come over with William III. when he made his memorable descent upon the English coast. It had done stout service at the Boyne and at Aughrim, and had formed part of the force with which Ginkell, pressing on after the last-named battle, had captured Galway some forty years before. A regiment with such a record was likely to have retained some of its old political proclivities. It may reasonably be surmised, therefore, that there was a certain ill-will between it and the young magnate, who made no secret of his sympathy with the rebel cause, and that such ill-will had a share in bringing about the tragedy that ensued.

Some of the officers of the regiment were amusing themselves one day in the billiard-room of a coffee-house in the Main Guard, the thoroughfare leading to the West Gate. They were lounging at the window when Robert Martin, dressed according to his wont in the latest French fashion, came down the street. In particular, it would seem that his hat differed in shape from the hats commonly worn in Galway at that time, and excited the



officers' ridicule. They jeered at him as he came along, calling out "Macaroni! Macaroni!" a word somewhat equivalent to fop; and as he passed beneath the window, one of the officers, whether by misadventure or design, spat upon his head. Maddened at the outrage, which was considered absolutely unpardonable in those days, Robert Martin rushed up the stairs. He appeared in the doorway of the billiard-room, his drawn sword in his hand, demanding furiously where was the rascal who had spat upon him. The officer in question, a Captain Edward Southwell, according to his own evidence, given later, answered that it was he who had done it, but that he had not intended any affront, and he offered to apologise. But as Mr Martin was by no means appeased by this *amende*, and none of the officers were armed, Captain Southwell offered to go to the barracks for his sword, when he would be ready to give Mr Martin any satisfaction he desired. Disregarding him, however, the latter turned fiercely upon another of the party, a Lieutenant Henry Jolly, who caught up a chair, whether to defend himself or to attack Robert Martin is not quite certain. Young Martin made repeated lunges through the bars of the chair, running the unfortunate lad through and through, and killing him on the spot. He immediately gave himself up to justice, and was lodged in the town bridge-well to await his trial on the capital charge.

The occurrence naturally created great excitement in Galway, and public feeling ran so high in favour of the young squire of Connemara, in view of the insult which he had received, that the dead man's relatives petitioned that the venue might be changed to Dublin, alleging that a fair trial was not to be had in Galway. This was accordingly done; and in consequence of the high position of the accused, and the interest which his case occasioned, the trial took place at bar—that is to say, before the whole array of judges composing the Court of the King's Bench. Not only the prisoner, but also the jury who were to try him, were brought up from Galway. Unfortunately, only a very meagre and garbled report of the trial has come down to us: the evidence for the prosecution is only given imperfectly and in part, and of the evidence for the defence we have no account whatever. Yet it is plain that there must have been a good and valid defence, pointing, as far as may be gathered, to Lieutenant Jolly having attacked the prisoner first with some weapon other than a sword,—probably either a chair or a billiard-cue. Several witnesses were examined on the accused's behalf, and the testimony of one of them in particular, we are told, had great weight with the jury. At any rate, and apparently with the full concurrence of the court, they returned a verdict of not guilty. It is further clear that this verdict was approved

of by the Government, for a curious letter is still extant in the Public Records, from the English Government to the Lords Justices of Ireland, directing that in the event of Robert Martin's being found guilty of the charge preferred against him, he was to be reprieved till the pleasure of the Crown was known.

Lieutenant Jolly was buried in the old collegiate church of St Nicholas in Galway, where a mural tablet of gray limestone still records his name—

“NEAR THIS PLACE LYES THE BODY OF

HENRY JOLLY,

LIEUTENANT OF GRANADIERS IN THE

HONBLE. GENERAL DORMER'S

REGIMENT OF FOOT.”

It says nothing of the manner of his death, and casts no imputation upon his slayer.

*“With the dead there is peace.”*

Robert Martin's after-career was not less tempestuous than his outset had been. He quickly came to be recognised as the head of the Jacobite movement in the west. The gentlemen of Connaught were Jacobites almost to a man, but for the most part they contented themselves with giving the cause their sympathy and good wishes, without any more active participation therein.



Thus we hear of one notable gathering at the Athenry Club. The members of that institution met at the club-room one evening to dine together. After the dinner some convivial spirits determined to make a night of it, and they continued on into the small hours, consuming much good claret and rum-shrub, the favourite beverages at that time of Irish country gentlemen. Towards five in the morning, when it may not uncharitably be supposed that he had drunk rather more than was good for him, John Kelly of Fedane gave the somewhat oddly worded toast of "The Glorious Pretender."

Athenry returned two members to the Irish Parliament, although its electorate only consisted of twelve burgesses. It was a pocket borough, the private possession of the Blakenys of Abbert. To their credit, however, it was recorded that these seats were never objects of sale or of any sordid bargaining, being always filled by two representatives of the family. The head of the house, John Blakeney of Abbert, was himself at this time one of the members for the borough, and was also present upon this festive occasion. He may have thought that he would be called to account for the night's proceedings, for he protested angrily, and told Kelly that he must be mad. Kelly, however, only sprang to his feet, waving his glass above his head and shouting, "King James! King James III.!"

The Earl of Athenry had been amongst the company at dinner, but, like a sensible man, had gone to bed in an adjoining room at an earlier stage of the proceedings. John Blakeney rushed in to him, crying, "The gentlemen are gone mad, and are drinking the Pretender's health!" Lord Athenry leaped out of bed, and hurrying into the club-room, he commanded the company to disperse forthwith and go to their respective homes, expressing at the same time his surprise at what he had been told of their conduct. Thereupon Thomas Burke of Ballydavid started up and said passionately, "By God, my lord, it is what is in your lordship's own heart, if you would but let it be known!"

The matter reached the ears of the authorities, and they deemed it of sufficient importance to summon John Kelly and Thomas Burke to Dublin, where both were bound in the sum of £100 to be of good behaviour for the future.

The drinking of toasts and shouting for King James might be all very well, but when Prince Charlie landed in Scotland to recover his father's crown, no man in Galway moved "tongue, pen, or sword" on his behalf. Robert Martin alone, it would seem, despairing, no doubt, of bringing about any armed rising in the west of Ireland, set out, since he might do no more, to strike a stout blow himself for the cause which he had so deeply at heart. As his opinions and tenets were well known, he feared that

he might be arrested on the way, and deemed it prudent to journey in disguise. Attired in a rough and common garb, he made his way across Ireland to a small seaport town upon the north coast, from which he had made arrangements to cross to Scotland. On reaching the harbour, however, he found that the vessel in which he was to embark was not ready to put to sea; and whilst he waited, he went into a waterside tavern to procure a meal. In an unguarded moment he ordered a dish of a choicer sort than the humble frequenters of the inn were in the habit of calling for. The host's suspicions were aroused, and keeping a vigilant watch upon his guest as he ate, he caught a glimpse of dainty lace ruffles tucked away beneath his coarse outer clothing. Convinced now that the new-comer was other than he would have it appear, mine host slipped out and lost no time in giving the authorities a hint about the suspicious stranger beneath his roof. Robert Martin was promptly apprehended, and, for the second time in his life, found himself lodged within jail walls. This second incarceration was a most fortunate incident for him. He was kept in custody for some time; but as nothing definite could be proved against him, he was at length released, though not till the young Pretender's ill-starred venture had ended in disastrous failure, and it was too late to join his confederates across the water.

Shortly after his return from this abortive expe-



dition Robert Martin conformed, nominally at least, to the Protestant religion. This course was practically forced upon all landowners by the Penal Laws, as otherwise they held their estates at the mercy of any Protestant informer who might be pleased to file what was termed a bill of discovery against any one of them. It is indeed hardly understood or remembered nowadays how iniquitous and grievously unjust the Penal Laws were. In our branch of the family another Jasper Martin, grandson of the one previously mentioned, and the son of his father's first marriage, likewise conformed, and ousted his father from the possession of the estate. By the deed of settlement drawn up between them, he covenanted to allow the old man a certain yearly rent-charge upon the property, and, in addition to some other perquisites, the use of a stipulated number of linen sheets, and of three silver cups to drink out of. No Catholic at that time was allowed to possess a horse worth more than £5, and any Protestant could claim to purchase the animal from him for that price. There was a well-remembered case where a Catholic gentleman, riding a valuable young horse, was thus challenged, and rather than yield his mount up, drew his pistol and shot it dead.

There were few Catholic estates in those days which were not vested in Protestant trustees to save them from confiscation, and only in the rarest instances were such trusts abused. A great portion

of the landed estates in one of the largest counties of Ireland were thus conveyed to a Protestant barber, whose own possessions did not exceed a few pounds in value, and who plied his humble calling whilst he nominally held half the county in fee. The rents were paid to him and he made them over to the uttermost farthing to those to whom they rightfully belonged. He was absolutely faithful to the trust reposed in him and died as poor as he had lived. Men were driven into perjury and sacrilege to save themselves from beggary, and to retain possession of the inheritance that had come down to them from their fathers, for the law not only demanded that they should cease to be Catholics, but that they should become Protestants, and take the sacrament in token of their conversion. The outward act, however, was all that was required, no inquiry was made into the sincerity of the belief avowed, in proof whereof the following story that occurred some twenty years later than the period of which we have been writing may be told.

Two young Roman Catholic gentlemen, brothers, were threatened with the loss of their estates through a Protestant relative laying information against them as Papists. They were both careless, hard-riding, hard-living young fellows, not concerning themselves much with religion of any kind, but they were both married, with families of little children dependent on them. It was required of

them not only that they should renounce the faith in which they had been brought up, but that they should make solemn oath at God's altar that they believed that faith to be erroneous, superstitious, and idolatrous, and partake of the communion in confirmation of their oath. Driven to this most terrible form of perjury, they vowed that they would only make the asseveration demanded of them in one lonely, half ruinous church a few miles from their home. The reason for this decision was not far to seek; the parson of the church had likewise conformed, and for reasons more unworthy than those by which the brothers were animated. Under the Penal Laws any Romish priest who recanted was entitled to an annuity of forty pounds a year, levied off the county in which he resided, and to the reversion of the first parish that might fall vacant within it, and here, too, no questions were raised as to the sincerity of the convictions avowed. In former years Father O'Flynn had been a boon companion of the two young men who were to appear before him, and had shared many a night's carouse with them. Owing to his vices and his misdemeanours he was threatened with expulsion from the priesthood, and had therefore made good his retreat into the Established Church before it was too late, but no one doubted that in his heart he still remained a Romanist. A very early hour was fixed for the ceremony, and shortly after daybreak the brothers rode up to the dilapidated church.



The windows were broken, the rain was coming through the roof in many places, and stalactites formed by the damp hung down from above. The aisle was wet and dirty, and grass sprouted round the edges of the gravestones with which it was flagged, and which bore the names of old Cromwellian families. The two converts from Popery tramped in unceremoniously in their heavy, spurred riding-boots, shouting for the parson, swearing angrily at being kept waiting, and rattling impatiently at the broken communion railings with the handles of their whips. The Reverend Patrick O'Flynn, late Father O'Flynn, came hurrying from the vestry, and was greeted by his former comrades with a shout of recognition. The business in hand was undertaken without delay, and the recusant parson resolutely recited the service, intermingled as it was with oaths and denunciations against the faith which in their inmost hearts all three men believed in; but when, at the conclusion of that service, one of the brothers spat out the sacramental wine and swore profanely that for his part he preferred good punch, Mr O'Flynn turned pale, and, forgetful for an instant, crossed himself devoutly and muttered a hasty prayer in Latin. The ceremony ended, the newly-made converts flung themselves on horseback and galloped back to the homes which they had saved by that morning's work.

## CHAPTER V.

## STRATFORD EYRE.

To return, however, from this digression. Two years after the Scottish rebellion—in 1747—Colonel Stratford Eyre was appointed Governor of Galway and Admiral of Connaught. He was a grand-nephew of Edward Eyre, M.P., who had deprived the Martins of their town residence, and was an old campaigner, bred in a stern military school. He had served under the Duke of Cumberland against Prince Charlie and his Highlanders, and had borne a conspicuous part in the final crushing defeat of Culloden. Though he had spent his boyhood in Galway, he had been absent from his native town for many years, and now returned to it imbued with the great importance of the task which had been entrusted to him—that of holding this far western outpost for King George against the enemies who swarmed around, both within and without the town. To Stratford Eyre every Catholic was a Jacobite, a rebel, and a smuggler, and he came to his new post

with a mind attuned to see traitors, plots, and prospective landings on all sides.

Robert Martin had made his chief place of residence at Dangan, some two miles out of the town, and splendidly situated upon the Galway river. A topographer of that day tells us that it was considered one of the finest places within the kingdom; and he lived there in the state and with the hospitality befitting the owner of Connemara. Of the house now not one stone is left upon another, only the stately entrance gateway and the crenellated wall by the riverside still tell of its past glories. Stratford Eyre stood for Protestant ascendancy, for the maintenance of the Penal Laws, and the supremacy of the English Government; Robert Martin, his late conversion notwithstanding, for the old Catholic proprietors, the native-born Irish, and the lost cause of the Stuarts. Each man was absolutely loyal and devoted to the side which he believed to be the right one, but fiercely intolerant of all that opposed him. Between two men of such temperaments, of such family traditions, and of such opposing views, the peace was not likely to be long kept.

One of Colonel Eyre's first proceedings after taking over his new command was to send up a report on the defences of the town to Dublin Castle. These appeared to be in a somewhat deplorable condition. Several months previously, he reminded them, the Lords Justices had ordered £140 to be



expended on making seven pairs of new gates, but for so far no money had been sent down even to procure the material needful for making them. In the meantime the gates were in effect continually open, for the Quay Gate had fallen down altogether, and the others had no locks, and "were all to pieces." This, however, might have been deemed of the less consequence, inasmuch as there did not appear to be any particular reason why any one who desired to enter or leave the town unobserved should trouble themselves to pass through the gates at all. The walls were bulging, and could easily be scaled, Governor Eyre went on to state, whilst it was only at the hazard of their necks that the sentinels and reliefs could walk along them. There was one breach in the walls, a hundred and fifty feet long, right down to the ground; and innumerable smaller breaches and holes, large enough for the passage of hogsheads, had been made in the walls next the quay and river to enable smugglers to run contraband. These, however, the energetic Governor had already had closed up, as well as several doors and windows opening to the waterside, through which people gained admittance to the town after the gates were shut. How it was possible to shut the gates at all, considering his previous account of their condition, Stratford Eyre did not explain. The two powder magazines, he continued, were very insecure and unsafe places to keep ammunition in, since they were loftier than any of the surrounding

houses, and so very conspicuous that they could be distinguished from the other buildings a mile off, added to which they were not bomb-proof. On his arrival he had found a most indolent garrison: no officer lay on guard, and there were neither rounds nor patrols. All that he had altered, however, and had indeed found abundant occupation for the whole garrison when off duty in clearing the walls and ramparts, which were in a most neglected condition, and the embrasures choked with dirt and weeds. The barrack-master hired out the king's bedding, whilst the soldiers of the garrison had to go without. The deputy-barrack-master was married to a Popish wife—a heinous offence in Stratford Eyre's eyes. He had also harboured two French officers immediately before the late rebellion, and lived in an old disused barrack by the riverside, very convenient for such disloyal purposes.

It would not seem as if the Government had shown themselves very enthusiastic at the prospect of the expenditure which putting the defences of Galway into good repair would have entailed, for in a later letter Stratford Eyre protests vehemently that his estimates had not included a single item which was not imperatively and urgently required for the security of the town. As proof of the condition of helpless inefficiency to which the garrison was reduced, he proceeded to relate that for the last twenty-four hours they had fully expected a hostile landing. It had turned out, however, that the sails

which had alarmed them were only a vessel from Liverpool, laden with rock-salt, making for the port and chased by a Spanish privateer, which had overhauled and captured her within the bay, whilst the garrison were unable to render any assistance. There were ninety-three pieces of ordnance upon the walls ; but of these all save five were dismounted, and of those five the carriages of four were broken and rotted. The blame for the ruinous condition in which he had found everything, Stratford Eyre roundly averred, rested with the mayor and corporation, who lived upon the revenues of the town, and made grants to each other and to their friends out of the tolls and customs, which, according to the ancient charters, should have been expended on paving the streets and keeping the defences in repair. He went on to give Mr Wayte, secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, some information regarding the governing body of Galway. All put together, mayor, sheriffs, and corporation, they had not £1000 in the world amongst them. The mayor was not worth £200, and was very young and assuming. "His name is O'Hara, which will give you a specimen of his principles (the true Milesian breed)." So wrote Governor Eyre, giving us at the same time an insight into his own principles and idiosyncrasies. One sheriff was a beggar, the other a shoemaker, and a poor one at that. Of the aldermen one was a broken dragoon, and another a son of my Lord Tyrawley's footman.



We must conclude that the Castle Government listened to Colonel Eyre's representations in so far at least as to provide him with the gates which he declared he so urgently needed, for his next step was to order the gates to be closed and barred at four o'clock, only leaving the wickets open for the ingress and egress of foot-passengers. The inhabitants protested, not unnaturally, against the inconvenience which this regulation occasioned, and the mayor and corporation waited upon the Governor to present him with a numerous signed memorial requesting that the obnoxious ordinance might be rescinded. They had bearded the lion in his den, and the irate Governor was not slow to avail himself of the opportunity of giving them a piece of his mind. He began by pointing out that the names of several known and avowed Catholics were attached to the memorial, and he reminded them that by the law<sup>1</sup> these were one and all disqualified from living within the town, or even in the Liberties thereof. He expressed his surprise that magistrates, whose business it was to see the laws carried out, should countenance such persons, and even be content to append their signatures to a paper jointly with

<sup>1</sup> The famous Act for preventing the further growth of Popery, which was passed in the second year of Queen Anne's reign, set forth that Galway and Limerick being considerable garrisons, it was of the utmost consequence for the peace and security of the kingdom that they should be in Protestant hands. No Papist was therefore to be permitted to own house or land or to reside in either town. In effect, however, the law was never carried out.

them. "Banish these avowed enemies of our present happy establishment hence, Mr Mayor, and there will be no occasion for gates here. If the gates in time past have been kept open, and all order and discipline neglected, it has proceeded from the non-residence of the Governor. And now, gentlemen," he continued, with a sudden change of subject, "since you are here in your corporate capacity, I must recommend you to disperse those restless Popish ecclesiastics. Let me not meet them in every corner of the streets when I walk, as I have done. No sham searches, Mr Sheriff, as to my knowledge you have lately made. Your birds were flown, but they left you cakes and wine to entertain yourselves withal. I shall send you a list, Mr Mayor, of some insolent, unregistered priests who absolutely refused me to quarter my soldiers, and to my surprise you have billeted none upon them. These and James Fitzgerald, who is also an unregistered priest, and had the insolence to solicit votes for his brother upon the prospect of a vacancy in Parliament, I expect you'll please to tender the oaths to and proceed against them on the Galway and Limerick Act. Let us unite in keeping those turbulent, unqualified townsmen in due subjection. Lastly, gentlemen," he wound up, "I put you in mind of the conditions on which tolls and customs are granted to you. Repair the breaches in these walls and pave your streets."

The reception which the Governor had accorded to

the Corporation of Galway could hardly be regarded as conciliatory, nor was it to be expected that the townspeople would rest content with his abrupt refusal to reconsider the question of the closing of the gates. Steps were immediately taken to have the memorial laid before the Lord-Lieutenant. In answer to a communication from his Excellency, Stratford Eyre sent up another lengthy despatch, justifying himself for his refusal to comply with the request. The complaint against him, he declared, was entirely a party matter, and he had proof that the mayor and sheriffs who had signed the petition had received presents to "nose" and insult him. The early-closing regulation inflicted no hardship upon respectable folk engaged in lawful trades, but only on those who desired to carry on nefarious practices under cover of the darkness. On two nights in the previous week the Papists, all his vigilance notwithstanding, had succeeded in running no less than £2000 worth of India goods. Galway, he reminded his Excellency, was in no sense a thoroughfare, but an extreme point, since beyond it to the west lay only the wilds of Iar-Connaught and Connemara, where there were neither roads nor wheeled vehicles, and into which no one desired to travel. All produce brought into the town from that side came in on back-loads, and as the wickets were large enough to admit any horse or cow, and stood open till ten in summer and nine in winter, there was no hindrance to trade in that quarter. Both the



water-gates opened on the quay; and all custom-house business ceased at nightfall. It could therefore only convenience French recruiters and smugglers—for whom Galway had hitherto been a general rendezvous—to keep them open any later. As regarded the other gates, the Abbey Gate faced upon Lough Corrib, and nothing but turf and water came into the town that way. Only private—*i.e.*, illicit—brewers would desire to draw either of these commodities home after dark. The chief entrance to the town was by William's Gate (so named in honour of William III.), which looked towards Dublin and civilisation, but even there no real inconvenience would be occasioned. The inns and stables at which the carters and carriers put up were without in the eastern suburbs, and there was no accommodation for them within the town. It could therefore be no great hardship for those who arrived with goods after the gates were closed to spend a night without the walls, and it was most desirable that their bales and casks should be examined by daylight, because of the likelihood of arms and ammunition being smuggled into the town. Further, the Governor implored his Excellency to consider the danger of a crowd rushing in through the gates, if they were set wide after dark, and overpowering the garrison. If Galway were once in the enemy's hands, it would be impossible to recover it without a train of artillery; the small outlying garrisons at Gort, Headfort, and Loughrea would

most certainly be surprised and captured too ; the whole province would rise, and such a success in the west would vastly embolden other disaffected parts of the kingdom. In fact, King George's crown remaining secure upon his head seemed, in the worthy Governor's estimation, to depend in large part upon the gates of Galway being closed betimes. The most cogent of his reasons, however, he reserved to the end. "Within the Liberties lives Robert Martin, a dangerous, murdering Jacobite, who can bring in twenty-four hours to the gates of this town eight hundred villains as desperate and as absolutely at his devotion as the Camerons to Lochiel, and who, I am confident, is plotting some mischief to the State for some time past."

The Lord Lieutenant, however, did not take so alarmist a view of the situation as did Stratford Eyre, and he graciously acceded to the inhabitants' request that the gates might stand open till eight o'clock. The people of Galway were naturally much elated at the victory they had won, and they decided, in token of their appreciation of the services he had rendered them in the matter, to make a presentation to the mayor, or, as Stratford Eyre put it, "He received the wages of sin for countenancing the faction." Ready money being probably somewhat scarce in Galway at that date, contributions would seem to have been made in kind and not in coin, for the mortified Governor notes in his next letter that "this same Robert Martin gave him two fat beefs"

as his share of the levy. Not long afterwards Stratford reported that the success of France and Spain—with both of which countries England and her allies (the Dutch and Austrians) were at this time at war—was openly prayed for in the chapels, and writing on the 23rd of October he says that at that moment the whole of Galway was illuminated, and that there were candles even in the windows of the convents. Colonel Eyre does not mention the cause of these rejoicings, that being of course well known to those to whom he wrote, but we have no difficulty in divining it. Bergen - op - Zoom, the strongest fortress in Dutch Brabant, believed to be impregnable, and well furnished with victuals and munitions of war, was carried by assault by the French on September 16, 1747. The outlying forts of Frederick-Henry, Lillo, and St Croix still held out, and the task of reducing them was entrusted to Lally and his Irish brigade. Frederick-Henry was stormed on the 2nd of October, and the two remaining forts surrendered on the 8th. No doubt it was the news of this triumph which had reached Galway a fortnight later, and the window-panes of the town were ablaze that night to celebrate the gallant feat of arms which the exiled Irishmen in the service of a foreign king had accomplished.

Mr Martin and his doings meanwhile continued to supply Stratford Eyre with abundant employment for his pen. He became more and more convinced that mischief was brewing at Dangan, and more



determined to get to the bottom of it. Somewhat later on he writes that the Catholics had grown to such insolence that one had struck the sheriff, whilst some went so far as to interest themselves in the election of the town magistrates, and others appeared in the streets wearing plaid vests—evidently a badge of disloyalty. More serious still, however, the Governor proceeded to narrate, several officers who had borne arms for the Pretender appeared openly in the town, and a certain Sarsfield, a near kinsman of Robert Martin's, who had fought in Lally's regiment at Culloden, was at that moment on a visit to his relative at Dangan. Furthermore, the alert Governor had apprehended an individual wearing a military garb, with a plaid vest in addition, who gave his name as Tom Daly. The mayor and deputy-recorder, however, had refused to hold him to bail, and so, Stratford Eyre writes bitterly, a man who he verily believed to be of Martin's set, and upon some ill design, had slipped through his fingers.

For his own part, Colonel Eyre entertained no doubt as to the business which had brought these officers of the Pretender's ill-fated army to Galway. A ship was even then lying at the quay in Galway, being fitted out by "the memorable Mr Martin." No information was to be obtained as to her destination or lading, but the Governor was convinced that she was intended to carry recruits into France, and that these were even now being collected under the

eyes of the Government by the Prince's emissaries. For wellnigh a century the supply of such recruits was a regular and well-organised business at the southern and western ports of Ireland. Contractors undertook to furnish a certain number of men and transport them to France or Spain according to demand. It was a capital offence to take part in this traffic, and instances are not wanting of the execution of these recruiters, but the work went on merrily none the less. During the long continuance of the war, French and Spanish vessels frequented these Irish ports to refit and revictual, maintaining friendly intercourse with the inhabitants, and there were few Catholic families at that day who had not one or more relations amongst the "wild geese" in the pay of France.

All ordinary channels of information failing, Stratford Eyre presently reported that Denis Macnamara, at that time an inmate of Galway jail, was willing to turn informer. Macnamara was temporarily separated from his wife by the unfortunate mischance that, instead of being lodged with himself, the lady had been apprehended as a vagabond in Meath, and was just then occupying free quarters at Trim. Colonel Eyre applied to have her transmitted to Galway, as Macnamara assured him that if she were set at liberty she would prove most useful in prowling about the back regions at Dangan and picking up information as to what Mr Martin had in hand, and that she would arouse

less suspicion than he himself would, were he to act in like capacity. In token of good faith, however, Macnamara was willing to remain in jail whilst his wife was set at large. This was the less self-sacrifice on his part, as Galway jail would appear to have been rather an agreeable place of resort just then, and in especial much frequented by those whom Stratford Eyre designated as "Martin's set."

Accordingly the Governor was able within a month to send up to Dublin further valuable information which Macnamara had gathered for him, and which he had deposed to on oath. The gentleman in the plaid waistcoat, whom the mayor and deputy-recorder had suffered to go free, was not Tom Daly, as he had given out, but another of the Sarsfields, Mr Martin's relatives, all of whom were in the French service. He had dined at Dangan the night before he was taken up, and there was a close alliance between him and Mr Martin. He was extremely angry at having been arrested, and had declared that if he could but meet the Governor some distance from the town he would use him ill. Mr Martin was also furious about the insult to his kinsman, and had said that he would draw upon the Governor, were he not in a public character,—a respect for dignities which one would perhaps hardly have looked for in headlong Robert Martin. The gentleman with the plaid waistcoat had come to Galway to raise men for the French service. He



had visited the jail, and had given a sailor confined there for debt nineteen English shillings and bidden him follow him. Several men were lying snug in and about the town waiting for Mr Martin's ship to be ready to put to sea, and several others were occupying quarters in the jail whilst waiting for that event. One of these latter, with whom Macnamara had struck up a friendship, had tried to persuade him to come too, and the captain of the ship had sent a message to the jail to encourage any young fellow to go on board, promising that if they were clever fellows they would be sure of getting commissions in France ; or, if they preferred it, they would get good pay on board the ship, and be free besides to make what they could in running contraband. The turnkey of the jail had been won over, and was to join the ship at Cork. Darby Brenehan, Mr Martin's servant, concerning whose detention in jail there will be more to relate directly, had told Macnamara that he himself was going in the ship, and that there were thirty guns and a chest of all arms belonging to her lying in and about Dangan. The Sarsfield who had fought at Culloden was also to sail in her. She was to carry men and provisions to Nantes and Bordeaux, and on her way south was to take in a large consignment of butter at the Burren of Clare,—a somewhat strange place to ship such a commodity, seeing that, according to an old saying, there is supposed to be on that rocky waste neither wood to hang a

man, water to drown him, nor earth to bury him. The vessel was to carry a letter of marque, such as the Pretender frequently issued to his adherents, and to capture any ship which attacked her, if she were able to do so, but she was not to chase any other vessel unprovoked.

On receiving this intelligence Colonel Eyre summoned the coast officers stationed in Connemara and on the Burren to Galway, and bade them keep a vigilant look-out for the ship, and a watchful eye upon all gatherings near the coast, and upon any strangers who might be observed hanging about there. He was compelled to send for them, he explained in a further letter to Secretary Wayte, because any letter which he had written to them would certainly have been intercepted; and he took occasion to point out the inconvenience from which Galway suffered in not having a post three times a-week, which most places in the kingdom were favoured with.

The ship presently fell down the river to start upon her voyage. Through some mischance, however, she sustained a crush which broke some of her timbers, and she had to put back for repairs, which were likely to occupy some time. Stratford Eyre promised the Government that when she was once more ready for sea, he and his underlings would keep a vigilant watch upon her, and do their utmost to defeat the illegal purposes of those who owned and who manned her. We hear no more of the

ship, and may assume that she set sail with her freight of wild geese and provisions and butter, and the Governor speedily had more personal matters to engage his attention.

Robert Martin had, as already stated, conformed to the Protestant religion, and amongst the valuable privileges and immunities which he thereby secured, not the least was the right to carry and possess arms. It chanced, however, that he had occasion to send a gun and pistol to a gunmaker in Galway for repairs, and he intrusted them to his servant, Darby Brenehan, already mentioned, to convey them thither. Brenehan was a Roman Catholic, and as he was crossing the bridge over the river to the West Gate of Galway he was challenged by the sentry, and committed to jail on the charge of unlawfully carrying arms, whilst the gun and pistol were handed over to the Governor.

Upon the morrow Colonel Eyre, who had in the meantime discovered to whom the weapons rightfully belonged, sent them out to Dangan by a messenger named Hanly, together with a somewhat curtly worded communication to the effect that the Governor returned Mr Martin his arms, though in strictness they were forfeited, as he did not desire to be peevish to any gentleman, but that he would recommend him for the future to put his arms into the hands of persons not liable to be questioned. Hanly was back within the hour, firearms and all, having been bundled neck and crop out of the house by Robert Martin, whose wrath had boiled over on



hearing of his servant's arrest, and upon receiving the Governor's advice how to conduct himself in future. Hanly, indeed, reported that he had indulged in many threats against himself and his master, and had seemed quite wild with rage. Mr Martin came into Galway and bailed out his servant, whose tongue had wagged so loquaciously in the jail, and a night or two afterwards the Governor was roused from his slumbers to receive a letter from him, in which he peremptorily ordered him to send the arms to their original destination, the gun-maker's within the town. But the Governor had got his back up in his turn, and in reply he sent the deputy town-major out with a verbal message to the effect that the weapons had been tendered to Mr Martin once in courtesy, but as he had refused to receive them on those terms, the Governor would now detain them by right, and had lodged them in the king's stores of war, to be used for his Majesty's service.

The spring assizes were near at hand, and Robert Martin promptly brought an action against Colonel Eyre for the recovery of his arms, as follows :—

“ROBERT MARTIN, Esq., *Plaintiff*.

“STRATFORD EYRE, Esq., *Defendant*.

“*By the Lords Justices of Assize for the  
Connaught Circuit.*

“The Defendant is hereby required to appear before us at 8 o'clock, in Galway, on the 6th of April, to answer the Plaintiff's bill for £5 sterling, being the value of one gun

and one pistol, being prosecutor's property, which defendant took and converted to his own use.

"Dated, *March* 1748."

Both sides having been heard, the court decided that the arms belonged by rights to Mr Martin, and that they must be given up to him. The Governor, deeply mortified at the result of the trial, set out for London to consult with his superiors how he should act if similar difficulties were to arise in the future. Robert Martin, however, was far from thinking that the legal victory which he had won atoned for the affront which had been put upon him by Colonel Eyre. He no sooner learnt whither his enemy had betaken himself than he forthwith set out in pursuit, rejoiced to have a chance of meeting him on neutral ground, where his "public character" would be no bar to demanding the satisfaction usual amongst gentlemen.

By chance he caught sight of Colonel Eyre entering a house in St James's Street, and lay in wait with a friend till he came out again. Rushing up to him he dealt him a couple of blows with a stout stick which he carried, and called upon him to draw and defend himself. Stratford Eyre was not slow to respond to the challenge, and in a moment a deadly conflict was being waged in the thoroughfare. Martin pressed in fiercely upon his antagonist, who fought on the defensive. Both were skilled swordsmen, and for a time neither gained

any advantage, but at last Robert Martin succeeded in beating down the Colonel's guard, and wounded him severely in the body.

Stratford Eyre fell to the ground, bleeding profusely, and was carried off to his lodgings; whilst a jubilant correspondent wrote to a friend in Galway that "Mr Martin had given the Governor the most unmerciful dhrubbing that ever was heard of in the streets of London." Happily the wound, though serious, proved not to be mortal.

After this crowning triumph Robert Martin settled down into more sober ways, and soon afterwards married Bridget, daughter of Lord Trimleston—a very stately and high-born dame, who never condescended to stir abroad from Dangan save with four horses to her carriage and outriders to precede her. It is possible, however, that the condition of the roads in Iar-Connaught at that day may have had something to do with bringing the lady to this determination.



## CHAPTER VI.

## FIGHTING FITZGERALD.

ROBERT MARTIN of Dangan was succeeded in the ownership of Connemara by his more celebrated son, Richard, who was entitled to style himself either counsellor or colonel at his pleasure. He had been elected Colonel of the Galway Volunteers upon their embodiment in 1779, when he was but twenty-five years of age, and he had also been called to the bar, as was very customary with young Irishmen of position at that time, though save in one solitary instance, to be hereafter narrated, he never practised as a barrister. He is, however, better and more honourably known by his nickname of Humanity Dick, which was bestowed on him because of his great love of animals. It was entirely owing to his efforts that the first Act for their protection, still known as Martin's Act, was passed through Parliament after the Union. Like his father, he was a noted duellist, but whilst the elder Martin was renowned for his swordsmanship, it was as a crack pistol-shot that

his son won his fame. He was once asked how he could reconcile his readiness to fight duels with his indignation at any suffering inflicted upon animals. "Sir," he replied curtly, "an ox cannot hold a pistol." His meaning, of course, being that the dumb creatures who serve us have no means of avenging their own wrongs.

One of the earliest and most tragic of his duels was fought with his own special friend and distant relative, James Jordan.<sup>1</sup> Jordan belonged to the adjoining county of Mayo, and till their disastrous quarrel Richard Martin and he had been the closest of friends and associates. Jordan had likewise been called to the bar, and both the young men belonged to the Connaught circuit, and went upon its rounds, more, it would seem, for the conviviality conjoined with those legal journeyings than for purposes of practical business.

The progress of the Connaught bar in those days from one assize town to another was an event attended with much pomp and circumstance. Every counsellor rode on horseback, and was followed by his servant also mounted, and carrying his master's belongings in saddlebags which dangled from the horse's flanks. It was forty years after the time of which we write before the Connaught bar purchased a waggon in joint possession, wherein to transport its members' baggage. From considerations of safety, no less than of camaraderie, the

<sup>1</sup> Burke's 'Anecdotes of the Connaught Circuit.'

whole troop kept together upon the road. The High Sheriff and his halberdmen, armed with javelins, rode at the head of the cavalcade, and five or six miles from each assize town they were met by a great concourse, composed of the gentlemen of the Grand Jury, all persons of quality; and practically every one who owned a horse or had been able by any means to procure one, came forth to welcome the "coming in" of Bench and Bar.

Soon after Dick Martin and Jordan had come to man's estate they decided to see something of the world in each other's company, and set out accordingly upon a prolonged tour abroad. After visiting most places of note in Europe, they proceeded to America, where they spent a considerable time, partly in New England and partly in the West Indies. Jordan had intrusted his mother with the management of his affairs during this lengthy absence from home, and upon his return he was by no means pleased at the condition into which they had been allowed to lapse. He reproached her for her neglect of his interests more warmly than was perhaps altogether fitting, and the relations between mother and son became very strained in consequence.

Upon the next coming of the Connaught bar to Castlebar, Mrs Jordan sought out the youthful Colonel of the Galway Volunteers, and confided her troubles to him. Dick Martin, who was always ready to champion the helpless and the distressed,



was stirred to indignation by the widowed mother's complaint, and he unfortunately allowed his feelings to get the better of him. At the bar dinner that night, in presence of a large company, he spoke out strongly to Jordan, upbraiding him for his unkindness and disrespect to his mother. Jordan hotly resented what he regarded as an unwarrantable intrusion into his private concerns. Angry words ensued, and a hostile message followed in due course.

A night's reflection had, however, served to convince Dick Martin that he had been in the wrong, at any rate in the publicity which he had given to his remonstrance, and he was most sincerely anxious to avoid a rupture with his former friend and chum. He was already a duellist of proved reputation, but for the first and only time in his life he declined the challenge, and offered a full and complete apology in its stead. Jordan, however, refused doggedly to accept of any *amende*, and a meeting was therefore arranged to take place in a field in the outskirts of Castlebar. Even then Richard Martin came upon the ground unarmed, hoping that even at the eleventh hour, and at sight of him, the companion of his boyhood, Jordan's better feelings would assert themselves. But Jordan proved implacable, he was deaf to all attempts to bring about a reconciliation, and he insisted that since Colonel Martin had come unprovided with pistols he should make use of one of his. The

ground was measured out, the adversaries placed opposite each other, and at the first discharge Jordan fell, mortally wounded. He died after a few days of great suffering, to Richard Martin's lasting and most passionate grief. Many months afterwards, when dining at a friend's house in the county Galway, he was seen, in utter oblivion of his surroundings, aiming his dinner-knife at an imaginary opponent.

"I could not have missed you," he muttered to himself; "no, Jordan, it was impossible."

The most celebrated of Richard Martin's encounters, however, was with George Robert Fitzgerald, commonly called "Fighting Fitzgerald," and from the vivid light which it throws upon the conditions that prevailed at that time in the more remote parts of Ireland, the story may well be told at large.

Fighting Fitzgerald would now be regarded as a criminal lunatic, and treated as such, but, being a county magnate, he was in those days permitted to levy civil war at his own good will and pleasure, and to terrorise the whole region in which he dwelt. He was the elder son of George Fitzgerald of Turlough near Castlebar, in the county Mayo. The elder Fitzgerald was himself renowned, even in that age, for his profligacy and the overbearing insolence of his demeanour. Father and son they considered themselves heads of the great, but proscribed, house of Desmond, and therefore *premiers*

*nobles* of Ireland, Cromwell having driven their ancestors from their southern possessions into Connaught, and the Fitzgeralds of Leinster being, according to them, a mere offshoot, or cadet branch of the Geraldines. George Robert's mother was Lady Mary Harvey, sister of three successive Earls of Bristol, whose eccentricities were so remarkable that it was commonly said that God made men, women, and Harveys. Her husband's excesses, however, speedily proved too much for the poor lady's endurance, and she returned from the far west to London, where she became a lady-in-waiting at the Court of George III.

Fitzgerald himself entered the army at the age of sixteen. His regiment chanced to be quartered in Galway, and there he fought the first of the thirty or forty duels in which he figured, and was very dangerously wounded in the head. A well-meaning but rash relative posted off to Mayo to summon his father to what was believed to be the death-bed of the son whom he at that time idolised. The elder Fitzgerald, on receipt of the disastrous intelligence, gave vent to his feelings by drawing his sword and plunging it into the body of the Job's messenger. Happily the blade struck the hip-bone, and the over-zealous relative was thus preserved from being run through. Long years after Fighting Fitzgerald had been laid in his dishonoured grave his remains were disturbed, and the whitened fracture mark of the bullet-



wound was still clearly visible on his skull. There can be little doubt that the injury affected his brain, and in conjunction with the peculiarities which he had inherited from both his parents, accounted in large measure for the fierce lawlessness of his after-career.

Fitzgerald's appearance was by no means in keeping with his wild and reckless character. He was extremely handsome, somewhat below medium height, but very slenderly and gracefully built. He excelled in all outdoor sports, and was a magnificent horseman, one of the most skilful swordsmen in Ireland, and a crack pistol-shot, so that he boasted himself of being able at a dozen paces to hit any spot on an antagonist's body to the twelfth of an inch. Having spent some time in the French capital, he adopted an almost effeminate fashion of dress, being always arrayed in the richest brocades, whilst his sword-hilt, the loop of his hat, and his shoe-buckles all blazed with diamonds, and he carried a muff on his left arm, which was then considered the last extremity of foppery. During his stay in Paris he was presented to the ill-fated Louis XVI., but the latter, on being told that it was the celebrated Irish duellist who was before him, turned his back upon him, exclaiming disgustedly, "Faugh, he ought to be called Jack the Giant-killer!"

On his return from abroad Fitzgerald settled down upon the family estates in Mayo. One of

his favourite amusements there was hunting by night. The hounds, who were guided solely by scent, could be trusted to hunt as well in the dark as by daylight, but George Robert had himself attended by a posse of mounted servitors carrying torches to light him across the country. At first, as the wild hunt swept by, the terrified peasantry deemed that Hell had broken loose, but mothers speedily learned to hush their frightened children with the assurance that it was only mad Fitzgerald riding past. When George Robert condescended to hunt in more orthodox style, and with the other gentlemen of the county, he took upon himself to order off the field any individual whom he did not consider good enough to hunt in his company.

"Go home, sir," he would say to one of these squireens; "you are more fit to follow the plough than the hounds." And to another of stout build, "Get back to your pig-sty, you great, unwieldy porpoise, for if you ride after the hunt you will assuredly break that short neck of yours!"

No one dared say him nay, for all knew his ungovernable temper, and he always carried a stout cudgel, which he called his "rascal-thrasher," and with which any one who ventured to dispute his autocratic decrees was certain to receive a sound drubbing.

His arrogance, moreover, was by no means confined to his native county. Like most of the

country gentlemen of his day, he had his town mansion in Dublin, in Upper Merrion Street. The Dublin streets at that time were ill paved and worse kept. At the most important points narrow crossings were swept through the mud, which lay piled up on either side. It was Fitzgerald's pleasure to take his stand in the middle of one of these passages, so that unfortunate wayfarers were compelled either to step into the heap of mud or to push up against him. If any one ventured upon the latter alternative, he was immediately challenged. There was a long-standing animosity between the Fitzgeralds and the Brownes, the other leading family of Mayo, whose head was Lord Altamont, and meeting Denis Browne, Lord Altamont's brother, in Sackville Street, George Robert fired a pistol at him in broad daylight. At a levee in Dublin Castle he had some altercation with John Fitzgibbon, afterwards the dreaded Lord Clare, and spat publicly in his face. He had made two bitter and relentless enemies, and he knew it in the day when he stood on trial for his life in Castlebar, and Denis Browne was High Sheriff, and Black Jack Fitzgibbon Prosecutor for the Crown. To Fitzgerald's credit, however, it must be recorded that when in Mayo he used all his influence to improve the condition of his father's tenantry. He introduced the cultivation of wheat, which had been unknown in that part of Ireland previously, and also the manufacture



of linen, to the great benefit of the people, and being possessed, when he pleased, of a winning charm of manner, he was held in much favour by the country folk.

His chief ambition was to be elected Colonel of the Mayo Volunteers, as young Richard Martin, some half-dozen years his junior, had been chosen by those of Galway. He was in Dublin when he heard that Lord Lucan, the first colonel of the corps, had resigned the post, whereupon he rode the whole distance to Castlebar in one day, and upon the same horse, and canvassed the corps with might and main. To his intense chagrin they passed him over, and appointed in his stead the man whom he hated above all others, Patrick Randall M'Donnell, an attorney of Castlebar, a distant relative of his own, and, most heinous offence of all, his father's legal adviser. The choice was destined to have dire consequences to all concerned. *En revanche* for this defeat Fighting Fitzgerald enrolled a force of his own, a hundred strong, of which he constituted himself commander, and which he styled the Turlough Volunteers. His younger brother Lionel, however, in a memorial which he addressed to the Government, declared that they were a troop of "banditti," consisting of deserters, jail-breakers, and other desperate characters, and he hinted broadly, and no doubt with truth, that the fittest lodging both for them and his brother would be within jail walls. A Dutch vessel having gone

ashore about this time in Newport Bay, George Robert purchased six pieces of ordnance which she had carried, together with the ammunition thereto pertaining, and mounted them within his demesne upon one of the ancient raths, or forts, that are so frequent in Ireland, and which was thus transformed into a miniature fortress. As will have been inferred, the family relations of the Fitzgeralds were not the happiest. George Robert had indeed long been at feud with his father and brother over money matters, and having learned that the old man was about to travel to Dublin, he waylaid him on the road with a body of his adherents and captured him. Having thus got possession of his person, he kept him confined in the subterranean dwelling beneath the rath, where the unhappy captive was sometimes chained to a dray, and sometimes to a tame bear which Fighting Fitzgerald had brought up, and which he made his constant companion, to the terror of the neighbourhood.

What, however, would seem to have incensed gallant Dick Martin in Galway far more than this unfilial conduct was Fitzgerald's having in pure wantonness and braggadocio shot a fine wolfhound belonging to Lord Altamont. Lord Altamont was either too poor-spirited or had too much sound sense to avenge the insult himself, so Colonel Martin resolved to do so in his stead. To have come forward openly as the dog's champion would, however, have cast a slur upon Lord Altamont's

courage, and this Dick Martin was unwilling to do. Another cause of quarrel had therefore to be sought, nor was it difficult to find.

Urged on thereto by Lionel Fitzgerald and the Grand Jury of Mayo, who in another memorial besought that "speady and affectual" means should be taken to procure the old man's release, the Government of the day resolved at last, very tardily, to bring Fighting Fitzgerald to justice for his ill-treatment of his father, still in durance vile in the *souterrain*. They sent down a writ of *habeas corpus* to the Sheriff of Mayo, commanding him to "repluoy" the body of George Fitzgerald the elder. But when the Sheriff with his myrmidons went out to Turlough to execute the warrant they found the "banditti" drawn up with loaded blunderbusses at the entrance; and George Robert at their head swore with many oaths that he would shoot the King of England himself if he ventured inside his gate. The Sheriff deemed it prudent to retire before this display of force, leaving the old man still in captivity. At the next assizes, however, Fitzgerald presented himself with the utmost effrontery to take part in the deliberations of the Grand Jury. His brother, hearing of his presence, and having obtained permission from the presiding judge, went forthwith to the Grand Jury room and seized him by the collar of his coat. Fitzgerald struggled desperately, calling upon the other members of the Grand Jury to avenge the



insult to the grand panel of the county; but not a man stirred, and as his brother was much the more powerful of the two, Fighting Fitzgerald had even to submit and suffer himself to be lodged in jail.

Richard Martin, as already said, had been called to the bar, although he had never practised. He now availed himself of this qualification to offer his services gratis to the Crown. The trial took place at once, inasmuch as any delay would have meant continued confinement for old Fitzgerald. At the commencement of the proceedings, George Robert demanded a postponement, alleging that a material witness of his was forty miles away. The judge replied sternly that from all he was informed Mr Fitzgerald's most material witness was his own father, who was but a few miles off and could easily be brought in. Fitzgerald's counsel thereupon pleaded that his father was one of the worst men living, and that any son would be justified in keeping such a father in captivity.

Up jumped Dick Martin from his seat amongst the prosecuting counsel.

"The prisoner's father had," he said, "undoubtedly done many evil deeds in his time; but the greatest iniquity he had ever perpetrated was in bringing the prisoner into the world."

On this George Robert, smiling grimly from the dock, responded—

"Martin, to judge by your appearance you take

very good care of your health, but let me tell you you have this day taken very bad care of your life."

The trial did not conclude till four o'clock the following morning, and the jury, after three minutes' deliberation, found Fitzgerald guilty. He was condemned to three years' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of £1000. The judge intimated, however, that the severity of the sentence might be materially reduced if his father were produced in Castlebar before he himself left that town the next day. Fitzgerald only replied insolently that he could have expected nothing better from such a judge and such a jury; and the incensed judge ordered him to be conveyed to prison upon the instant. This was, however, more easily said than done, for the Turlough Volunteers had by this time come into the town with bayonets by their sides. They formed up opposite the court-house and ostentatiously loaded their pieces with powder and ball, loudly declaring that they would not allow their master and chief to be taken to prison. There was no garrison in Castlebar at the time, but in this emergency Colonel M'Donnell called out the Mayo Volunteers, and being in superior numbers they succeeded in driving the rival force out of the town. Fitzgerald was then brought across to the jail, boastfully declaring that it would not long contain him, an opinion that seems to have been pretty generally shared. Lionel Fitzgerald,

writing to the Government that night, said that he himself was sitting up, fearful of an attack being made upon him, and that though the sub-sheriff had summoned the town to assist him in preventing George Robert's escape, he had only succeeded in procuring two halberdmen and one man with a firelock to guard the jail against a rescue. Lionel therefore called upon the Government either to remove his brother to Dublin, or to send down a military guard to take charge of him in Castlebar.

These apprehensions proved to be well founded. By some means or other a servant's livery coat and a pair of pistols were smuggled into the jail. Two or three days after Fitzgerald's committal his lawyers came in to consult with him, and when they departed he walked out boldly behind them, attired in the livery coat. One of the jailers recognised him and tried to seize him, but George Robert fired one of the pistols point-blank at him—the priming happily missed fire—and rushed out of the jail. Flinging himself on a horse that was held “contiguous,” as his brother describes it, he galloped through Castlebar, a pistol in either hand, the reins hanging loose on the horse's neck, and thence over hedge and ditch to Turlough, where loud salvos of artillery from the fort proclaimed to the peaceful and law-abiding inhabitants of Mayo—if, indeed, there were any such persons to be found there at that time—that Fighting Fitzgerald was once more at large.



This last exploit was, however, too much for even the Irish Government to stomach. They issued a proclamation offering a reward of £300 to any one who would lodge the body of George Robert Fitzgerald in any of His Majesty's prisons, and the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Carlisle, panic-stricken apparently at the strength of the Turlough fort and the force that it contained, despatched six companies of foot, two troops of cavalry, and a "park" of artillery from Dublin to demolish Fighting Fitzgerald's stronghold and capture its owner, orders being given, besides, that all troops that could be spared from the garrison towns along the line of march were to join the flying column.

Fitzgerald did not await its coming. He spiked some of his guns and carried off the others, having first put wooden dummies in their place to deceive the enemy on arrival. Dragging his unfortunate father with him, he retreated across the mountains, hotly pursued by the Mayo Volunteers, under the leadership of Colonel M'Donnell and Lionel Fitzgerald, both intent upon delivering the old man. So many sympathisers, however, streamed to join the "banditti" on the way that by the time Killala was reached that body had become too formidable for the Volunteers to attack. Fitzgerald put his captive and his cannon into open boats, and crossed over into Sligo. There he took up his quarters in a wretched hut close by the sea, with his boats drawn up beside it, ready for further flight upon the

instant, and Lionel wrote despairingly to the Government that "sea power" must be added to the forces hastening across Ireland, if his brother was to be captured.

In this, however, the younger Fitzgerald proved to be mistaken. The poor old man, broken down, no doubt, by the misery of his condition, and seeing no hope of release, came to terms with his unnatural son. He undertook to make over the whole of his estate to him, only receiving a yearly pittance in return, and to sign a deed which exculpated Fighting Fitzgerald from all blame concerning his own imprisonment. That worthy immediately set out with his father and conveyed him by unfrequented roads to Dublin, thereby eluding the force sent down against himself. Once in the capital, however, he would seem to have considered that the quittance extracted from his father freed him from all the consequences of his lawless deeds, for he made no effort at concealment, and strutted about boldly in the most public thoroughfares. The town-major determined to earn the proffered reward, and taking a file of soldiers from the Castle guard, he came upon his quarry in College Green, walking arm-in-arm with a brother duellist, one Fenton. In the confusion and scrimmage both men were arrested, but as there was no charge against Fenton he was released the next morning, whereupon he sent to the town-major the following cartel :—

"SIR,—Despairing of obtaining any satisfaction from you for the illiberal treatment I received from you, I desire you will meet me with a friend at the Fifteen Acres to-morrow evening, when the Lord have mercy upon your soul, for your body will receive none from

"MICHAEL FENTON."

The officer, however, so far from complying with the invitation, lodged an information against Fenton, who was once more arrested, but as usual acquitted by a sympathetic jury.

Fighting Fitzgerald served six months of his sentence, and was then granted a pardon through the influence of his powerful connections, and to the disgrace of the Government of the day. The very night after his release he attended the theatre in Smock Alley, where Mrs Crawford was playing *Belvidera* to the delight of the Dublin playgoers, and who should be likewise present but his amateur prosecutor, Richard Martin. Fitzgerald stared rudely at him, and then struck him with a cane, crying, "Take that, you scoundrel!"

Dick Martin would have retaliated upon the instant, but he entangled himself in the curtains of his box as he rushed out of it, and came to the ground, thus enabling Fighting Fitzgerald to get away. Humanity Dick thereupon sent him a message in proper form, requesting a meeting at the



earliest possible moment, but the unlucky second who presented himself with the challenge was set upon by George Robert, and so severely belaboured with the rascal-thrasher that he fled from the house with a battered skull, a broken finger, and sundry other injuries. Not very long afterwards, however, Dick Martin and Fitzgerald met accidentally in Castlebar. Colonel Martin, remembering the insult he had received in Dublin, rushed at his enemy to strike him, but Fitzgerald waved him off.

"No, damn it, Martin," he said, "there is no need for that with an officer and a gentleman. I am at your service this moment with sword or pistol."

Colonel Martin had only just arrived from Dublin, and the servant to whom his duelling pistols had been intrusted had unfortunately got drunk upon the road and stayed behind. Quite undeterred, however, Dick Martin borrowed a pair of very clumsy horse-pistols, and insisted on an immediate encounter. The officer commanding the garrison now quartered in Castlebar obligingly placed the barrack-yard at their disposal, and thither the adversaries betook themselves, escorted by a cheering crowd, Fitzgerald swaggering along and shouting, "The Mayo cock against the Galway cock for a hundred pounds!"

Two shots were exchanged. At the first discharge Fitzgerald missed his aim, while Humanity Dick hit his opponent full in the chest. Unluckily for him, seeing what was to come, the bullet

struck a button on his coat and glanced off. As Colonel Martin raised his pistol the second time, Fitzgerald called out, "Honour, Martin, honour!" Dick Martin immediately fired in the air, whereupon Fitzgerald, taking deliberate aim, shot him in the body, exclaiming as he did so, "Hit for a thousand!"

Colonel Martin reeled and fell back, crying out "I'm done for!" and was carried into a neighbouring house. The surgeon who had been summoned had just finished dressing his injuries when Fitzgerald himself appeared in the room, saying with the utmost coolness, "Well, doctor, how does your patient get on?" Opening the curtains of the bed, closely drawn, according to the hygiene of the day, he said, "Martin, my dear fellow, how do you feel? It's a mere scratch, I understand, not worth a fig. Keep yourself perfectly quiet, — I always do."

Happily the wound did not prove to be mortal, and Colonel Martin recovered completely from it.

An impression prevailed at the time, and for long afterwards, that Fitzgerald owed his escape on this occasion not to the bullet striking a button but to his wearing a steel waistcoat under his clothes. The chief foundation for this belief, however, would seem to have been the good fortune that brought him off scatheless in the numerous duels which he fought. In one of these encounters upon the Continent, against a gamester called Bagge,

the latter, just as the combat was about to begin, called out that his opponent was *plastronné*. Fitzgerald, on the instant, flung off his clothing, revealing, indeed, a shirt fantastically tied with rose-coloured ribbons, but no trace of any bullet-proof garment whatever. It would therefore seem that in this one respect at any rate injustice was done to Fighting Fitzgerald.

This was in 1783: three years later, after a deed of wickedness so great as to be wellnigh incredible, the end came. Fitzgerald had never forgiven the insult which he conceived to have been put upon him when Colonel M'Donnell had been elected to the command of the Mayo Volunteers in his stead, and he had been heard to swear that Mayo could not and should not contain both M'Donnell and himself. M'Donnell's residence, Chancery Hall—so named because he had only established his right to it after a protracted lawsuit—was in the vicinity of Turlough, and as he was riding home one night, he was fired at from behind the demesne wall of the latter place and wounded in the leg. He ascribed the attack, and no doubt rightfully, to the Turlough Volunteers, and one of that body, a man named Murphy, was arrested and lodged, not in the jail, but in a private house in Castlebar, where it is said that a gallows was erected to terrify him, and he was also offered a bribe of £300 if he would avouch that his master had prompted the attack. Nothing, however, could



shake Murphy's fidelity, and as the evidence against him was insufficient, he was after a time released without a trial. It was now Fitzgerald's turn to strike, and he did so swiftly. After the outrage M'Donnell had deemed it prudent to leave Chancery Hall and to take up his abode in Castlebar. Fitzgerald lodged an information against him for the wrongful imprisonment and ill-usage of his servant, and obtained a warrant for his arrest from a magistrate who was a creature of his own. Armed with this document, he rode into Castlebar at the head of his force to seize Colonel M'Donnell's person. The Mayo Volunteers, however, on hearing of the mischief intended to their chief, turned out in full strength, and a pitched battle was fought in the streets between the two corps, which ended in the rout of those of Turlough, who were driven pell-mell out of the town.

Unhappily Colonel M'Donnell was compelled shortly afterwards to go out to Chancery Hall on business, and he took two of his adherents, named Hipson and Gallagher, with him. Their presence was betrayed to Fitzgerald, who surrounded the house with the whole of his force, himself in command, disguised in a countryman's big frieze coat. M'Donnell hid under a heap of malt, but was dragged out and placed forcibly upon his own horse. Notwithstanding his vehement protests, he and his followers were carried to Turlough and shut up together in a small room at the top of the house.

Early next morning they were brought downstairs, where the Turlough Volunteers were drawn up in military array before the door, and on M'Donnell's demanding whither they were to be taken, Fitzgerald rejoined insolently that he would know soon enough, and that the head constable had his orders. By this somewhat grandiose designation was meant Fitzgerald's chief henchman, a bravo known from his nationality as Scotch Andy, who was given command of the party, Fitzgerald himself remaining behind. As he was still lame from his wound, Colonel M'Donnell was again permitted to ride his horse, which was led by Murphy, with a drawn sword in his hand, whilst Hipson and Gallagher were roped together. They had proceeded about half a mile from the house when some shots were suddenly fired at the escort from the other side of the demesne wall, and one of them was wounded.

"A rescue! a rescue! Shoot the prisoners!" shouted Scotch Andy instantly, as at a prearranged signal.

A volley was immediately poured upon the defenceless men. Hipson fell dead at the first discharge, and in his fall broke the cord that bound him to Gallagher. The latter had the presence of mind to throw himself heels uppermost into a ditch half-full of water, and to lie there motionless, as if likewise shot, till he was able to crawl away unperceived into some bushes. A ball shattered Colonel M'Donnell's arm, and the terrified horse broke loose

from Murphy and galloped away. Even with his arm hanging helpless by his side, M'Donnell managed to keep his seat till the horse, in crossing a little bridge, swerved violently, and he was flung off, just as Scotch Andy came up in hot pursuit. The wretched man lying on the ground begged piteously for life—for dear life only.

“If you were me own mother, I'd drive this through your sowl!” retorted the ruffian, as he emptied both the barrels of his blunderbuss into his victim's side.

The news of this appalling crime soon spread to Castlebar, and the troops quartered there, together with the Mayo Volunteers and the mob of the town, came pouring out to Turlough. Fitzgerald was urged by those with him to mount and ride for his life, and to lie hidden somewhere till the powerful influence of his family could once more be exerted on his behalf. In this extremity, however, whether it were from guilty terror or the restiveness of the horse, his wonted powers of horsemanship failed him. He made several ineffectual efforts to mount, and then, as the avenging torrent was now close at hand, he rushed into the house to hide, even as M'Donnell had done upon the previous day. For a long time the search for him proved vain, and it was about to be given up under the supposition that he must have succeeded in effecting his escape, when he was discovered hidden under a pile of bedclothes in a great chest, grasp-



ing a pistol in either hand. It was only with the utmost difficulty that he was protected from the fury of the Mayo Volunteers, frenzied at the murder of their chief, and conveyed to Castlebar jail, from which this time there was no escape for him. Thus baulked of their prey, the Volunteers and the mob wreaked their vengeance upon Turlough House, which was thoroughly wrecked, not a pane of glass nor an article of furniture being left entire.

Fitzgerald was tried at the following summer assizes, in June 1786. The trial created the most intense excitement throughout Ireland, and so many people flocked to Castlebar for the occasion that gentlemen of fashion gladly paid exorbitant prices for lodgings in wretched thatched hovels. Relays of swift horses were stationed at intervals the whole way to Dublin to bring the finding of the jury thither with the utmost possible speed; and thousands of pounds were wagered throughout Ireland as to whether Fitzgerald would be found guilty, and whether, if found guilty, he would be executed, it being generally thought that in the last resort his mother, who was lady-in-waiting to one of the princesses, would procure his pardon from the King.

George Robert appeared in the dock in wretched and slovenly attire, very different from the magnificence for which he had been noted in former days. He wore an old stained hunt uniform, his waistcoat was soiled and unbuttoned, and his hat tied with a common hemp string. Fitzgibbon, as Attorney-

General, conducted the prosecution, and did not trouble himself to conceal his exultation at seeing his ancient enemy brought to this lamentable plight. The court was densely crowded, men even sitting upon each other's shoulders, and the trial had not proceeded far when the floor showed ominous signs of giving way. Judge, jury, counsellors, and jailers fled helter-skelter, and it was said that if the prisoner and his friends had been sufficiently alert, he might once more have been got away. The judge took refuge in the jury-room, being most unceremoniously hustled and impeded by less exalted persons, who, like himself, were seeking safety. The panic having been allayed, the trial was once more resumed. The only witnesses against Fitzgerald were Gallagher and Scotch Andy, who had turned king's evidence to save his own worthless neck. George Robert's counsel protested vehemently against the gross illegality of the murderer himself being permitted to give evidence against an accessory to his crime, but he was overborne by Fitzgibbon, who lost no opportunity of browbeating his opponent, and called him Mr Tautology Puzzlepate and other nicknames. Gallagher deposed that he had, through a broken pane in the window, heard Fitzgerald give orders to Scotch Andy to shoot the prisoners if he saw any likelihood of a rescue, and that he had added grimly, "Dead dogs tell no tales." This evidence was, however, much invalidated by the defence, who

contended that from the position of the room in which Fitzgerald had confined his prisoners it was not possible for Gallagher to have overheard what he averred, and who pointed out, furthermore, that Gallagher had offered no resistance to being taken from Turlough House, such as a man who knew himself to be going to certain death would assuredly have made. Practically therefore the case for the Crown depended upon the evidence of Scotch Andy, who detailed all the circumstances of the murders with the utmost callousness and effrontery, and swore that the pretended rescue had been concerted between his master and himself, a man being posted behind the demesne wall to fire at the escort with snipe-shot, but that only two others of the Turlough Volunteers had been in the secret, the rest believing themselves to be genuinely attacked.

Fitzgerald defended himself, and spoke most ably and lucidly for nearly three hours. His defence was that he held warrants for the arrest of Colonel M'Donnell and his companions; that his men were fired upon first, and one of his witnesses swore to having seen twelve of the Mayo Volunteers lying in hiding outside the demesne wall of Turlough, waiting to attack the convoy with the prisoners. He averred that the prisoners were shot in the confusion and *melée* which resulted, but that Scotch Andy had no orders from him to do so. The trial lasted throughout the night, and in the early morning of Saturday,



the 8th of June, the jury retired to consider their verdict. They were only absent a quarter of an hour, and returned with a verdict of "Guilty."

Fitzgerald was thereupon put back for sentence, whilst fifteen of the Turlough Volunteers were put on trial. Five were found guilty and the rest were acquitted on the ground that they had not been in the plot, and had believed that the rescue was a real one. On the Monday those to whom the finding of the jury had been adverse and their former chief were all placed in the dock together. Sentence of death was passed on them in due form, and it was intimated to them that they were to die at sunset. It was openly said, even in the newspapers of the day, that Fitzgibbon and the Brownes hurried on the execution lest Fitzgerald's powerful relatives might intervene on his behalf—nay, popular belief went so far as to declare that Denis Browne absolutely had the reprieve in his pocket whilst the hangman performed his task. This, however, considering the distance from the capital, and the time occupied by communications in those days, is all but impossible.

Fitzgerald's five retainers were executed first, and then he himself was led out. In consideration of his station he was permitted to walk from the prison to the gallows, instead of being conveyed thither in a cart, as common malefactors were, the executioner preceding him, wearing a mask. Arrived at the fatal spot, the doomed man shook hands with

a few friends who had companied with him even to this last, and sprang lightly up the ladder. He placed the noose about his neck with his own hands, said a short prayer, and leaped off. The sudden shock snapped the rope, and Fitzgerald came to the ground.

"My life is my own," he shouted, as he sprang to his feet.

"Not while there is another rope in Mayo," fiercely responded Denis Browne, who, as High Sheriff, was sitting by on horseback.

It was some time, however, before the fresh rope could be procured, and when it came the wretched man's nerve had been completely shattered by the time of waiting and suspense. Instead of his jaunty demeanour and unconcern, he now clung to life, and begged piteously for a short respite, and another, and yet another, to say one last prayer. Night had fallen long before the final act in the tragedy had concluded, and George Robert Fitzgerald had paid the penalty for his misdeeds. His body was taken out to Turlough, but so complete had the pillage of the mansion been that not a single candlestick remained in the house, and the candles for the wake had to be stuck into empty bottles round his corpse. He was buried by torchlight in his family burial-place, in an ancient abbey within the demesne. His is the only case on record of an accessory to a murder being found guilty upon the evidence of the principal, himself untried; and a sturdy old

barrister, meeting Chief-Baron Yelverton, afterwards Lord Avonmore, who tried the case, in Dublin after his return from the west, told him to his face that though Fighting Fitzgerald richly deserved his fate, he was none the less "a murderer murdered."



## CHAPTER VII.

## DUELS.

It was a matter of argument in those days whether assize or election times were most productive of affairs of honour. At least three hundred notable duels were computed to have been fought in Ireland in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. No gentleman was held to fill his station in life properly till he had smelt powder, and one of the first inquiries always made concerning a newcomer into any neighbourhood was, "Has he blazed?"

The men of Galway were specially famed in the old time throughout Ireland for their combativeness and their readiness to fight duels on any and every pretext. Scions of the old families gloried in such soubriquets as "Hair-trigger Pat," "Nineteen-duel Dick," or "Blue-blaze-devil Bob," and the only county which could rival Galway in this respect was Tipperary. It was held that Galway carried off the palm for swordsmanship, whilst the duellists of Tipperary were the most accurate and deadly shots. Mayo came not far behind in either branch

of the art, and was followed, though more distantly, by Sligo and Roscommon. At the summer assizes of 1777 delegates from these five most pre-eminent counties met at Clonmel and drew up a code by which the procedure in affairs of honour and all points of etiquette connected therewith, were to be governed in future. It was somewhat grandiloquently entitled "The practice of duelling and points of honour settled at Clonmel summer assizes, and presented for general adoption throughout Ireland," but was more familiarly known as the Thirty-six Commandments, the rules and regulations laid down being thirty-six in number. Every Irish gentleman was considered bound by them, and was expected to keep a copy in his pistol-case, so as to be unable to plead ignorance as an excuse for any breach of these maxims.

The chief points enumerated were that the original aggressor must be the first to apologise, even should the aggrieved have been guilty of the greater rudeness. For instance, should one gentleman accuse another of some trifling breach of manners or of courtesy, and the other retort that he lied, yet the former must make the first apology, because he gave the first offence, and not till after such apology and one exchange of shots might the other offer his excuses. After two shots had been fired on either side, however, it was open to the more grievous offender to make his explanation, and the original aggressor might then apologise. If any doubt existed

as to which of the parties was the original aggressor, the question must be decided by the seconds, and if they should be unable to agree, the duel must proceed till two rounds had been exchanged, or till one of the adversaries was wounded, as the challenger should elect.

Firing in the air, or dumb-shooting, as it was called, was strictly prohibited. A challenge should not be given, so it was very reasonably contended, without due cause, and if the challenged had given just offence, he should have apologised before coming on the ground. *Children's play*, said this rule, was therefore dishonourable to one side or the other. The regulation was none the less very frequently disregarded, and more honoured in the breach than the observance. Another very sensible rule decreed that challenges must never be sent at night, unless the individual to be challenged intended leaving the locality before morning, by this means ensuring at least sobriety and the cooling effects of a night's sleep to heated and heady dispositions.

The choice of weapons rested with the challenged, unless the challenger passed his word of honour that he was no swordsman; but in that case he might not object to whatever weapon the challenged selected as his second choice. The challenged had also the selection of the ground, but the challenger named the distance at which the combatants should stand, whilst the seconds fixed the time and the manner in which the firing was to take place.



A special rule referred to what were called simple, unpremeditated encounters with the small sword: that is to say, where two gentlemen quarrelled and fought the matter out there and then, without preliminaries of messages or seconds, with the swords that were always worn ready to hand in those days. In these cases the rule laid down was simple and short. First draw, first sheathe, it said, unless blood were drawn, when both combatants must sheathe and proceed to investigation, whether of the wound or of the cause which had led to the fracas, the rule did not make clear.

Seconds were bound to do their utmost to effect a reconciliation before the meeting took place, and also whenever in their judgment sufficient shots had been exchanged, or one party or the other had been seriously enough wounded. It was very specially enacted that seconds must be of the same rank and social standing as their principals, inasmuch as they were very likely to be drawn into the dispute and to become principals in their turn. Should the seconds quarrel over their arrangements and decide to have a combat on their own account, it must take place simultaneously with that of their principals, the seconds standing at right angles to them, and shooting across their fire, something after the fashion of a quadrille figure. If the duel were fought with swords, then the seconds were to fight side by side with their principals, five paces apart.

One four-handed duel of this sort was actually

fought in Galway. Sir John Bourke of Glinsk, over an election dispute, challenged Counsellor Amby Bodkin, one of the committee who had drawn up the Thirty-six Commandments, and who was considered to be the best authority of his day on all points of duelling etiquette. The seconds were not to be outdone, and resolved to have their share of the fun. A great crowd gathered to witness the meeting, and the retainers of the family brought out Sir John's son and heir, a little fellow of four or five summers, "to see papa fight." He was perched on the steward's shoulders to watch the fray at his ease. The four combatants were drawn up in quadrille form, ten paces apart, and the signal was given by an umpire discharging a pistol into the air. At the first volley the two principals were slightly wounded; the second discharge took better effect, Counsellor Bodkin and both the seconds reeled and came to the ground. They were all three more or less seriously wounded, but happily no lives were lost as a consequence.

Upon another occasion Counsellor Ned Lysaght, a noted duellist, or gamecock as the expression then was, was acting as second to two other counsellors, when his fellow-second said to him, "Take care, Mr Lysaght, your pistol is cocked!"

"Well, then, cock yours," retorted Lysaght, "and let's have a slap at each other as we are idle." That time, however, the request was not acceded to.

During the General Election of 1783 Denis Browne,

who has been mentioned in the last chapter, stood against James Bingham, afterwards created Lord Clanmorris, for the representation of the county Mayo. The election, as was usual at that time, was a protracted business, extending over several weeks, and as it progressed Denis Browne's prospects did not appear very favourable. He summoned his uncle, James Browne, who was Prime Serjeant, one of the chief legal dignities of Ireland in those days, to come to his assistance, and the latter, on his arrival in Castlebar, was disgusted to learn that his nephew had never yet figured in a duel.

"Do you think the men of Mayo will have a milksop for their member?" he demanded sternly. "You must challenge Bingham at once!"

"But I have no quarrel with him," objected the younger man.

"That's neither here nor there," said his uncle. "Knock him down the next time you meet him, and fight him on the spot!"

Denis Browne took the Prime Serjeant's advice. He encountered Bingham upon the steps of the Court-house, and pushed against him so roughly as to fling him down into the street. Bingham sprang up, muddied and infuriated, and demanded instant satisfaction, which Denis was only too well pleased to give him. The two candidates repaired likewise to the barrack-yard, which would seem to have been the favourite duelling-ground of Castlebar, and fell to with their swords, to the unbounded joy and



delight of a throng of electors. Denis Browne proved himself the better swordsman and vanquished his opponent. He was shortly afterwards returned in triumph at the head of the poll, his victory over Bingham having contributed not a little to this happy result.

At this same election Colonel Richard Martin unsuccessfully contested the county Galway. One of his strongest supporters upon the hustings was a Mr D'Arcy, a very fluent speaker, endowed with a fund of humour, a powerful Irish brogue, and unlimited courage. He had, however, unhappily lost the use of his lower limbs, and was therefore transported from place to place in a sedan chair, or carried, where the chair could not go, in the arms of the brawny chairmen. During the election, which, by the way, lasted nearly two months, he received some affront from a young gentleman belonging to the opposite camp, a stranger in those parts, and promptly called him out. The young man was naturally averse to fight a man considerably older than himself under such uneven conditions, and he begged that Mr D'Arcy would nominate some one of his friends to meet him. D'Arcy, furiously incensed, swore that it was not his fashion, nor the fashion of the county Galway, to fight by proxy, and that he himself and no other would fight the young spark. Having therefore no alternative, the latter went to the ground at the

time appointed, and found D'Arcy seated in an arm-chair and eager for the fray. Not to be outdone, the younger man dispatched his second for another arm-chair, and, sitting opposite each other, the combatants fought several rounds, till the seconds at last intervened and the affair terminated.

The law, then as now, declared duelling to be illegal, but no one had cause to trouble themselves on that score when the legal profession distinguished itself above all others for its pugnacity and its readiness to fight "for the dissension of a doit." During one western circuit, at a somewhat later date, an attorney named Fenton and Counsellor Hillas of the Connaught bar, who were engaged in the same case, had a dispute concerning fees. Fenton challenged Hillas and shot him dead. Fenton was apprehended and brought to trial at the ensuing assizes. The facts were undisputed, and the presiding judge charged the jury accordingly. He was bound to lay down the law to them, and by the law it was murder, wilful and premeditated, but then, warming to his subject, "Before God, gentlemen," he cried, "I vow I never heard of a fairer duel in the whole course of my life."

Needless to say the jury, without leaving the box, acquitted the prisoner.

"Manslaughter in self-defence" was a verdict very frequently returned, whilst other judges would put it to the jury whether there had been any foul

play or not, directing them to acquit if they found there had been none, and the jury, most of whom were probably duellists themselves, or at any rate in strong sympathy with the custom, were only too ready to respond. One very notorious case did indeed occur in the West of Ireland. In the year 1788 two gentlemen, Robert Keown and George Nugent Reynolds, having quarrelled, went out to fight each other. Mr Reynolds, on coming on the ground, took off his hat and courteously wished Mr Keown good morning, whereupon Keown shot him through the head. Reynolds' second, a Mr Plunkett, cried out furiously, "Murder, a foul murder!"

"If you don't like it, take that!" retorted Keown's brother, who was acting in like capacity, and snapped his pistol at his co-second. Happily it missed fire, but Plunkett had to ride off the field for his life.

Keown was found guilty of murder; he appealed, but the conviction was upheld—indeed one can hardly conceive its having been reversed—and he was duly executed. Horrible to relate, Reynolds' widow, a lady of good social position, came up to Dublin and took lodgings opposite the gallows that she might witness the last agonies of the man who had murdered her husband.

Such occurrences were fortunately most rare, affairs of honour being in general conducted with



the most scrupulous punctilio, and enjoying, as already said, the highest legal sanction. Young men destined for the law were exhorted to perfect themselves in the noble science of defence as a most important part of their equipment for their future career, and many men of high eminence at the bar owed their success quite as much to their daring and to the number of duels they had fought as to their eloquence or their legal acumen.

"My young friend," said Dr Hodgkinson, Vice-Provost of Trinity College, to a student who aspired to be called to the bar, and who had consulted him as to the course of study which he had best pursue, "practise four hours daily at Rigby's pistol gallery. That will advance you to the woolsack faster than all the law books in the college library."

John Toler, who was afterwards Lord Norbury and Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas, was the younger son of an impoverished Tipperary landlord. His father, when he lay dying, called him to his bedside, and told him that as the estate must go to his elder brother, all he could bequeath to him was £50 and his duelling-pistols, a handsome, silver-mounted pair of barkers such as were heirlooms in most Irish families at that day, being handed down from father to son and marked, some of them, with a nick for every man they had brought down.

"Now, Jack," said the dying man, "always be

ready to keep up the credit of the family and the honour of an Irish gentleman."

Toler took the paternal advice to heart, and became no less renowned for his deeds of arms than for his legal attainments. He obtained a seat in the Irish House of Commons, and being a thick and thin supporter of the Government, he was always the man whom the Administration relied upon to challenge any member of the Opposition who made himself obnoxious. His promotion in consequence was so rapid that it was said that he *shot up* into preferment.

During one debate, whilst he was Solicitor-General, and before his elevation to the peerage, he made a violent attack upon Sir Jonah Barrington, who was a member of the same august assembly. Barrington retorted that Toler's own character was but too well-known, that he had a hand for everybody, and a heart for nobody. Toler promptly sent a friend across the floor of the House to demand either satisfaction or an apology. Barrington returned that he would give no apology whatever, but as much satisfaction as Toler desired. Toler thereupon rose in his place, cast a meaning glance in Barrington's direction, and both honourable members, moved by a common impulse, made for the door of the chamber. The quarrel and the challenge had however been too public for any one to doubt their intention, and the Speaker com-

manded the Sergeant-at-arms and his myrmidons to pursue the members who had dared to disturb the decorum of the House, and to bring them before him. Barrington and Toler took to their heels and ran for it. Barrington got clear away, but Toler in his haste to escape let the doors of the House swing to upon the skirts of his coat. In his frantic efforts to free himself he tore them completely off, but was none the less captured and brought back.

Barrington continued his flight as far as Nassau Street, where he was overtaken, and as he resisted arrest he was unceremoniously seized, and, to the great delight of the mob, hoisted like a sack upon the shoulders of a stout janissary. In this fashion he was carried back to the assembly which he had just quitted, and tumbled down upon the floor in front of the Speaker's chair. The Speaker read both members a lecture upon their conduct, and commanded them to pledge their honour to him forthwith that the matter should proceed no further. Toler stood up to make his defence, but in the abbreviated remnants of his coat he presented a most ludicrous figure, and his appearance was greeted with roars of laughter. Curran rose up and said with great gravity that a most unparalleled insult had been offered to the House, as it would seem that one honourable member had trimmed another honourable member's jacket within its walls, and almost within view of the Speaker.



Amidst the renewed merriment which this sally occasioned, both the offending members made haste to tender their apologies to the Speaker, and to give the undertaking required of them.

Toler fought at least one duel after he had become Lord Norbury, and upon attaining the highest judicial dignity he let it be known that, as he expressed it, "he would not seek shelter behind the Bench nor merge the gentleman in the Chief-Justice."

His brother Chief-Justice, John Scott, Earl of Clonmell, who presided over the court of King's Bench, had the reputation of having tried more cases and fought more duels than any other judge upon the Bench. He fought Lord Tyrawley on some dispute about his own wife, and Lord Llandaff about his sister, and others for miscellaneous reasons as he put it himself, both with sword and pistol. In one encounter which he had late in life, however, and which was not fought either muzzle to muzzle or hilt to hilt, he had very much the worst of it.

John Magee, printer and proprietor of 'The Dublin Evening Post,' had been sued for libel by Francis Higgins, a disreputable attorney, who had become wealthy by keeping a gaming-house, and of whom the Chief-Justice, to his own discredit, made a boon companion. This personage was more commonly known as the Sham Squire, owing to his having early in his career, through most disgraceful

trickery, obtained the hand of an unfortunate girl, the daughter and heiress of a Dublin merchant. He is generally believed, and with apparently good reason, to have been the individual who betrayed Lord Edward Fitzgerald's hiding-place to the Government. Lord Clonmell, straining the law as it then stood in his ally's favour, issued a writ called a fiat against Magee, who was thrown into prison till he could find security for £7800, the whole amount which Higgins claimed as damages. The matter was brought before the Irish Parliament and Magee was released, though under enormous bail. He was no sooner at liberty than he set about finding means to pay off his score against Lord Clonmell.

As a first step he had placards extensively posted about Dublin announcing that he found himself possessed of £14,000, and that, having settled £10,000 upon his family, he intended, "with the blessing of God, to spend the rest upon Lord Clonmell." The Chief-Justice had some time previously purchased a country residence, called Temple Hill, a few miles from Dublin, on the outskirts of the village of Blackrock, which he intended to be the home of his declining years. He had planted it extensively, and had spent large sums in beautifying it with pleasure-grounds and parterres and other such amenities. Magee succeeded in renting the fields immediately adjoining his lordship's demesne, and having done so, he

issued another placard in the following high-sounding terms :—

## IRISH FESTIVITY

OR

### LAU BRAUGH PLEASURA.

ON THE NATIVE DAY OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES,

LATELY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPOINTED BY THE

REPRESENTATIVES OF A FREE PEOPLE AND

THEIR PEERS, SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL,

IN PARLIAMENT DULY ASSEMBLED,

### UNSHACKLED REGENT

OF THE IMPERIAL, INDEPENDENT, AND ANCIENT REALM OF  
IRELAND, DURING THE ACKNOWLEDGED INCAPACITY OF  
HIS FATHER, OUR LIEGE LORD AND LAWFUL SOVEREIGN,

GEORGE III.,

WHO UNITES IN HIS PERSON AND WEARS UPON HIS BROW  
THE CROWNS OF IRELAND—SCOTLAND—ENGLAND.

OLD LAMMAS DAY, AUGUST 12, 1789.

A few words of explanation are here necessary. The celebrated controversy over the Regency had taken place a few months earlier. When George III. was pronounced insane and therefore incapable of governing, Pitt, as Prime Minister, brought in a



Bill to create the Prince of Wales Regent, but with sundry limitations of his powers. The measure was furiously opposed by Fox and the Whigs, in alliance with the Prince himself. They declared that he was Regent in right of his birth as unquestionably as he would become king upon his father's death, and that Parliament had no power either to confer the Regency upon him or to limit its prerogatives. The Irish Houses of Parliament supported the Whigs in this contention, and in the teeth of the Irish Government—Pitt's nominees—they passed a unanimous address to the Prince, praying him to take upon himself the full royal power during the King's illness. The Lord-Lieutenant refused to transmit the address to England, and the King's unlooked-for recovery put an end to the controversy. Magee in his newspaper had vehemently supported the Irish Parliamentary party, hence this ingenious device for flouting the Government under the guise of a loyal and most commendable celebration of the Heir Apparent's birth.

As self-appointed steward of the Lau Braugh Pleasura—what in the English of the present day would be styled a garden-party or rustic fête—John Magee, now of Fiat Hill, so he had appropriately christened his newly acquired property, but late of Fiat Dungeon Cell, No. 4, in the New Bastille, opposite the Courts of Irish Justice, proceeded to present his most respectful compliments

to the men of Ireland, and to those fairest objects of creation, the lovely daughters of Hibernia, and begged that they would one and all honour his Irish festivity with their presence, promising that every preparation should be made for their pleasure and amusement. Ladies and gentlemen were invited to a special *table-d'hôte*, to be spread at three o'clock in the afternoon, and full permission was given to all tavern-keepers and publicans to erect tents upon the ground, the only condition being that they must be well and handsomely covered, and that "native punch, nectar ambrosial," should be dispensed thereat.

The invitation so liberally given was, needless to say, equally liberally responded to. From early morning the road from Dublin was thronged by crowds on foot, all hastening towards Fiat Hill, and also by well-laden noddies and low-backed cars. These two vehicles were at that time the public and the private conveyances patronised by the lower orders of the Irish metropolis. The noddy, which plied for hire in the Dublin streets, was an old, worn-out chaise, which had been converted to this humbler use by fixing a stool upon the shafts to serve as a driving-seat. It had its name from the nodding motion which this perch, right over the horse's quarters, imparted to the jarvey, and was to be had at so much a "set down." It very often proved to be a set-down in good earnest, the fare being deposited in the gutter by a wheel coming

off the crazy machine. The low-backed car, on the other hand, was the old Irish car, with solid wooden wheels fixed to a revolving axle. It was in universal use for conveying merchandise of all kinds about the town, and on Sundays or other occasions of junketing, it was converted into what was grandiloquently styled a chaise marine by laying a mat or, where its owners possessed such an article, a feather-bed upon it. Half a dozen people besides the driver could find accommodation thereon, two on either side and two at the back, and in this fashion they were dragged along at a foot pace, their feet dangling a few inches from the ground.

At Fiat Hill upon this memorable day the fun was fast and furious. There were boat-races from the "Admiral's Barge" moored off the pier at old Dunleary—not for many years to be converted into the fashionable Kingstown—to the shore below the "tented field," as John Magee styled it in his advertisement. Every boat must carry the flag of Ireland, and every brave sailor who competed must wear a clean white shirt and round black hat, adorned with band and cockade of blue and buff, the colours of the Prince of Wales and of the Whigs, which latter would be supplied gratis by the Admiral. Prizes for the winners were, for the first boat, a complete suit of the colours of ancient, imperial, and independent Ireland, the harp and crown upon an azure field, with permission to add the Prince of Wales's plume, and a guinea to bumper



long life to George, Prince of Wales; and for the second boat, an ensign with the harp and crown, and half a guinea to toast health and festivity to the same individual. On *terra firma* harpers and pipers had been provided for those who chose to dance, and for others a variety of sports had been arranged, cudgel play "upon an elevated stage, with proper judges upon the boards, to prevent ill-temper and preserve good humour," a needful precaution doubtless. The prize to be a beaver hat richly laced with gold. There were to be foot-races and races in sacks and football. "The boy who plays his game most active and clever," so John Magee promised, "shall be enrobed in triumph glorious, with an excellent frize greatcoat."

The crowning effort of the day was reserved for the afternoon. By that time, several thousands of people, including all the rabble of Dublin who had been able on foot or by vehicle to transport themselves so far, were assembled on the ground. A drove of active pigs, with their tails well shaved and soaped, were produced, some of them were dressed up in wigs and gowns to resemble Lord Clonmell and other legal dignitaries, and the biggest and fattest porker of them all had been christened Shamado, after Higgins, Magee's enemy. Silence having been with difficulty procured, it was proclaimed that an Olympic Pig Hunt was about to take place, and that whoever could catch a pig by its tail and hold it fast might have it for

his own, after which, at a given signal, the whole number were let loose. A scene of indescribable confusion followed. The terrified animals, penned in by the crowd in all other directions, burst through the fence which separated Lord Clonmell's pleasure-grounds from Fiat Hill, with the whole mob in full cry behind them. Shrubberies and plantations were broken and trampled down, lawns and flower-beds trodden into indistinguishable ruin, and within half an hour John Magee saw himself amply avenged for the wrongs which he had suffered from the noble owner.

Another legal luminary much distinguished for his duelling propensities was John Egan, who subsequently became Chairman for the Quarter Sessions of the county of Dublin, held at Kilmainham. He was a big, burly, black-haired man, commonly known as Bully Egan, because of his rough, overbearing manners and his readiness to give and accept challenges. In those days it was no uncommon occurrence for two counsellors who had a difference in court to retire to a neighbouring field to settle the question by a resort to arms, and then to return and resume their arguments at the point where they had been broken off. Egan was on one occasion conducting a case at the Waterford Assizes, and had a dispute with the opposing counsel over a point of law. They exchanged glances, and both simultaneously disappeared from court. They crossed the Suir in the

ferry-boat, and having by this means gained the county Kilkenny and put themselves beyond the jurisdiction of the Waterford authorities, they deemed that they were safe from any possible interruption. It chanced, however, that a Kilkenny magistrate had been in court, and guessing whither the gentlemen had betaken themselves, he hurried after them. He crossed the river in the next trip of the ferry-boat, and arrived upon the scene just as the combatants had taken their ground and were about to fire.

"Stop, stop!" he shouted, "I'm a justice of the peace for this county."

"You may be St Peter from heaven for all we care, you won't stop us!" retorted Egan.

Finding commands of no avail, the J.P., who was a big, broadly-built man, planted himself boldly between the antagonists, thus effectually masking their fire.

"If you don't get out of that, by —— we'll shoot you first, and pound you to a jelly afterwards," swore Egan's opponent.

Appalled by this threat, and finding all his arguments and protests vain, the worthy magistrate at length consented to stand aside and allow the combat to proceed. The opposing counsel each emptied a case of pistols, as the phrase was, without damage being done to either side, and recrossed the river to the court, where they found the judge, the jury, and the general public, who had all thoroughly



well understood the cause of their abrupt departure, quietly waiting to hear which of them had been killed before proceeding with the case at hearing.

Another of Egan's duels was fought with Curran. Egan, as already said, was a stout, bulky man, and on coming on the ground he complained that Curran had an unfair advantage over him, for whilst he himself was as big as a turf-stack, Curran was as thin as a blade of grass.

"Oh, Mr Egan," said Curran, "I have no desire for anything that might be considered unfair. Let my size be chalked out upon your body, and any hits outside the line shall not count."

The handicap proved unnecessary, however, as neither of the combatants were wounded; Egan, indeed, notwithstanding the numerous duels which he fought, both with sword and pistol, had the singular good fortune to come off unscathed in them all. It must be said that the marksmanship of the Irish fire-eaters does not seem to have been of the best, or the tragic results of these encounters would have been much greater than it was. In one duel in which the Right Honourable G. Ogle, Privy Councillor and Member for Dublin, figured, he and his opponent were so inveterate that they insisted on discharging four brace of pistols at each other, but the only damage sustained on either side was that one of the seconds tumbled into a potato-trench and broke his arm.

Late in life, after he had been made County

Court judge, Egan had an encounter with Roger Barrett, Master of the Rolls. The duel was fought upon the fair-ground at Donnybrook, and a large concourse gathered to witness it. Both men were humorists, and the meeting was characteristic. Upon the combatants taking their ground, Barrett, who was the challenger, promptly fired without waiting for the signal to be given, and then walked coolly away, calling out, "Now, Egan, my honour is satisfied."

The judge was, however, by no means contented, and shouted, "Hilloa! stop, Roger, till I take a shot at your honour!"

Barrett thereupon came back, and planting himself in his former station, said composedly, "All right, then, fire away!"

Egan presented his pistol, and taking most deliberate aim, first at one part of the Master of the Rolls' anatomy and then at another, seemed determined to finish him off outright. At last, however, he called out, "Pho, pho, I won't *honour* you, I won't be bothered shooting you, so now you may go to the d—l your own way, or come and shake hands, whichever you like best."

Barrett chose the latter alternative, and, amidst the plaudits of the crowd, the antagonists departed from the field in much good-humour and the best of friends.

Like most counsellors of any eminence, Egan was in Parliament, sitting as one of the members for Tallagh in Waterford. He distinguished him-

self by his absolute integrity, a quality only too rare in that venal assembly, one member of which, on being reproached for having sold his country for lucre, thanked God that he had a country to sell. Egan was entirely without private means, and dependent upon his stipend as chairman of Kilmainham. He was indeed so poor that when he died three shillings found upon his mantelpiece represented the sum total of his worldly wealth. During the struggle over the Union it was intimated to him with great plainness that he would incur the Government's most serious displeasure if he opposed that measure, whilst he might hope for very substantial advancement if he supported it. As the debate progressed, Egan was seen to be labouring under intense, though suppressed excitement. At last he could restrain himself no longer, but springing to his feet he delivered a vehement denunciation of the Bill. At the end of it he paused, then stamped his foot violently: "Ireland! Ireland for ever!" he shouted, "and *damn Kilmainham!*"

For the honour of the Government, it must, however, be recorded that no attempt was made to deprive him of his post, which he continued to hold up to his death.

Sir Jonah Barrington's and Toler's abortive attempt to fight each other was by no means the only encounter occasioned by a debate in the House of Commons, nor is this surprising con-



sidering the amazing language which the Speaker permitted the members to indulge in. A younger scion of a titled family having on one occasion addressed the House, the speaker who rose to reply to him declared that the race to which he belonged were rotten and corrupt every one of them, from the member who had just sat down to the toothless hag grinning in the gallery. This last was a delicate allusion to the mother of the member in question, who had come down to hear her son speak. Even Grattan himself stooped to invective and personalities at times. He was small and slender of build, and once when he had assailed Egan, the latter retorted by calling the great orator "a duodecimo volume of abuse."

The fiercest and most envenomed conflict of rhetoric upon the floor of the Irish House of Commons, however, was that between Grattan and Flood, who till then had been close political friends, and members of the same Opposition, but had differed upon a motion of Flood's for retrenchment and reduction of the army in Ireland. Flood, who had but recently recovered from illness, and spoke with difficulty, twitted Grattan with being a mendicant patriot, who had been bought by his country, and had sold that country for prompt payment of the sum at issue.<sup>1</sup> Grattan, in return, sneered at

<sup>1</sup> The Irish Parliament had voted Grattan £100,000 for his services to his country. He could only be induced to accept £50,000, and that under extreme pressure.

Flood's bodily infirmity, which he hinted was assumed to suit his own purposes, and likened him—Flood being of gaunt and cadaverous aspect—to an ill-omened bird of prey with broken beak and sepulchral note. He declared that he abused every person who differed from him, and betrayed every man who trusted him; and he wound up by telling him in the face of his country, before the world, and to his beard that he was not an honest man. Flood was on his feet in an instant. At the least his infirmity had not made him afraid of the right honourable gentleman, and he would meet him anywhere, upon any ground, by day or by night.

At this point it would seem to have dawned upon the Speaker that matters were going rather far, for he arose and appealed to the House to support him in keeping the gentlemen in order. A Mr Burke thereupon moved, somewhat ambiguously, that the honourable members be made to promise that nothing further should happen. The House was cleared for the division upon this question, and during the confusion attendant upon that process, Grattan and Flood, the two individuals whom it most immediately concerned, both succeeded in slipping out and making good their escape. A meeting was arranged to take place the following day at Blackrock, and the antagonists had nearly reached the trysting-place when they were overtaken by messengers bearing the Chief Justice's warrant, and arrested. Being brought back to

Dublin in custody, they were bound over in recognisances of £20,000 each to keep the peace.

The last expiring struggle of the Irish Parliament was not without another dramatic episode of this sort. Upon the night of February 14, 1800, Isaac Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer, rose to move the resolution for the Union between Great Britain and Ireland. In his speech introducing that measure, he made a violent personal attack upon Grattan because of the hostility which he had always shown to it in his writings and in his utterances both within and without the House. He accused him of associating with disaffected persons, and wound up his harangue by calling him an unimpeached traitor.

Grattan's reply was vigorous and forcible. "Far be it from us," said a Dublin newspaper of the following day with commendable reticence, "to communicate to the Public the Portrait which one Honourable Gentleman holds forth of another on an occasion of this kind; but it may at least be said that the picture was a full length, in which, whether or no there were some features that might be overcharged, there were none that were not touched in with great strength and spirit." What may be called an outline drawing of the portrait has, however, come down to us. Grattan declared that he would not call his adversary a villain, both because it would be unparliamentary and because he was a privy councillor, nor would he call him a fool,



because he happened to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Half minister, half monkey, a prentice politician and a master coxcomb, nothing could limit his calumnies but his fears. He had deemed himself safe in using language within the House which, had it been uttered outside its walls, he, Grattan, would have replied to with a blow.

He had scarcely resumed his seat when an intimation was conveyed to him that General Cradock, the honourable and gallant member for Thomastown, desired as Mr Corry's second to wait upon him in the Speaker's room. Grattan, who practised oratory and pistol-shooting with equal zest in the woods of Tinnehinch, his Wicklow home, lost no time in betaking himself to the sacrosanct spot appointed for the interview, and it was agreed that the meeting between him and the Chancellor of the Exchequer should take place with the least possible delay, in other words, as soon as it was light enough for the combatants to see each other. The rest of the night was occupied by a very desultory and protracted debate. Several members, we are told, spoke more than once, a matter of the less moment, as no one appears to have listened to them, the attention of all being engrossed by the impending duel.

At daybreak the gentlemen stepped out from the heated atmosphere of the chamber, lit by the flaring candles of its chandelier, into the chilly dawn of the winter's morning. Ball's Bridge, a mile and more away, was the place fixed upon, and out of the

many members who had eagerly proffered him their services, Grattan had selected Mr Metge, one of the members for Westmeath, to act as his second. Just, however, as Grattan and his antagonist had been placed opposite each other, up rushed a sheriff's officer—whom we should nowadays term a policeman—who had got wind of the affair.

"Gentlemen, this must not go on," he gasped, with as much dignity as he was capable of after his race, "I forbid these proceedings."

General Cradock, who had distinguished himself greatly in the West Indies, who had borne a large part in putting down the rebellion of '98, and who was moreover a very large and powerfully-built man, was not to be so easily daunted. Seizing the representative of the law in his arms, he swung him round and deposited him in a little ditch near by. The officer might very easily have emerged from it, but he either deemed discretion the better part of valour, or else, his conscience once eased, he was anxious, like a true Irishman, not to spoil sport, and he preferred to remain where he was and see the fun out. It was still barely light, and Grattan complained that he could not see his opponent clearly.

"The gentleman is placed too far off," he said, "let him come nearer." And the distance between the duellists was accordingly shortened.

At the first exchange of shots the Chancellor of the Exchequer received a ball through his left arm.

This wound, however, though painful was not disabling. Their other pistols were therefore handed to the combatants by their seconds, and once again the word was given. This time, however, neither fired, though each called upon the other to do so. A brief pause ensued, then the seconds once more simultaneously cried "Fire!" Again the gentlemen stood motionless, and it was plain that neither of them desired to continue the combat. As, however, no apology had been made or explanation offered on either side, honour, according to the rules by which affairs of this kind were governed and which imperatively demanded two discharges, could not be considered satisfied. Corry, who was by this time bleeding profusely, called out to Grattan to suggest that they should both give their word of honour to fire the next time the signal was given. This they did, and having let off their pistols without any further damage being done, both abruptly turned and quitted the field.

Upon regaining the road Grattan inquired with some anxiety from General Cradock whether the Chancellor's wound were dangerous. The General reassured him on this point, and the ice having thus been broken, he in his turn approached Mr Metge and expressed his regret that the combatants had separated without exchanging the compliments customary on such occasions. Mr Metge fully concurred in the desirability of such an exchange taking place, and spoke to Grattan, who was ready



to do all that might be required of him. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, without waiting for these confabulations, had in the meantime got into his carriage and driven off to his residence with the surgeon, who as usual was in attendance. Grattan pursued him thither, and being shown up to the room, where the surgeon was busy with bandages and dressings, he courteously expressed his hopes for Mr Corry's speedy recovery from the wound which he had himself given him. The Chancellor replied with equal politeness, and with low bows and further civilities the late combatants separated.

On August 1, 1800, the Act for the Union between Great Britain and Ireland received the Royal Assent, and the Irish Parliament ceased to exist.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## OLD IRISH TRAVEL.

INTREPID mortals who ventured upon a journey to Ireland in the eighteenth century regarded themselves as men of heroic mould, bent upon a very hazardous enterprise. Of this number was a certain individual named Bush, who visited Ireland in 1764, and gave his experiences to the world in a volume entitled 'Hibernia Curiosa.' He was impelled to this great enterprise, so he tells us in his preface, by the misrepresentations contained in certain books which had not long before appeared. "The greater part of these," he exclaims indignantly, "appear to have been wrote implicitly from tradition or the hearsay of other people. Every gentleman who has been through the country knows that what they palm off upon us for natural history has no existence but in their own or the imagination of others, and even of such subjects as have some existence in nature are as much like the originals indeed as a sixpenny picture of KING-GEORGE & QUEEN-SHARLOT stuck up with a cat's head in a

pottage-pot against the walls of a cottage in Lancashire" resembles their most august Majesties, was no doubt what our author meant to say if his anger had not got the better of his literary style. By natural history the worthy Bush did not mean any description of the flora and fauna of the sister isle, but rather of the ways and manners of its inhabitants; and to rectify the misconceptions caused by would-be tour-writers, whose longest journey he verily believed to have been from their own dwellings to the nearest chop-house, he set out from Chester by the turnpike road which had not long before been constructed to Holyhead. The stage-coach accomplished the distance very comfortably, so he tells us, in two days, and after "jumbling" up and down the Welsh mountains he reached Holyhead, that *ne plus ultra* of terra firma. There he began to feel some of his courage and his zest for the enterprise he had undertaken oozing away. He confesses that it was with apprehension, not unmix't with fear, that he surveyed the yawning "gulph" before him and the floating carriage which was to convey him across it, and reflected that there would be but a few inches between his cabin and a bed of salt water. To reassure himself somewhat he sought out the captain, and that jolly mariner recommended a bottle of claret as the best specific, if not against the perils of the sea, at least for putting the terrors of it out of his mind.

With or without the claret Bush got safely to the



other side, though only after beating in the teeth of the wind for forty hours. His first impressions of the Irish metropolis were not very favourable, as it did not contain a single inn, so he assures us, where an Englishman with any sense of decency would have been satisfied with his quarters, and there were not more than two or three in the whole town into which an Englishman would have set foot at all. In his first hostelry, situated in Essex Street, Bush had to pay a shilling a night for a bed two feet wide, in a room not much more than double that width. Through the good offices of a coffee-house acquaintance he shortly found a clean and neat room for himself elsewhere, but he had to pay half a guinea a week for it, which he considered excessive.

In the country districts through which Bush journeyed the conditions were somewhat better. The inns were clean and reasonably comfortable, and the roads too were fairly good, though not equal to those in England. He added, however, that if his horse had been gifted with the powers of Balaam's ass he would certainly have lifted up his voice in protest at the treatment he met with. The poverty of the people was so great that every handful of good hay and straw which was grown was expended not only upon their own bedding and the thatch of their dwellings, but also in making their horse-furniture, the whole of which, saddles, bridles, stirrups and all, was composed

of *sugauns*—i.e., straw ropes. The refuse at the bottom of the stacks and the spoilt and rotted hay, of which, owing to bad methods of harvesting, there was but too much, were considered good enough for horses. Only once during his journeying in Ireland did Bush succeed in obtaining a clean, dry bed for his horse, and that was when his host happened also to be a farmer. Bush arrived at the auspicious moment when his men were busy threshing, and he insisted on seizing upon as much of the straw as afforded his horse a good bed for that one night at any rate.

Unhappily the two characteristics which impressed our traveller most amongst the upper classes in Ireland were their predilection for duelling and for excessive drinking. It amazed him that a race so kindly and so hospitable should yet be ready on the smallest provocation, often for an offence given by sheer inadvertence, to run each other through the body, or to perforate each other's skulls with a brace of pistol-balls. Like most visitors to Ireland Bush met with unbounded hospitality, his only difficulty being to avoid swallowing five times more liquor than he had a mind for. The wine consumed was almost entirely claret, of which, in the year of Bush's visit, 8000 tuns were imported into Dublin alone. It was cheap, for the best claret procurable in Dublin cost but half-a-crown a bottle, whilst the price of that ordinarily drunk was only two shillings. Even a

middling drinker, our author tells us, could carry off his four bottles without being in the least disordered thereby, and in Ireland a man was looked upon as a mere nincompoop with his bottle if he could not take off his gallon coolly. It was indeed impossible, so it seemed to him, to make an Irishman, who was anything of a drinker, drunk with claret. At the end of five or six bottles he might perhaps be a little flashy, but you might drink him to eternity, and he would never be anything more. Shortly after Bush's arrival in Dublin, one very hospitable individual, to whom he had just been introduced, said genially to him: "Well, sir, as you are come over quite a stranger to the country, it behoves us to make it as agreeable as we can. There is a company of us to meet at the Black Rock on a jolly party on Sunday next, and by — there is to be five or six dozen of claret to be emptied. Will you give us the honour of your company?" The number of the assemblage by whom this exploit was to be accomplished was not mentioned, but Bush declined the pressing invitation.

Those ultra-convivial habits are attested and deplored by many other writers of the time. "Make your head while you are young," was advice frequently given by elders to their juniors. It was said that no man who drank ever died of drink, but that many died learning to drink. Many were the devices adopted by the ingenious to circumvent the



endeavours of those who would fain remain sober. Some hosts had their decanters made round below like a soda-water bottle of the present day, the only stand for them being at the head of the table before the master of the house. Every one was therefore obliged to fill his glass at once and pass the bottle on, unless he desired to upset its contents over the table. Others adopted the simpler but quite as efficacious plan of knocking the stems off the wine-glasses, so that they would not stand, but had to be emptied as fast as they were filled. Nay, hospitality went to such lengths that a man who accepted an invitation to dine was very likely to have his boots and his horse locked up, and to be detained willy-nilly a guest for two or three days.

One young fellow about this time, being on his way to college in Dublin, was invited to spend a few days *en route* at the house of an old friend of his father's. The night of his arrival there was as usual a drinking-party, and he was plied with bumpers till he sank senseless under the table. Determined to escape this fate upon the second night of his stay, he waited till the company had well started upon their potations, and then endeavoured to steal unperceived out of the window. He was detected, however. The cry of "Stole away!" was immediately raised, and with loud and vigorous view-halloos the whole company gave chase. In the condition they were in it did not give him much trouble to evade the pursuit, and he found shelter

for the night in a ruined chapel within the demesne. In the early morning he ventured back to the house, and as he approached the hospitable mansion the doors were flung wide and a most extraordinary procession issued forth. Such of the company as were still able to walk had procured an old Irish low-backed car, on which they had laid the bodies of those who were insensible and thrown a white sheet over them. One or two of the guests had taken their places in the shafts, others pushed behind, whilst some walked on either side carrying lighted candles in imitation of an Irish wake, and the whole number raised the best imitation of the *keen*—the Irish funeral-cry—that they were capable of. In this fashion the victims of the night's debauch were conducted back to their respective homes by the survivors. When those who had been thus prematurely waked regained their senses, they forthwith sent challenges to their mourners, and a goodly crop of duels were fought as the outcome of this practical joke.

Richard Twiss, who visited Ireland some years later than the author of 'Hibernia Curiosa,' does not animadvert upon the drinking and duelling propensities of Irish society, but upon another custom even more reprehensible. He asserts that the accomplishment most cultivated by Irish ladies of that day was the forging of franks. It will be remembered that at that date, when postage was a very costly item, any letter which bore the signature

of a peer or member of Parliament was carried free. In answer to Twiss's strictures some laughed the practice off as trivial and harmless, and declared there was no law against it. He was obliged to point out that so far from this being the case there was a penalty of no less than seven years' transportation decreed against all who indulged in this trick. Others averred that they had leave from the member in question to counterfeit his name; and Twiss was told that some of the Irish members were so obliging as to give all the inhabitants of some favoured town permission to frank letters in their name. There were still others who assumed an air of conscious rectitude, and insisted that the revenues of the Post Office were so scandalously misapplied that it was a meritorious act to lessen them. Twiss assures us that he had seen more than one lady of rank, with her own dainty fingers, forge any signature she desired to copy so perfectly as to defy detection. No other writer mentions such a practice; and we can but hope that Twiss was unlucky in his choice of acquaintances, both titled and untitled. It must also be said that his book when it appeared aroused a storm of indignation throughout Ireland which was not allayed for many years, and other travellers who came over, intending to write their experiences, found themselves received with scant favour.

Twiss found two coinages—the English and the Irish—current in Ireland. Irish coins consisted of



fivepennies, tenpennies, and six-shilling pieces. The common people called an English shilling a hog and an English sixpence a pig; but why these terms of opprobrium were given them he could not discover. The value of the currencies differed to the extent of a penny in the shilling, so that an English guinea was worth £1, 2s. 9d. Irish money—a difference that must have been somewhat confusing in everyday life, one would imagine.

Notwithstanding this duplication of coinages, there was such a want of small change that many employers and tradesmen struck their own copper coins. These were called traders, and were generally inscribed: "I., A. B., promise to pay the bearer twopence on demand," whilst on the reverse there would be a beer-cask or some other emblem denoting the occupation of the issuer. These tokens were chiefly current in the northern parts of Ireland where industry and the circulation of money was more brisk.

Unhappily Twiss and all other travellers were painfully impressed by the wretched poverty of the peasantry. Scarce one cabin in twenty boasted of a chimney, and in many of them the smoke curled up from every inch of the rotten roof; whilst here and there a pole projecting through the thatch, with a sod of turf at the end of it, proclaimed to those of understanding that native-brewed potheen was to be had within. If any one entered one of these shebeens in quest of refreshment, the top was

immediately knocked off an egg, and its contents emptied out to furnish a glass. Even in the houses of the better-to-do farmers the furniture generally consisted of only a few three-legged stools and the large iron pot in which the potatoes were boiled, which subsequently served as a table, the kish or flat basket into which the potatoes were thrown after boiling, being set upon it whilst the family squatted round, and after the meal a wooden methers containing milk, the only drinking vessel in the house, was passed from hand to hand. For light they used rushes dipped in melted tallow; if a larger light was required they twisted several rushes together and fastened them into a slit stick, the end of which was afterwards stuck into a sod of turf to form a candlestick.

In most of the villages Twiss passed through he saw boards nailed up over some of the doors setting forth that "dry lodgings" were to be had within. As pigs could not read, he concluded that the invitation could not be addressed to them, though in many instances the proffered accommodation seemed better fitted for them than for human beings. He supposed, however, that dry, as in the usual employment of that word, meant free from undesirable damp and moisture, and that these advertisements were in some sort a reflection upon other lodgings in the vicinity that were not so favourably situated. Later on it was explained to him that "dry lodgings" meant only that no food or drink was to be had

within, but merely sleeping accommodation. He was told that in a higher rank in society the same term was applied to a ball where no supper was provided.

In the summer and early autumn, as soon as the turf-cutting and potato-planting were ended, the roads were covered with barefooted, half-clad wayfarers, bound for England or else for the cornlands about Dublin, to aid in the harvesting. They were known as *spalpeens*, and in general had no other possessions than a few oatcakes brought from home as sustenance for the journey, and the half-crown for which a passage was to be had in the hold of one of the crowded packet-boats which plied between Dublin and Liverpool, or Parkgate, hard by Chester. Their wives and children generally locked up the family cabin and maintained themselves by begging through the countryside till the potatoes were fit for digging. Yet, poor as they were, the Irish peasantry were a happy and light-hearted people. In the evenings, when their work was done, instead of glowering by their own firesides, they gathered together; the old gossiped, and passed the same pipe from hand to hand, each enjoying a whiff in turn; whilst the young danced, either to the sound of their own voices, or to that of a bagpipe, if such could be procured.

One competent authority estimated that there were not less than a hundred thousand people—men, women, and children—subsisting by beggary, or who,



in the more euphonious language of the country, "carried the meal-bag and milk-can," small contributions to those twin receptacles being collected from door to door from those who were but little better off than the recipients. In point of fact this multitude lived on the boundless hospitality of the country—a hospitality only made possible by dependence upon the potato,—being free to enter any house they pleased, to take a seat by the fire, and share the family meal.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE PEREGRINATIONS OF AN *EMIGRÉ*.

By far the most vivid and humorous picture which we get of Ireland in the pre-Union days, however, is contained in the writings of an *émigré*, the *Sieur de Latocnaye*. *Latocnaye* was a Breton noble who had taken part in the disastrous rising of *La Vendée*, and had had the good luck to escape across the frontier into Flanders. But when, after the battle of *Fleurus*, the hordes of the victorious Republican army overran the Netherlands, *Latocnaye* became alarmed as to what his fate would be if he were captured, and, deeming a further flight advisable, he crossed over into England. Here he spent some time, during which he saw *George III.* hooted by the populace as he drove in state to open Parliament. Finding himself, however, with more leisure time on his hands than he well knew how to dispose of, he determined to spend some of it in making a walking-tour through Ireland, which if not the first altogether of such enterprises is certainly the first of which we have such a detailed description.

Our traveller crossed from Cardiff to the Suir in the packet-boat, and was charged a guinea and a half for his passage, which he deemed extremely dear, as the cabin was neither clean nor comfortable. He contrasted it very unfavourably with his voyage in the trading-smack which had brought him to England. The charge there had been only fifteen shillings, and for this sum, though they had been detained some days by contrary winds, he had been provided with food whilst on board, and been regaled twice a-day with tea.

Arrived at Waterford, he put himself and his luggage on one of the low-backed Irish cars, the only vehicle procurable, and for which he had to pay as much as he would have done for a post-chaise anywhere else. It was raining heavily, and the carman stopped at every wayside alehouse to drink and gossip, leaving the young French noble to sit outside in the wet. Irish rain seemed to him more icy and penetrating than any he had encountered before. At first he civilly requested the carman to proceed upon his journey, but finding this of no avail, he had recourse to some of the expletives which he had picked up from the sailors on board ship and from the loungers about the wharves and landing-stages. This proved much more effectual, and he had the satisfaction of hearing his driver say, in taking a hasty leave of his friends, "By —, I'm sure he's a gentleman, for he swears confoundedly." At Athy he very gladly bade good-bye to the jolting vehicle



and its jehu, and transferred himself to a barge upon the canal, which had been opened for traffic about a year previously, and in this fashion he came on to Dublin.

Of Dublin itself Latocnaye did not form a very high opinion, at least as far as its social aspect was concerned. The only entertainments, he tells us, were what they called routs—that is to say, where a house could contain twenty persons comfortably sixty were invited, and so on in proportion. He was present at one such festivity where, from street-door to garret, every room was so crowded with handsome and well-dressed ladies that they could scarcely stir, and were obliged to speak through their fans. His inborn vivacity and natural good spirits, the exile informs us, were the only possessions which ill-fate had not been able to rob him of, but of those he seems to have had an unusually large share. Upon the present occasion, while fully sensible of all the beauty around him, he could not but think regretfully how much more agreeable it would have been to have spent the evening in a room with a few of the many charming women present, rather than upon a staircase amidst such a multitude of them.

Shortly before Latocnaye's arrival in the Irish metropolis the passenger packet-service upon the Grand Canal had been inaugurated. Two very handsome boats, we are told, of which the one was named the *Camden* in honour of the Viceroy, and the other the *Pelham*, started simultaneously, at nine

o'clock in the morning, the one from Dublin, the other from Kilcock, some twelve miles distant. They passed along amidst the cheers of the crowds gathered along the banks, and the acclamations were redoubled when at noon the boats met and passed each other half way at Lucan Harbour. "The construction of the boats," said a newspaper of the day sententiously, "is such as to remove all fear of their oversetting." A gratifying assurance truly to those who purposed travelling by them.

Our Frenchman was, however, present at a more imposing ceremonial connected with the inland navigation of Ireland. This was the opening upon St George's Day 1796 of the floating and graving dock which united the Irish canals with the Liffey, and so with the sea. So important was the occasion deemed that even the Bench and the Bar forsook the law courts to witness the great sight. At eleven o'clock the Viceroy, the Earl of Camden, sailed into the dock in the viceregal yacht, commanded by Sir Alexander Schomberg. A fleet of craft of all sorts and sizes pressed in astern, and a park of artillery planted upon the bank thundered a royal salute. Arrived in the middle of the basin the yacht cast anchor and returned the salute, whilst the Royal Standard was broken at the masthead. The Lord-Lieutenant immediately went ashore, and was received upon the wharf by the chairman and directors of the Grand Canal Company. Having knighted the chairman, the Lord-Lieutenant sat down to a

sumptuous breakfast in a tent by the waterside, where covers were laid for a thousand persons. Our author was not amongst this favoured throng. Together with an English acquaintance of his, he formed part of the crowd which lined the edges of the dock, and which was computed to have numbered some hundred and fifty thousand. So great was the enthusiasm exhibited by this concourse that Latocnaye was much alarmed lest some of them should fall into the water, and still more apprehensive that he might be pushed in himself. Two young ladies, separated from their friends in the press and terrified by the pushing and swaying of the crowd, clung to him and his companion for protection. The Frenchman looked at the girl who had caught hold of him, and seeing that she was very pretty he immediately kissed her; the Englishman with equal promptitude clasped his pockets tightly,—this seemed to the former to be typical of the two nations.

In Dublin Latocnaye completed his preparations for the undertaking which he had in hand—or perhaps it might be more accurately said on foot,—and these, for their ingenious simplicity, deserve to be recorded. He cut the feet off a pair of silk stockings, and stuffed into them the entire outfit for his journey. This consisted of a pair of breeches, fine enough to be rolled up as small as a man's fist, two very fine shirts—the era of starched and glazed shirt-fronts was not yet,—three cravats, two pair of



white silk stockings, three handkerchiefs, a powder-bag made of a lady's glove, scissors, needle and thread, and a comb and razor. A pair of dancing pumps was carried as a separate parcel. Upon the road our tourist tied his three bundles up in a handkerchief, and slung them on his sword-cane, to the end of which he had affixed an umbrella. This last article created much astonishment, and even merriment, amongst the country people as he walked along, being apparently an entire novelty to them. Upon approaching any house to which he had an introduction, he put his bundles into his pockets, and stepped out jauntily with only his sword-cane in his hand. The owner of the house, seeing him arrive thus unencumbered, made haste to offer him clean linen and a change of clothes, proffers which were invariably declined. It was the young man's great delight to witness his host's astonishment when he made his appearance at a later hour in the drawing-room, dapper and dainty as only a Frenchman of the old *régime* could be, and looking with his elaborately powdered hair, white silk stockings, and evening shoes as if he had arrived in a travelling carriage with several trunks, instead of coming on foot without visible luggage.

So great was the hospitality that he met with—his host of the previous night invariably furnishing him with an introduction which secured him a warm welcome at the next big house upon his line of march—that during the eight or nine months that

his tour lasted our friend only slept at his own charges some half-dozen times. On one of these occasions, a day or two after his quitting Dublin, he lodged at the inn in Kilbeggan, and had the unusual experience of being waited on by a titled host. Some score of years before, Lord Townshend, the wild and dissolute viceroy—who signalised himself once by bringing his pack of foxhounds with him into the council chamber in Dublin Castle,—whilst on a progress to the West, was compelled by the breaking down of his equipage to spend the night in Kilbeggan. Much to his surprise and gratification he was served with an excellent meal and with claret of most choice bouquet and flavour, for in those days most innkeepers, even of the smaller country inns, had a store of good wine laid by for special occasions. Lord Townshend, according to his wont, did full justice to the vintage, and flushed with what he had drunk, insisted on summoning the landlord into his presence. He compelled the worthy man to kneel down before him, and despite the remonstrances of the more sober amongst his suite, he struck him with his sword, exclaiming, “Rise up, Sir Thomas Cuffe, prince of innkeepers!”

The next morning on being reminded of his exploit, of which he was himself totally oblivious, he felt some dismay; and called for the newly-made knight. “We were guilty of some follies last night,” he said to him, “but I trust you understand that what passed was a joke and nothing more.”

"For my part, my lord, I do not care," returned mine host, "but I must consult my wife on the matter."

Her reply was, "I never looked to find myself a lady, but since fortune has made me one, such I'll remain." And Sir Thomas and Lady Cuffe they were all the days of their lives, though by no means above attending to the duties of their calling.

It was not only from the well-to-do and the owners of country mansions that Latocnaye received hospitality. He turned in at all the cottages along the road to chat with the inmates, and was always made welcome to potatoes and milk, or anything else that the house contained. Once night overtook him before he had succeeded in reaching the residence for which he was bound, and he was obliged to take refuge in a cabin by the roadside. The owner, a widow, gave him a kindly welcome, and cooked the only food in the house, a few potatoes which she had got by begging, for his supper—a widow's mite indeed. She made him as comfortable as she could for the night by spreading a mat upon a wooden chest, the only piece of furniture which the house contained. The floor-space was already occupied by half a dozen children sleeping upon some straw in company with a pig, a dog, a cat, a duck, and two chickens. The young French *sieur* felt as though he were Noah in the Ark, surrounded by the animals. At daybreak this heterogeneous family were awake and astir, the animals



greeted the first rays of the rising sun by making the noises individual to each of them, and immediately set about looking for something to eat. The dog smelt the stranger all over, he showed his teeth and growled in evident displeasure at finding such an unwonted inmate within the cabin, the pig put up its snout and snuffed at him, and the duck and the chickens began to eat his powder-bag, so that he deemed it well to get up, lest he should be devoured himself. It was only with the utmost difficulty that he could induce his hostess, when departing, to accept a shilling for the shelter that she had given him.

Latocnaye visited many of the holy wells, which were places of great resort, and to some of which people came from long distances in hope of a cure for whatever complaint they were suffering from. Beside one of these wells there was a large black stone, which seemed to him to have been a tombstone, for three death's heads were still faintly visible upon it, though they had been almost worn away by much rubbing and kissing. The devotion consisted in going round the well and stone on bare knees seven times, repeating certain prayers the while, but the round being so long the devotees were allowed to assist themselves by two huge thigh-bones taken from an ancient graveyard adjoining. Our traveller saw several well-dressed people going the round amongst the peasantry, and in particular one exceedingly pretty young girl ardently kissing the death's heads. The gallant Frenchman could

only wish with all his heart that she had taken him for her physician instead of the cold and unresponsive stone. Saturday was the day of general resort to the well, the devotions were all over by two o'clock, and the afternoons were given up to pleasuring and also to match-making, these pilgrimages being productive, he was told, of many marriages.

As he journeyed southwards he overtook a young countryman, and walked some miles in his company.

At length the young fellow said with a sigh that he was sorry, very sorry. Latocnaye inquired wherefore.

"Ah, sir," said his companion, "I am sorry that I cannot treat your honour to a glass of whisky."

Latocnaye took the hint thus subtly given, and at one of the roadside shebeens he and the young fellow partook together of a drop of the "creature," as potheen was and is still called. In return, his new acquaintance took him into an ancient graveyard, and showed him, standing upon a tombstone, a stone vessel, which Latocnaye recognised as the holy water stoup of the ruined church hard by.

"That vessel is always full of water, and nobody ever put any into it. The water is good for every disorder, but," added his travelling companion with another sigh, "I brought my mother a bottle of it last week, and she is none the better."

Latocnaye pointed out to him that the water was very dirty, and the vessel half full of mud. He suggested that if the stoup were cleaned out, the water

might have a more beneficial effect. With a handful of rank grass, plucked from amongst the graves, they succeeded in scooping out the mud, whereupon, to the young man's consternation, the water drained away, leaving the vessel empty.

"Let us get away as fast as we can," he cried, "for if the people see what we have done, they will break our heads."

The most celebrated of these places of pilgrimage, however, was not visited by Latocnaye, but by another traveller, Luckcombe. This was the Great Skelig, the rocky islet off the coast of Kerry that rises perpendicularly from the sea to a height of eight hundred feet. Only one slender and extremely perilous track led to the summit. The pilgrims commenced the ascent by squeezing themselves through a funnel in the rock which resembled a chimney, and was called the Needle's Eye. Thence a narrow sloping ridge had to be crossed, and at its end was the Stone of Pain, a smooth wall of rock, some twelve feet in height, leaning out over the sea far below, with only a few shallow holes for hands and feet cut in it. Thereafter the path was somewhat less hazardous till the highest pinnacle of the crag was reached, upon which there was a stone cross, known from its elevation as the Eagle's Nest, and affording a magnificent view of sea and coast to all whose heads were sufficiently steady to enable them to gaze at it. The last and most terrifying of the stations, however, still remained to be accom-



plished. This was a spit of rock, only some two feet in width, projecting sheer above the sea, eight hundred feet below. The pilgrims, men and women, had to seat themselves astride upon it, and so edge forward to another cross, rudely cut upon the rock at the farthest end of the Spindle, as it was called. When this had been kissed, and a Pater Noster said, the penance was completed, and the descent, which was to the full as dangerous as the ascent, was commenced. Pilgrims journeyed from all parts of Ireland to perform this penance, and especially at Michaelmas—the Great Skelig being dedicated to the Archangel—the concourse was very great.

Latocnaye found that this life of a wandering Jew which he led agreed so well with him, that though he was constantly drenched to the skin, and often tired out with the long distances he had to accomplish, yet he was becoming as fat as a friar. He admired the situation of the town of Cork when he reached it extremely, but he thought it would be well if the streets were cleaned and if the pigs were not allowed to roam in them in search of food. In Cork there were a number of French Republican officers, prisoners of war, who were allowed to reside there on parole. Latocnaye was invited to a dinner to meet them, and did not find that, exiled compatriots though they all were, they were much in sympathy with each other. The Republicans abhorred the *émigrés*, and spoke with the utmost bitterness of those who had borne arms against France.

Latocnaye pointed out to them that most of the *émigrés* had had to bow to a *régime* more despotic even than that of Robespierre, and from which no flight was possible—hard necessity, namely. The officers admitted to him that the condition of the French finances was extremely bad, but as one of them cheerfully remarked, “Holland, Spain, Italy, His Holiness the Pope, and parts of Germany, have already contributed to our relief, and we hope soon to put England under requisition too.”

Irish wakes and funeral customs were a source of great astonishment to our pedestrian. “Every peasant who dies,” he says, “is sure of having his friends and acquaintance in his room, crying, weeping, drinking his health, and singing his praises extempore in Irish from the day of his death to that of his burial.” One woman in his hearing excused herself for not having sent for a doctor for her husband in his last illness by declaring that the expenses of the wake were as much as a poor woman like herself could afford; and he was further told that if any neighbour, or even any person who had the slenderest acquaintance with the deceased, failed to put in an appearance at his wake without good and sufficient reason therefore, it would produce an eternal feud between the families.

Having taken a walk one day a mile or two beyond the town of Killarney, the young Frenchman was witness of a singular scene. A funeral passed him—that of an old woman, he was told.

According to custom, the coffin was immediately followed by a number of women crying the *keen*, that wildest and most desolate of lamentations. The men slouched along behind, seemingly indifferent. Thus they proceeded till a cross-road was reached, and here a difference of opinion made itself manifest. The husband wished to convey his wife to the old Abbey of Muckross, where was the burying-place of his family, whilst her brother insisted vehemently that she should be taken to a burial-ground nearer the town, where her own people were laid. The relatives and partisans of either side laid hold of the coffin, each party endeavouring to drag it their own way. Finding that neither could succeed, they set it down upon the road and decided to settle the matter by a stand-up fight. Sticks were whirling and hostile cries ringing out when Latocnaye's host, the parson of the parish, appeared upon the scene. Without an instant's hesitation he bounded into the thickest of the *mêlée*, seized the brother and the husband each by the collar of their coat, and demanded to know what the disturbance was about. Upon the cause being explained to him, he decreed that a husband had the right to do what he pleased with his wife,—dead or alive,—and bade the cortége take its way abbeywards. The women during the fight had crouched upon the ground round the coffin and continued their *keening*, quite regardless of the affray going on beside them. Now, as the



bearers lifted the coffin again, they followed, and the funeral once more set forward,—the reverend arbiter, as a precautionary measure, retaining his hold of the brother.

Our hero, at the first outbreak of hostilities, had ensconced himself upon a low wall by the roadside, to be out of harm's way, and have a vantage ground from which to view the conflict. He had expected to see the clergyman soundly trounced for his interference, and was much surprised at the unquestioning obedience with which the mourners submitted to the reverend gentleman's ruling. Truth to say, he was somewhat disappointed at the tame ending to the affair, but what astonished him most in the whole matter was that any one should have thought a dead woman worth fighting about.

At Limerick Latocnaye made acquaintance with horse-racing and cock-fighting, both novel experiences to him, as such sports were unknown in his own country. Of cock-fighting he thought but little. He was present at one combat which lasted half an hour before one bird was transfixed by the enemy's spur, and the victor expired immediately afterwards from wounds and exhaustion. Latocnaye's one and paramount desire was that he were strong enough to put the spurs on those who set the cocks on, and to make them fight in the birds' stead.

It amazed the young Frenchman greatly to discover what a long and severe process of dieting and

training both horses and jockeys had to undergo to fit them for the struggle on the racecourse. Races in those days were for the most part matches run for a wager, and for stakes privately arranged between the owners. It astounded Latocnaye still more to learn that if one of the horses should fall ill or die before the time fixed for the race, his owners and backers had to pay the stakes and bets in full, just the same as if the horse had run and been beaten, and that the most honourable and punctilious men would not have an instant's hesitation in accepting money under such circumstances. Very characteristically he could not imagine that the owner would not endeavour to find a loop-hole to evade such a penalty if possible, and he was confirmed in his belief by the following story which was told to him as having recently occurred.

A horse which had been entered for such a match met with an unlucky accident and broke its leg. The owner sought out his opponent, and, telling him that his horse had fallen sick and might not be able to run, proposed to forfeit half the stakes to be off the race. The other agreed with unexpected readiness, and the money was promptly paid over. When this had been done, the first owner said self-complacently, "I got out of that business pretty well, for my horse has broken his leg."

"I got out of it better," retorted the other, "for my horse is dead."

Our *émigré* had the good fortune to be in Limerick during the race week, which was the duelling season *par excellence*. The streets were filled with idlers and race-goers, and everything was in topsy-turvy confusion. No one dreamt of doing any work while the races were going on, and the country folk from miles round about flocked in to look on. He estimated that on one occasion there must have been 20,000 people gathered on the racecourse. The crowds were unusually great that year, he was told, because there were three peers amongst the jockeys. Several bucks who had come from the South went about the streets demanding truculently, "Do you want powder and shot? We will give you some." Eight duels were fought during the week, and an officer of the Irish Brigade was killed. Happily for the wellbeing of the country the races only lasted one week; had they lasted three, said the Frenchman pithily, the harvest would not have been gathered.

As Latocnaye went farther west he was much shocked by the poverty of the people and the wretchedness of their habitations. In Connaught the children played about the cabin doors "as naked as one's hand." They none the less seemed healthy and well-grown, and looked "as fresh as roses." As he passed along the women and children constantly came out upon the road to ask him the time, but whether this was for the pleasure of conversing with a stranger, or of seeing a watch, he



could not determine. Poor as they were, too, their hospitality was wondrous. Every man's door stood open, and not only a neighbour, but even the veriest stranger passing by at meal-times, might walk in without ceremony and seat himself at the board to share what slender fare the family possessed.

Galway impressed our traveller more than any other Irish town which he had seen. The streets were properly laid out, and the houses not only larger and more imposing, but built upon an entirely different plan, their gable ends towards the street, with inner courtyards and wide coach-doors, reminding him much of old towns which he had seen upon the Continent, and bespeaking the Spanish origin of the Citie of the Tribes. The chief need of the town seemed to him to be a bedlam in which to confine the madmen, who for want of it were permitted to run wild about the streets, but were generally harmless, which must have been a consoling reflection for the rest of the population.

Galway was a very pleasant sociable place in those old days. In the summer-time ladies flocked into it from every corner of Connaught for the sea-bathing—at least, so they gave out. Our cynical Frenchman took leave to doubt if they had not sometimes more important business in view. Such a muster of fair ones naturally brought a corresponding number of young men in its train, who

came openly and avowedly for amusement, and often returned home provided with a partner for life. There were gatherings every evening to which admittance was had by a small payment, and they were designated routs, drums, or assemblies according to the price charged, and also according to whether the ladies attending them were dressed, half dressed, or undressed. The greatest gaiety and unconstraint reigned at these gatherings, and the young French noble deemed that in matters of coquetry the ladies of Galway had nothing to learn from his countrywomen—that in fact they might have given these latter instruction in the art.

He was somewhat scandalised, however, after the stricter decorum of France, to see in the mornings merry parties of young ladies, half a dozen or so, perched upon a low-backed car, with their feet dangling all round it, driving out two miles by the Sea Road, to refresh their charms with a dip in the waters of the bay. In the evenings, if there chanced to be no rout or assembly, the summer visitors and the residents promenaded the streets, going in and out of the shops, buying, chatting with their friends and acquaintances, and enjoying themselves.

The shopping had, however, a serious side to it, for the milliners were always willing to give the ladies credit for the ribbands and other articles of attire which they needed to enhance their looks,

and to let the bill stand over till after the fair one's wedding, when the unfortunate husband in Latocnaye's judgment resembled a vanquished nation, compelled by its conquerors to pay for the cannon-balls and bomb-shells by which it has been enslaved.

So great indeed were the attractions of life in Galway, that they made some people oblivious even of the passage of time. "There are in this good city," further observes our author, "ladies who grow old without perceiving it, and who go on dancing, shopping, and bathing until they are upwards of fifty." He was convinced, however, that ladies of fifty could not have spent their time so agreeably anywhere else.

One fact Latocnaye mentions which may astonish many people. This was that the fervour for the House of Stuart had much abated of late years in the West of Ireland, and he believed that with the incoming of the new century it would disappear altogether. Be it remembered that Charles Edward had died nearly ten years before, after an old age melancholy in its degradation, and that of all that ill-fated race there only remained that most exemplary but entirely uninteresting figure, the Cardinal of York, for whom one can scarce conceive any fervour continuing to be maintained.

No small amazement and consternation were excited in Galway when Latocnaye announced his intention of continuing his journey into the farther



wilds of Iar-Connaught and Connemara. He was told that it was the most abominable country in the universe, and even in Galway, the only link between the outer world and those regions that lie shut away beyond Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, there seemed to him to be less known about them than about the islands of the Southern Pacific. Most of those he questioned could only return vague answers, whilst some begged him not to adventure himself into a country the inhabitants of which were as savage as the Iroquois, and where he would not find even a dry stone to sit upon. All this opposition, however, only made our pedestrian more determined to carry out his project, nor did he find himself beset by any of the perils and difficulties with which he had been threatened. What struck him most, indeed, was the almost total absence of population in those mountain wilds. There were no roads, only a few bridle-paths, and such population as there was was strung out along these, or else settled upon the coast, and they were all engaged in one and the same pursuit—that of smuggling.

The deep secluded harbours of the western coast, running far inland, afforded the most admirable facilities for carrying on this trade, which was so safe and so lucrative that many people had settled upon the coast for the special and avowed purpose of engaging in it. Even the gentry did not scruple to promote this traffic, and it was whispered that

more than one titled family owed the wealth for which they had been ennobled to lucky importations of claret and madeira, and of the delicate and highly prized muslins, which Manchester had not then learned to imitate. Nay, one reverend incumbent had succeeded in obtaining a negligent diocesan's sanction to the purchase as glebe of a barren and seemingly profitless strip of land by the sea-shore. The parsonage had been built there, four miles from the church to which it appertained, but above an extensive range of cellars, and with spacious out-offices, all most convenient for the bestowal of "run cargoes."

One landowner, who was more than suspected of being concerned in this illicit traffic, in order to clear himself of all such unjust imputations, assembled a considerable body of his tenantry, and in the presence of the preventive officer, specially invited to be present with his men upon the occasion, harangued them forcibly upon the evils and iniquities of the contraband trade, and assured them of his fixed determination to uphold the law. The officer was no less surprised than delighted at receiving such an unlooked-for promise of support. His gratification was very considerably lessened, however, by discovering upon the following day that, whilst he had been engaged in listening to this edifying discourse, those of the gentleman's tenants who had not formed part of the audience had been busily employed a few miles away, upon

the other side of a sheltering headland, in discharging the cargo of a smuggler and conveying it to safe hiding-places inland.

Many and ingenious indeed were the devices adopted in those old days to outwit the customs' officers. Boat-loads of native-brewed potheen or of foreign claret and brandy were ferried across Lough Corrib and Lough Mask snugly stowed away beneath a harmless looking covering of turf or straw. Funeral processions might be seen wending along the rough mountain tracks, the hooded *keeners* trooping after the coffin and sending their cry echoing over those desolate wastes. The coffin instead of its ordinary dread burden was filled with tobacco, and the mourners carried parcels of the same valuable commodity beneath their capacious cloaks. The whole consignment having been safely disposed of inland, the party would return merrily homewards. Or else tobacco leaf would be put into sacks, carefully padded and packed, and slung across a horse's back, looking for all the world like sacks of oats on their way to be ground at the mill.

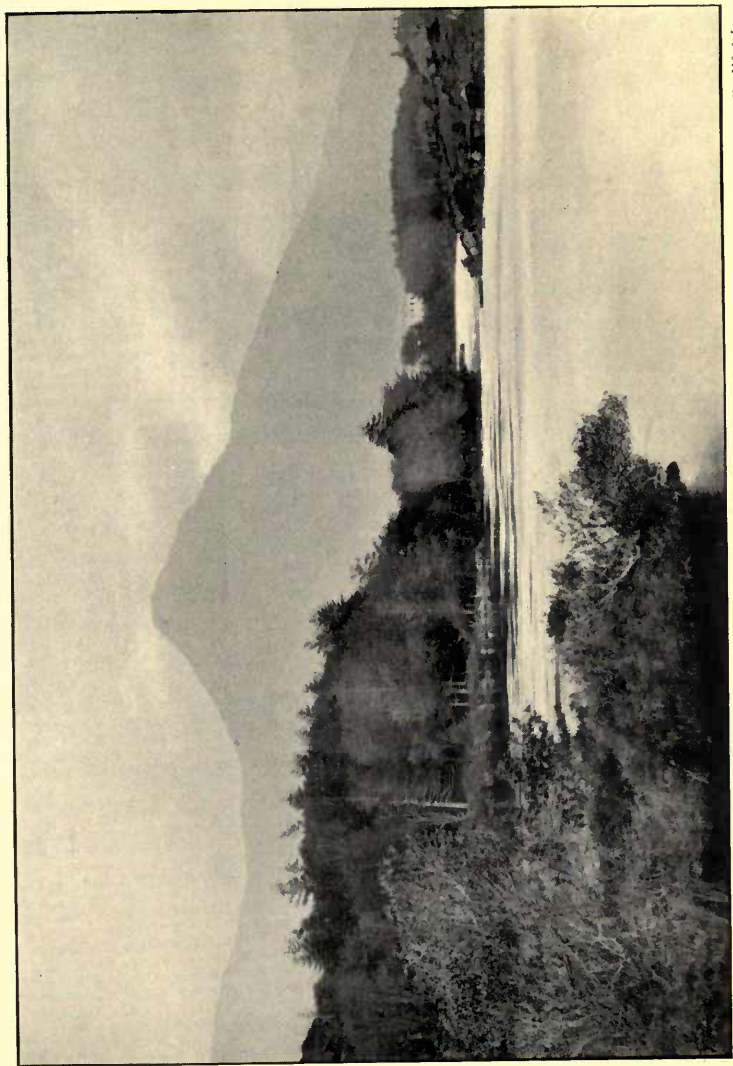
One woman sat shrieking and lamenting herself outside the door of a wayside cabin as the excise officer and his men passed. Her husband lay within in the last agonies of typhus fever. The gauger gave the fever-stricken abode a wide berth, but on his return a few hours later, the husband, miraculously recovered, sat by his wife outside, both grinning broadly in the knowledge that during



those hours a rich prize had been conveyed safely beyond the enemy's grasp.

Like all travellers through Connemara, the young French noble was hospitably entertained by Colonel Richard Martin at his home at Ballinahinch, in the heart of that wild region. It was a great amazement to the vivacious Breton that a man of wealth should live in such a remote and desolate spot, for the grandeur of the surroundings, at the foot of the great Twelve Bens, had no attractions for him. There was no town nearer than Galway, forty miles away, and from it all household supplies, even bread, had to be procured. On coming into the property Dick Martin had commenced to build a residence suited to his vast estate upon the shore of one of the innumerable lakes which stud Connemara. Finding, however, when the walls were but a foot or two above the ground, that the project would be an extremely costly one, he had wisely abandoned it, and contented himself with adding to and enlarging a house which his father had originally built to be an inn.

"I never met a man so careless about the affairs of this world as Colonel Martin," says our author. "He has the very best intentions, and his whole heart is set upon the improvement of his estate." Unhappily, in his desire to benefit his property he had allowed himself to be duped by sundry adventurers who had undertaken either to search for minerals or to bring great tracts of that waste wil-



*From a photo by*

BALLINAHINCH, CONNEMARA.

*R. Welch.*





derness into cultivation, and who, after extracting large sums from the good-hearted and credulous owner, had departed leaving no results behind them.

The Martin estate at that time covered nearly a hundred square miles, and brought in from £10,000 to £12,000 a-year, an average of about fourpence an acre. One of the fierce religious conflicts, by which Ireland has been but too often disgraced, had broken out in the North just before this. Inoffensive Roman Catholic farmers, who hitherto had lived peacefully amongst their Protestant neighbours, received a card, bearing the following mandate, a parody of Cromwell's stern decree: "Peter, James, or so forth, you have so many days to dispose of your property and go to Connaught or to Hell, for here you may not dwell." Those who disregarded the cruel behest ran the utmost risk of having their houses burnt over their heads, and it was not unusual of a morning to see a score of homesteads blazing, whilst the high-roads were covered with men, women, and children fleeing for their lives they knew not whither. Thus for the second time there was a forced migration from the more fertile parts of Ireland to the barren regions beyond the Shannon, but whilst it had been the chieftains and the aristocracy of the old Irish race whom Cromwell had banished to the West, it was now the humble tillers of the soil who came, bringing such poor remnants of their be-

longings as they had been able to carry away. Humanity Dick proved his right to his nickname by the kindly welcome which he gave to these unhappy victims of religious bigotry and of greed. He was only too glad indeed of settlers upon his unpeopled wastes. More than a thousand families established themselves upon his estate, and to each of them he gave an allotment of land rent-free for a number of years, after which they were to pay him a small sum yearly.

Unfortunately the dwellers upon the coast at that time added to their favourite avocation of smuggling the more nefarious one of wrecking. An established device of theirs for luring a ship to its destruction was to tie a lantern to a horse's collar and to turn it out to graze along the shore. The movements of the horse as it raised and lowered its head made the light, when seen from the sea, appear as though it were on board a vessel riding over the waves. The crew of some unhappy craft in the offing, seeing, as they deemed, another ship nearer in-shore, were not afraid to venture closer to land themselves, and were thus driven upon the rocks. During Latocnaye's visit to Ballinahinch the captain of a vessel which had gone ashore, but of which the crew were lucky enough to have escaped with their lives, arrived to demand justice from Colonel Martin, and to beseech him to prevent the people plundering his ship and its cargo. Dick Martin immediately summoned a number of his

more substantial tenants, and armed them. At the head of this improvised force he proceeded across the mountains and dispersed the looters, leaving a sufficient guard to protect the ship till she was ready to put to sea again.

When our tourist at length quitted the hospitable shelter of Ballinahinch, Colonel Martin insisted on providing him with a horse and a guide to conduct him the rest of the way through Connemara. This last was by no means a needless precaution, for beyond Ballinahinch even the bridle-paths dwindled away into narrow stony tracks very difficult to find or to follow. Every peasant he met took off his hat and bowed low, saying "God bless you, sir." Several times they followed him for long distances, for the pleasure, as it seemed to him, of showing off their English in conversation with a stranger. They carried their hats under their arms all the time, and no remonstrances of his could induce them to put on their headgear. As he was descending one rough mountain-side the horse trod on a loose stone and fell, flinging his rider over his head. All the while that Latocnaye was picking himself and his steed up, the guide did not cease to ejaculate piously, "God bless you, sir! God bless your honour!" without, however, offering any more active help. When both were on their feet once more, the guide said with much satisfaction, "God bless your honour, you're hard to be hurt!"

Somewhat farther on the young Frenchman over-



took another traveller journeying the same road, and entered into conversation with him. His business, he found, was that of an inoculator, and he went over the mountains of Connemara inoculating the children of the peasantry against the smallpox. He had been moved, in the first instance, to take up the trade by seeing the frightful ravages that the horrible disease made in those desolate regions, and he had followed his calling now for more than thirty years, not earning more than thirty or forty pounds a-year thereby. That year, he told Latocnaye with pride, he had inoculated no less than 361 children, and out of the whole number only one had died. This was as well for himself; for if a child died whilst it was under his care, not only did he not receive his fee, but he had to fly with all speed from the locality to escape the sound thrashing which he was otherwise sure of receiving from the infuriated parents and neighbours. It was certain, therefore, that he would pay all possible attention to his small charges; and our hero thought that this Connemara custom might with much advantage be introduced into more civilised regions, where it was matter of indifference to the faculty whether their patients recovered or not, since they were sure in either case of being paid and were never beaten.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE EVE OF '98.

HITHERTO in his journeyings through the wilder and more remote parts of the island our *emigré* had walked unmolested: all had been quiet and peaceful, with no indication of the revolutionary storms which were sweeping over Europe elsewhere. Now, however, as leaving the west he set his face northwards, he became aware of a very unpleasant change in this respect. The attempted landing of the French in Bantry Bay, which had taken place whilst he was in Galway, had opened the eyes of the Government to the dangerous possibilities that underlay Irish disaffection, and they were determined to repress all symptoms of rebellion with a strong hand.

It was on reaching Derry that Latocnaye first became aware of the political differences that were rapidly dividing Ireland into opposing and hostile camps. Here, however, the two parties still were on a friendly footing, and kept up social intercourse with each other. During Latocnaye's visit a large

ball was given at the inn where he was staying. He attended the function, and was much amazed to see the whole company, as soon as supper was announced, rush helter-skelter to the supper-room to secure places for themselves, without respect for any person whatsoever. A lady of high rank, who had officiated as queen of the ball, and who no doubt thought it inconsistent with her regal dignity to join in the race, was unable to obtain a seat at the table, and Latocnaye himself, who had lingered too long watching the *sauve qui peut*, was glad to accept of the edge of a stool, proffered him by a friend who had made better speed.

Outside Limavady he found the following startling notice posted up: "If any person fires again upon the centinel, orders will be given to burn the town." "The devil is in this," said the Frenchman to himself.

On the road he turned into a wayside cabin to obtain some refreshment, and an old woman said warningly to him: "I'm thinking, dear, you've come from some place far off. Maybe your umbrella, and mostlike its string, will be getting you into trouble."

The umbrella had a green lining and a string of the same colour. Latocnaye at first laughed loudly at the absurdity of her fears; but on learning that at the last fair the soldiers had gone through the crowd and forced the women to take off every morsel of green that they had about their attire,



he deemed it prudent to cut the string off his umbrella.

Martial law had by this time been proclaimed in nearly all the northern towns. The inhabitants were compelled to put their lights out at nine o'clock, and any one who ventured abroad after that hour was liable to be arrested; whilst every day Latocnaye heard of outrages and crimes that had taken place during the night—symptoms of the prevailing disaffection,—of houses that had been burnt, and even of murders that had been committed.

There was no doubt that these reports were often grossly exaggerated. In company with the officer commanding one district, he visited one man who was said to have been severely beaten, and found that he had only a few trifling bruises to show, which for all evidence to the contrary might have been the result of a drunken brawl.

Yet outrages there were, and of that unhappy nature to which the Irish are but too prone—the venting, namely, of hatred and revenge upon dumb animals. As already said, the Penal Laws ordained that any priest who came over to the Protestant Church should be provided with the first curacy that might fall vacant. The curate of one parish in Antrim in which Latocnaye stayed belonged to these recusants. He was a tolerably worthless individual, whose conversion seemed to have been actuated more by worldly considerations

than religious convictions, and as he displayed a greater zeal in the collection of his tithes than in the other duties of his calling, he was subjected to constant persecution and annoyance. The horns, ears, and tail of his cow were cut off and nailed against his door. He sold the wretched animal and bought another, only to have her treated in the same way, and a third fared no better. Realising that the same fate would befall any other beast that was so unfortunate as to have him for her owner, the reverend gentlemen kept this last one, and when the poor, maimed creature was sent out to graze, the neighbours set their dogs on to worry her. The curate lodged a complaint with the authorities, whereupon his windows were broken, and the solitary chimney of which his dwelling boasted was stuffed up from without.

Latocnaye walked over one day with his host—a Mr Moore, a large landowner in the district,—to visit the Giant's Causeway. On the way he saw a great crowd gathered in a field near the cliffs; and upon asking what had brought them together, he was told that they were digging the potatoes of a man for whom they wished to display their affection and esteem. The whole proceedings were directed by one man, who wore no uniform or distinctive badge of any sort, but issued his orders by signs or by certain inflexions of his voice, evidently well understood by those under his command. Those taking part in the work all wore

their best clothes, as if for some occasion of solemnity and importance. The road beyond the field was crowded by the horses of well-to-do farmers, who were as busy digging and gathering the potatoes as any day-labourers; and one of the most zealous workers was a dissenting minister of the neighbourhood. Not being capable of more arduous labour, he was assisting in carrying the potatoes as they were dug to the pits prepared for them, and in his enthusiasm, and for want of another receptacle, was availing himself of his new castor-hat to carry them in. A castor-hat, it may parenthetically be observed, was one of the high-crowned hats which had but recently, in republican days, superseded the flat three-cornered hats of French monarchical times. It was covered with the skin of the beaver—called castor in those days, whence its name,—and was an expensive possession, not ordinarily employed as an implement of agriculture. No one was permitted to partake of any spirituous liquor; and whilst the work went on the women and children, sitting in rows along the ditches, sang in chorus to enliven the toilers. The whole gathering bore such an aspect of jollity and good fellowship that no stranger would have deemed that it was in reality a seditious meeting—the individuals who were thus honoured being almost invariably men imprisoned for high treason. The same compliment was, however, occasionally paid to others well affected towards the Government—



Mr Moore, our author's host, being one of the few thus specially singled out. This did not, however, prevent his house being visited a few months later by a party of United Irishmen, who carried off his firearms and silver-plate, and made several pike thrusts through a portrait of William III. that hung upon the walls. The digging and gathering completed, the whole assembly formed in military array and marched off six deep to the sound of horns and trumpets, each digger carrying his spade upon his shoulder, whilst the mounted force closed in behind. These potato-diggings were shortly afterwards prohibited by the Government.

Our traveller's next halt was at the little town of Ballycastle, some miles further along the coast, where Scotland and Ireland draw together. It also was *en fête*, though for a different reason. The day of his arrival the company of soldiers which had garrisoned it hitherto marched out, and were replaced by a Scotch regiment from across the narrow Channel. The inhabitants greeted the new-comers upon their disembarkation with the utmost enthusiasm, and with many demonstrations of welcome. It may indeed be feared that the welcome was too fervent and too readily responded to, for during the first night in camp all the ammunition and more than half of the regiment's arms and accoutrements were stolen.

Upon the following day almost the whole population were paraded before Mr Ezekiel Boyd, the

chief magnate and only justice of the peace in those parts. With striking and absolute unanimity they one and all made oath that they knew nothing of the missing arms and ammunition, and there the matter was allowed to rest. Latocnaye, who was present at the ceremony, thought that if the people of Ballycastle had had to deal with some of the old soldiers with whom he had campaigned on the Continent, they would not have got off so easily. He was told, however, that such looting was by no means unfrequent. A troop of cavalry had been similarly robbed at Cumber but a short time before, and the same thing had also happened elsewhere. A single, isolated outrage of this nature our traveler could have understood, but such repeated robberies made him think that there must be something very rotten both in the state of Ireland and in the discipline of the army.

In Belfast Latocnaye came in for yet other rejoicings. This time it was King George's birthday which was being celebrated. The town was illuminated in honour of the auspicious occasion, and the soldiers of the garrison in particular distinguished themselves by demonstrations of loyalty that were somewhat alarming to the rest of the inhabitants. They carried their officers shoulder-high through the streets, and ran about cheering and breaking all windows that were not lit up. They made their way down even into the back streets and alleys, and continued the work of destruction there.

General Lake, the officer in command, was riding about the streets all night, endeavouring to keep order and placing the more riotous of the soldiery under arrest.

From this time onwards the young French *sieur* began to find travelling afoot much less pleasant than before. Some of those to whom he had letters of introduction viewed him with suspicion because he was a Frenchman, and therefore presumably a revolutionary agent. Others again, whose own sympathies inclined towards revolt, on learning that he was provided with passports from the Irish Government, immediately concluded that he was a spy sent out by the authorities to report upon the condition of affairs in the disaffected districts. These last, however, Latocnaye was frequently able to disarm by the simple expedient of unfurling his umbrella and displaying its green lining.

The aspect of Dublin, too, he found to have changed mightily, and not for the better, during the months that he had been away. Instead of routs and assemblies, there was nothing now but drilling and arming. All the upper classes were joining the yeomanry. Not only the professors and students of Trinity College, but even the merchants of the city and the revenue officers were all enlisting, and had each their special corps that they belonged to. The counsellors and attorneys had also their own companies, both



mounted and foot; and there is record of one trial where not only the jurors and the bar, but even the judge himself, appeared in uniform.

Latocnaye was only present at one public function, and it was of a vastly different nature from that festive occasion of the previous year when the Lord-Lieutenant had sailed into the Canal Basin amidst the acclaiming multitudes. Peter Finerty, printer of the 'Press,' the organ of the United Irishmen, who had been put on trial for the seditious utterances of his newspaper, was sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred pounds, and to stand in the pillory for several hours. During the whole time of his exposure the two rebel leaders, Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor, stood one on either side of him, to cheer and encourage him during the ordeal; and Finerty himself, surrounded though he was by soldiers, and with his head and his hands protruding from the wooden frame, was yet bold enough to call out to the crowd who cheered him enthusiastically, to keep up good heart, for the Republicans of France would soon come to their aid again, and the next time that they came they would not fail of their purpose. Within a few days his friends had raised a subscription of no less than a thousand pounds for him, and another printer was found with sufficient hardihood to carry on the 'Press,' of which later on Arthur O'Connor himself undertook the editing.

Finerty subsequently went to England, where

he became a successful journalist. It being on one occasion cast in his teeth that he had stood in the pillory, he declared it to have been the proudest hour of his life.

More than once it was given out in Dublin that the expected general rising would take place upon some day which was named, and though such rumours always proved baseless, yet Latocnaye began to mark groups of men hanging about the quays and corners of the streets whose squalid rags and scowling faces brought back forcibly to his mind the early days of the French Revolution. He had intended to prolong his stay in Ireland for some time, and even to undertake another tour through the central parts of the island and along the canals and waterways, but he had had enough of the one revolution which he had experienced. He had no desire to find himself involved in another, or rather in an insurrection, for the shrewd young Frenchman entertained no doubts as to what the outcome of any rising in Ireland must be. The Government there, he deemed, were not likely to display the weakness and incapacity of the ruling powers in France, but for which the tide of anarchy, in his judgment, might in its beginning have been stayed. None the less he thought that a country where uprising and civil war were imminent was not a desirable place to linger in, and accordingly he sailed away to Scotland in the early days of 1798, just before the outbreak of the Irish Rebellion.

## CHAPTER XI.

## HUMANITY DICK.

COLONEL RICHARD MARTIN had been an advocate of the Union, which he believed to be for the benefit of both countries. He continued to represent the county Galway in the British Parliament, and carried his duelling proclivities across the water with him. <sup>1</sup>Amongst his other Irish qualities he possessed a rich western brogue, and once when he was speaking upon the subject that lay nearest to his heart, the Bill for the Protection of Animals, a member upon the opposite side of the House punctuated the speech with frequent ironical cries of "Hare, hare!" Humanity Dick held on without evincing any signs of discomposure, and when he had ended he stepped quietly across the floor, and inquired with deferential courtesy who had been so kind as to applaud him. His reputation as a duellist was well known, and no one displayed any inclination to avouch to those derisive cries. Dick Martin waited in silence for a minute or two, and

<sup>1</sup> Jerdan's 'Men I have Known.'



then a member on one of the back benches pointed slyly at a stout city representative, seated a little distance off, and affecting an air of the most sublime unconcern. "Pooh, only an alderman," said Richard Martin contemptuously, as he turned on on his heel and strode back to his place.

He was a consistent Whig throughout life, but on one occasion, during the Administration of Spencer Perceval, he made a speech so unexpectedly favourable to the Government that the Prime Minister, much gratified at this unlooked-for support, expressed his desire to make the personal acquaintance of the member for Galway, and inquired where he could have the pleasure of calling upon him.

"Within pistol-shot of the Treasury," was the grim response.

Notwithstanding much ridicule and opposition even from Canning himself, he succeeded in carrying the first Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to be found on the Statute-Book of Great Britain, an achievement which won him his nickname of "Humanity Dick." He was an ardent advocate of Catholic Emancipation, and an equally keen opponent of Capital Punishment, especially in cases of forgery, to which it was then applied with merciless rigour. He supported various other ameliorations of the penal code, which since his day have long formed part of the law of the land.

Dick Martin was as quick at repartee as he was with the sword and pistol. In those days there

were no side-paths in the narrow streets of Galway, and it was a customary courtesy amongst pedestrians to allow any one of superior social standing to pass on the side next the wall, where there was less likelihood of being splashed by conveyances in the roadway. A man who had an old grudge against Colonel Martin, meeting him in the street one day, pushed rudely past, saying aloud as he did so, "I never give the wall to a blackguard."

Colonel Martin immediately stepped to one side, took off his hat, and made a low bow. "I always do," he said.

At an election before the Union, Dick Martin was opposed by another territorial magnate of Galway, a thorough sportsman, renowned alike for his reckless extravagance and dare-devil bravery. He was, however, totally illiterate, a circumstance less regarded then than it would be at the present time. The hustings in those days used to be erected in Eyre Square, in Galway. The long elevated platform was divided into three separate booths. From the central one the High Sheriff made the public nomination of the candidates, whilst those gentlemen themselves addressed the electors from either end, so that they stood near enough to each other to exchange banter and other sallies of wit. Advancing to the front of his booth with a folded paper in his hand, Dick Martin exclaimed—

"I declare solemnly, before all here assembled,

that I am willing this moment to retire from this contest and to allow my antagonist to be returned unopposed if he will only sign this declaration which I hold in my hand."

This, however, it was not possible for that gentleman to do, not from any dissent to the views set forth in the document in question, but because, as Dick Martin was well aware, he was totally unable to write his own name.

When George IV. visited Ireland another election in Galway was pending. The King inquired of Humanity Dick, who came up to attend his levee, which candidate would probably be returned. With a bow Colonel Martin replied, "The survivor, sir."

Within Connemara the Martins, from father to son, reigned with a sway that was absolute and supreme, they being not alone the owners of that huge tract, but also the only magistrates resident within its borders. The keep of a ruined castle on an island within Ballinahinch Lake served during many years as prison for the district, and was known as "Mr Martin's jail." Offenders brought before Humanity Dick he would sentence to a week, or fortnight, or three weeks' imprisonment, according as the heinousness of their misdemeanour merited. They were forthwith ferried over to the island, and there being no possibility of escape thence, had even to remain till their time of durance expired.



"Troth, the masther's better to them nor a whole bench of magisthrates," a dependant of his once remarked; and doubtless the peasantry from the surrounding mountain-sides preferred confinement within view of their own homes to the terrors of banishment to the far-off town of Galway.

The owner of the Aran Islands, that lie across the mouth of Galway Bay, who exercised as despotic a rule over them as did the Martins over Connemara, was wont to adopt a different procedure. When any of his islanders were found guilty of any offence, he would say sternly, speaking in their native Irish, "I must transport you to prison in Ireland for a month." Tears and supplications would follow, the delinquent pleading piteously not to be condemned to transportation to the mainland; and sometimes on earnest promises of better behaviour in future, the landlord would relent and remit the dreaded penalty. If, however, he considered the crime too serious for any clemency to be shown, he would draw out the committal warrant, and hand it to the culprit, with orders to betake himself without delay to Galway jail. The offender, accompanied to the shore by all his relatives and friends weeping and making lamentation over him, would thereupon immediately take boat to Galway and deliver himself up, warrant in hand, to undergo his appointed sentence.

There was yet another magistrate, dwelling in Iar-Connaught, who, besides being a merciful man,

took special pride in the peaceful condition of his immediate neighbourhood, and the immaculate character borne by his people. When compelled, therefore, by strict justice to commit some transgressor to jail, he generally accompanied his mittimus with the hint to the custodians who were to convey the captive to prison "to give the poor fellow a chance." The hint, needless to say, was invariably taken, with the result that not only did that benevolent justice enjoy the utmost popularity, but during his lifetime the special portion of Iar-Connaught where he reigned maintained an unexampled record for good conduct and respect for the law, scarcely any of its inhabitants appearing at their country's bar, or being given free lodging in the king's guest-house.

This paternal and irregular administration of justice had advantages appreciated by those likely to become amenable thereto, for in those days the law, when directly appealed to, was apt to be somewhat drastic in its dealings. There was thus a hurling match played in Galway which ended, as games of hurling have done in Ireland before and since, in a free fight. The members of the combatant teams were sentenced impartially to four months' hard labour each, and bound over thereafter to keep the peace for no less a period than fourteen years, a grievous condition surely to lay upon any Irishman. One of the players only, who had suffered the loss of an eye in the *mêlée*, was, in consideration of that

circumstance, let off with the mitigated penalty of a month's incarceration. Hurling matches were very popular contests at this time, and gave occasion for great feats of skill and daring. Sometimes one county or one barony would pit itself against another, when the best players were brought together, and the excitement grew to fever heat. There was one historic match long remembered, when the men of Leinster challenged the men of Munster, and the struggle was fought out in the Phoenix Park, before all the rank and fashion of the Irish metropolis. The issue was decided at last by one of the Munster men running up with the ball on the point of his hurley and driving it through the windows of the viceregal carriage, thus eluding the vigilance of the opposing goalmen and securing the goal. Hurling was, however, discountenanced by the authorities, and soon afterwards sternly suppressed, as owing to the excitable disposition of players and onlookers, matches almost invariably led to riots and disturbances, the spectators being seldom content to remain passive, but taking sides according to their different proclivities.

The law also dealt very sternly in those old times with juries who obstinately and perversely refused to find a verdict, the penalty decreed being that they should be carted to the verge of the county in which the disagreement had taken place, and there turned adrift to shift for themselves. <sup>1</sup>At one Con-

<sup>1</sup> Burke's 'Anecdotes of the Connaught Circuit.'



naught assizes a man was brought to trial, charged with having broken into a gentleman's house, and stolen therefrom plate, wine, and other articles of value. It must be borne in mind that by the ferocious code of those days if the worth of the articles stolen exceeded a trifling amount, the punishment was death. The evidence against the prisoner was tolerably clear, but his case resembled another of more recent date, when the accused, on being asked by the presiding judge if he were represented by counsel, replied, with a knowing glance at the jury-box, "No, me lord, but I've several good friends among the jury."

In this case, too, the prisoner had four stalwart champions empanelled, who were resolved to endure all hardness rather than suffer their friend to be found guilty. The trial did not conclude till late in the day; and as there appeared no prospect of the jury's coming to a speedy agreement, they were, according to custom, locked up for the night in the jury-room, foodless and fireless. It was late in the autumn, and the weather was bitterly cold. By rights it was the summer assizes which were being held; but when at the proper season of the year the majesty of the law, with all attendant pomp and circumstance, had journeyed to the west, the High Sheriff had obstinately and contumaciously refused to make oath that the Church of Rome was idolatrous and damnable—had, indeed, though a good Protestant

himself, refused to make any oath that reflected upon the religious tenets of his countrymen. Without such oath, however, no one might fill the office of High Sheriff, and a Grand Jury not called together by a duly qualified High Sheriff was not legally constituted, and had no powers to find true bills against any one. As no way could be found out of this *impasse*, Bench and Bar had even to take the road again with their business unaccomplished, leaving the knotty problem to be solved by the higher powers in Dublin. These wisely directed the judge to waive the question of the oath, and sent him back later in the year to transact the legal business that had been left unexecuted at his former visit.

Throughout the long hours of the night the prisoner's friends held out unflinchingly against all the arguments and remonstrances which the rest of the jury could bring to bear, and the next morning found them still presenting an undaunted front. The judge, who was anxious to conclude the business of the assizes, and who was also probably not in the best of humours at having had to undertake a second journey into the western wilds at this inclement season of the year, sent the jury a peremptory message that if they had not arrived at a verdict by three o'clock in the afternoon, carts would be in readiness to convey them to the county boundary fifteen Irish miles away. As that hour drew

near the foreman and the majority of the jury became more and more clamorously insistent that the others should give way and enable a verdict of guilty to be returned. Reasonings and protestations proving of no avail, they had resort to more vigorous means to bring the minority to be of one mind with themselves. These latter, who made up in determination what they lacked in numbers, were not slow to retaliate; the furniture and the firearms supplied weapons ready to hand, and a pitched battle ensued. The sounds of conflict at length reached the ears of the judge, who was trying another case in the court below. He despatched the javelin men, the attendants of the High Sheriff, upstairs to break in the door of the jury room; but the aid of the military had to be requisitioned before the mob of furious men struggling within could be disentangled and dragged out. They were led down into the court, battered, bleeding, and dishevelled, but with the lust of battle still unquenched, and loudly proclaiming their intention to have each other's lives. The judge reprimanded them severely on their behaviour, and ordered them to be forthwith carted away. Three low-backed Irish cars, with their wooden axles and solid wheels—the only vehicles then in use in Connaught,—were in waiting at the court-house door, and on them the hapless jurymen were placed. Surrounded by a troop of dragoons who made escape impossible, and with



the High Sheriff at the head of the procession, they moved slowly away; but when the confines of the town were reached and the rough track which did duty for a road came in sight, stretching away into the bleak landscape, the heart of even the stoutest of the jury began to fail. From car to car a hurried consultation was held; the prisoner's friends agreed to find him guilty of stealing goods of the value of four and ninepence, and the others were contented with this compromise. The procession halted, whilst a mounted messenger galloped back to acquaint the judge that unanimity had at last been reached. Alas! however, he came too late. The last case having concluded, the judge had already taken his departure, and so the forlorn train had needs to continue its way through the wintry afternoon towards its distant goal.

Very much later than this, when the practice of thus deporting recalcitrant juries had long been discontinued, a man accused of murder was brought to trial in Galway. As it was doubtful, however, whether the evidence would sustain the capital charge, the Crown, when the case came on, reduced the indictment to manslaughter. Upon this latter charge the evidence was so clear and conclusive, that when the jury retired to consider their verdict they were expected to reappear in court almost immediately. An hour, however, had passed before they returned, and then the foreman

—an individual named Coffey—intimated that they were unable to agree. The judge inquired if there were any point which he could make more clear to them.

“None at all, me lord,” said the foreman. “But for me own part, I’ll find no man guilty by Saxon law.”

The judge bade them retire once more to the jury room and consult anew; but after the lapse of another half hour they came back and declared that there was no possibility of their arriving at a verdict.

“Me lord, you may as well discharge us,” said the foreman doggedly, “for if I was to stay here for a year, I’d niver find any man guilty by Saxon law.”

The counsel for the Crown thereupon rose in his place. “Then, my lord, the case must stand over till the next assizes. But,” he added impressively, “I give warning to all, that when the prisoner is next brought to trial the indictment will be for murder.”

Up leaped the prisoner in the dock, wildly waving his arms. “Och, Misther Coffey, for the love of the Lord will ye find me guilty!”

And found guilty he accordingly was.

The town of Galway was at this time unlighted and unpaved. Efforts at illumination had been made at an earlier period, but the lamps had disappeared. It was said that “the smugglers broke

them," as detrimental to their pursuits. Pigs were permitted to roam in the streets at their own good will and pleasure; and fish was cleaned there, and the heads and other offal left lying as they fell. In the poorer parts of the town it was the habit of each householder to accumulate outside his door a heap of filth which sometimes attained almost to the eaves, and which lay rotting and oozing upon the street till the spring came round, when it was conveyed, in the panniers of an ass, if such could be secured, but more generally upon its owners' backs, to the patch of ground outside the town which had been rented in conacre to supply the family with potatoes during the ensuing season.

After one very wet summer there came a partial failure of this all-important crop. Not that awful, utter failure that came later in the black year of '47, but still a scarcity sufficient to cause much suffering amongst the poorer members of the community. Money was freely subscribed in Galway for the relief of the distress, and a committee was formed to distribute these funds amongst the necessitous. The inspiring genius of this body was an energetic parson of the Established Church, and to him was due the credit of the suggestion that a twofold benefit might be achieved if the destitute were set to work upon a thorough cleansing of the streets. To obviate all unnecessary hardships the bellman was ordered to go round the town and give warning to the owners



of these malodorous heaps that they must be removed to the backs of their dwellings, or to some other less prominent position, on pain of their being swept bodily away. The town crier accordingly went forth, and after ringing his bell long enough to attract a crowd of goodly proportions, he bellowed out—

“This is to give notice that yez is all of yez to remove the dirt that yez has put upon the streets, for if yez does not the minister will take it for himself. God bless the King and the minister both.”

The owners of the muck-heaps were, however, by no means minded to obey the mandate and remove their cherished gatherings from the convenient proximity to their doors, and the first band of scrapers and sweepers, some forty in number, whom the relief committee had armed with brooms and shovels and sent forth, were met by an angry mob and driven ignominiously off the streets. The intrepid divine thereupon constituted himself commander-in-chief and led his forces in person into the fray. The cleansing operations were to commence in Suckeen, the eastern suburb of the town, and there the defenders were strongly posted upon the manure-heaps and armed with pitchforks and flails. Twice over the attack upon these entrenchments was repulsed; but then came up the artillery—sundry carts, to wit, which had been hired to carry away

the spoils,—and with these galloping behind him the gallant cleric once more charged the heights, waving his stick above his head, and regardless of the unsavoury missiles hurled at him from beneath the defenders' feet. He stormed and captured the loftiest of these fortresses, and, firmly ensconced there, resisted all efforts to dislodge him. Victory being thus achieved, the rest of the town capitulated, and the work of purification was carried out.

Notwithstanding Dick Martin's enormous estate—which consisted, however, chiefly of mountains and bogland—he was always in monetary difficulties, and like most other Irish gentlemen of large landed property in his day, heavily in debt. Reckless expenditure, well-meant but ill-starred endeavours for the improvement of the “houseless wilds” over which he ruled, and the huge cost of contested elections had involved him deeply in financial liabilities. Within his mountain fastnesses, however, he dwelt secure, and being asked on one occasion whether it were true that the King's writ did not run in Connemara, he replied, “Egad, it does, as fast as any greyhound if any of my good fellows are after it.” He owned a lodge at Oughterard, which he styled his gate-house, and the public road beyond it his avenue, since it ran for thirty-six miles uninterruptedly through his property. At this gate-house a trusty guard kept watch and ward over all who went

into the region beyond, and the bailiff who would have penetrated into Connemara to serve a writ upon its owner had need to be a daring man. When Roundstone, upon Richard Martin's own application, was raised to the rank of a market town, and the sheriff came down to publish the Act of Parliament authorising the holding of markets and fairs there, Humanity Dick's henchmen, distrusting all the sheriff's assurances that he intended no harm to their master, took the precaution of making him most royally drunk, and whilst he lay prone in this condition they rifled his pockets, and made sure that there were no processes or other obnoxious documents amongst their contents.

The last and fiercest of all Dick Martin's electoral conflicts was that fought at the General Election of 1826. My father was then High Sheriff of Galway, and the youngest sheriff on record, being just twenty-one years of age. The borough election, though it did not last as long, was not less hotly contested than that for the county. Upon this occasion the rival candidates were a young Mr Monaghan, a Dublin barrister—or counsellor, as they still continued to be called—who subsequently rose to be Chief Justice on the Irish Bench, and a Mr Blake, whose residence was in the vicinity of Galway. Mr Blake was in a predicament, which was at that time common enough to gentlemen of large landed estate in



Galway, and indeed throughout Ireland generally, who did not enjoy the immunity which his mountain barrier gave to Dick Martin. He was what was known as a "Sunday boy": in other words, owing to financial embarrassments he was unable to appear abroad except upon the Sabbath, and had to spend the other six days of the week straitly shut up within the walls of his dwelling. A member of Parliament, however, could not be arrested for debt, which, amongst other reasons, made it exceedingly desirable that Mr Blake should become member for Galway town, as he would thereby be delivered from his present thralldom. The contest was a very close one, and was fought as elections were fought in those days. The body of the court-house, where on ordinary occasions judges, juries, and lawyers carried on their functions, was packed throughout the day with a wildly excited crowd of men, half-naked, wholly drunk, and fighting ferociously for not one of them could have told what. Amidst this indescribable din a local orator stood up to make an impassioned appeal on Mr Blake's behalf.

"Citizens of Galway," he shouted, "will you suffer yourselves to be represented by this counsellor from Dublin—a stranger brought here by his hirelings? Will you leave Mr Blake to pine in his seclusion outside your town? Or will you bid the counsellor begone whence he came, and make Mr Blake by your votes a free man this day?"

This eloquence prevailed, and Mr Blake was returned at the head of the poll. Mr Blake himself, whilst the election was proceeding, was out upon Lough Corrib in a boat, where he was safe from arrest, as a writ could only be executed on *terra firma*. His victory was made known to him by the frantic crowds rushing to the water-side to hail the newly elected member, whereupon the boat was speedily pulled ashore, and Mr Blake was chaired and carried in triumph through the streets of Galway on the shoulders of his supporters.

At the county election matters assumed a much more serious aspect. Colonel Martin's opponent was James Staunton Lambert, also belonging to the county, and who was backed by the Daly family. This was a very important matter, for whilst the Daly property was nearly adjacent to the town of Galway, and their partisans were drawn from the neighbouring parts of the county, the Martin voters had to be brought in from the farthest wilds of Connemara. There was but one polling-place, the court-house in the town of Galway; thither all voters from the whole of the huge county had to be conveyed, and an election therefore commonly lasted six weeks. Dick Martin brought most of his tenants round by sea, and landed them in hordes upon the quays, their landing being fiercely opposed by the opposite faction. They were lodged in one of the large corn warehouses which in those days lined the

wharves of Galway, now, alas! all fallen to ruin and decay, and were safely locked up, partly to keep them sober, partly to prevent their being tampered with. During the night the warehouse was set on fire by some of the Daly faction, and the poor wretches only escaped with difficulty and in their shirts. It was said afterwards that some votes were lost in consequence, that lives were lost along with them seemed of less consideration.

The Martin supporters were not slow to retaliate. Mr Tom Lambert, brother of the candidate, was dining a night or two later at a hostelry within the town, in company of six friends, who belonged all of them to different families of the county, when one of their adherents rushed in breathlessly to announce that the Martin mob were in their turn attacking the house in which Mr Ponsonby, a landlord who favoured Mr Lambert, had bestowed his tenants, and threatening to murder them. The gentlemen in all haste snatched up such weapons as they could procure. Tom Lambert secured a pistol, one or two others had swords, and the rest had to content themselves with broom-handles and shovels. Thus armed they sallied into the street, and were soon espied by the mob, who, desisting for the time from their onslaught upon Mr Ponsonby's premises, surged down upon them in very menacing fashion. Tom Lambert whipped out his pistol and warned the crowd that if they did not keep back he would fire. Awed by this bold front,



the mob seemed inclined to draw off and leave the gentlemen in peace; but a butcher, Jerry Sullivan by name, flourishing his knife aloft, called to them to come on, and led them on to the attack himself, whereupon Tom Lambert shot him dead. He and his friends were immediately arrested and lodged in Galway jail to await the assizes. They had a most jovial time during their incarceration, being visited daily by crowds of their friends, whom they entertained at dinner and supper, so that for the time being the jail became quite the centre of social life in Galway. Tom Lambert was tried for his life, and the others for having aided and abetted him, but they were all acquitted on the score of not having been the original assailants and having only acted in self-defence.

In the meantime, after scenes of riot and disorder, unparalleled even in the annals of Galway, Richard Martin had been once more returned by a majority of eighty-five votes. A petition was, however, immediately lodged against his election on the grounds of intimidation and illegality. An election petition in those days was heard before a committee of the House of Commons, supposed to be chosen impartially from both parties. Mr Lambert alleged that the Martin faction had broken into his committee and tally-rooms, and prevented any business being transacted there, that they had posted themselves at all the approaches to the court-house, and that their demeanour had been so

ferocious that his voters had been afraid to venture near the polling-place. It was further proved that no less than two hundred of Richard Martin's supporters had voted twice, whilst some in their zeal for his cause had gone so far as to record their votes three and four times over. It was not contended that Dick Martin had personally countenanced these practices, but those two hundred votes being struck off his lists was more than sufficient to unseat him, and to plant Mr Lambert in his place.

After this last and crushing blow Richard Martin retired to Boulogne, where he spent the last years of his life, protecting all helpless and ill-used creatures, overdriven horses and donkeys, and the immature fish thrown out upon the beach by the fishermen to die. We get one last characteristic glimpse there of the old duellist, who made it his rule to pace the sands every day at low water, when all the fashionable world of Boulogne galloped upon the wide expanse left bare. Seeing a young fellow one day plying his hired mount viciously with whip and spur, Humanity Dick stepped to his side.

"What right, sir, have you to torture and ill-treat that animal?" he demanded sternly.

The young Englishman stared insolently at him. "I don't know who you are, sir, and I shall treat my horse as I please."

"A pity for the poor beast that he has such a d—d bad rider," was the pithy response.

"I do not submit to such language, sir," said the youth with all the dignity he could command. "I demand an immediate and complete apology." And he tendered his card.

Humanity Dick flicked it contemptuously aside and drew himself up. "I am Richard Martin at your service," he said haughtily, "and any one in Boulogne will tell you where I am to be found."

The mention of that name was enough to cool the young fire-eater's ardour, and as Colonel Martin, even in his exile, had paramount influence amongst the English colony, and his displeasure was therefore not lightly to be incurred, a hint from him to the keeper of the livery stable was sufficient to ensure that that particular Nimrod was never intrusted with a hack again.

At the General Election of 1832 Richard Martin's son, Thomas Barnewall Martin, was returned in triumph, and the County Galway was once more represented by a Martin.





"MY GRANDFATHER," ROBERT MARTIN OF ROSS



## CHAPTER XII.

## THE OLD HOME.

WE prided ourselves not a little on being the main and elder stock of the Martins, dwelling still on the lands in Iar-Connaught which our fathers had acquired from the O'Fflaherties in those far back days when the merchants of Galway began to desist from their trading and to develop into county magnates. The fact that those lands were small in comparison with the vast tract owned by the younger or Connemara branch of the family made no difference to us.

My father being on one occasion summoned as witness in a trial, the opposing counsel commenced his cross-examination with the remark, "I think, Mr Martin, that you are related to the Martins of Ballinahinch?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said my father haughtily; "the Martins of Ballinahinch are related to me."

I can remember, too, as a little girl, seeing my grandmother and Mrs Martin of Ballinahinch, wife of Thomas Martin, M.P., curtseying to each other



with the stiff formality of those days, before a door which both desired to pass through.

"You should go first," said Mrs Martin, "for your husband is the head of the family."

"No, it is your right," answered my grandmother, "for yours is member for the county."

But I forget which eventually took precedence.

As a young man my grandfather had been enrolled first lieutenant of the Galway Yeomanry, which were embodied in 1796 after the attempted landing of the French in Bantry Bay. Coming home one evening in the early spring of '98, tired out after a long day's snipe-shooting, he found imperative orders awaiting him to join his regiment in the market square of Galway, nearly a dozen Irish miles away, at seven o'clock the next morning, since another invasion of the French was hourly expected. In point of fact, with the utter ineptitude with which everything connected with the disastrous Irish rebellion was contrived, the expected landing did not take place till four months later, when the insurrection itself had been ruthlessly and mercilessly quelled. Great was the grief and the dismay of the female portion of the household on learning that their darling was to be exposed to the perils of a campaign against a foreign enemy, whilst he himself, seeing that he must set out at daybreak next morning, desired nothing so much as to secure a good night's rest beforehand. Accordingly he willingly submitted to be put to bed by the

tender hands of mother and aunts, who tucked the curtains of the four-post bed in securely all round and shuttered the windows, giving him solemn assurance that since they must sit up all night to make ready his wardrobe and pack his valise, they would not fail to rouse him betimes. My grandfather slept the sleep of the just and the weary, and woke to find himself, owing to the precautions taken, still in profound darkness. Sounds of life and stir without, however, made him suspect that it must be later than he had at first deemed, and great was his consternation on flinging open the shutters to discover that it was already well past ten o'clock. Those fond ladies had perjured themselves, deeming by this simple device to outwit the authorities, and to keep the cherished heir from being the target for French muskets. By dint of hard riding he succeeded in overtaking his regiment at their first night's camping-place, but in what terms he made his excuses to his commanding officer is not known.

The whole family were compelled soon afterwards to abandon their home and to take refuge in the town of Galway, it being considered too hazardous to remain in the open country in view of the disturbed conditions then prevailing. One of my widowed grand-aunts, whom, according to the custom of those days, we called by her married name, Aunt Browne, was wont long afterwards to recount to us children how terrified they had all been to hear behind them, as they drove along the lonely

road between the mountains and Lough Corrib, the clatter of horses' hoofs, and how they had deemed themselves pursued by some rebel band. Their fears were speedily allayed, however, for when the horsemen came in sight they proved to be a troop of the Mayo Yeomanry, also hastening to the rendezvous, who immediately undertook to escort the fugitives the rest of the way. The young captain who was in command rode at the side of the carriage where my grand-aunt, then a girl of sixteen, was seated, and paid her marked attention.

"He was a charming young man, my dears, a most charming young man. And what do you think his name was?" she would ask coyly at the end of the story.

"Browne," we would all cry eagerly, and she responded complacently, "Yes, dears, he was Captain Browne."

For it was a case of love at first sight, and she married her gallant protector.

We were a large household, even as households went in those days, when the family circle was much more extensive than it is at present. Often nowadays when I hear of the impracticability of what are called dual arrangements, of the hopelessness of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or wife and sister-in-law, living in harmony together, I think of the motley group which was sheltered in the tall stone house that looked out over the gray lake with its wooded shores to the purple mountains



beyond. Younger sons might be sent out into the world to seek their fortune; but it was a matter of course that the eldest son when he married should bring his wife to the family home, and that his children should grow up under its roof-tree. Nor did it occur to any one that the young couple must have a sitting-room of their own—a castle of refuge to retreat to: their life merged in that of the family and flowed on with it. As professions for gentlemen were undreamed of then, it followed as a matter of necessity that the unmarried daughters of a family, unless unusually well-portioned, must remain in the home of their birth, even when it had passed to a brother, or possibly to a still younger generation. They helped in the bringing up of the children, these elderly spinsters, and filled up odd nooks and corners in the family life. Even more distant relatives, widowed aunts and cousins, left with straitened means and families of children, looked to the old ancestral home to provide them with at least a temporary asylum, and its shelter was seldom or never denied to them.

It must be remembered that the cost of living, or at least the outlay in ready money, was very much less than it would be at the present day, or such unbounded hospitality would have been scarcely possible. My grandfather, who was the head of our house, used to boast that his very numerous family cost him next to nothing to maintain—the demesne, the garden, and the dairy supplied almost all our

needs. It was no part of his economy to consider that the large quantities of home-grown products which we consumed represented money in another form.

Our household allowance was a sheep every week and a bullock once a-month, all that could not be eaten fresh being salted down in huge stone pickling-troughs. In addition the poultry-yard had its tribes of feathered fowl, farther afield rabbits multiplied in a manner devastating to the young plantations, trout abounded in the lake, so did game in its season. Fuel we had free, too, for we were surrounded by turf-bogs—a very important matter, indeed, in all Irish households in those days, for except in the towns near the coast coal was rarely burnt. Our bogs lay at the lower end of our lake, and the turf was brought up in big, clumsy turf-boats, and discharged at what we called the turf-quay, below the house. I remember one of our visitors standing on our hall-door steps, looking out over our lawn and lake to the purple slopes of the heather-clad mountains rising beyond, and extolling the beauty of the view and the judgment of the builders who had set the old house just where it stood. My grandmother, to whom this encomium was made, and who had an eminently practical mind, answered dryly, that for her part she thanked Providence that those who had gone before her had built the house where there was an abundant supply of spring water, and within convenient proximity of

a good turf-bog,—matters vastly more important, to her thinking, than the finest prospect in the world.

As to light we made our own candles — mould-candles for parlour and drawing-room, and dips for kitchen and nursery use. Mould-candles were made of mutton-tallow, which was considered to give the better light. Wicks were drawn tightly through long narrow moulds fixed in rows to a board, and the melted fat poured in afterwards. For the dips lengths of loosely twisted wick were tied round a stick, a dozen or more at a time, and dipped into a great saucepan of grease upon the kitchen fire, allowed to cool and dipped again, till they had attained sufficient thickness.

We baked our own bread, too, in a cavernous oven in the kitchen wall, in which huge turf-fires were kindled and allowed to burn themselves out, after which the hot ashes were swept out and the batch of loaves thrust in. Truly the careful housewife at the head of such an establishment as ours did not eat the bread of idleness in those days? Groceries, for which coin of the realm was needed, were her most anxious consideration, and in those days sugar cost sixpence a pound for even the coarsest kinds, whilst the vendors of tea frankly confessed that they could not recommend the qualities that cost but three and four shillings a pound to their patrons. For five shillings a drinkable article might be had, and thence the prices rose to twelve shillings, the sum that was charged



for Imperial Gunpowder, a very potent and wholly admirable tea.

Ready money was indeed so scarce in Galway that when play was high the stakes were frequently made in live-stock, as being more plentiful than coin. A sheep a point and a bullock on the rubber were recognised stakes at whist.

Our wine was bottled by my grandfather, who imported hogsheads of port from Lisbon, and of sherry from Spain. The ancient trade which had made Galway great was not wholly dead, even then, and ships still came and went to southern ports from Galway Bay.

The ordinary wages of a servant in those days were £4 a-year. Our cook received £8, and there-with highwater mark was supposed to have been reached. Only the upper servants were allowed tea; the others lived upon the produce of the estate, and cost, so to say, nothing. Under such conditions it was easy to maintain a numerous retinue, and ours equalled that of a high-placed Anglo-Indian official of the present day. There was the turf-boy, whose duty it was to fill the turf-boxes, the cavernous receptacles throughout the house from which the fires were supplied; the boy who pumped the water, and the boy who drove the cows: the main difference between our ragged regiment and the dusky retainers of an Indian bungalow being, that whereas with the latter it is matter of caste and honour to do their own special work and that

alone, ours were mostly eager to do anything which was not their rightful business, and to leave that undone.

Not the least important person in the household was Sally Sweeny, whom from the nature of her avocation we dubbed "Sally Forth." Twice a-week, summer and winter, sun and rain, she walked—or as she herself expressed it, "slipped"—into Galway, eleven Irish miles distant, and out again, to do the family shopping, deliver notes and messages, and execute commissions. She could neither read nor write, yet she never made a mistake in any direction given her, or delivered a letter or parcel save at its rightful destination. She was frequently intrusted with considerable sums of money by various members of the family, and could carry the most complicated reckonings in her head, accounting on her return for every farthing received with the utmost accuracy. She always went barefoot—not from poverty, for she carried her shoes and stockings with her, but for ease in walking. A little wood just outside Galway served her and most other countrywomen as a dressing-room, where they donned their *chausure* before entering the streets of the town. Once, however, her memory did fail her, when one of the ladies of the family had ordered her to bring back a yard of satin, and the unaccustomed word slipped out of Sally's recollection. But she did not allow herself to be nonplussed, and going into the prin-

cial emporium of Galway she demanded of the astounded proprietor—

“What is’t that ye call the Divil whin it’s not Divil that ye say to him?”

“Is it Satan you would be meaning?” queried the perplexed draper.

“The very wan,” said Sally delightedly. “An’ ye’ll give me a yard.”

The distances the peasantry traversed on foot were indeed extraordinary. On one occasion my father had gone up to a fishing-lodge which he had in the mountains, and after his arrival there discovered to his vexation that he had forgotten to bring any letter-paper with him, while he had an important letter to write. However, on expressing his annoyance at his own forgetfulness to the caretaker in charge of the lodge, the latter made light of the difficulty.

“What would ail me that I wouldn’t slip into Galway for your honour?” he demanded.

And into Galway he accordingly slipped,—forty Irish miles there and back across the mountains,—and returned triumphant with—one sheet of letter-paper!

Hughie Caulfield, the gardener, was something of a scholar, and a philosopher to boot, more given to meditation and to leisurely ruminating than to any over-exertion in digging and trenching. Being found asleep in the sunny greenhouse one spring afternoon when the grapes were setting, he thus



excused himself for his neglect of duty—"I was that onaisy in me mind about thim grapes I cudn't stop awake."

He took no little pride in his learning, and was once overheard expounding that most vexed question of Reformation history to one of his subordinates after the following fashion—

"Says Thomas a Becket to Henry the Eighth, 'Ye can't marry Anna Bullen,' says he. 'And for why not?' says Henry. 'Sure, she's yer own daughter, man,' says he. 'The devil may care who's daughter she is,' says Henry, 'I'll marry her.'"

Out of doors, our yard was the scene of constant activity and bustle, where multifarious trades were plied. Next the big entrance gate was the forge, which roared and glowed perpetually, for not only was all our own work done there, but the tenants brought their horses to be shod, and the tires of their wheels and ploughs to be mended. Next to it was the carpenter's shop, in which all repairs indoor and outdoor were executed, and the simpler articles of household furniture made. Beyond, again, was the slaughterhouse, an unavoidable necessity in such an establishment as ours.

The ordinary wages of a labourer at that time were fivepence a day, and we kept forty in constant employment. Two huge black pots filled with potatoes were boiled for them every day, together with great pieces of corned beef, carefully weighed

out from the pickling troughs. They dined in the haggard, called in from all parts of the farm by the clanging of the yard-bell. Amongst those who never failed to respond to the summons was one strangely assorted couple. The steward, having been sent to a neighbouring fair to purchase a pig, intended in due time to replenish the household stores of ham and bacon, reported on his return that he had bought "a nate, cliver, grave, gay little pig." The animal possessed of so many and somewhat conflicting qualities was of the true old Galway breed, lean and long-legged as a greyhound, with well-arched back and ears as short as if they had been cropped for sedition, and possessed, moreover, of a turn of speed and staying powers not common to the porcine tribe. By what means Sal—for so with total disregard of sex we named him—arrived at an understanding with Chance our pointer, no one ever knew. Every morning, however, as soon as they were set free from kennel and sty, they set out together for the woods, where they hunted in company—Chance working his way into the rabbit-holes to bolt the rabbits, and Sal standing in readiness to pounce on the prey as it came out, after which they shared the spoils of the chase in strict amity. A few moments, however, after the mid-day bell had clanged out its summons they always came into sight, Chance leading, but Sal a good second, coming at a brisk trot, and grunting louder and yet more loudly the nearer he drew to the

promised land, where a meal of potato skins and other leavings of the workmen's dinner awaited them both.

This partnership was deemed so remarkable that Sal's life was spared on account of it, and he was suffered to attain to an age far beyond the span usually allotted to pigs. He lived in a house of his own, apart from the other pigs, and grew to an enormous size, developing a huge pair of curved tusks. He became so savage at last that it was found necessary to slaughter him. Age and hard exercise, however, had made his flesh so tough that it was quite unfit for consumption.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## BY LAND AND BY WATER.

WE were wont, like most of the Irish gentry, to make an annual migration from the far west to Dublin for the gaieties of the winter season. The heads of the family, and as many of its other members as could find accommodation, travelled in our own carriage, a truly patriarchal conveyance. It was hung so high from the ground that it had to be entered by a little carpeted staircase, which was folded back neatly inside the carriage, after the four occupants of the interior had taken their seats. Two others sat behind in the rumble, and two more on the box, for as we travelled with post-horses and postilions we did not need a coachman, and these outside seats were much sought after by the youngsters of the party. The big travelling carriage carried not only ourselves but also our wardrobes, in a set of trunks which specially appertained to itself. It was a joyful day for us children when, a full week before the date of departure,—everything was done leisurely and with deliberation in those

days, there was none of the modern rush and hurry,—the black, iron-bound boxes were brought indoors and carried upstairs to be packed. There was first the huge imperial which covered the whole roof of the carriage, in which gowns could be laid without folding them—no modern lady's dress-basket was ever half so capacious or convenient. Then there was the boot, a smaller box, which slipped in under the coachman's feet: this was considered a man's piece of luggage, and given up to the gentlemen of the party. Another curious wedge-shaped box fitted in between the driving-seat and the body of the carriage; and lastly there was what was called a cap-case, a light box which swung behind from two iron hooks at the back of the rumble, and held the ladies' bonnets. And bonnets were bonnets in those days, not the filmy morsels which now do duty as such, and they required a roomy receptacle to hold them.

The weight of our equipage, when fully loaded with all its freight, animate and inanimate, must have been prodigious: it was not surprising that we travelled slowly. The journey from Galway to Dublin occupied three days.

The first night brought us to Ballinasloe. The second day was the most interesting of the journey, for upon it we crossed the Shannon by the many-arched bridge of Athlone, which in olden days was the only passage into Connaught, and the furthest extent of British jurisdiction. It was so narrow

and so encumbered with strings of cars and carts that on market and fair days pedestrians often found it easiest to traverse it by leaping and scrambling from one vehicle to another the whole way across. Near the middle of the old bridge there was a curious and much-defaced monument, the almost indecipherable inscription of which set forth that the bridge had been built in the same year of Queen Elizabeth's reign which saw the overthrow of the arch rebel Shane O'Neill, and that it was finished within the year by the "good industrie and diligence" of one Peter Levis, Chanter of Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin. The lower part of the monument contained a mutilated figure of the said Peter Levis in cap and gown, grasping an implement said to be a pistol, though it bore little resemblance to that weapon, with what was equally suppositiously a rat perched on the end thereof. Whereof it was told that Peter Levis had been a monk, who for the sake of worldly advancement forsook his faith and became a Protestant. Being a man of great talent and learning he was sent down to build the bridge across the Shannon. Judgment, however, pursued him to the west in the shape of a rat that haunted him by day and by night, slept on his pillow, dabbled in his food and drink, even pursued him into the church and mounted the pulpit with him when he ventured to preach, leering at him evilly during his discourse, till maddened at the torment, the renegade monk



snatched up a pistol to rid himself of his persecutor. But as he pulled the trigger, the horrible creature leapt upon the pistol and bit his thumb so severely that he died of the gangrene engendered by the wound. Such at least was the story told of the monument, and we used to gaze at it awestruck as we threaded our way slowly across.

That night we slept at Kilbeggan, and once we found there an English traveller in great and justifiable indignation at the damp bed that had been proffered to him. "These Irish innkeepers of yours are so lazy, ma'am," he said irately to my grandmother, "that they will not even be at the pains of throwing their servants and their children two or three nights a-week into the unoccupied beds to keep them dry and fit for strangers."

To many people the remedy might have seemed no less objectionable than the disorder.

It was only towards evening on the third day of our journey that a murky light, low down on the horizon, told us that we were approaching the metropolis.

Posting cost a shilling a mile, with a gratuity besides to the post-boys. If this was insufficient, they passed on a bad report of the travellers to their successors upon the next stage, and these revenged themselves beforehand by proceeding as slowly as possible. A penurious aunt, journeying across Ireland from Waterford to visit us, and finding herself crawling at snail's pace, let down the

window and called to the post-boys to go more slowly still,—“I’ve never been this way before, and I wish to admire the scenery.” “Now, my dears,” she said to her daughters inside the carriage, “they’ll go fast, just to aggravate us.” But I do not know if the ruse succeeded or not.

In our own journeys it always seemed to us that our grandfather’s vocabulary had but two phrases in answer to all the demands made upon him in the different innyards. “Begad, I won’t,” and “You’re a d——d rascal.” More than that we never heard him utter.

Those members of the family whom the travelling-carriage, roomy as it was, could not accommodate, or who were obliged to make chance journeys to or from Dublin at other times, could travel by land or by water, by the stage-coach or the canal-boat. All the mail-coaches started from the Post Office in Dublin at nine o’clock in the evening. To see them set out was one of the sights of Dublin, and one which there was always a large crowd gathered to witness. There was the Galway mail, the Sligo mail, the Belfast mail, and numerous others besides; and a merry and inspiriting spectacle it was to see the well-appointed four-horsed coaches draw off, with much tooting of horns and chaff from the bystanders, in their different directions. It was pleasant enough, too, on a spring evening to drive out past the fresh greenery of the Phoenix Park and through the pretty village of Chapelizod on

our western road. Fatigue, however, soon overcame pleasure, and those long hours of darkness during which one sat bolt upright, generally in company with three other inside passengers, were very wearisome, and sleep was wellnigh impossible. The only rest we had, till Galway was reached, was half an hour's halt at Ballinasloe for an early breakfast.

On one occasion I was travelling home alone, having danced well into the small hours the previous night. My father's outside car met me in the innyard at Galway, and I was transferred without delay from one vehicle to the other, for the goodly number of Irish miles which had still to be accomplished. So tired out was I that I fell asleep on the way and rolled off the car. The coachman drove on some distance before he missed me, and turning back in much alarm, found me lying by the roadside, still sound asleep and quite unhurt.

This fast coach, which ran at night and carried the mails, was called the Fly. The slower and cheaper day coach carried passengers only, but a sufficient number of them, accommodating thirteen outside and six within, so that these latter were squeezed pretty well like sardines in a tin. I remember that when I was a little girl of six or seven summers my grandmother, a most stately old lady, took me with her to visit a family of friends who lived somewhere in the Irish midlands. We travelled by the day coach, and had for escort



a young cousin, one of the numerous collaterals who gathered under our hospitable roof. The problem of the matinee hat at the present day is as nothing compared to the difficulties which ladies' bonnets in a well-filled stage-coach gave rise to. My grandmother, not desiring that her best bonnet of purple velvet—I remember it well—should be crushed and flattened out of recognition, prudently removed it on entering the vehicle, and suspended it in some mysterious fashion from the roof, so that it hung down in our midst like a chandelier. Having replaced the bonnet by a frilled mobcap, such as old ladies then wore, she ensconced herself in the most comfortable corner of the coach and speedily fell fast asleep. I was wedged in opposite her, between my cousin and a stranger of such ample proportions that I had barely room to breathe. Whenever we stopped to change horses my portly neighbour got out and refreshed himself at the bar of the inn. The result of these repeated potations soon made itself apparent, and upon our resuming our journey after our third or fourth stage he was pleased to commence tickling me. At first I giggled, then I squealed, and at last, becoming frightened by his persistence, I screamed, whereupon my cousin and protector, without more ado, hit my tormentor square in the face. The latter was not slow to retaliate, and my august relative awoke to find a pugilistic contest being waged inside the coach, across my terrified person. The guard

had to be called down from the back of the coach to separate the combatants and restore peace.

At our next halt a man appeared at the window of the coach and handed in a baby, with a label bearing the address to which it was consigned tied about its neck. "Give me the little dear—I'll make a cushion for it," said, as we thought, our inebriated coach-fellow. We had mistaken the proposition, however, for, placing the hapless infant on the seat, he was just about to plump himself down upon it when it was dragged out from under him by some of the other passengers.

Sending parcels by stage coach was expensive in those days, and our friends and relations often made use of us as carriers to convey packets to and from the West. Sometimes their demands were more than was reasonable. On one occasion my grandfather was visiting at the house of a somewhat frugally-minded lady, and chanced incautiously to mention that he intended proceeding to Dublin in a few days. The lady's two young daughters were on a visit to the metropolis, and she immediately grasped at such a golden opportunity of sending them a new bonnet apiece. With astonishing amiability my grandfather consented to take charge of the two formidable blue bandboxes, such as were at that time universally employed by milliners, and they were placed in his gig. Once safely outside the gate, however, he took the bonnets out of their boxes, rolled them

up, with a fine masculine disdain for feminine fripperies, and stuffed them into his portmanteau, after which he tossed the empty bandboxes over the demesne wall into a secluded spot amongst some bushes, where he imagined they would lie snugly hidden. They were discovered, however, a day or two afterwards and brought to the lady, whose consternation and fear as to what had become of the missing bonnets was very great. Her dismay must have been equalled by that of the young ladies when they were presented with the flattened and crushed headgear by my grandfather. It was not often, however, that my grandfather allowed himself to be thus entrapped, long experience having made him wary. Another lady, who had frequently trespassed on his good-nature, wrote to him once entreating him to take charge of yet another parcel for her, and assuring him that this time it would be a very small one that could not possibly inconvenience him. My grandfather's reply was short and pithy. "Catch a weasel asleep," was all that he wrote back.

On our annual migrations to Dublin from our western wilds we young folks greatly preferred travelling by canal-boat to the more rapid, but much more cramped, journey inside a stage-coach. There were at this time two services of passenger-boats on the Grand Canal which intersects Ireland between Dublin and the great waterway of the Shannon; and here too the more rapid means of



transit was designated the Flyboat, however little its progress might come up to modern ideas of that motion. It was drawn by four horses, which trotted in a curious lopsided fashion as the boat, steered in mid-channel, pulled obliquely on them, and was supposed to attain a speed of seven Irish miles an hour. The ordinary service had but three horses, and they walked. It took four-and-twenty hours to accomplish the distance between Shannon harbour and Dublin. The canal-boat of those days much resembled a child's Noah's ark in appearance, its whole length being occupied by one long cabin, with a table down the middle and seats and windows on either side. There was a small deck fore and aft, where one could stand now and again to stretch one's cramped limbs, and when passing through the locks it was sometimes possible to go ashore for a few minutes. Meals were served on board, and the Grand Canal Company also boasted itself of providing sleeping accommodation. This consisted, however, in nothing more than a supply of pillows, which were served out at nightfall to the passengers, and which they were free to lay on the table before them and to rest their heads upon for the night. That not much sleep was to be had was evidenced by the eagerness with which the early breakfast of ham and eggs, cooked on board, was welcomed,—and it must have been served sufficiently early, as Portobello Harbour, in the north

of Dublin, where the voyage ended, was reached at six in the morning.

There was not much variety in the *menu* on board the canal-boat. A boiled leg of mutton was served for dinner every day the whole year round with the most unfailing regularity. On one occasion a friend of ours, himself a Roman Catholic, was travelling in the canal-boat on a Friday. He had for fellow-voyager a priest, and at dinner-time, when the perennial leg of mutton was brought in for all others, irrespective of creed, a small but most tempting-looking middle-cut of salmon was placed before his reverence, which he forthwith, without apology to the company, transferred to his own plate. Our friend, making a virtue of necessity, accepted the slice of mutton that was allotted to him without protest. Not so a stout grazier, who sat opposite the priest, and looked on gloweringly as the latter, for his own greater convenience, neatly divided the salmon into halves before proceeding to demolish it. He was just commencing upon it when the grazier, suddenly stretching across the table, thrust his fork into one of these portions. "I belave, yer riverince, ye think no one on board except yerself has a sowl to be saved," he exclaimed, as he bore the captured moiety off in triumph.

A cousin of ours, a somewhat fastidious young lady, was coming down from Dublin once to visit us. There had been a fair at some town or village

near the canal-bank, and at this point the canal-boat was invaded by a number of farmers and cattle-drovers, who congregated on the small after-deck, drinking porter and whisky, smoking, and indulging in bad language, which was only too audible to the cabin passengers. Much incensed, my cousin sent for the captain of the canal-boat and told him it was monstrous that ladies' ears should be polluted by the language they were compelled to listen to.

"Thin if yer ears is that tindher, ma'am, I'd advise ye to put wool in them, thin ye'll hear nothing that'll be displaisin' to ye," was all the satisfaction she got, as the captain went out of the cabin and banged the door behind him.

In Dublin itself in my earliest years we went about in sedan-chairs, and surely no more delightful conveyance was ever devised. The chair was brought into the hall, the occupant tucked herself away comfortably inside—there was no going out o' nights into the cold raw air, no soiling of shoes or skirts on muddy pavements,—the chairmen picked up their load, carried it at a sort of jog-trot through the streets, and deposited it within the hall of the house for which one was bound. Once I remember that my sister and I were sent in one chair to a children's party. We had some quarrel on the way, and shook the chair so violently in our struggle that the chairmen set it down in the middle of the street



and refused to proceed until we behaved ourselves as ladies going out in a chair should. Even gentlemen made use of this mode of conveyance, which was, however, expensive. The lowest fare was half-a-crown, and that was for very short distances, merely round the corner or into the next street; for any greater distance the demand was five shillings. The stand for chairs was, and had always been, a stretch of blank wall facing Ely Place, near St Stephen's Green, and there the chairmen, who always wore white stockings and black velvet knee-breeches, sat upon the kerb or lounged about, waiting for a summons.

<sup>1</sup> In former days John Philpot Curran, the noted counsellor and patriot, had for his town house one of the most imposing mansions in Ely Place. Curran was afflicted with a disreputable younger brother, much resembling himself in person, and with a share of his ready wit. By profession he was an attorney, but, owing to his dissolute habits, he had lost all employment, and brought himself to destitution. The elder Curran, who was generous to a fault, had assisted him very often, but at last, wearied out by incessant demands for money, and despairing of promises of amendment which were never fulfilled, he sternly refused any further pecuniary assistance, and forbade his brother his house. By some means the brother contrived to obtain permission to put up a wooden shanty against this piece of dead wall,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Jonah Barrington's 'Personal Sketches of His Own Times.'

and erected a cobbler's stall and bench there, with a board overhead, bearing the inscription—

CURRAN, COBBLER.

SHOES SOLED AND HEELED.

WHEN THE STALL IS CLOSED ENQUIRE OVER THE WAY.

Upon Curran's next return in his coach from the Four Courts he found his brother seated at his stall, wearing a leather apron and busily plying his new trade, surrounded by a crowd of gaping chairmen. He only looked up for a moment to wave an airy greeting to his brother, with a "How-de-do, Jack," before bending assiduously to his task again. It was not very long before a servant came across the street to request his attendance at the stately mansion opposite. There terms were arranged between the brothers, and in return for very tangible benefits the younger Curran undertook never to play the cobbler again.

In those earliest days that I can recall Grafton Street was the fashionable promenade, where all the smart people of the metropolis drove in the afternoons, the carriages moving slowly down upon the western side of the street and up again on the eastern, whilst friends and acquaintances strolled upon the pavements and chatted with the occupants. Great folk still had their state clarences and barouches, where the bewigged coachman, wearing a three-cornered hat, sat enthroned upon his embroidered hammercloth, and two powdered foot-

men stood behind. Two or three of such equipages were generally to be seen amongst the array.

In the early years of the last century Charles Bianconi, an Italian printseller and picture-cleaner, settled at Clonmel. The only public conveyances in those days were the stage-coaches already mentioned, which ran upon a few of the principal roads, and at fares beyond the means of humble wayfarers. As Bianconi trudged weary miles from village to village, carrying his wares, it was borne in upon him what an inestimable boon a service of cheaper conveyances between the lesser provincial towns would be to the farmers and shopkeepers and others of their class. Accordingly, as a small beginning, he started an outside car to run daily between Clonmel and Caher. The enterprise, however, was not welcomed as he had hoped that it would be, and sometimes for days together the car carried scarcely a single passenger. But Bianconi was not to be discouraged. He started a second car under another name, in seeming competition with the first, and the two ran at ruinously low fares, and were consequently always well laden. Bianconi allowed this state of affairs to continue for some weeks, then one day the opposition car was suddenly withdrawn and the fares raised to a remunerative level. But by this time the public had grown accustomed to the service, and were not minded to forego its comfort and convenience. A second car, running between Clonmel and Thurles,



had soon to be added, then one to Limerick, till before very many years had passed Bianconi's cars—no longer the humble jaunting-car of his first beginning, but well-appointed two-horsed cars—ran throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, and made his name—pronounced English fashion with a strong accent on the second syllable—a household word to its remotest corners. In his heyday, before the advent of railways, Bianconi owned some 1300 horses, and his cars covered daily a distance of more than 3000 miles. He amassed a great fortune for himself, but in his wealth and prosperity Bianconi never forgot his own early struggles and toils. His drivers had orders always to offer a lift, free of charge, to any wayfarer plodding along with difficulty, and who from his appearance did not seem able to produce even the modest twopence a mile that was demanded, and more especially that a seat should always be given to a woman who carried a child in her arms. One of these Bianconi cars passed our gate every day on its way between Galway and the farthest wilds of Connemara, with which it was at that time the only link of civilisation. We made such frequent use of it that we had our own diminutive for it, and when any member of the family announced his or her intention of proceeding into Galway, and was asked how they intended to travel thither, the answer was generally given laconically—"Bi-an."

One winter we had two English guests, who came

over to us for the woodcock shooting—a Mr Hare and a Colonel Greaves. They were a pair of elderly dandies, London men both of them, and very precise and methodical in all their ways,—so much so that in July, when my father's invitation was given to them, they had already fixed the exact dates for their arrival and departure the following January. When this latter time approached, my grandfather, who generally sent his guests into Galway in his own conveyance to meet the mail-coach, intimated to the two Englishmen that, for some reason, it was not possible for him to do so on this occasion, and that the first stage of their return journey would have to be accomplished “Bi-an.” They were highly scandalised at the suggestion, and declined absolutely to travel by any such conveyance as a public outside car. Rather than demean themselves so far, they ordered out a carriage from Galway for themselves. In answer to the summons there came out an ancient and rickety yellow chariot—I can see it still,—hung so far from the ground that when the old gentlemen had mounted into it they waved their farewells to us from aloft. Their portmanteaux were placed on the front seat, the English body-servant—as a valet was called in those days—got into the rumble, and away they went. Galway fashion, the equipage had come out none too early, and the postboy was threatened with dire penalties if he did not go his fastest and bring them into Galway in time for the

flying night coach. They had, however, not gone more than a couple of miles when the bottom fell out of the chariot, the two old bucks were precipitated to the ground, and had nothing for it but to run for their lives, holding on to the seat on which their portmanteux rested, and which was just on a level with their chins. In vain they shouted to the postboy to stop: he thought they were urging him on to greater speed, and only drove the faster. The servant in the rumble, from whom their plight was concealed by the high back of the chariot, thought the same, and the two old fellows had to scamper along panting and breathless. How long they could have held out I do not know, but happily some countrymen, at work in a field beside the road, perceived the two pairs of legs running amongst the wheels of the carriage, and by their shouts brought the postboy to a stand. The poor old dandies, when released from their perilous predicament, were utterly exhausted, and, indeed, on the verge of apoplexy. All hope of reaching Galway in time for the night mail had of course to be abandoned, and they returned to us on foot, much humbled and crestfallen.

"Egad, serve them right!" said my grandfather. "They'll not think themselves too grand to travel 'Bi-an' again."

Nor did they, for on the following day they took their seats very submissively on the plebeian conveyance.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## AFFAIRS OF HONOUR.

WHEN I was young, though the passion for duelling had much abated, yet duels were still not unfrequently fought, and one rather secluded spot in the outskirts of Galway was known as "the Field of Mars," from its being the locality generally chosen for such encounters. My father was regarded as one of the chief authorities in the county upon all points of honour and of the very precise etiquette by which such encounters were governed. He had not fought many duels himself, it is true, but he had officiated as second upon several occasions, and he never failed to attend at any meetings of which he had cognisance. Till the law frowned upon duelling and made secrecy imperative, it was customary for the friends of both sides to muster as spectators.

My father on one occasion challenged, or was challenged by, a Mr French of Port Carron, who lived some miles from us. I have forgotten what the cause of offence was, if I was ever told

it. In order not to alarm the ladies of either family, it was agreed that the duel should be fought at a fishing-lodge of my father's up in the mountains, which was seldom inhabited, and was then standing empty. My father summoned a friend from a distance to act as his second, and they were walking up and down outside our gate, earnestly discussing the details of the meeting which was to take place next morning, when a gentleman in a gig came driving along the road. My father stopped the gig, and politely invited its occupant to come up to the house and dine. The offer was equally courteously declined, and the gig drove on.

"Who's your friend?" asked the second.

"That's French of Port Carron," said my father calmly.

"And what do you mean, sir," roared the second in angry amazement, "by bringing me here on such a fool's errand? Pretending you're going to fight this man, and then inviting him to dinner!"

"And do you think, sir," retorted my father, equally hotly, "that I'd allow Mr French or any other gentlemen to drive past my gate without asking him in to dine? But I'll fight him to-morrow all the same, as sure as my name is Martin, whether he'd dined with me or not."

In the end, however, when the parties met on the field, the seconds succeeded in patching up a reconciliation, and no encounter took place.

My father had been dining at a friend's house one night, and after dinner one of the other guests drew him aside. "I want to consult you," he said; "I've been grossly insulted by So-and-So," naming a mutual acquaintance, "and I intend to call him out."

He detailed the circumstances of the affront, which were flagrant enough, but my father none the less uttered counsels of peace and moderation. "I don't want to remind you that you are a first-rate shot, and that So-and-So is a very poor one," he said at last, his remonstrances having been vain; "but there is another consideration I would like to put before you. Did you notice"—impressively—"that we were thirteen at dinner to-night?" For my father, like every true Irishman of his day, had the most implicit belief in omens and portents. The man to whom he spoke, however, either did not share his beliefs or else had been too deeply offended to heed the warning. The challenge was duly sent and accepted, and the conditions arranged were that the duellists should draw lots which was to fire first. The lucky chance fell to the crack shot; he fired, and missed his aim by a hair's breadth. The other man, who ordinarily could not have hit "a turf-stack flying," as the saying is, by mere blundering chance aimed straight and true, and shot the challenger through the heart.

Another time, a regiment which had been quartered in Galway had received marching orders, and two of



the younger officers were anxious to have a last day's snipe-shooting before they quitted the West. They engaged one of the poaching loafers to be found hanging about most Irish country towns to carry their game-bag and to act as guide, giving him stringent injunctions not to lead them over any private or preserved land, but only over the boggy wastes, of which there were a large extent in the neighbourhood of Galway. In his desire, however, to show the gentlemen good sport, and thereby secure a larger *backsheesh* for himself, their guide brought them across some ill-drained swampy fields belonging to an individual named Reilly, a squireen or half-sir, as the class just below gentility was styled in the West. A few brace were secured here, and the officers returned, unwitting of their trespass and rejoicing in the excellence of their day's sport. A few days later, however, there appeared in one of the local papers a paragraph headed "A Dirty Trick by the Dirty —th," a very highly coloured account of the subalterns' poaching exploit, with their names in full and sundry reflections upon the behaviour of English officers in general and of that regiment in particular. There was no time to be wasted upon the usual formalities of seconds and messages, since the regiment was to march the day but one following, and hot-foot the two young fellows went out to Mr Reilly's dilapidated residence to demand instant satisfaction. They found the house closely shuttered and barricaded, and it was

only after long and repeated knocking that a window on an upper floor was opened and the head of an unkempt maidservant thrust out.

"We want to see your 'master,'" shouted the officers from below.

"Yez can't; he's in his bed," rejoined the damsel.

"He's got to come down and speak to us," they roared.

"He won't thin," and the window slammed.

All further battering and banging remained unheeded, and the officers were obliged to return to Galway without having achieved their mission. Sore and angry, they were grumbling to each other next day, when the door opened and my father walked in.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I've heard of the dilemma you're in, and I've come to reassure you as to your honour and that of your regiment. Leave them both in my hands; I will take good care of them." And my father was as good as his word, for he went about blazoning the story of Reilly's poltroonery abroad, and intimating that, if that individual were not contented, he had but to step forward, when my father would be pleased to give him redress—which being the last thing that Reilly desired, he durst not show his face off his own lands for many a long day thereafter.

An officer belonging to a regiment that had but lately come to Galway, upon the other hand, found himself in a still more awkward predicament. He

was challenged by a Galway fire-eater because he had saluted and had even waved his hand to the latter's wife and sister without having been previously introduced to them. The officer pleaded vainly that, being somewhat shortsighted, he had mistaken them for two other ladies, the honour of whose acquaintance he already possessed. Nothing, however, but a meeting in correct form would appease the fierce Galwegian; but as no one was hit, not much harm was done.

In Galway, indeed, the love of duelling lingered long, and one duel was fought within my own memory upon grounds that even the seconds themselves deemed entirely frivolous and insufficient. The principals, however, persisted stubbornly not only in fighting, but in fighting at unusually close quarters. Having done their utmost in vain to effect a reconciliation, the seconds, by secret agreement, charged the pistols with *stirabout*, so that when the signal was given there issued from the muzzles, instead of the winged death expected, a horrible spluttering mess that covered the combatants with dirt and ridicule.

There was no keener duellist or more unerring pistol-shot in the West than Sir John Blake of Menlo. He, too, was in the habit of spending the winter season in Dublin, and once, upon the eve of his return to the West, he had a quarrel with a gentleman, and challenged him to fight next morning upon that favourite duelling-ground, the



Fifteen Acres of the Phoenix Park. Sir John's opponent was punctual to the hour appointed, so were the seconds and a few friends who had got wind of the affair; but there was no sign of Sir John himself. Half an hour went by, and still he did not put in an appearance. His second became more and more perturbed, but his adversary maintained an unruffled composure.

"Something unlooked-for must have detained Sir John," he said. "He's the last man in the world to disappoint a gentleman upon an occasion like the present."

They had waited an hour and more when the rumbling of wheels was heard, and a heavy travelling-carriage rolled into view, with luggage piled high upon the roof and servants in the rumble. It came to a stand behind the enclosure of the Chief Secretary's Lodge, where it was partly screened from sight, and from it emerged Sir John. He crossed the grass to where the group stood awaiting him, and, lifting his hat, apologised courteously for the inconvenience to which they had been put.

"Most grieved, gentlemen, to have kept you waiting in this unconscionable fashion. It was all the fault of her ladyship's confounded French maid. She took so long over her packing and her trunks this morning, I began to fear I should not get here at all."

The ground was measured out and the word given. A case of pistols was emptied on either

side, and, honour having thus been satisfied, Sir John bowed again and returned to the carriage, where he resumed his seat beside Lady Blake, and the equipage once more set forward upon the road to Galway. Her ladyship, no doubt, from long usage regarded Sir John's engaging in an affair of honour with no more concern than a wife of the present day feels at her lord and master taking part in a contest at golf or tennis.

There was also an individual called Pistol Blake, whom we regarded with much awe, his soubriquet having been earned by the number of duels he had fought and by his skill as a marksman.

He was one of three brothers, of whom the other two were known respectively as Blake the Lamb and Blake G—d D—n ; but how they had acquired these somewhat contrasting names I am not aware. Pistol Blake himself, however, on one occasion belied his bellicose soubriquet by throwing oil on waters which were rapidly rising into storm.

A number of gentlemen of different religious persuasions had met together at dinner, and a controversial topic having been started, the argument was becoming unduly heated when Pistol Blake, whose own religious convictions were somewhat of a loose fit, intervened.

"Come, you fellows," he said, "what's the use of quarrelling over trifles when we're all agreed on the main points ? Now, don't we all believe in heaven and hell ?"

Yes; so far the whole company would all go with him.

"And don't we all believe St Peter holds the keys of them?"

Here very decided differences of opinion made themselves apparent.

"Well, I believe it," said Pistol Blake firmly; "and I believe when any one leaves this world and passes to the upper regions—as I trust all here may do—St Peter meets them at the gate. 'Who are you?' he asks. 'Please, St Peter, I'm So-and-so.' 'Are you a Protestant or a Catholic?' 'A Catholic, St Peter.' 'Come in and turn to the right.' Another soul appears before him. 'Who are you?' 'Please, St Peter, I'm Such-a-one.' 'Are you a Protestant or a Catholic?' 'I'm a Protestant, St Peter.' 'Go to the left.' Well, when my turn comes to quit this world and I arrive at the gate above, St Peter will say to me, 'And who may you be?' 'Please, St Peter, I'm Pistol Blake of Galway.' 'And are you a Catholic or a Protestant?' 'Indeed, St Peter, I've never been able to make up my mind which I am.' 'All right, Pistol Blake, step in and take your choice of seats.'"

In the laughter which greeted this sally angry feelings were forgotten, and the dinner finished in peace and harmony.

In my recollection ladies never rode otherwise than as they do at the present day: my aunts, however, could recall the time when it was still



customary for ladies to ride pillion. One of them, being delicate, had in her girlhood been ordered horse exercise, and was in the habit of riding out every day with a groom before her. The leather belts which grooms still wear are a survival of the time when they were of practical use for their mistresses to hold on by. One morning this functionary was manifestly in a great hurry to be off, and hardly waited at the mounting-block for my aunt to settle herself on the pad behind him before starting at a rapid pace down the avenue. "Where are we going?" she gasped, as she was bumped and jolted along at a very brisk trot.

"Ach, jist be aisy, Miss Margaret, an' I'll take ye for the most iligant ride ye iver had in yer life."

Nothing further was to be extracted from Connor, who continued to ride on at full speed till he had gained a coign of vantage on a high bank, from which, partially screened by some bushes, they could look down on a field below in which two small groups of men were standing, some distance apart.

"With the blessin' of goodness we're in time!" exclaimed Connor joyfully, as one member of each party stepped forward, and the two began to pace out the ground together. My aunt became aware then that a duel was about to be fought. Connor, however, was deaf to all remonstrances and entreaties to remove elsewhere, and my aunt had perforce to remain a spectator of the whole affair.

Happily neither of the combatants was killed, one only being wounded, and that not seriously. Not till honour was declared to have been satisfied could Connor be induced to turn the horse's head homewards, remarking as he did so—

“Well, Miss Margaret, niver say I didn't bring ye where ye couldn't see the very best of it all.”

I sometimes doubted if my aunt had been quite as unwilling an onlooker of the combat as in after years she would have had us believe. She was a very charming, high-spirited Irish girl, as those who could remember her in her youth often told me. In those days, and for long afterwards, the county folk gathered in Galway for the spring and summer assizes; there was much hospitality and joviality while the civil and criminal business of the county was being disposed of, and the week concluded with the assize ball, of which it may be remarked that the line of social demarcation was so clearly defined in those days, that though entry was open to all who paid their guinea, no one not undoubtedly belonging to the county set ever ventured to present himself within the sacred precincts of Macklin's Hotel, where these festivities were held. The music on these occasions was provided by the band of the regiment quartered in Galway, and it was the custom for the colonel of the regiment to lead the lady whom he wished to honour to the head of the room for the first country-dance—for country-dances were still danced

then,—and to request her to name the tune. At one such ball the colonel, disregarding the claims of sundry ladies of high degree to this distinction, led out my aunt, who was then a very young girl, and, bowing low, begged her to choose her tune. My aunt immediately called for “The White Cockade.” The memories of ’45 were not wholly extinct at that day, and the county families of Galway, though taking no active part in the rebellion, had been Jacobites to a man. The colonel had no choice but to order the band to strike up, and to foot it up the room and down again to the strains of the rebel air with the best grace that he could muster.

My aunt eventually married an English officer, a very excellent man, who acquired some distinction in his profession, but who was a bit of a martinet, and I fear she vexed his orderly soul very often by the easy-going, happy-go-lucky ways she had acquired in our old Galway home. On one occasion her husband was to bring a general officer, who had come down to inspect the regiment, home to breakfast after the parade.

“Pray, my dear,” he said to his wife beforehand, “see that everything is in readiness before we arrive, so that there may be no jumping up from the table and running out of the room for something which has been forgotten.”

My aunt promised careful compliance with his wishes, and strove to carry them out. Alas! how-



ever, a few moments before her husband and his guest were expected, she discovered that she had omitted to provide any white sugar, which was then much too expensive a luxury to figure every day upon a regimental officer's breakfast-table. Her husband's orderly was summoned in hot haste and bidden speed to the nearest shop. In the meantime my aunt received the general with her best manner, and dallied over the business of pouring out the tea, prolonging the time by her bright Irish talk, while she watched impatiently for the arrival of the sugar-bowl. What, however, was her horror, when the door opened and the long-legged orderly straggled in. With one hand he clapped upon the table a blue paper bag, of the sort beloved by grocers, and with the other a heap of coppers.

"There's yer sugar, mum, and there's yer change," he said, as he saluted and withdrew.

## CHAPTER XV.

## COLLATERALS.

THERE were not many solaces in the old days for those whom the world had treated harshly. Club-life, in Ireland at least, was in its infancy ; very few of the numerous beneficent enterprises which nowadays afford interest and occupation to the solitary woman had then been set afoot. It was well for all such forlorn ones that, in Galway at any rate, charity to kith and kin never failed, and that to the third and fourth generation the old home gave shelter and a welcome to all who stood in need of it.

Much of such family wreckage drifted to us. Most noteworthy thereof was Major William Poppleton of the 53rd Foot, who had married one of my aunts. He had first joined his regiment in Egypt in 1801, and after the surrender of the French he took part in Baird's famous desert march to India. During that march he and a portion of his regiment by some means became detached from the main body of the troops, and lost their way in the scorching waste. Utterly exhausted by hours of fruitless

wandering, they gave up all hope and lay down on the sand to die of thirst. Rescue came at the last moment by a party of searchers sent out in quest of the missing force. My uncle saw much service afterwards in India and throughout the hottest fighting in the Peninsula; but the horror of those hours was never effaced from his mind, and recurred to him in dreams so often and so vividly, that to the day of his death he would never sleep without a large vessel of water placed by his bedside to enable him in his first waking moment to assure himself that it was a dream and nothing more. He was appointed orderly officer at Longwood, and had personal charge of Napoleon for two years during the "Last Phase" on St Helena. My uncle fell under the spell which that marvellous personage exercised on all who were brought into contact with him. He was devoted to Napoleon, and as far as was compatible with his duty he endeavoured to mitigate the many petty indignities and humiliations imposed upon the "Corsican adventurer" under Sir Hudson Lowe's harsh rule. Napoleon fully appreciated my uncle's feelings towards him, and he was the only member of his English bodyguard for whom the fallen Emperor had a sincere affection.

The crisis came when Sir Hudson Lowe, who lacked the most ordinary instincts of a gentleman, issued an order to the officers of this bodyguard to report to him all private conversations of Napoleon



and his suite, both those which were addressed to themselves and those which they might chance to overhear. Major Poppleton indignantly refused to obey the mandate, and resigned his post. Napoleon was much afflicted at the prospect of losing his favourite custodian, and he besought him to yield obedience to Sir Hudson Lowe, so that he might still retain him about his person. My uncle, however, was not to be prevailed upon. He would never stoop, so he declared, to conduct so unbecoming an English officer, and he quitted the island prison. At parting Napoleon gave him the Cross of the Legion of Honour, together with a handsome gold snuff-box and a lock of his hair, as tokens of his gratitude and esteem.

Major Poppleton returned home a ruined man. He had committed the unpardonable sin, he had disobeyed his commanding officer, and for him no place of repentance was to be found. He was obliged to leave the service to which he was devoted, and in which he had borne himself with no small distinction.

His wife had died during his sojourn at St Helena: none the less it was to her old Galway home that he turned, bringing his children to grow up there. He lived amongst us for many years, a gentle subdued man, broken in health and spirit; and he laid his bones at last in our burial-place, in the lonely ruined chapel above the lake, where his tombstone still records the long list of his services to a country that did not value him.

In after years when the reaction had come and the British Government were ashamed of the sorry fashion in which they had treated their imperial captive, a commission was bestowed on Major Poppleton's only son, as some recognition of what was due to his father.

Throughout our childhood the gold snuff-box always stood upon the dining-room chimney-piece, and every visitor to the house was offered a pinch out of "Napoleon's box." It was kept well filled therefore, white snuff at one end, black snuff at the other, and underneath lay a piece of white paper, as it had come from the jeweller's hands. Many years afterwards, when snuff-taking had ceased to be the fashion, and the box was only a curiosity, a gentleman to whom it was shown asked the reason of that piece of paper. "To keep the fingers of the snuff-takers from scratching the box," he was told. More inquisitive, however, than all who had gone before him, he prised up the bit of paper, and underneath lay another closely folded paper—a letter from Napoleon himself to the Count of Las Casas, sending messages to his adherents in France, and his wishes for the bringing up of the King of Rome. It was plain why the letter had been placed where it was. Napoleon had known that Major Poppleton would refuse to take charge of it, if it were openly tendered to him in St Helena; but he had never doubted that he would discover it after his arrival in Europe, and he had trusted to his

friendship to deliver it, with the result that it had lain where he had hidden it for nearly forty years. The Count of Las Casas, the King of Rome, my uncle himself were all long dead when the letter was found ; Louis Napoleon reigned at the Tuileries. The Count of Las Casas' son, however, was alive, and to him the long-concealed letter, destined for his father, was sent.

Another of my aunts had eloped at the age of thirteen with a young officer, the worst that could be said of whom was that his courage very considerably exceeded his common-sense. As a lad, just joined, he had taken part in the disastrous retreat of Corunna ; he served afterwards throughout the Peninsular war, the first Afghan and the Sikh wars. Unfortunately for himself, however, he was possessed of an ungovernable temper and an overweening sense of his own importance. Shortly after his marriage he waited, in company with his youthful wife, on some highly placed official of the War Office, to solicit his good offices in assisting my uncle to procure some piece of preferment of which he was desirous. The great man evinced himself most gracious, and promised to do all in his power to further my uncle's wishes. At the conclusion of the interview, however, he only bowed to the young lady, and resumed the writing on which he had been engaged. My uncle conducted his bride downstairs and placed her in the carriage which waited below, after which he rushed upstairs again and challenged



the official to mortal combat, to avenge the insult he had offered his wife in not handing her to her carriage. The challenge was declined, but it need hardly be said that my uncle did not receive the appointment he coveted.

Twice over in India he struck his commanding officer in the face, and on each occasion was tried by court-martial and cashiered. Partly owing to his brilliant services, however, and partly to the intervention of the Duke of York, who was his personal friend, he was twice over reinstated in his regiment, but at the very bottom of the list of officers, below the youngest ensign; with the result that, when he died of wounds in the siege of Mooltan, after forty years of almost continuous active service, he was no more than a simple captain.

My widowed aunt followed the fashion of the family and came home to us, with her younger children. She had had fifteen children altogether in the course of her very checkered life, whom she had deposited here and there, cuckoo fashion, as occasion and the exigencies of active military life demanded. Once when she was on board a troopship, a sailing-vessel of course, as all such craft were in those days, a hurricane came on, and all on board gave themselves up for lost. My aunt, however, did not lose her presence of mind. Amidst the prevailing terror she calmly unpacked her boxes and dressed such of her children as she had with her in their best, that when their bodies should be cast ashore they would

be recognised as the children of gentlefolk, and receive decent burial. After she had settled down with us in Galway, it was a favourite amusement of ours to make her go over the names of her children to us, and she could never succeed in making the tale complete.

"Thirteen — fourteen," she would count up. "But I know there were fifteen of them. Oh! there was Miles; I had quite forgotten poor dear Miles. I can't just remember what Miles died of, but he was a darling!"

Some of these luckless youngsters died, some grew up without ever seeing their parents again. Occasionally, however, her progeny turned up when they were least expected or desired. I was walking with my aunt on our avenue one day, when we saw Hughie Caulfield, the gardener, approaching, and in his wake a disreputably clothed fair-haired stranger, with the general appearance of a German bandsman. As we came near, a signal passed between Hughie and the unknown, and the latter, advancing with clasped hands, ejaculated ecstatically "Mother!"

My aunt, however, who had by this time become slightly hard of hearing, and did not much relish the looks of the stranger, drew herself erect and said haughtily—

"Did you address any remarks to me, sir?"

"I only said I was your son," he answered meekly.

My aunt, on one of her many voyages to India, had deposited this particular scion, then aged two, in a monastery in Malta. By what means she induced the monks to take charge of him we never clearly understood, but he had remained with them till old enough to enter the Austrian army. He had been left for dead on one of the Hungarian battlefields, and, having been nursed back to health by sisters of charity, had quitted the Austrian service without over-ceremonious leave-taking, and made his way across Europe to us.

On some misgivings being expressed by the heads of the family as to what was to become of him, now that he had arrived, he declared that he was confident of being well able to shift for himself, and indeed he proved that his self-reliance was fully justified. For, having been provided with funds to journey to London, he went straight to Apsley House, and made his way into the presence of the Iron Duke. He represented his father's services and his own straits to him so eloquently that the Duke, who was then Commander-in-Chief, not only bestowed a commission upon him, but also added thereto a gratuity to enable him to purchase his outfit.

It was perhaps not surprising that our new cousin should feel some elation at what he had achieved; but after his return to Galway he assumed airs of superiority and an amount of what is generally known as "side," which made



him extremely unpopular amongst the younger members of the household, and we concocted a deeply laid scheme to humble him in the dust.

We procured an old pistol, which we primed and loaded with a blank charge. Armed with this weapon, we lay in wait in one of the shrubberies on the avenue one moonlight winter's evening, when we knew that our objectionable relative was out walking. One of us girls, who possessed the accomplishment of whistling on her fingers like any street boy, was posted above to give a signal on our victim's approach. The signal was not in the least required, as we had stationed ourselves just beyond a clearing on the avenue, across which we could plainly see him coming in the moonlight; but we deemed it to be the correct thing, and to make the whole business appear more lifelike. Accordingly the object of our vengeance had no sooner plunged into the gloom amongst the shrubs than the whistle rang out, and simultaneously we let off our ordnance, once and again.

Alas, however, for our well-thought-out revenge! We had never doubted that our obnoxious cousin, for all his tall talk, would take to his heels at the sound of the shots, and skurry up to the house in ignominious flight, there to relate his alarming experience on the avenue, when we, following after, would have burst in upon the horrifying recital, and by relating the true version of the tale, have covered him with ridicule.

At the double discharge our kinsman came to a dead halt—for a moment only—then realising what the shots meant, he walked on, somewhat more rapidly perhaps than he had walked before, but with no undue precipitation. It must have required some nerve—and we felt it as we listened to his footfall—to walk on steadily and firmly through the thick darkness under the tall laurels, in which he had every reason to believe armed assassins were lurking. Nor on arriving at the house did he betray to any one what had taken place. He was no doubt fully convinced that he had been mistaken in the uncertain light for my grandfather, the Galway landlord, and he would not alarm my grandmother or my aunts by telling them of the murderous attack that had been made upon him. He kept his own counsel, therefore, and I need hardly say that we did the same for many a day to come. Our cousin sailed for India shortly afterwards, and we never saw him again; but I am sure that he told the story of his narrow escape from death on our avenue at many an Indian mess-table.

I do not know how we came to devise such a plan of revenge, but certainly it was not put into our minds by anything that we ourselves had known of, for our relations with our tenantry and with the people about us were always most friendly. It had not been so in the lawless days at the beginning of the century. The old house itself had, I

think, been built with some view to defence, and could have been held easily enough against a mob unprovided with firearms. In my earliest childhood large flat stones still remained on all the upper window-sills, which had been placed there in readiness to be hurled down on the heads of attacking Whiteboys—or Terry-Alts, as the organisation, which under varying names has played so large a part in Irish affairs, was generally called in Galway.

Another and a more tragic reminder of the Terry-Alts and their doings we had in a waif of lower degree, to whom also we gave shelter,—one of our servants, Sally Connolly by name. She must have been a middle-aged woman as I remember her; but years before, in her youth, her parents had in some way incurred the wrath of the Terry-Alts. Their cabin was attacked, the father savagely beaten, the mother held down on her own fire till she was severely burnt, and in the struggle Sally herself received an injury which lamed her for life. More than that, the terror of that wild night's work had unhinged her mind, and left her ever after subject to periodical fits of religious mania. When this madness was at its height she wandered about the country, visiting the holy wells for many miles round about. Her appearance in itself was somewhat terrifying. Nature had intended her to be exceedingly tall, but the hurt she had received had drawn up and shortened one of her limbs very con-



siderably. She disdained any artificial aid, and therefore when she stood on one foot she was a gigantic woman, but when she came down upon the other she became comparatively short. We used to meet her on the road, striding from one holy well to another, with the very singular gait engendered by this deformity, her long black hair streaming behind her; or else we would see her in the distance, on her knees, as she went her rounds at one of these sacred spots, saying the appointed patterns<sup>1</sup> and prayers. The first symptom that one of her attacks of mania was coming on was always that Sally ceased to fasten up her hair, and we children used to announce, quite as a matter of course—

“Sally Connolly’s going mad again; she’s got her hair hanging down.”

Not unfrequently a member of the family on going up to bed would find Sally crouched by the bedroom-fire, with her tresses hanging about her, wringing her hands and rocking herself to and fro. Everybody knew her to be harmless, and it never occurred to any one to regard her as an undesirable member of the household. “The poor afflicted creature!” was all that was said; and we waited in patience till Sally’s madness should have developed sufficiently for her to quit the house and

<sup>1</sup> A corruption of Pater Noster, a certain number of which, with Aves and other prayers, according to the object of the suppliant’s desire, are appointed to be said at each holy well.

take to her wanderings. After a few weeks the mad fit wore itself out, and she returned to us and to her domestic duties.

Beside every holy well in Ireland there is planted a bush, on which the votaries who come with their prayers to the little hallowed pool hang each of them a rag, gay-coloured at the first, but bleaching soon in the sun and rain to the same neutral tint of yellowish grey. A visitor to our house asked Sally once, when sanity had for the time being returned, what was the purpose of those fluttering fragments of worsted and cotton.

"You cannot think, surely, that the saints in Heaven need those bits of rag to remind them of your prayers?"

"Troth, no," was the quick-witted answer, "no more than your good friends in the grand houses where yous go visitin' would be wantin' to be remembered of yous. But you lave the little white ticketeens all that same, to let the quality know you'd been in it, and them little docketts an' the rags, as you call them, is the one thing."

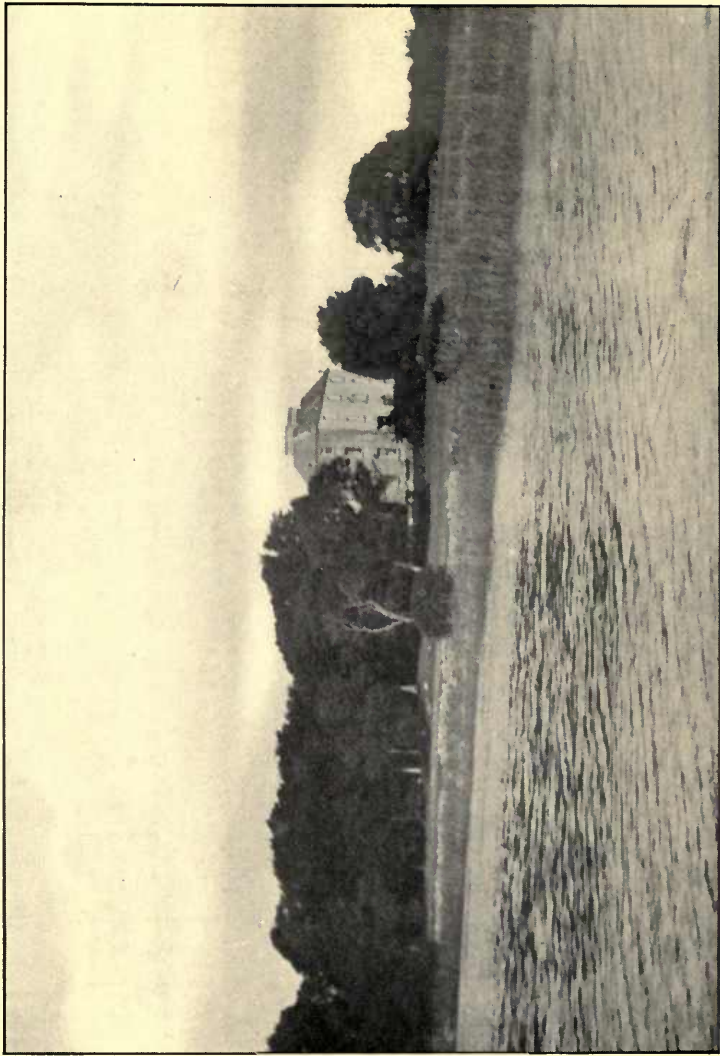
It was not always from incipient madness that the servants left their tresses unbound. It proceeded sometimes from slovenliness. One of my aunts, who was of a literary turn, meeting the housemaid with her hair hanging in luxuriant disarray on her shoulders, said indignantly to her—

"One would think you were Ophelia!"

"Faith, thin," returned the damsel, no wise dismayed, "if 'Faylia had as much turf an' wather to carry, it's no wonder she'd look like me."

She no doubt imagined 'Faylia to be a rival housemaid in some neighbouring establishment.





"THE OLD HOME," ROSS, CO. GALWAY.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE GREAT STORM OF '39.

ONE of my earliest recollections, if not the earliest of all, is of a visit which Lord Anglesey paid to us. As all the world knows, this gallant officer commanded the cavalry at Waterloo, and is generally held to have contributed more to the success of the Allies than any other of the leaders who participated in that great struggle, the Duke of Wellington alone excepted. As he rode over the field by the Iron Duke's side near the close of the day, a spent cannon-ball carried away his leg at the thigh.

"By G—! sir, I've lost my leg!" he exclaimed.

"By G—! have you, sir?" responded the Duke, who was probably too much preoccupied at that critical moment to take in the full extent of the calamity that had befallen his comrade-in-arms.

As Lord Anglesey was thus debarred from further campaigning, he was, in recognition of his brilliant services, made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. During his tenure of office he made a tour through Conne-



mara, the first ever undertaken by an Irish viceroy, and on his way towards those western wilds he spent a night at our house. He carried amongst his baggage an assortment of cork legs, suitable for various occasions, and whilst the company were assembled downstairs at dinner his valet treated the servants to a private view of them. I was taken to the exhibition by my nurse, and I remember that there was one leg in ordinary morning attire, another booted and spurred for riding—the leg which was clad in evening array he was wearing at that moment.

We were all gathered on the steps to witness his departure next morning. There had been much speculation amongst us children as to how he would be able to mount his horse, but he managed that difficult operation so easily and gracefully that when he rode away we were left in hot debate as to which leg was the artificial and which the real one.

I was somewhat older, but still a little girl in short petticoats, when my grandfather became possessed of a piece of property not usual for a country gentleman to own. This was nothing less than a fully-rigged, ocean-going vessel of his own. He took her over from her former owner in payment of a bad debt, and it was a proud day for us children when we were taken into Galway to see the *John and Mary* as she lay moored beside the wharf. She was a three-masted barque, generally

employed in the American timber trade, but in our eyes she could not have been surpassed by any ship of the British navy. My grandfather perhaps did not view his new acquisition as ecstatically as we did, but force of circumstances having compelled him to become proprietor of the *John and Mary*, he determined to avail himself of her to provide an opening for one at any rate of the numerous junior members of the family who found an asylum beneath his hospitable roof. He accordingly appointed one of my young cousins mate on board his new craft. Neither my grandfather nor any one else deemed it of the smallest consequence that the cousin in question had never set foot on a ship's deck before, and knew no more of seamanship or navigation than he did of astrology. As for us children, we thought that no higher honour or better fortune could by possibility have fallen to any one's lot, and we watched the *John and Mary* hoist her sails and head away down Galway Bay and out westwards, bound for America, on our cousin's maiden voyage, with admiration by no means unmingled with envy.

It was in the autumn that he sailed away. There were no Atlantic cables in those days, and the cost of foreign postage was far too great for our cousin to incur the expense of a letter merely to chronicle the safe arrival of his vessel and himself upon the other side of the world. We had no expectation, therefore, of hearing from him while he was away,

but when Christmas was past my grandfather announced to us that the arrival of the *John and Mary* in Galway Bay might now be looked for any day. We were still waiting eagerly to hear of her return, when on the night of Sunday, the 6th of January, there swept over us and over all the west of Ireland that terrific hurricane which is still remembered and spoken of there as the Great Storm of '39. If there had been any prognostications of the coming gale, I was too young to be told of them; all that I remember is that we children awoke terrified to feel the tall, stone-built house, at the top of which we slept, rocking beneath us, as the furious blasts swept in from the Atlantic. There came one gust more tremendous than those that had gone before, and with a mighty crash our window, which looked out westwards, was driven bodily in, covering the floor with splintered wood and glass. It was all my father and two of the gentlemen who chanced to be staying in our house could do with their utmost strength to force the door open against the raging, screaming wind that filled the room, and to rescue us; and though our old home stands some fifteen miles from the Atlantic as the crow flies, with a range of high hills intervening, the floor of our bedroom in the morning was coated with salt and strewn with seaweed.

We were carried downstairs to the great vaulted kitchen underground, the one place which was



thought secure, and where the rest of the household speedily gathered. It was feared every moment that the tall house above us would topple down, and I remember my grandfather consoling the terrified company with the assurance that even if the house should collapse over our heads, the groining of the underground storey was strong enough to keep us safe. Happily it was not put to the test, and in the early hours of the winter's morning the fury of the gale abated. As we came up from our subterranean retreat into the hall, and reached the foot of the main staircase, we looked up and saw the stars shining clear above us.

"Thady, where's the roof?" cried my grandmother in dismay to our general factotum, who was assisting to carry some of the youngest members of the family up-stairs.

"Troth, I don't know, unless it's down by the lake it would be," responded that individual.

And down by the lake the twisted and broken remains were accordingly found next morning.

We were lucky, however, in having had a good slated roof over our heads, for in the thatched dwellings of our humbler neighbours fire was added to all the other terrors of that night. Matches cost a shilling a box then, and were luxuries attained to but by few. In all houses in Galway, of whatever degree, the turf fires in those days were never extinguished, but were left to smoulder

on the hearths all night. The wild blasts whirled these embers up the chimneys and set the straw roofs ablaze. In Galway, Loughrea, and the other towns of the West, whole streets were swept away, for the burning thatch was carried through the air, setting roof after roof alight, and in that raging gale it was impossible to make any attempt to extinguish the flames. A group of cabins that stood not far from our own gate caught fire in this manner. One of the occupants thereof was an old Waterloo pensioner, and when his affrighted women-folk would have aroused him in the earlier hours of the night, he waved them grandiosely away.

"I've been in too many battles to be frightened of a blast o' wind," he declared, and it was only with difficulty that he was induced to leave his bed even when the thatch of his own roof was on fire. When he got outside, however, and saw the row of blazing cabins, he exclaimed, "I've heard of the burning of Moscow, and I was at the battle of Badajos meself, but, dang me, this bates the whoule of them."

Then remembering his Waterloo medal, left in the burning house, the poor old fellow would have rushed back to recover it. He was held by force, and the roof of the cabin falling in a moment later effectually prevented any further effort at rescue.

The light of the winter's morning revealed a

scene of widespread desolation. Trees were uprooted, houses blown down or unroofed, haggards and turf-stacks levelled—as a Connaught newspaper of that day recorded: “Between Galway and Oughterard all is misery and woe.” The wages of slaters and masons rose to seven-and-sixpence a-day,—a sum absolutely unparalleled then,—so great was the demand for their services. And one good citizen of Galway understood how to make hay, if not when the sun shone, at any rate when the winds blew, and to turn his fellows’ distress to his own profit. Here is his advertisement, culled from the same old newspaper, and preserved through many long years:—

“Interea magno miseri cœlum

Incipit . . .

Queare agite o Tectis juvenes succedite nostris.”<sup>1</sup>

“Ye houseless, ye homeless, attend to my call:  
Come here, my poor fellows, I’ll shelter you all.  
I’ve store of good mutton, good poultry, and fish,  
With cowheel and tripe, that magnificent dish.  
I’ve whisky the heart of a Stoic would warm,  
And will make us forget the effect of the storm.  
Be with me at five, or at half-past to-day,—  
You’ll be well entertained, and little to pay.

—PADDY KELLY.”

We have brought advertising to a science nowadays, but perhaps Paddy Kelly’s poetic effusion was

<sup>1</sup> These lines may be somewhat freely translated—

“Whilst the sky is in great tumult . . .

Come, young friends, enter in under our roof.”



as apposite to the occasion as any of our modern puffery; and is it conceivable that any restaurateur of the present day would seek to attract patrons to his establishment by heading his bill of fare with a distich made up of two appropriate lines, ingeniously conjoined from different parts of the *Æneid*? The quotation is not free from blunders, it is true, but perhaps the country printer was responsible for those, not Paddy Kelly.

There being neither telegraphs nor special correspondents in those times, it was only gradually that the tale of disaster and wreckage which had taken place elsewhere filtered through to us. Indeed on that fierce night the mail coaches had had the utmost difficulty in accomplishing their journeys, and the Galway mail had been blown bodily off the road, and into the "gripe of the ditch," happily without hurt to man or beast. The coast was strewn with wrecks, and even the ships deemed secure within the harbour at Galway broke from their moorings and were driven ashore. One small craft, with its crew of three, was lifted bodily by an enormous wave and carried right inland, being found high and dry, with its crew all safe on board, when the storm abated.

As each succeeding day brought its additional list of calamities and of loss of life by sea and land, the thoughts of all within our home turned anxiously towards the *John and Mary*, which should have been nearing the Irish coast upon that disastrous

night. We children did not, perhaps, fully realise the fears of our elders, but as day after day went by without bringing tidings of the missing vessel, a deep and increasing gloom settled down upon the house. I cannot now recall how long after the great storm the suspense endured, but I remember as vividly as if it had been yesterday how we all sat silent and depressed round the table after dinner. The cloth, according to universal custom, had been removed, and the decanters in their silver coasters were reflected in the shining mahogany below them. The door opened, and the servant standing in the doorway announced, "The *John and Mary* is come into Galway, sir. Master George'll be here in the morning."

There was a moment's deep hush, and then a crash, as my grandfather's grey head fell flat upon the table in the sudden revulsion from the anxiety and tension of those last days. Our cousin duly arrived next morning, to be acclaimed by us all as a hero,—and, indeed, the experiences which he had had upon his voyage had been sufficiently thrilling. The *John and Mary* had encountered the full fury of the gale in mid-Atlantic, and one huge wave which swept the decks had washed George overboard. By good fortune he clutched a lifeline as he was swept to what seemed certain death, and the next wave flung him back on the ship's deck again.

Our rejoicings over our cousin's return were

destined, however, to be of short duration. The very next night, as we sat once again at dinner, there came the news that tobacco and other contraband articles had been found on board the *John and Mary* by the customs officers, and that her captain had been committed to jail on a charge of smuggling. George started up from the table, declaring with boyish bombast that the honour of his ship was to him as his own, and that he would return to Galway that instant to take his place on board her. My grandfather forbade his doing so, and commanded him to remain where he was. My grandmother, however, had considerable doubts as to whether the prohibition would weigh with him when the constraining influence of my grandfather's presence was withdrawn. George was a special favourite of hers, and she was keenly desirous of keeping him out of further trouble. She took the precaution, therefore, not only of locking his bedroom door at night, but also of removing his boots. All her care was in vain, however, for in the morning it was found that George had climbed out of the window and walked the eleven Irish miles into Galway barefoot in the middle of the night. My grandfather himself drove into Galway next morning and proceeded to the jail where his captain was confined.

"This is a pretty business, Captain Mitchell," he stormed as he was ushered into that worthy's cell, "and I should like to know what you have to say



for yourself for bringing disgrace on my ship and me."

"I've this to say, Mr Martin," retorted the old sea-dog. "There's a hundred ships and more wrecked round these coasts this last big storm, and I've brought your ship safe into Galway Bay. That's what I have to say for myself, sir."

"And begged you couldn't say better," returned my grandfather, completely mollified and appeased.

The law, however, was not so easily pacified, and as it appeared that Captain Mitchell had converted the ship below hatches into a smuggler's emporium of tobacco, cigars, and other contraband, he was sentenced to pass some time in Galway jail, and was thus precluded from taking command of the *John and Mary* upon her next voyage. My grandfather therefore promoted George, who was then aged nineteen and had had no other training than that one adventurous voyage across the Atlantic, to be captain of the vessel. He made two or three highly successful trips backwards and forwards to America, after which, a cadetship in the East India Company's service having been procured for him, he departed to other climes, and sailed the seas no more. It was quite incomprehensible to us children that he should relinquish the command of the *John and Mary* to serve John Company or any one else. My grandfather, whose successful trading across the herring-pond had more than recouped him for the bad debt which had been the original cause of his

taking over the *John and Mary*, disposed of the vessel after George's departure. She was cast away upon her very next voyage, and became a total wreck, though the crew were saved.

My grandfather's first nautical venture having proved so successful, he felt emboldened to launch out upon a more ambitious one. An enormous number of trees had been blown down in our woods by the great storm, and he resolved to turn ship-builder, and to construct a yacht with the fallen timber in which to sail upon Lough Corrib, some five miles distant from our home. My grandfather had no more knowledge of shipbuilding than our cousin had had of navigation, but he never allowed such trifles to stand in the way of any projects he had formed. A retired sailor who had settled at our back gate and married the cook, and whom we styled Admiral Laffy, gave advice as to the lines of the craft. Her framework was put together in our woods, where a sort of float with huge wheels was also constructed. The giant skeleton was with much difficulty hoisted on to this, and then the work of dragging her across the five miles which separated us from Lough Corrib began. A long team of all the horses procurable, of every size and breed—from ragged, long-tailed Connemara ponies to ponderous cart-horses—was harnessed to the float, whilst many willing hands tugged at each spoke of the wheels. There were loud shouts and cheers in English and in Irish whenever an obstruc-

tion was successfully surmounted or the summit of a hill reached, and the progress of our future yacht filled all who beheld her on her way with awe and admiration.

Upon the shore of Lough Corrib my grandfather, Admiral Laffy, and our carpenter, by their joint efforts succeeded in constructing a two-masted vessel, which it would have been an excess of courtesy to have called a schooner. We thought her a beauteous craft, but to those who regarded her with less partial eyes she appeared decidedly clumsy and broad in the beam. One candid friend having observed that her progress through the water was likely to be about as fast as a canal-boat's, she was forthwith dubbed the *Lord Cloncurry*, that nobleman being at that time chairman of the Grand Canal Company. The fishermen and other dwellers upon the shores of Lough Corrib, however, called her by the less high-sounding name of the *Moireen-lay-tha-wadtha*, which means the Little Mary with the two sticks. It was somewhat embarrassing when Lord Cloncurry himself paid us a visit not long afterwards and inquired why we had done him the honour of christening our yacht after him. He laughed very heartily, however, when the reason was explained to him.

The clumsiness and breadth of our pleasure-boat were not without their compensating advantages, as they gave us very comfortable accommodation below, where we had quite a spacious ladies' cabin,



furnished with large lockers, on which feather-beds from home were laid, forming most luxurious bunks. Indeed our start upon a yachting cruise resembled an emigrant family's departure for the backwoods, for a cart accompanied us, conveying feather-beds, pots and pans, and everything needful for our sojourn on board. Admiral Laffy was, of course, appointed skipper of the *Lord Cloncurry*. He was much addicted to high-sounding language, and I remember inquiring anxiously of him one morning when I first came up on deck whether we were likely to have a fine day.

"By the upskirting of the morn," he said sententiously as he cast his eyes aloft, "I doubt there'll be desolations before the afternoon."

Unfortunately the *Lord Cloncurry* required smooth water to sail in. A very small amount of wind caused her to heel over so alarmingly that there seemed imminent danger of her turning turtle. Whenever a squall threatened, therefore, we made haste to seek the shelter of an island and to cast anchor under its lee till the gust had blown itself out. Happily there are said to be as many islands in Lough Corrib as there are days in the year, so we never had far to run for safety. As we were not the slaves of time, and it did not matter much in which direction we sailed, these frequent stoppages and delays were of little consequence, and many were the happy summer days we spent on board our home-built yacht.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## EVERYDAY LIFE.

IN those days the postage of a letter from Dublin to Galway cost tenpence, while from London it was one-and-sixpence. Unlike our present arrangements, it was the receiver and not the sender of the epistle who paid the postage. The postmaster in our village kept a book, just as the greengrocer and milkman do nowadays, in which all letters received for the household were entered, with the names of the recipients to whom they were addressed, and the postage paid upon them. The book was presented to my grandfather, and paid by him every week. It can readily be imagined that under such a system unnecessary letter-writing was not encouraged, whilst clandestine correspondence was wholly impossible, since each member of the family was held to strict account for all letters received by him or her during the week. A member of Parliament, however, could frank ten letters every day to any part of the United Kingdom, and if he did not require this number for his own correspondence,

might oblige a friend by signing his name upon the back of a letter, a boon which was much sought after. A peer possessed the privilege without any limit whatever, and I well remember seeing the Duke of Devonshire, who had stayed with us on a tour through Connemara, sit down at my grandmother's writing-table just before his departure and sign his name on innumerable sheets of paper till the whole table was covered with them. They were a parting gift to my grandmother, to be filled in by her subsequently with the name of any correspondent she pleased. Envelopes were a later invention; letters were written on the inner side of the sheet, which was afterwards folded and sealed. It may surprise many people to learn that the penny post when it was first established was by no means a universally popular institution. It certainly was not so with us. Before its advent, as already said, postage was a household charge, which my grandfather defrayed together with all the other family expenses. After the introduction of penny stamps every one had to buy their own, and great was the grumbling and discontent thereat. The first stamps—called labels—were small black ones that had to be cut from the sheet with a pair of scissors, the useful invention of pin-holes, with which we are all so familiar, not having been yet made. The leading newspaper of the west of Ireland, 'The Connaught Journal,' made exceedingly merry over the new-fangled scheme. "These



labels," so it informed its readers, "are small square pieces of paper with the queen's head upon them. In the case of an eightpenny postage it is necessary to paste eight of these upon your letter. Some other and better devised arrangement must be thought of for the convenience of the public. The thing," so this Western editorial upon the penny post wound up, "is as laughable as it is absurd."

We took in 'The Times,' the subscription for which cost ten guineas a-year, and the paper reached us two days after it was published, Monday's copy arriving on Wednesday afternoon, and so forth. Irish newspapers cost fourpence a-piece. 'The Dublin Evening Packet' and 'Evening Mail' were only published three times a-week, but 'The Saunders News-letter' appeared every day. There was a tax of a penny three-farthings upon each single copy, with a further impost of half-a-crown upon every advertisement that exceeded ten lines in length, so that the profits of newspaper proprietors were not so great as might at first sight appear.

On one of our visits to Dublin we brought up in our train one of our numerous hangers-on, a sharp lad, who, in the language of the West, we called Patcheen, and who had a very pretty conceit of himself. One evening my grandfather, hearing the 'Evening Packet' being cried in the street, sent Patcheen out with the requisite fourpence to buy a copy. Patcheen speedily returned, but one glance

at the sheet which he had brought revealed that, whatever interest its contents might possess, they lacked the charm of novelty. The news vendor, detecting the raw country lad at a glance, had palmed off a week-old paper upon him.

"Ah, Patcheen, you'll need to sharpen your wits here," said my grandfather, not sorry to take him down a peg, "or these Dublin jackeens will be too many for you."

Patcheen vanished in a trice, paper and all. In an hour he returned triumphant with a newspaper, the moist smell and exact folds of which proclaimed it as fresh from the printer's hands.

"Ho, ho! So you overtook the rapsallion," said my grandfather.

"No, plaze your honour, he'd got beyant me," returned Patcheen seriously, "so I cried that paper meself till I had it sould, an' thin I bought the right one."

Our education—at least the more ornamental portion thereof—was carried on by a system of peripatetic teachers. Our French, our drawing, and our music masters each possessed a pony and gig, with which they went the round of the County Galway, driving themselves from one house to the next in which a young family was growing up, and remaining a week at each halting-place, during which there was nothing but music played, or French talked, or pencil-drawings executed, as the case might be. Our French master was a M.

Nichollet, a natty, punctilious little man, whose threadbare clothes were always carefully brushed, and who never sat down on a chair without first spreading a red silk pocket-handkerchief upon it. In marked contrast to him was Mr Walsh, the music master, who was old and wizened, and whose clothes were covered with the snuff that he was perpetually taking. He was, however, an admirable musician, and able to teach the piano, harp, and guitar, then the most fashionable instruments, as well as singing, both solo and in parts. He had a very irascible temper, and on one occasion, perceiving that our attention was distracted from his instruction by the antics of a canary, he seized the hapless bird and hurled it, cage and all, from the window of the schoolroom, upon an upper floor. He was mistaken, however, in imagining that his lesson would benefit by this deed of violence, for there was an instant and tumultuous rush from the room and down the stairs, where we found our pet lying dead below. We vowed dire and somewhat perfidious vengeance, for, concealing our feelings towards him, we politely invited Mr Walsh to come for a row upon the lake that afternoon, and once out of sight of the house we rocked the boat so violently from side to side that he was reduced to abject terror, and clung to the gunwale, beseeching us piteously to put him ashore. We did not consent to do this, however, till we had wrung various concessions regarding our lessons from him, and, last but not least, had



extracted a solemn promise from him not to tell of us when he was once more on *terra firma*.

Three or four times a-year our instructors came to us thus upon their educational round. I do not know what honorarium they received for the week's instruction, but I know that it was not always convenient to pay it in coin of the realm. On such occasions my grandfather would present them with a calf instead, and give it grazing till it had developed into a saleable beast. I fancy there were not many estates on the visiting lists of these professors of the gentler arts on which they had not generally a head or two of cattle at grass, and that they did not suffer by such transactions.

Another individual whose home, so to say, was upon the road, was a certain Tom Blakeney, a wit and *raconteur*. He, too, owned a horse and trap, and used to drive boldly into the stable-yard of whatever mansion he intended to honour with his presence, where he would have his horse put up, and order his portmanteau to be carried indoors, after which he made his way to the drawing-room, trusting to his conversational powers to procure him a favourable reception. Once established, he used to remain till he had wearied of his surroundings, or till the patience of his hosts showed signs of being exhausted, when he would move on to fresh quarters. He was the only being towards whom I ever knew my grandfather display any inhospitality, but it was sometimes necessary to

give Tom Blakeney a hint that he had worn out his welcome.

"Are you driving to Galway to-day?" my grandfather asked him pointedly on one such occasion.

Tom Blakeney looked from the window and shrugged his shoulders.

"Too bad a day, sir," he said.

"Not half so bad as the day you came," was the significant answer.

When he did at length take his departure, my father, standing on the steps to speed our parting guest, asked—

"Where's your next billet, Tom?"

"Haven't a notion," he responded carelessly. "Depends what way the wind's blowing when I get to the gate."

Beggars were known to us as "God-save-all-heres," that being the salutation with which they entered the kitchen, seating themselves afterwards in the warm peat-reek by the fireside for a gossip and a meal. To have refused them such hospitality would have been held not only derogatory to the dignity of the house, but also as certain to bring ill-luck upon it. The cook, whom, as dispenser of the kitchen bounties, they were all eager to propitiate, generally turned their services to account to pluck fowl for her, or turn the spit, which in my earliest years was still done by hand. It was considered a marvel of mechanical ingenuity when at a later date a clockwork contrivance was introduced,

which was fastened to one corner of the kitchen ceiling, and from there, by means of a weight and a long chain, imparted the necessary rotary motion to the joint roasting before the fire.

Another duty which was left to such stray hangers-on was the collection of dandelions, their juice being a remedy decreed to my Indian aunt, who, like most Anglo-Indians of that date, had brought back from her long residence abroad what we called "a liver." There were, therefore, generally three or four old crones seated round a flat stone outside the kitchen-door, gabbling Irish and pounding vigorously at the green heap before them, till a wine-glassful of a most nauseous fluid had been extracted. As the nearest medical practitioner resided in the town of Galway, we relied almost entirely upon home-doctoring, and the prescriptions in vogue were mostly of the same primitive nature. If any one was considered to stand in need of a tonic or strengthening medicine, an iron draught was concocted by the simple expedient of heating the poker white-hot, and stirring a tumbler of porter therewith. My grandfather, indeed, who was principal medical adviser to the district, had but one sovereign remedy, which he prescribed with the utmost impartiality for all ailments of whatsoever nature they might be. He used to powder a huge lump of rhubarb on a pewter-plate—its being pulverised upon pewter being considered to play a very important part in the efficacy of the recipe—and



blend it with a bottle of port. This he administered by spoonfuls to all who came to consult him. "The Masther's medicine" was held in high repute, and was more sought after than the prescriptions of a specialist would have been, if such had existed in those days.

On Sunday afternoons my grandfather used to have his chair carried out to the head of the flight of steps that led to our hall door, and to seat himself there, his bottle of medicine by his side, ready not only to minister to bodily ailments, but to adjudicate in all family and neighbourly squabbles; and though his decisions in these delicate matters had not a shred of authority behind them, they were obeyed as implicitly, indeed probably more so, than if they had been backed by all the powers of Crown, Lords, and Commons.

One family party in special I well remember. They came up the avenue abreast, so that neither side might gain even the momentary advantage of a first hearing, but forming none the less two separate and well defined groups. The most important figure on the one side was the widowed mother, arrayed in the customary close-fitting, quilled white cap, and the weighty blue cloak which descended as an heirloom in the female line. She was supported by a bevy of shrill-voiced daughters, clad in the red, home-woven country skirts, whilst upon the other side of the avenue walked her son and the young wife whom he had lately married, together

with some of the latter's relatives. According to universal custom, the son had brought his bride home to the ancestral cabin, which might have been deemed well filled already, seeing that it contained but the usual two apartments, the kitchen and solitary bedroom. Wranglings and dissensions had ensued, originating, as far as might be ascertained in the din of tongues, in the young wife's fortune not having been as large as had been anticipated, or as the son was entitled to, in his family's estimation, in view of his position as heir of the homestead. This matter, which might have been thought to concern the bridegroom alone, was in reality of quite as great importance to his family, since in such cases the bride's portion was generally devoted to making up the fortunes of the daughters of the house, thus enabling them to find husbands in their turn, whilst the possession of the farm, free of all encumbrances, was regarded as a fair equivalent. A veritable cat-and-dog life appeared to have been led within the narrow walls, and finally the whole family had arrived to lay their grievances before my grandfather.

He silenced the disputants by a wave of his hand, refusing to listen to the torrent of accusations and recriminations which both sides were endeavouring simultaneously to pour forth. Then he gave judgment shortly and trenchantly—

“Block up the door between your rooms, and break a door into the inner room from the outside.

That'll give you a dwelling apiece. Don't you, sir," to the son, "dare to set foot in your mother's house; and don't any of you," to the mother and daughters, "presume to go into the young people's unless they bid you. Now begone the whole lot of you, and the blessings of peace go with you."

A Sunday or two later the son returned, alone this time.

"Well, what's amiss with you now?"

"'Tis the cows, yer honour," the young fellow blurted out after standing on the steps awhile, turning his soft felt hat round and round sheepishly in his hands. "They all goes into me mother's house by nights, an' the hins, the crathers, does be in afther them. The sorra fut or feather comes in to me."

But here my grandfather firmly drew the line. The hens and cows, he declared, must be left to their own unfettered discretion in their choice of a bed-chamber; at least, he would be no arbiter in the matter, and the young man had to depart disconsolate to his one-roomed abode, uncheered by the dumb companionship for which he craved.

Sometimes, however, the contending parties preferred to have recourse to the full majesty of the bench from which my father and grandfather administered impartial justice.

On one such occasion the cause of dispute was a goose, to which two old women laid claim. The bone of contention appeared in court in a basket,



out of which she succeeded in thrusting her head every now and again, trumpeting noisily to denote her disapprobation of the proceedings.

"Where do you live?" demanded my grandfather of the first old woman.

"The first house, yer honour, afther ye pass the cross-roads goin' out o' the town."

"And where do you live?" of the second claimant.

"'Tis this side of the cross-roads, sir, an' sure——"

But once again my grandfather cut short the flood of objurgations and recriminations.

"Let the goose," he said sternly, "be conveyed in the basket to the cross-roads, and be set at liberty there. Let no one dare to meddle with her, but allow her to take her own road. I'll warrant she'll go where she's accustomed to be fed."

This judgment was considered but little inferior to that of Solomon.

Those really ill and unable to come in quest of medicine for themselves were visited and attended to in their own homes by one of my aunts, who from long experience had acquired a certain rudimentary skill in doctoring. Most of her time was occupied in these ministrations, and the gratitude of the poor people to her was most touching. Sometimes when she entered their doors they would kneel before her. It was quite an ordinary occurrence for my aunt to be roused up in the middle of

the night because some one in the vicinity had been taken ill and desired her advice. On coming down once in answer to such a summons she found two wild-looking men at the door, totally unknown to her. They had come two or three miles across the mountains to beseech her help for a neighbour who was very ill, and they were so urgent in their entreaties that my aunt consented to go back with them. There was no road; her guides steered in the darkness by landmarks known to themselves, and helped her along up and down the rough hill-sides and across the bogs. At the worst passages through these swampy morasses she found men stationed with torches of flaming bogwood to light her over. When the sick man's abode was reached at last she found it filled to overflowing with relatives and neighbours, all talking volubly at once, and loudly proclaiming their conviction regarding the patient that "sure the death was on him, an' sorra bit o' good Miss Marian or any one else could do."

Having with some difficulty ejected this jabbering and excited crowd, my aunt turned her attention to the man whom she had been brought to see. He was in great pain and manifestly very ill. There was no possibility whatever of procuring a doctor, and my aunt had to decide upon the spur of the moment what was best to be done. Rightly or wrongly she decided to put him into a hot bath. The house, like most others of its class, contained but two

vessels of any capacity, the big black potato-pot, namely, and the churn. My aunt was a woman of resource. She had the potato-pot filled with water and put upon the fire, and she put the man into the churn. She kept him there all the night through, propped up on either side by a neighbour, the temperature of the bath being maintained from the supply upon the fire, whilst she herself administered nourishment at frequent intervals. The man recovered, but whether owing to the treatment or not is more than I could venture to say.

Many indeed were the strange remedies whereof my aunt was told in the course of her practice. An old man who had wounded himself severely with a scythe had been recommended to sit all night with his leg in a boghole, a cure that brought an attack of bronchitis which wellnigh proved fatal; whilst a favourite prescription against deafness was the broth of a boiled hedgehog poured into the patient's ears; and the recognised treatment for whooping-cough—yclept chin-cough—was to pass the child three times beneath the body of a she-ass, to which useful animals there was much resort in times of epidemic. The people, too, trusted much in charms, mysterious formulas repeated over the sick by some individual in whose family the words had been handed down seemingly from hoar antiquity, passing always from father to daughter or mother to son, never to the same sex. Only one person, too, might possess the magic power, and the



jealously-guarded secret was only transmitted on the near approach of death.

Wondrously superstitious the people were, more especially in their profound belief in fairies—generally alluded to mysteriously as “them”—to whose intervention any untoward and unlooked-for event was certain to be ascribed. I remember going with my aunt to condole with a poor woman who had recently lost her husband.

“He come in at that door theer,” she said tearfully, “an’ he calls to me, ‘For the love of God, get me a sup of wather.’ An’ he drank the wather, an’ wint an’ stretched himself on the bed an’ died.”

“It must have been some sudden attack of the heart,” hazarded my aunt sympathetically.

“May be so, ma’am,” in a tone of polite incredulity.

“What do you think yourself that he died of?”

“Well, your honour,” sinking her voice to a mysterious whisper, “he was up upon the mountain, an’ there was a turkey-cock come out from behind a rock, an’ wint coachin’ round him, an’ round him, an’ round him three times, an’ he just come down home an’ died, as I’m afther tellin’ yez.”

Most evidently she believed the turkey-cock to have been the embodiment in visible form of some malign and evil-disposed fairy.

“This avenue is no road to be thravellin’ by night,” said an indignant maid to my grandmother, who would have sent her on an errand in the dusk.

“As soon as it's dark it's as thick as blades of grass wid little men on horses, an' caps on the heads of ivery one of them.”

The caps somehow seemed to be the most appalling part of the fairy vision.

My father from one of his visits to Dublin had brought back a small musical-box, then a very recent invention. In the evening, after dinner, he wound it up and hid it under a pile of cloaks in the hall. In a few moments all the servants rushed up from below stairs with blanched and terror-stricken faces.

“The Lord Almighty look on us an' kape us from harm this night! We're ruinated and desthroyed—it's the fairy music!”

One firmly rooted belief in the west of Ireland was that before the downfall or extinction of any ancient family the elfin minstrels were heard to play outside the doomed mansion. It is still believed that before the fatal illness of our kinsman Thomas Martin, the last owner of Connemara, the fairy music circled round and round the old family home of Ballinahinch.

Another time a sudden commotion below stairs heralded the arrival of an affrighted messenger at the drawing-room door to announce in a hushed whisper that there were fairies downstairs. Naturally we all, grown-ups and children, lost no time in descending to the lower regions, where we found the servants clustered in one of the dark stone-

flagged passages, gazing awe-stricken and from a respectful distance at a faint greenish radiance, which could be discerned in the gloom playing on one of the walls. My grandmother, who knew nothing of science, but deemed it highly inexpedient that the house should acquire a reputation for supernatural visitants of any sort, commanded a bucket of water to be brought and thrown against the wall as the readiest means of putting an end to the fairies and their doings. So far, however, from this quenching the fairy lights, they only shone out more brightly than before, and the exclamations and other manifestations of terror redoubled in volume and intensity. It was left to one of the gentlemen of the party to hit upon the true explanation of the phenomenon, which was only that some fish had recently been hung up at that spot, and that the unearthly gleam was caused by the phosphorescence of a few of their scales which still adhered to the wall. This solution of the mystery was received with scant favour and many headshakings by the household.

Once as we were driving home from church we saw a crowd gathered upon the road, and stopped to ask what was the matter. A quantity of oats had recently been stolen, we were told, and the wise woman, as the white witch is called in Ireland, had undertaken to discover the thief by means of a charm.

Her appliances were of the simplest. Two men



kneeling on the road each held up a sheep-shears, on the points of which a large corn-sieve was balanced, and the wise woman standing beside them repeated over the names of all likely and unlikely delinquents in a sort of chant, demanding of the sieve—"As the thruth's in ye, was it Thady Kearney stole the corn? was it Tom Rorke?" and so on. Always, however, when the name of a certain Neddy Faherty was reached the sieve toppled over and fell to the ground. Neddy Faherty was himself amongst the crowd, and loudly and vehemently protested his innocence. Again and again the incantation was repeated; but no matter where Neddy Faherty's name was placed in the long list which the wise woman went through, as soon as it was uttered down came the sieve. Reading the growing mistrust upon his neighbours' faces, poor Neddy burst through the throng to the side of the carriage and wildly implored our help. My father and grandfather, convinced that there must be some trickery or collusion at the bottom of the matter, got out of the carriage and took possession themselves of the sieve and shears. The crowd waited breathlessly while once more the roll of names was gone through; but the result was the same—as soon as Neddy Faherty was named, the sieve clattered down upon the road. Rendered desperate by this culminating proof of his guilt, Neddy burst into tears.

"The Divil has a houl't of me," he sobbed, "be

raysin of me puttin' a stitch in me breeks o' Sunday last. Sure I'll go behind the wall an' tak' them off of me an' wid the blessin' of God I'll be quit of him."

The ladies of the family deemed it as well not to await the result of this novel form of exorcism, and drove on. When the gentlemen returned home on foot, however, they reported that even the removal of poor Neddy's nether garments had been impotent to break the spell; the sieve continued as before to turn over at each mention of his name. They both remained certain that the divination had been affected by means of a trick, but how it could have been accomplished they had not the least idea,—in all probability by nothing more occult than the wise woman keeping sharp-eyed watch upon the sieve, and adroitly introducing Neddy Faherty's name as she saw that it was about to overbalance.

They were the more strengthened in their conviction by its being proved to demonstration a short time afterwards that the thief of the oats was none other than the wise woman herself.

Another instance of the belief in witchcraft was far more tragical. Walking with an aunt one day, we met a little bare-legged boy, who led a young woman by the hand. She wore the blue cloak and red homespun skirt universal amongst the peasantry, and would have been strikingly pretty, save that her eyes had the far-away, unsettled look which bespeaks a mind astray. My aunt stopped and questioned the little fellow as to where he was going.

“I’m takin’ me sisther to the priest to say a prayer over her. The sinses has gone out of her since her little child died, an’ maybe if the priest prays over her they’ll come back to her.”

My aunt’s interest having been aroused, she made inquiries concerning the poor girl, for she was little more, and discovered that she had been but a short time married, the match having, according to custom, been made for her by her parents. The husband proved to be a heartless brute, who ill-treated his young wife after a fashion happily very rare in Ireland. Her baby’s death was the last stroke of ill fate, and with it poor Mary Tierney’s mind wholly gave way, and she fled back to her father’s cabin, where she wandered aimlessly about, talking disjointedly to herself, and refusing absolutely to return to her husband. Very shortly after the day on which we had met her on the road, the good priest’s ministrations having proved unavailing to cure a mind diseased, she and her family were sitting at their fireside when they saw Mary’s husband coming up the boreen or lane. Mary started up in wild affright.

“Hoide the tongs ! Hoide the tongs !” she cried ; words which were afterwards held as proof that an attempt upon her life had been made before.

The appeal was disregarded, it being thought to be only one of her crazy fancies, and the husband, entering, sat down amongst the others. He had no difficulty in persuading them that the cause of



Mary's insanity was her being possessed by a witch, and he urged that if he were but permitted to place the tongs round his wife's neck *and make them meet*, the evil spirit would be driven out, and Mary would be herself again. Incredible as it may seem, the attempt was permitted, and he strangled the unfortunate girl before her parents' eyes. Even when she fell lifeless to the ground, he persuaded them that it was but the last departing effort of the witch, and that in a few moments her own spirit would come back to her, and she would rise up in her own right mind; and in this belief the parents ate their supper with the murderer, the girl-wife's dead body lying on the floor beside them.

Strangest of all, perhaps, when the hue-and-cry was out against the murderer and the police were hunting him, it was his wife's family who assisted to hide him, and, thanks to their aid, he succeeded in evading justice and making his escape to America.

Yet there were those who held that the husband had not intended to kill his wife, but had truly believed that by his jugglery with the tongs he would drive out the evil spirit and bring the old Mary back. Certain it is that the tongs was regarded as a potent and indeed invincible weapon against fairies and witches and *hoc genus omne*. A woman living near Lough Corrib, having occasion to go out of doors to attend to her business, leaving her little child sleeping in the house, laid the tongs across the cradle to keep it safe from harm. When she re-

turned both child and tongs had disappeared, but whilst search-parties went out to look for the little one, the mother remained calm and undismayed. Neither hurt nor harm would come to it, she was convinced, whilst it carried the tongs for its own protection. Alas, however, the tongs were found lying in the long grass down by the lakeside, where the tired hand of the little toddler had let them fall, and therewith the poor mother broke out into vehement and despairing grief, and when in sad truth the tiny body was found shortly afterwards floating in one of the inlets of the lake, she never doubted that the fairies had lured her baby to its doom when once it had parted with the safeguard of the tongs.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## MATTERS MISCELLANEOUS.

A VERY favourite holiday resort of ours was a fishing lodge which my father had amongst the mountains that separated us from the Atlantic. Upon the first occasion on which I was permitted to form one of the fishing-party, my mother drove me to the lodge in a pony basket - chaise, the gentlemen of the party having gone afoot across the mountains. It was her first visit as well as mine, and, without any warning whatever, the road suddenly came to an end, and we found ourselves on the brink of a chasm—a narrow inlet of the sea which ran far inland. Those who had originally taken in hand to construct the road had not sufficiently counted the cost of the undertaking. The money had sufficed to bring the road to the edge of the cliff, but no funds had remained wherewith to build a bridge across the gap, and so the road was left without fence or any other protection to prevent a heedless wayfarer from toppling over to his destruction, whilst a rough



track led round by the head of the harbour. My mother remonstrated at some cabins near by at such a perilous state of affairs, pointing out the serious accident which might befall any benighted traveller, but she was answered placidly—

“Sure, yer honour, God is good, and who’d be thravellin’ the road by nights that didn’t know it.”

Upon one of our arrivals at the fishing lodge we found every one there in much perturbation and alarm because of the nightly apparition of a ghost,—a vague white form which flitted about a small neglected graveyard near the river, one of those clusters of graves about a ruined chapel wall which are so frequent throughout Ireland. One of the gentlemen of our party undertook to lay the unquiet spirit, and going out not far from midnight did indeed soon become aware of a white figure looming towards him through the darkness. Our friend, however, held on his way undeterred.

“Ghost,” he said in sepulchral tones, when he came near, “could you drink a glass of whisky?”

“I could so, yer honour,” blithely responded the ghost, taken off his balance by the unexpected offer, and standing revealed as the principal poacher of the neighbourhood, who had availed himself of this spectral guise to set his night-lines and carry on his other depredations undisturbed.

Upon another occasion my grandfather was one of the party, and after a day’s down-pour and a

red flood in the river, which promised the best of sport for the morrow, he determined to steal a march on the younger men. He got up accordingly at three o'clock in the morning, chuckling to himself at the laugh which he would have at all the young fellows at breakfast when he returned with a basket of sea-trout. Early as he was, however, he had been forestalled, for as he approached one of the best pools on the river he beheld a man upon the bank endeavouring to land a fish, which from the splashing and the commotion in the water seemed to be a giant of its tribe. Convinced that he had caught a poacher redhanded, my grandfather hurried down, to be greeted with the cry—

“Oh, Mr Martin, for the love of God make haste or he'll be slippin' out of the net on me!”

The man was one of the keepers, and the salmon none other than Lord Cosmo Russell, one of our guests, who had gone out even earlier than my grandfather. Having lost his footing upon the rocks, he had fallen into the deep pool, and as he was unable to swim he would certainly have been drowned if the keeper, with much presence of mind, had not thrown the landing-net over his head and given it a turn, thus keeping him securely prisoned in its meshes till help came. With my grandfather's assistance the young fellow was speedily drawn ashore, half-choked as well as half-drowned, but very grateful for his rescue.

I can also recollect being taken into Galway by

one of my aunts for a day's outing, she driving herself and me in the same low pony-chaise. My aunt had much shopping to do and many friendly calls to pay, so that it was late before we set out for home, and darkness had overtaken us long before we had accomplished half our journey. I cannot now exactly recall what disaster befell our equipage,—to the best of my belief one of the tyres became detached from the wheel to which it appertained : at any rate, the injury was such that it was impossible to proceed farther in the damaged chaise. The night was dark, and it was beginning to rain. We were compelled to unharness the pony, and, leaving our conveyance by the roadside, to make our way on foot to a village, a mere handful of squalid houses, some distance farther on, where my aunt forlornly hoped that we might be able to procure a car to convey us the half-dozen Irish miles that still intervened between us and home. The village, however, did not possess a vehicle of any kind, and the rain steadily increased. Nothing remained to us, therefore, but to take shelter for the night in the one public-house that reared itself two-storeyed above its thatched neighbours. The owners of the hostelry with glib readiness undertook to provide us with tea and sleeping accommodation. We were seated at the former meal, not very appetisingly set forth in the frowsy, stuffy parlour behind the "tap," when a scraping and a scuffling became audible in the narrow passage



outside, and, propelled from behind, there came in at the door of the room a huge feather-bed.

"What is this for?" demanded my aunt.

"Sure 'twas tay and a bed yez ax'd of me," returned the bare-armed hostess, still heated and dishevelled from her struggle with the feather-bed.

"But we do not require them side by side," returned my aunt with dignity. "Is there not a bedroom in the house which we can have?"

"Yis, sure,—there's an iligant room above-stairs."

"Then let us see it, if you please." And up we went by a ladder-like stair, and through a hole in the floor which gave access to the upper storey. We were ushered into a good-sized room that contained two beds, curtained with blue and white.

"A double-bedded room!—why, this is excellent; this will suit us admirably," said my aunt with much satisfaction. Even as she spoke, however, a loud snore proceeded from behind one of the curtains. "Surely there is some one in this room already?" she asked in dismay.

"Ach, that's only Father Connellan, the qui'test, nicest man that iver was. An' sure he'd not mind the likes of yous."

My aunt, however, thought that we might be more pernicky than Father Connellan; and we were beating a hasty retreat when the reverend father, roused from his slumber by our voices, inquired from behind his curtains what was amiss.

On being informed of the state of affairs, he insisted gallantly on rising and dressing himself, and giving up the apartment to us in undivided possession.

In the morning we discovered that the state chamber of our wayside hostelry was unprovided with washing apparatus of any kind, and my aunt sallied out in search of some means of supplying the deficiency.

"If you could even let us have some water in a tub, if there is nothing better," she said.

There was a hasty, whispered colloquy at the foot of the trap-ladder stair. A suggestion was evidently made and objected to. Then we heard the hostess's decisive tones. "Sure the last of them is out of it," she said, as she hurried towards the back premises. This time it was a bumping and rolling that ensued; and a barrel which had recently held salt herrings, and was still redolent of its late contents, was rolled in from the yard. We preferred to postpone our ablutions, and to await the arrival of a conveyance from home, which a messenger, in local parlance, had "slipped over" to fetch.

Another of the recollections of my childhood is of the wedding of our nurse,—the same who had taken me to the private view of Lord Anglesey's legs. She had come to us from a distant part of the county, and on going up to the nursery one morning I found her in floods of tears.

"Me father's sint a sthrange man to marry me, miss," she sobbed.

I promptly advised that she should refuse to be married, and stay on with us; but she only answered hopelessly, "Sure, I must do as I'm bid."

We escorted our faithful handmaiden to the chapel, all weeping in sympathy with her, whilst she wept more unrestrainedly than all the rest. The bridegroom—a shy, loutish countryman, who kept at a respectful distance as we walked along—did not appear to be in any way troubled by the grief of which he was the cause. We saw the bridal pair duly married, and they forthwith departed together, she riding pillion behind him. I never heard of our devoted Mary again; but I have no doubt that long before the eleven miles into Galway had been covered she had dried her tears and acquiesced in the inevitable.

Such marriages were universal, the only unusual feature in this case being the bride's unwillingness—unwillingness for which, children as we were, we shrewdly held a good-looking young stable helper in my father's employment responsible. In general, such arrangements were accepted as a matter of course by the parties most nearly concerned.

I was visiting one day with one of my aunts at a cottage in our neighbourhood. We were much surprised to see there a large mahogany chest of drawers,—a very much handsomer piece of furniture than was generally to be found in those lowly



abodes. Spanish mahogany had been one of the imports brought into Galway in large quantities in former times, and much good and solid old mahogany furniture still remains, a silent witness to the trade and commerce of those days. The mistress of the cottage, seeing where our eyes had strayed, said with much complacency, " 'Twas for that same I was married." She then proceeded to relate to us that the piece of furniture which had attracted our attention had been bequeathed to her father by an aunt, or some other female relative, with the express stipulation that it should form part of the wedding portion of the first girl married from the house. Not long afterwards her mother was at a fair, and heard that a small farmer, hitherto unknown to her, had come in, partly on his ordinary business of buying and selling and partly to open negotiations for the hand of his only son. Such a chance was too good to be missed. An introduction was forthwith sought and obtained; and her mother explained to the father of this eligible *parti* that though her daughter would have but a slender portion in money, yet she would bring with her to her future home a couple of sheep, a yearling bullock, and, above all, the chest of drawers. The bargain was struck, and on the appointed day the bridegroom-expectant arrived to view his future possessions.

"He wint down to the field wid me father," said our hostess, "an' he seen the sheep an' the young

baste, an' thin he come up to the house for to look at the dhrawerses. He took a bit of a sthring out, an' he measured them ivery way, to make sure the size they was; an' thin he says, 'An' which o' thim little girls is it?' An' I was next the doore"—meaning thereby the eldest unmarried daughter—"an' so I wint."

To have been married as an adjunct to her chest of drawers seemed to the good lady a cause for pride, and the match had to all appearance proved a most satisfactory one.

Our gardener had the reputation of being very parsimonious and niggardly in his money dealings. He had also a sister who had somewhat passed the flower of her youth. I remember our lying crouched amongst some shrubs—with a fine childish unconcern at eavesdropping—to listen to the negotiations which were being carried on across the garden wall between the gardener and an aspirant to the sister's hand. The wooer was holding out for a small increase to the lady's dower, which the gardener was unwilling to give. Losing patience at last, as the latter remained adamant to all arguments and persuasion, the ardent lover exclaimed angrily, "Troth, thin, it's glad ye should be to be gettin' shut of her. It's a trifle shtale she's gettin'."

He marched off with that parting shot, and the negotiations were temporarily broken off. They were afterwards resumed and brought to a successful issue, but I do not know which of the parties gave way.

I also remember, though I had no personal acquaintance with any one immediately concerned, the marriage of the daughter of a well-to-do shop-keeper in the town of Galway. The father of the bride, like our gardener, was considered to be decidedly close-fisted. The bridegroom, as well as I remember, was of a station somewhat superior to that of the family he proposed to ally himself with. The wedding-day came, but when the bridal party assembled at the chapel the bridegroom failed to appear. After waiting long and vainly for the laggard, emissaries were despatched to his abode to hasten his coming. They found him snugly ensconced in bed.

"Sorra foot do I stir out of this," said the prospective Benedick, "unless the fortune's doubled."

For an hour and more intermediaries ran backwards and forwards between the chapel and the bridegroom's dwelling, striving to make terms, whilst the bride waited at the altar with such patience as she could muster. The bridegroom, however, stood, or rather lay, firm, and at last the father, unwilling that his daughter should be put to shame in the sight of all Galway by returning to her father's house unwed, yielded, and promised to double the fortune as demanded, whereupon the bridegroom got up, dressed himself, and came to church to be married.

Somewhere in those far back days, too, there was a festivity long remembered in the annals of



Galway. The owner of an estate some few miles outside the town was married to a lady who was very fond of company and of social gaieties, and who also held complete sway in the domestic establishment. She insisted on her husband throwing down the old house in which he and his fathers had lived and building a palatial mansion in its stead. When the imposing pile was little more than roofed in, the walls being only covered with their first coating of rough, criss-cross plaster, the lady, unable to restrain her impatience any longer, gave a house-warming—an entertainment that lasted three days and three nights without intermission, and to which the whole of the county Galway were invited. Guests were put up in the unfinished bedrooms, on the stairs, in any nook or corner which could be made to serve. Others, who could not secure even such accommodation, slept in their carriages, drawn up outside in the yards and shrubberies, whilst the remainder drove in and out of Galway for occasional periods of rest.

On the second night of the festivity, in the hurry and scurry of getting supper ready for the numerous company, a luckless kitchenmaid missed her footing and fell from top to bottom of the stone kitchen stairs. She was taken up dead, but the major-domo, deeming it a pity that the revels of the quality should be cut short, allowed no word of the disaster to be breathed above-stairs. He had a grave hastily dug under the stairs, in which the

hapless girl was laid, whilst the dancing went on uninterruptedly overhead. The cost of the house-warming having wellnigh ruined the ambitious dame and her docile spouse, the mansion remained in its unfinished condition for many a long year, and eventually passed into other hands.

Though our hospitalities, happily for ourselves, were on a very much smaller and more modest scale, yet my grandfather was the most hospitable of mortals. Notwithstanding his having already a large and many-branched family of children, grandchildren, nephews, and nieces, established under his roof, he was never so happy as when a goodly number of guests were gathered there too. His family were quite in accord with him on this head, and every member of it was ready to give up his or her room at a moment's notice to accommodate another guest. Our practice was to spread a sheet upon the floor, empty our belongings into it, and gathering it up by the four corners, to depart with it to seek a shake-down in some one else's room, leaving the chamber thus summarily cleared for the new arrival.

The only member of the household who did not approve of this keeping of open house was Bartley, the turf-boy. Bartley's mission in life was to carry in turf from the long, dark turf-stacks, which were built up every autumn beside the hay- and straw-ricks in the haggard. He was to be met at all hours of the day mounting the back-stairs with a

huge creel of turf upon his back, which he emptied with a thunderous reverberation into the capacious receptacles provided upon each landing, or else wheeling barrowloads of turf into the kitchen, which he flung down with even less ceremony in a heap in the corner. Some one happening to praise my grandfather's open-handed hospitality in his hearing, Bartley muttered in return—

“Och, ay, ivery wan is for iver cryin' up the ould masther and his hospitalitee, an' his axin' this wan and that wan for to shtop wid him, but sorra wan thinks of Bartley that has to carry the turf for the whoule of thim.”

Another time, as he toiled upstairs beneath his load, he was overheard groaning to himself, “Pity help the people that has to carry the turf for Purgathory.”

One of my younger sisters somewhat shared Bartley's views upon this latter point. We were periodically catechised by the Warden of Galway, as the incumbent of the old collegiate church of St Nicholas was styled. This dignity dated far back into the ancient and troublous times, when the inhabitants of Galway were at war with the surrounding Irish and represented to Pope Innocent VIII., in the first year of his popedom, that they were civil and modest people, living in a town surrounded by walls, and that they did not follow the customs of the wild people who dwelt in the mountains and woods round about. By reason,



however, of the "impetrations and provisions" of these wild people—in other words, their attempts to institute Irish clergy into the parish church of St Nicholas—they were so much harassed at their devotions that they could not hear the Holy Offices nor receive the sacraments according to English decency, right, and usage, to which they and their fathers before them had always been accustomed. Further, that they were much disquieted and sometimes robbed and killed by these rude and unlearned men, and that worse was likely to befall them in the future if they did not receive speedy succour. The underlying meaning of the petition, no doubt, was that the clergy of Irish extraction favoured the surrounding natives at the expense of the inhabitants of the town. To protect his beloved children, the inhabitants of Galway, from all such damages and inconveniences, Pope Innocent, by papal bull, erected their parish church into a collegiate, to be governed by eight vicars, all of whom were to be virtuous, learned, and well-bred men, with a warden or custos at their head, to be all chosen and presented by the mayor of Galway, the bailiffs and mayor's peers, and to be exempt from any jurisdiction of the Irish bishops. The lines of the Warden of our day had fallen upon more peaceful times, and he had not to fear the onslaughts of unlearned men, but only the ignorance of a few little girls when he came out to give us Scripture teaching.

He had been instructing us one day about the end of the world, and that no one would then be left alive in this mortal flesh upon earth, when my small sister spoke up boldly—

“I don’t believe it.”

“But you must believe it, my child,” said the Warden, “for it is true.”

“It can’t be true.”

“Why not?” queried the perplexed divine.

“There must be people left in the world to cut the turf for hell,” said my sister clinchingly and triumphantly.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## FOLDS—FOR SHEEP AND OTHERS.

THE tribes of Galway had each their distinctive soubriquet. There were the prating Frenches, the proud Lynches, the merry Joyces, the brave Brownes, and so on. The Bodkins had originally been the dangerous Bodkins, they became the bloody Bodkins after a terrible tragedy of the eighteenth century. The eldest son of the house believed, apparently with reason, that his father intended to disinherit him in favour of the children of a second marriage, and entered into a horrible league with some of his kinsmen—a blind uncle, known as Blind Dominick, foremost amongst them—and with some of the surrounding peasantry for the destruction of his own kindred. The conspirators broke into the house at dead of night and murdered the entire family—father, stepmother, little children, and even the guest who by ill-hap was passing the night there—in cold blood. The baby alone escaped, for his nurse, who was in the secret and knew what was



impending, could not bring herself to let him be sacrificed with the others. She contrived to steal away with him before the slaughter began, and he survived to be the future head of the Bodkin family. The half-brother who had instigated the murder, Blind Dominick, and two others were brought to justice and executed, the gallows being erected beside the scene of their ghastly crime.

We were the litigious Martins, and never was name better deserved, in so far at least as my grandfather was concerned. He was never so happy as when he was at law with some one or other, and on one occasion spent seventy pounds in law costs to make good a claim for five. Winning his case, however, fully compensated him for the outlay incurred. Next to being engaged in a lawsuit of his own, he loved best to give evidence in somebody else's. On one such occasion the point at issue concerned the ownership or tenure of a certain field, and my grandfather was asked to state on oath what he considered its value to be.

"I'll tell you its value!" he said scornfully. "If you put a lamb on it, it would die, and if you put a hare on it, it would run away!"

In his home life, however, so far from displaying the contentious qualities of his race, he was the most placable and easy-going of men. Indeed without a temper akin to the angelic he could hardly have maintained even a passable equanimity, con-

sidering the household of which he was the head—the extensive family to whom his hospitable roof gave shelter, and the retinue of hangers-on and dependants who inhabited the lower regions.

With one of our establishment he did indeed live at perpetual feud. This was Mrs Finnegan, who dwelt at our gate, and filled the double rôle of gatekeeper and laundress. The cause of quarrel was the obstinacy with which Mrs Finnegan, to save herself the trouble of conveying the family washing to some more secluded spot, persisted in hanging it out to dry opposite her own door, so that the first sight which greeted visitors turning in at our gate was our linen flapping and bulging on the winds.

One very muddy day my grandfather, coming in from his rounds about the farm, found that notwithstanding all prohibitions the clothes-lines had once more been set up on the forbidden ground, and our wearing apparel was broadly exposed to view. Infuriated by this wilful disregard of orders, my grandfather tore the whole collection down, and proceeded to dance upon it with somewhat more vigour than grace. Mrs Finnegan rushed from the lodge, and though the delinquent was her own master, she gave him what in Galway is known as “all sorts,” calling him “an ould haythen,” “a shtag,” and other terms of opprobrium. My grandfather, however, continued to foot it undeterred, till he had re-

duced his own shirts and table-cloths to a muddy heap, when saying only "I've done it once, and I'll do it again," he marched off in triumph up the avenue.

Of Mrs Finnegan it must, however, be recorded that, save in this one matter of hanging out the washing, her devotion to the family was absolute and unbounded. It is matter of faith in Galway to this day that it is eminently unlucky to meet a barefooted woman when starting on a journey, or upon an enterprise of any kind. Mrs Finnegan, who like most others of her class dispensed habitually with *chaussure*, was so well aware of the evil influence which she might all unwillingly exercise on our affairs, that when she descried any of the family coming down the avenue with the appearance of being bound for fair or market, or on any other business, she fled incontinently to hide herself in the inmost recesses of the lodge, and nothing would have induced her to venture forth till they had passed by, though on the travellers' return she was always at the gate to greet them with smiles and welcoming gestures.

During one of our winter sojourns in Dublin my grandfather's ire was aroused by the quality of the milk supplied to us. Rushing downstairs one day when the milkman rattled at the railings with his can, he roared at him—

"You scoundrel, how dared you put dirty water in my milk?"



"'Twasn't dirty," retorted the milk-vendor, incensed at the unjust aspersion,—" 'twas clane wather out of the pump."

My grandfather was so delighted at the success of the trap which he had laid, that he quite forgave the iniquity which had been the cause of it.

Another of my recollections of those early days is accompanying my grandfather to hear a popular preacher, who at that time drew large crowds to one of the Dublin churches. The preacher chose for his text, "He shall be called a Nazarene," and thus, not very tactfully seeing the likelihood of some of his auditors having come from beyond the Shannon, commenced his discourse—

"That, my brethren, was a term of reproach, as we should say of a man nowadays, 'He is a Galway man.'"

Speech being under the circumstances denied to my grandfather, he could only glare up in impatient wrath at the pulpit—it was of the usual three-decker form. I fear he did not benefit much by the rest of the sermon, and any mention of the preacher's name in his hearing afterwards always produced an outbreak of indignation from him.

My grandfather, when at home, took it into his head on one occasion that those in his employment were not serving him as they ought—more especially in the early morning before any one

was stirring. He determined, therefore, on paying a series of matutinal surprise visits to see for himself how they were attending to their duties. We had been somewhat troubled by poachers at this particular time, and my father, the sportsman of the family, had enjoined upon the keepers to be specially vigilant. The first time, therefore, that my grandfather went abroad in the early morning he was challenged as he was crossing one of the fields, and, according to his own account, narrowly escaped being shot by one of his own keepers. Undeterred by this experience, he went forth again next morning, and this time made a discovery which roused his wrath. In the field which bordered our avenue, known by the euphonious name of Skinnegan, and which had been empty the previous day, six unknown cattle were quietly grazing. My grandfather, too much infuriated to allow the intruders to batten upon his pasture for even another minute, drove the offending animals out of the field himself, and down the avenue to the gate. There some bare-legged boys from an adjacent cabin lent him ready and joyful assistance, and at the head of this ragged contingent, armed with sticks and branches, my grandfather personally conducted the trespassers to the village pound, some half-mile away, and saw them securely shut in there before returning, heated and indignant, to breakfast.

"That's the way I'm served,—that lazy herd of mine not troubling himself to mend my fences, and half the cattle in the country allowed to trample in and out of my best grazing field as they please. Wait till I find Master Ned after breakfast, and I'll give him the best dressing down he ever had in his life."

And my grandfather snorted, meditating to himself the epithets he would apply to the peccant herd.

There was, however, no need to go in search of the delinquent, for before breakfast was ended a message was brought in that the herd was without, desiring to see the master.

Ned was upon the hall-doorsteps, much crest-fallen and alarmed.

"I'm sorry to have to tell it to your honour," he began humbly, "but there's six of your honour's own cattle in the pound. I put them in Skinnegan late last night, an' shut the gate on them meself, an' how they got out an' wint sthrayin' on me——"

He got no further, for my grandfather, who had with difficulty restrained himself till then, beat a hasty retreat to the dining-room, where he collapsed into a chair and laughed till his family had fears of an impending apoplectic seizure. But from thenceforth he gave up his early inspections, and left the care of his property to his underlings.



The pound indeed played a very important part in the country life of those days. Every village had its own enclosure into which animals found straying upon the high-road or on somebody else's land were driven and kept in custody till redeemed by their owner. It was one of the chief duties of the very inefficient police of those days to convey wandering animals into safe keeping in the pound, and the elderly barony constables were frequently to be met strolling leisurely along at the heels of some vagrant pig or donkey. Fences were generally so bad, and the custom to the pound was consequently so great, that the inhabitants of many villages clubbed together and paid the pound-keeper a yearly sum for which he was bound to take in all stray quadrupeds and give them up to their owners without exacting the appointed fine. As money was always very scarce in the west this commutation was generally paid in kind, each head of a house sending a contribution of potatoes or corn or turf, or taking in a beast of the pound-keeper's to graze. Creditors had also the right to drive the cattle of their debtors to the pound and to sell them in a few days if their claims were not met; and landlords could likewise enforce the payment of their rents. "Driving for rent" as it was called was, however, considered a harsh measure, and in our part of the world at any rate was seldom adopted. In their dealings with each other the people had a system that was admirable

in its simplicity, and by which all legal expenses, even those of the pound, were avoided. If a man owed one of his neighbours money, the latter would contrive to steal his horse or his cow, and would secrete it carefully. Word would then be conveyed to the defaulter that he could have his own back by paying his debt, and on this being done restitution was promptly made and the animal returned to its owner's keeping.

It was during my early years that the Irish Church Mission was set on foot. Opinions may differ nowadays as to the wisdom of a movement that strove to detach the Irish-speaking peasantry from the Church of their fathers and to bring them over to the Protestant faith, but on one point at least there can be no doubt—that those who originated the enterprise were actuated by none but the highest and noblest of motives. Dr Nangle, one of the most fervent and impassioned of the Mission preachers, came down into our neighbourhood, and amongst those who went to hear him was Sally Forth, whom I have already mentioned.

"Well, Sally, and how did you like the preaching?" we inquired on her return.

"Prachin'!" she rejoined indignantly. "That was the quare prachin'! What was't all about would yez think but an ould sheep that wint asthray! As if no one but himself iver had a sheep goin' asthray on them afore! An' maybe if he'd gone to look in the pound 'twas there all the time!"

The priest blew his counterblast to the mission-preaching the following Sunday, and a very loud blast it was. "Troth, ye could have heard him cursin' a mile beyant the chapel door," so one of his hearers reported to us. The clinching argument in the controversy was, however, supplied by Hughie Caulfield, the gardener. "Pratestants!" he said with lofty scorn. "'Twas mighty little St Paul thought of the Pratestants. You've all heard tell of the 'pistle he wrote to the Romans, but I'd ax ye this, did any of yez iver hear of his writing a 'pistle to the Pratestants?"

It is to be feared that all the conversions made in those days were not actuated by absolute conviction. One very simple-minded and kindly old lady, a distant relative of our own, believed that she had by her arguments won over an old bedridden fishwife of the Claddagh, the fishing suburb of Galway; and was in the habit of visiting her almost daily, bringing her tracts and reading to her. Naturally she did not fail to supplement these spiritual ministrations by small gifts of a more substantial kind, such as tea and other creature comforts. The old crone's bodily condition, however, did not improve, and she became uneasy about herself. One day when her benefactress had come for her usual visit, the doctor also arrived and the old woman asked him anxiously whether she were in any danger.

"It would not be right to deceive you," said the



doctor gravely, "and since you have asked the question, it is my duty to tell you that you are very ill and in serious danger."

"D'ye mane that I'm like to die?" screamed the patient in terror. "Thin good-bye to ye, ma'am. Docthor, dear, will ye bid Father Lynch come to me."

Another of our acquaintance, a widowed lady of title, adopted a more forcible method of conversion. She decided, more I fear on fashionable than religious grounds, to keep only Protestant servants in her employment in future. A stately English butler and a bevy of housemaids and cooks were imported, and of her former establishment there remained only the page-boy. It seemed scarcely worth while to replace him by another urchin brought from a distance. The lady's mind was speedily made up, and she summoned the page to her presence.

"Patsy," she said, "you're a Protestant from this out."

Patsy, however, lifted up an unexpected voice of protest.

"Plaze, yer ladyship, I'd do anything ye bid me savin' that."

Her ladyship remained unmoved.

"Williams," she said to the butler, "take Patsy away and reason with him. Bring him back in two days."

The butler, it is to be feared, was not a skilled

controversialist, at least his arguments failed to convince Patsy, who at the end of the two days still remained obdurate.

"No, yer ladyship, I'll niver turn," he declared tearfully.

"Williams," said his mistress imperturbably, "take Patsy away and put him to bed. He's not to get up till he's a Protestant."

Patsy held out manfully for a week, and then his resolution failed and he sent a message from under the bedclothes that he was now a Protestant, whereupon he was allowed to don his buttoned array and to resume his place in the household, but whether that conversion proved a lasting one is more than I would like to vouch for.

The services at our parish church were of a primitive simplicity, and the edifice itself as bare and unadorned as a barn. It was heated by two large fireplaces high up in the wall, in which in winter time large turf-fires blazed, and a goodly store of turf was laid in readiness underneath each. Every now and again during the service my father or grandfather would go out of our large square pew, in which we could sit or loll at ease unseen by the rest of the congregation, poke the fires vigorously, and pile on more turf. There was no organ or musical instrument of any kind. We ourselves composed the choir: on wet Sundays, or whenever from any cause we did not come to church, there was no singing. Hymns were un-

known, at any rate in Iar-Connaught. We sang the Psalms in the metrical version of Tate and Brady, two verses and the doxology, never more, no matter what the length of the Psalm might be, nor how the sense might be interfered with. Perhaps the patience of the congregation would not have held out longer. Whenever we came late to church, which, having several Irish miles to drive, I fear happened but too often, the clerk, who was lame, would limp down from his desk—the lowest tier in the tall three-decker, of which the upper stories were reading-desk and pulpit—and come across to our pew to fetch the slip of paper on which we had written down the two psalms to be sung that morning. It was the clerk who subsequently gave them out, the musical portion of the service not being held to concern the clergyman. One of us girls raised the note, the others joined in, and the clerk beat time on the front of his desk.

The old rector always prayed for the weather that would suit his own glebe-land crops. As we drove by the rectory on our way to church my father used to say, "Begad, old Wilson will pray for rain to-day, his turnips are looking dry," or else, "We'll have the prayer for fine weather to-day, I see he has the meadow cut." He had five sermons, which he preached in regular and unvarying rotation. The Sundays as they came round were known to us not as the Third after the



Epiphany or the Fifteenth after Trinity, but as Give-and-it-shall-be-given-to-you or Fight-the-good-fight-of-faith Sunday, from the text of the discourse which we knew we should listen to that day. However familiar these theses might be to his hearers, it was absolutely necessary that they should be delivered in a black gown: if Dr Wilson had preached in his surplice, even his very tolerant congregation would have been scandalised. The church had, however, no vestry. The black gown was therefore always laid in readiness over the wooden enclosure that fenced the three-decker. During the singing of the second psalm Dr Wilson used to duck down behind this screen, and there, hidden from the eyes of the congregation, divest himself of his surplice and don the black gown in its stead. If another clergyman chanced to be present, he could be seen assisting to draw the vestment on; at other times, in Dr Wilson's struggles to array himself, his head used to bob up and down from behind his screen in a manner that was highly amusing to us children.

On one occasion the judge who was holding the assizes in Galway had come out to spend Sunday with us. Dr Wilson had heard that we had an important visitor staying with us; but being very deaf, he had received the mistaken impression that the distinguished stranger was an ecclesiastic. When the time for the sermon arrived, he came across to our pew, holding out the black gown in

both hands, and sought to place it on the dismayed judge's shoulders, ejaculating in his jerky fashion, "Won't ye preach? Won't ye preach?" It was with much difficulty that my father made him understand that our guest was a legal and not a clerical dignitary.

One of our older relatives was a Catholic, and a very devout one; we frequently accompanied her to the services and ceremonies of her church, and she was always much interested in anything that might enhance their dignity and lustre. One evening she returned from an expedition into Galway in much excitement.

"I hear, girls, that there is a new Mother Superior coming to the convent. She is a most charming woman, a foreigner, so I was told, belonging to one of the first families in France. A nun is to make her profession next week, and I have got permission to bring you all to the ceremony."

Foreigners were sufficiently rare in Galway at that date to make us all eager to see this *rara avis*, and we took care to be in good time, so as to secure advantageous places in the gallery at the end of the convent chapel which was reserved for strangers, and where there was only standing room, no seats being provided.

"Ah, there is the Reverend Mother," whispered our relative in tones of much gratification, as

the long line of nuns filed into the chapel below. "Very foreign-looking, and most distinguished, one would know at the first glance that she was a Frenchwoman."

There was general anxiety to catch sight of the distinguished stranger. Those at the back of the gallery craned their necks to see over the heads of those in front, and some scuffling and shuffling ensued. Incensed at the unseemly disturbance, the French aristocrat looked up at the strangers' gallery and thus delivered herself in strong Hibernian accents—

"While that scrooging goes on up there the ceremony will not proceed."

The nun about to take the final vows upon her that day was a Miss Blake, a member of one of the old tribal families of Galway. At the conclusion of the Office, when the solemn, lifelong vows had been taken, she prostrated herself upon her face before the altar, and a black pall was spread over her, thus typifying that from henceforth she was dead to the world with all its pomps and allurements. She continued to lie thus whilst one of the officiating priests mounted into the pulpit and preached the customary sermon in a rich and rolling brogue. He took for his text the Psalmist's well-known words, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider. Forget also thine own people and thy father's house. So shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty."



Stretching out his arm towards the newly professed nun, lying motionless on the pavement below, he cried, "It's my belief when King David wrote that psalm he pinitrated into the dinsity of futurity, and he beheld Miss Blake lying there."

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE CITIE OF THE TRIBES.

EVERY summer we, and most other families of our acquaintance, went into the town of Galway, or rather out to the straggling suburb that fronts upon Galway Bay, for some weeks' bathing and sea air.

All classes did the same, and indeed it was pathetic to see the faith that the poorer folk had in the "salt wather" as a cure for all diseases and infirmities, and the struggles that were made and the discomforts endured in order that some ailing member of a family might have the benefit of the health-giving waters of Galway Bay. One poor man carried his wife, who was recovering from a severe illness, nearly fifty miles upon his back, to bring her to the sea, supporting her and the children who accompanied them by begging from house to house along the road.

"Och, but he dearly earned me," said the wife afterwards, when happily she was restored to health and strength.

"I'm not one of thim that crowds their houses,"

said one woman who catered for this class of lodgers, in lofty scorn of her neighbours; "I'd niver put them to sleep more nor three in a bed."

There was indeed almost a dignified seclusion in such liberal accommodation, since the more general custom was to let each corner of a room to a separate family, who brought their own poor bedding and camped upon the floor as best they could. Even for the better-to-do the arrangements were of a very primitive simplicity, widely different from the luxury that prevails at a fashionable watering-place of the present day, but perhaps our manner of life was to the full as enjoyable.

Some of our friends had seaside houses which they occupied during those summer weeks, but for the most part we contented ourselves with such lodgings as the Sea Road afforded, and our difficulties and the shifts to which we were put only afforded merriment to ourselves and our neighbours, with whom we lived in a sort of perpetual picnic.

Every one bathed in the mornings, or was supposed to do so, and sundry elderly gentlemen used to establish themselves on the low wall between the road and the beach and exchange salutations from thence with their acquaintance in the water.

"Good day, Mrs D'Arcy, glad to see you," it used to be, "I hope you find yourself well this morning, ma'am." This to a portly matron who was disporting herself in the waves.

It was said that all the scandals of the County



Galway were hatched at this *al fresco* club, for which reason the favourite and most frequented coign on the sea-wall was known as Calumny Corner.

Sibby was the name of the high-priestess who presided over the bathing rites. She waded out into the sea to give screaming infants the three dips, head downwards, which were the approved method of introducing children to the delights of bathing. Those of more mature growth who were timorous of venturing themselves into the briny deep she encouraged by bidding them seat themselves on the margin and pouring a bucket of sea-water on their heads, as a foretaste of the joys awaiting them. There were but few bathing-boxes, and if any bathers prolonged their dip beyond what Sibby considered reasonable, she would bestow a resounding smack upon them as they emerged all dripping from the water, accompanying it by a torrent of abuse for having kept the box so long from the others who waited for it. A shower-bath could be had in a shanty hard by, and only the initiated knew that the motive-power needful to raise the water to overhead level was supplied by Sibby's son, who mounted a ladder outside and emptied a pail of water down at the critical moment. Once, indeed, a lady, having pulled the string and waiting in vain for the expected douche, heard instead a deep voice overhead—

"A thrifle more to the wesht, I'll trouble ye, me lady."

She rushed forth, horrified and indignant, to confront Sibby.

"Ach, whisht!" said the latter with supreme unconcern, "it's only me son Patsy, an' who'd be mindin' him."

Another time an English lady on a visit to Galway demanded a tepid shower-bath.

"An' what might that be, ma'am?" demanded Sibby, to whom such flowers of speech were unknown.

"Tepid? Why, half hot and half cold, to be sure," was the impatient reply.

The lady undressed and, all unsuspecting, pulled the string. Down came a deluge of scalding water upon her.

"Let me out! let me out!" she screamed in alarm. "It was a tepid bath that I asked for."

"Sure ye said that 'twas half hot and half could that 'twas to be, an' here's the could for ye," as another pailful was emptied down.

Five o'clock was the recognised hour for dinner in those days, and once, when we had lingered unduly over that meal, I remember the heated and indignant slavey of the lodgings bursting into the room. "Are yez not done with the plates yit?" she demanded. "Mrs Lynch downstairs is waitin' for her turn of them, nor Father Connor can't git his supper till he has the knives."

After dinner every one turned out to walk up and down the Sea Road, and we finished up the day either by bringing our friends home to drink tea with us or by drinking tea with them. If the number of guests at any house exceeded the supply of teacups, some of the invited ran to their own lodgings and brought back a reinforcement from thence.

The most exciting times that were witnessed in the old "Citie of the Tribes" were when an election was in progress. The court-house in Galway was the only polling-place, not only for the borough of Galway but also for the county, and the voters had to be transported thither from the most distant and inaccessible parts of that extensive region. A county election, therefore, commonly lasted six weeks, and during all that time the town was in a turmoil. Skirmishes and encounters took place at every street corner, and troops of dragoons galloped up and down dispersing riotous mobs. Special distinction was won on these occasions by the men of the Claddagh—the fishing village upon the western bank of the Galway river, whose inhabitants are said to descend from Spanish colonists who settled there in the old days when there was constant intercourse between Spain and Galway. Though fallen from their old estate of merchant-adventurers to be no more than a race of fishermen, the men of the Claddagh retained no little of Spanish arrogance and pride of bearing, together



with their unmistakable Southern mien. They held scornfully aloof from their Irish neighbours, suffering no stranger to dwell within their gates, governed there according to their own customs by a sovereign of their own election, and marrying only with those of their own clan. They spoke a dialect of their own, a peculiar, harsh-sounding Irish, hardly understood by the other inhabitants of Galway, and rarely sent their children to school. They paid no taxes, by what right was unknown, and still obeyed that emphatic injunction of the Galway Council, framed centuries before, that fishermen should not take in hand spade nor harrow, for they neither held nor cultivated any land, and relied solely upon fishing for their support. They held absolute sway over Galway Bay, only going out to fish when it so pleased themselves, and not suffering any one else to do so when they preferred to idle ashore, even though the waters might be swarming with fish. In their everyday attire the Claddagh fishermen wore wide trousers rendered waterproof by a compost of boiled potatoes and fish-oil, liberally smeared on, which did not render their close proximity too agreeable. On great occasions, however, such as elections, they turned out in full force wearing their distinctive holiday dress, coats and waistcoats of bright blue frieze, adorned with large white buttons, knee-breeches of the same, tied at the knees with blue ribbons, and stockings of blue worsted. What was of more consequence than their dress, they

came out armed with slings, with which they hurled stones with an accuracy of aim that made it perilous for any voter on the side opposed to theirs to venture across the street. Round the court-house itself the wildest scenes took place, one side endeavouring to convoy its supporters inside the building, the other dragging them out again by force,—sticks were whirled, yells and imprecations resounded on all sides, and every now and again a sudden charge of cavalry scattered the combatants like chaff before the wind.

The rival candidates were always two gentlemen of the county belonging to the different camps of Whig and Tory, as those distinctions were then understood, and their friends and neighbours took sides according to their opinions and proclivities. The political opinions of a Galway landlord were of some importance in those days, when he brought all his tenants and retainers with him to the poll to swell the votes on his side. I well remember seeing my grandfather ride forth from our house at the head of a troop of voters eighty strong, mounted on cart-horses, on mares with foals running beside them, and on mountain colts with unkempt manes and fetlocks.

It was said that sometimes when landlords suspected their tenants of not following them with a whole heart they rode at the heels, instead of at the head, of their forces, to flick the steeds of unwilling voters along the road. Such cases were, however, I

think, of not very frequent occurrence, as in general the tenants made the landlord's cause their own. Whig and Tory were words of unknown import to them; but they flourished their blackthorns and broke each other's heads with as much zest and goodwill as if they had been engaged in a faction fight of their own.

In return for the support which the tenants gave their landlords at election times, the latter were expected to stand by them if by ill chance they should find themselves in any trouble which involved a compulsory appearance before the bench of magistrates at petty sessions, or even before judge and jury at the assizes. Of one friend and neighbour of ours it was confidently asserted by his dependents, "If a man was on the gallows itself, the masher would get him down."

Our political proclivities were not the same as those of our Connemara kinsfolk. They were Whigs, while our branch of the family had always been consistently Tory, and held the claims of party as stronger than those of kindred. Such ardent politicians indeed were we all that I can recall the entire family, grown-ups as well as children, standing in a row on our hall-door steps, vehemently shaking our fists in the direction in which we imagined London to lie, as a defiance to Lord Melbourne and his Whig Government. Except, however, in the very heat and stress of election time, these differences of opinion had no effect on our friendly footing with our relatives; and



indeed when once an election was over, it was wonderful how quickly all the animosities it had aroused were forgotten, and good fellowship once more reigned throughout the county.

It must have been at the last election which Thomas Martin contested before his death in 1847, that very confident hopes were entertained by the Tories of unseating him and his Whig colleague, and of returning two Tories in their places. A relative of ours, who had a house in the town, and whose views were the same as our own, threw herself heart and soul into the fray. Her house was decked from top to bottom with true-blue Tory streamers. Regardless of mobs and riots, she drove herself every day about the streets in her pony carriage, her ponies' heads and her own bonnet decked with Tory favours—and ladies' bonnets in those days afforded ample space for the display of party colours. Moreover, she prepared a sumptuous repast, and somewhat rashly proclaimed that she would therewith regale "the sitting members for Galway" after their victory. The last day of the poll came; but alas! when the count-up was complete, the Whigs were found to be once more in the ascendant. A very dispirited and dejected knot of county politicians had gathered in our relative's house that night, when there was a resounding knock at the door, and Thomas Martin and his brother Whig member walked in.

"We're the sitting members for Galway," they said, "and we've come to eat your dinner."

And so they did ; and a right merry party they were, though the rest of the company consisted of those who had done their utmost to prevent the return of those particular "sitting members."

Many indeed were the happy holiday visits we paid to our relatives at Ballinahinch, their home in the heart of Connemara. The hospitality was unbounded, and the cheer such as could not be provided nowadays by prince or peer. Little that was not home-grown figured on the board—venison from the red-deer on the mountains, salmon, oysters, and lobsters from the fisheries in the land-locked harbours, whilst to accompany this abundant fare there was claret and port landed within those same harbours, and potheen distilled in the mountain fastnesses, not a drop of which had paid dues to king or gauger.

When Charles Bianconi established the public car which ran daily from Galway to Clifden, Thomas Martin used to send his servant every evening to await the car's arrival, and to compel any stranger of decent appearance upon it to come to his hospitable mansion as a guest. Thomas Martin was wont to declare that the most tedious time of the day was the quarter of an hour's waiting before dinner ; he therefore appointed that hour for family prayers. The company were always the guests staying in the house, for there were no other resident gentry within twenty Irish miles round about, and it was to them in their evening dress that Thomas Martin used to

read prayers. Two favourite terriers were always present, and their gambols and squabbles whilst family worship was proceeding were sometimes a trial to the gravity of the auditors. If their goings-on became too obstreperous, Thomas Martin, a man of gigantic stature and great strength, would grasp a dog with each of his large hands and thrust them one under each arm, where he held them in chancery, continuing unconcernedly to read the while, unconscious of the struggle which we, who fronted him in a long row, had to keep our risible muscles in control. His servant, who as a Catholic took no part in the devotions, stood bolt upright at the door whilst they were in progress. To us upon our knees it seemed that at the end "Amen dinner Gallagher" came all in one breath.

Our favourite expedition was always a boating-party up the chain of lakes that wind through the wildest of those mountain passes. Mary Martin, Thomas Martin's only child and heiress, who knew every rock and stone within those lakes as she did the palm of her own hand, stood in the bow directing our course, and at the head of each lake the peasantry, forewarned of our coming, were assembled in crowds, greeting us with shouts and demonstrations of welcome. They carried the boat shoulder high across the narrow strip of intervening land, and launched it in the lake next beyond, at the end of which another similar portage took place till the final goal of our voyage far up Glen Inagh was



reached. On one of these visits of ours Mary Martin, who in jest was styled the Princess of Connemara, took one of our party to the top of the mountain that overhangs Ballinahinch, and bidding her look around, told her that all that she could see, mountains and lakes and indented coast-line, was all her father's and hers.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## VALE.

ANOTHER of my earliest recollections is of the wedding of the only son of one of our nearest neighbours. The bride lived on the other side of Lough Corrib, the long, narrow lake which separates Connemara and Iar-Connaught from the rest of the County Galway, and according to general custom the newly married couple were to take up their abode with the bridegroom's parents in the old family home. The bridegroom himself crossed the lake by the ferry to Headfort for the wedding ceremony ; but his father and mother drove the lengthy round in a cabriolet, then the most fashionable form of conveyance. It was a hooded gig, with a board hung on at the back, intended for a powdered lackey to stand upon. How such a modish equipage had found its way into our western wilds I do not know, but it had been arranged that after the wedding breakfast the bridegroom should drive his newly wedded wife home in the cabriolet, while his parents remained for a few days' visit to

those of the bride—no further honeymoon being considered necessary. When, however, the hour of departure arrived, the youthful bride was seized with a sudden fit of shyness, and declared that nothing would induce her to set out alone with “a strange man.” Entreaties and persuasions were all in vain.

“It was quite pretty of her, poor dear,” the old lady said, retailing the story to us afterwards; “but she vowed nothing would induce her to go with George, unless his father and I came too.”

Nothing remained, therefore, but for the old couple to mount again into the cabriolet, and take the bride to sit bodkin between them, whilst the happy bridegroom, *faute de mieux*, had to seat himself behind on the board intended for the lackey’s feet. The town of Galway occupies the narrow neck between the southern end of Lough Corrib and the sea, and in this fashion did the bridal party drive through the streets, with the bridegroom’s long legs trailing in the mud behind him.

Lough Corrib cut us dwellers in Iar-Connaught off from much of the social life of the county; but there was nothing perhaps which we as a family regretted so much as that it precluded our becoming followers of the hounds, or taking any share in the hunting for which Galway was famous then as now, save when we might chance to be invited to some hospitable mansion upon the other side of the water for a meet or hunt-breakfast. I remember one of



my aunts returning in deep disgust from one such visit. "The men," she declared, "were hunting the fox, but the women were hunting James Daly,"—the heir to an old Galway estate, who had made his first appearance in the hunting-field after his return from the Grand Tour, then considered an indispensable part of the education of every young man of position.

Women did, however, hunt in more legitimate fashion and with more zeal than this judgment would imply—as one member of the Galway hunt found to his cost. A lady's pommel broke as she was jumping a wall, and she came somewhat heavily to the ground. A man who rode up dismounted gallantly to assist her. What, however, was his dismay when the distressed fair one, having regained her feet, gathered about her the trailing skirt which ladies in the early 'Forties rode in, and scrambled nimbly on to his horse. Sitting sideways on his saddle, she rode the run out, taking every fence like a bird, whilst her rescuer was left standing disconsolate, staring blankly after her.

The *coup-d'œil* of a Galway meet sixty years ago would make a modern up-to-date sportsman stare. The business side of hunting, the art of riding to show off or sell a mount, was unthought of then: it was for sport, and for sport alone, that the followers of the hunt came together. Girls were there in skirts innocent of the tailor's art, which had been originally fashioned for other wear than in the

hunting-field; men in country-built suits,—but all prepared to ride to the utmost. Shaggy and ill-groomed many of the horses might be, but it was wonderful how they could negotiate the notable stone walls of Galway; and to prevent the scuffing of knees and fetlocks against these obstructions, many riders, regardless of appearance, had those parts bound about with swathings of cloth and felt, more or less artistically tied round them. When a covert proved blank, word was passed round where the next draw was to be; and a scurry and scamper across country ensued, and many an impromptu point-to-point race was thus ridden.

Every one has heard of the Galway Blazers, but few know how that far-famed pack came by its name. In the earlier part of the last century, not long after the Galway Hunt had been established, the Master received a hospitable invitation to come over the border into Clare with hounds and huntsmen, and to bring as many of the followers of the pack as chose to bear him company, for a day's hunting. The sport was of the best: of the best, too, was the feasting which followed. Too good, indeed, it is to be feared, was it; for in the small hours of the morning the hospitable mansion which had given shelter to the Hunt was discovered to be ablaze, and as none of the company were capable of rendering efficient aid to extinguish it, they had even to let it blaze till it was burnt to the ground. It was as the Blazers that the Hunt returned to

Galway, and the Galway Blazers they have been ever since.

One of the Masters of those early days who is still had in remembrance, and of whom many stories are told, was John Dennis, a keen sportsman, a fearless and daring rider, and withal the kindest of men. He never indulged in the vituperation which is considered more befitting to M.F.H.'s than to ordinary mortals. His sister was to the full as zealous for sport as he was himself, and as unfailing in her appearance in the hunting-field; and it was to her he used to address himself when rebuke was needed. "Hold hard, Isabella!" he would shout if any over-ardent spirits were pressing unduly on the hounds. Isabella might be half a field off and guiltless of trespass; but she understood, and so did the Hunt.

His forbearance in this respect incurred the contempt of an English groom who had recently taken service in Galway, and who had been accustomed to a more forcible code of objurgatives. "'E ain't got no way with him," he declared indignantly, "with his 'May I trouble you to move?' and 'Would you kindly stand to one side?' Where I comes from it's 'Hi! you bloomin' fool on a bay 'oss, d'ye think ye're stuck there for an ornament?' or 'Go to — out o' that, and crack yer whip there!'"

John Dennis's favourite hunter was Ghuznee, a black horse of eighteen hands, so wicked that he had been given to him because no one else dared



ride him. Dennis was wont to mount him blindfolded and in the stable: he always rode him with a cheekbit nearly a foot long, but I think he rarely made use of the power this gave him. Once riding Ghuznee in a steeplechase in the county Cork, he was leading when, half-way round the course, his left rein broke. John Dennis, however, was not the man to give in for such a trifle, and with his whip he steered Ghuznee in to victory.

He had another horse called Almansor, which was what is known as moonblind—that is to say, he was more blind at certain times than at others. He had entered Almansor for a point-to-point race near the town of Galway, and on the day of the race, when he rode out upon the course, a friend sidled up to him and inquired in an anxious undertone—

“How’s the horse to-day, John?”

“Very bad,” was the whispered answer.

“But surely you won’t ride him; you may come to most serious grief,” remonstrated the friend.

“Well, you see, the fellows have their money on,” Dennis returned; “I’m bound to make the best fight I can for them.”

The course marked out was a desperate one, natural, not artificial, over wellnigh thirty stone walls, and walls such as are only built on the stony lands surrounding Galway, where the object is quite as much to dispose of the superabundant stones as to construct a fence. Almansor kneed one or two of the walls, but John Dennis, by sheer strength and

horsemanship, absolutely lifted him over those formidable obstructions and brought him in second.

A well-known figure in the hunting-field in those days was Corny Kilkelly, one of the class known in Ireland as squireens, the best definition of which may be that given us by Sally Forth, already mentioned,—"the very best of commonalty, jist next to quality." However that may be, there could be no doubt that Corny was a thorough good fellow, a hard rider, who knew a good horse when he saw one, and was seldom without that most desirable possession himself. It chanced once that the hunt had to traverse a plantation, fenced as such enclosures usually are in Ireland by a loose-built stone wall, topped by a rusty wire, from which there was but one practicable gap. At this strategic point Corny's horse, a new acquisition, inconveniently swerved, whirled round, and fell to bucking and kicking in a fashion that not only was exasperating to his rider, but effectually blocked the egress of the rest of the field, who, bottled up to the rear, had to look on at the battle with such calm as they could, and at the hounds, followed by those few who had had the luck to emerge previously, streaming away across the fields. An Englishman, lately come to live on the confines of the county, who was unknown by sight to Corny, as Corny was to him, lost his temper, and broke into maledictions on horse and rider, more vigorous even than were justified by the situation.

"What d'ye call yerself?" roared back Corny,

still holding the gap against all comers on his plunging steed. "If there's any mumber of this hunt will say ye're a gintleman, I'll horse-whip ye meself."

One constant and well-known Blazer had a mare, a trifle touched in the wind, but hard to beat none the less. He rode her to a standstill in one hard run, till she foundered under him in a ditch. As he disengaged himself, somewhat crestfallen, from his stirrups, John Dennis on Ghuznee thundered past.

"Give her that, my boy, and she'll be all right in a trice!" he shouted, tossing him a phial from his waistcoat pocket.

The potion was duly administered, but failed of the magical and instantaneous effect hoped for.

Another of the field, coming up, slackened speed to inquire into the nature of the disaster, whereupon the dismounted rider, not to be baulked of his sport, vaulted up behind him, after the fashion in which the Knights Templars depicted themselves as riding, and the two men rode the last three miles of one of the fastest runs on record together, and finished in at the death. The feat is remembered in Galway to this day.

I can recall receiving a much-prized invitation to accompany some of the older members of the family to a hospitable friend's house for the occasion of a meet. Unfortunately, however, the weather on the important day proved of the worst,—too tempestuous for even a Galway foxhunter to venture out in. As the disconsolate Nimrods lounged idly in the



drawing-room, sorely at a loss how to employ themselves, one of them was wearily turning over the books that lay upon the table, in the somewhat forlorn hope of extracting amusement therefrom.

"Poetry!" he said in tones of disgust, as he took up one volume, a Shakespeare as it chanced. "Now, who wants to read stuff of that sort? Oh, come, though"—with rekindled interest—"here's something that sounds better. The Taming of the Screw—now that might be worth reading."

Whilst on the subject of sport, I may here remark that in those old days, though grouse-drives and the colossal battues of the present day were unknown, yet there were possibilities of rough shooting such as are undreamt of now. John Dennis backed himself on one occasion to shoot forty brace of snipe in a day, without a dog. He was scoffed at for his boast, but he accomplished the feat before luncheon, walking up the birds himself—and be it remembered that all guns were muzzle-loaders then.

In those days Lisdoonvarna was in its earliest infancy as a watering-place. It only boasted of one hotel, or rather inn, of very modest dimensions, and the accommodation which this could afford was often severely overtaxed during the summer months. When all the beds had been disposed of, shakedown were made up upon the tables, and indeed a table was often made to serve as a double-decker, one guest sleeping upon it and another

underneath. After one unusually large influx of visitors, an English tourist who desired to catch the morning coach from Ennis, and had therefore ordered an early breakfast for himself, was fuming and stamping impatiently in the hall. "What's keeping breakfast?" he broke out at last angrily; "I ordered it overnight." "Ye can't have breakfast yit," was the unperturbed response; "his rivirence is not off the table."

There were, however, lower depths to be sounded than even a bed upon the dining-room table. Amongst the latest arrivals the previous evening had been no less a personage than the Master of the Galway Blazers, not John Dennis, but his successor. Even M.F.H.'s, however, must bow to the exigencies of circumstances, and, as the dinner-table was already clerically occupied, the kitchen-table had needs to be requisitioned. A heterogeneous collection of bedclothes was arranged upon it, into the exact nature of which it was perhaps well not to inquire too closely, as it seemed to be composed of contributions from the wardrobes of the landlady and her underlings, and the pillow was an oddly shaped substance, enveloped in many wrappings, but emitting a faint and strangely familiar smell. The Master was too weary to concern himself over such trifles, and he slept as soundly upon his makeshift couch as if it had been a canopied bed of state. He was awakened in the morning by a gentle fumbling at the wrappings

beside his head, and started up to see a gleaming knife suspended above him.

"I'm sorry to be disturbin' ye, sir," said an apologetic voice, "but sure the house was out of pillows intirely, an' we put the side of bacon under your honour's head. I was jist conthrivin' to get a few rashers off for the quality's breakfast without disturbin' ye, whin ye woke."

This Master long ruled the Blazers, and was most deservedly popular amongst his followers. He suffered, however, from a double infirmity—he could never go to bed at any reasonable hour or get up betimes in the morning. Whenever, therefore, he put up at a friend's house upon the night before a meet, it was regarded as part of his host's duty to get him out of bed in proper time, even if it were necessary to adopt the forcible means of tumbling him on to the floor. Once, however, the meet was upon his own lawn. There had been a terrible night of wind and storm, but none the less a goodly muster of sportsmen gathered with the hounds and huntsmen at the appointed hour in front of the Master's dwelling. Of the Master himself there was, however, no sign. At last, after long and weary waiting, a window upon an upper storey was thrown up, and a head, adorned with the red flannel nightcap with dangling tassel which elderly gentlemen then wore, was protruded, leisurely contemplating the animated scene below.



There was an immediate chorus of angry and impatient shouts. "Come down out of that! Do you want us to be hunting by moonlight?"

"Begad, boys, it's easy for you to be travelling so early," rejoined the Master from his altitude. "If you'd all been lying as I have with the weight of a chimney on top of you half the night you'd not be so full of talk."

It was quite true. A chimney had crashed down during the night into the Master's bedroom. Happily the principal portion had been caught and upheld by the rafters, and the smaller fragments had fallen wide, scattering harmlessly over the floor; but the Master had not troubled himself to change his couch, and had only turned on his side and slumbered peacefully on.

Like his predecessor, John Dennis, he too had a favourite hunter which had been bought out of a hack car in Dublin. He had just seated himself on the car at Carlisle Bridge when the horse took fright and incontinently ran away the whole of the long length of Sackville Street. "He was within a pip of taking Nelson's Pillar along with him," the Master said afterwards; but when the steed's wild career was checked at the Rotunda, he turned to the jarvey and said, "My man, that animal had you nearly killed that time; most likely he'll kill you outright the next run he takes; you'd best sell him to me."

And there and then the bargain was struck,

and he bought him from between the shafts at a very small price. A splendid horse he turned out to be—very fast, but a desperate puller. Once or twice the Master rode him upon what was called a gridiron-bit in those days—an instrument warranted to bring the most headstrong horse to reason; but once or twice of the treatment sufficed, and ever after he rode him on the snaffle.

This Master of the Blazers had a van-and-four in which he drove the hounds to the meets in state, generally handling the reins himself. The van served a double purpose, for on Sundays he took the cover off, placed benches inside, and drove his whole household to church in it. On one occasion as he was driving the hounds home after a day's sport a wheel came off, the unwieldy machine toppled over and broke, and a yelping, clamorous torrent poured forth. An unhappy mule, which was grazing close by, frightened by the sudden uproar, squealed loudly, kicked up its heels, and dashed away in a panic. That panic was its undoing, for in a trice the whole hungry pack were after it full cry, and at the end of a mad run the poor brute was pulled down, torn to pieces, and devoured. The Master and one or two friends, who had sent their hunters home and taken seats upon the van, were obliged to unharness the four horses and ride them home barebacked, leaving the broken-down van by the roadside.

There were no leaden weights in those days such

as men of slender build carry now on their saddles when riding a race. The custom was to procure a large post-bag, and to pour shot into it till it turned the scale at the requisite point. This the unhappy jockey had to carry slung upon his back while he rode. The old racecourse at Ballyglunin was four Irish miles round, and this Master of the Blazers, by no means young, but small and spare, rode at one race-meeting three races upon the same day, twelve miles in all, carrying three stone of shot upon his back.

Once, as the field were jogging through the town of Tuam on their way from covert to covert, one titled member of the hunt dropped out of the line. "I've a trifle of business to transact," he said, and disappeared into the local bank. When he rejoined the hunt it was with an air of much satisfaction. "I did good business there, boys; I got five hundred out of them," and stooping down he extracted notes to the value of £250 out of the top of one of his hunting-boots, and then a similar sum out of the other. Reynard took to the water during the run that followed and swam across a river. Forgetful of all else in the excitement of the moment, the noble lord who had been so lately enriched was one of the first to plunge in gallantly in his wake. Instantly there were frantic shouts from all the rest of the field: "For heaven's sake, man, mind what you're about, or there'll be an end of you and your five hundred!" However, on arriving on the



farther bank the notes, though somewhat moist, were still safe.

All masters of hounds and secretaries of hunts have known the worry of apportioning hen-money amongst the many just and unjust claimants for it, but probably not many have had it demanded of them in such grandiloquent terms as were employed on Bridget Coolahan's behalf in a document which now lies before me. Written on thin paper, yellow with age, and wreathed round with pen flourishes, it is headed "Ecce Iterum," as if to show that Latin was as familiar to the writer as caligraphy and the loftier heights of the English language.

"HONORED SIR," it runs,—"The Bearer, Bridget Coolahan, has come by a very great Loss. That infernal insidious Quadruped (vulgarly called a fox) Proverbial for his Machiavelianism, has in his nocturnal Perambulations converted the poor woman's poultry-yard into a scene of Mortality. No less than 13 of her fowl has fell victims to his insatiable ungovernable fury. She places her affiance in your well-known Benevolence, and expects that you will make good her loss."

An elderly relative of ours, with whom we often stayed, lived in an out-of-the-way and scantily inhabited part of the county. She was an old lady of stern resolve, a social doyenne in the region where she dwelt. There was another old family

residence in her neighbourhood which, owing to a Chancery suit, had lain untenanted and derelict for many years. The law at last adjudged it to a widow lady, a stranger to the West, who arrived there imbued with a vast sense of her own importance and position. The coverts within the demesne, like all else, had been grievously neglected; but according to the new owner foxes absolutely swarmed there, and her ambitions were set upon a lawn-meet of the Blazers. This, however, she could not compass; the Master was not to be cajoled into bringing the hounds down to a remote part of the county with only a very dubious chance of sport when they got there. She was therefore constrained to approach the owner of a private pack of considerably less lustre than the Blazers, who hunted an outlying part of the country at this time, and who did not, if there were no foxes, disdain to have a run after a hare. This gentleman proved more amenable than the Master of the Blazers, and he willingly consented to bring his hounds over for the contemplated lawn-meet.

The meet duly took place. Immediately afterwards, however, it was perceived by those in the locality that the widow had ceased to hold intercourse (and was, indeed, "dead cuts," as the phrase went with us) with another family in the vicinity who lived some three or four miles away, nearer the confines of the wilder and more mountainous part of the country, whose head was a staunch sports-

man and straight rider to hounds. No one save themselves knew what the cause of quarrel had been, but in a region where there were very few resident gentry it was highly inconvenient that two of the families could not be invited simultaneously on occasions of festivity. Our old cousin declared that she was not going to tolerate any nonsense of that sort in the neighbourhood, and that she was determined to get to the bottom of the matter, when in all probability it would be found that a little friendly mediation and diplomacy was all that was needed to set matters right. Accordingly she made her way over to the widow and boldly inquired as to the cause of the feud. The widow's answer was prompt and uncompromising. Never, never would she speak to her fox-hunting neighbour again; had he not out of sheer jealousy and of malice aforethought contrived to ruin her lawn-meet. She proceeded to relate how this false friend had brought a dog in a bag with him to her meet. The dog's feet had been smeared with aniseed or some other strong-smelling stuff, and at a convenient moment the captive had been enlarged. He had naturally made for home at the utmost speed with which his legs could carry him thither, and in so doing had laid a trail which the hounds had straightway hit off and hunted, and had thus been lured away from her covert, where the find ought to have taken place, and where, as it would seem, the foxes sat idly



on their tails, yearning for the excitement of a run.

My relative indignantly refused to believe that one of our oldest friends could have behaved in such an unneighbourly and reprehensible fashion, and she drove off to his house to tell him the story, and to afford him the opportunity of giving it an immediate and unqualified denial. Far from doing so, however, our friend admitted the impeachment with the utmost equanimity. He averred that he had not been actuated by any unworthy desire to bring the hunt about his own doors, but that it was the Master of the visiting pack who had himself suggested the expedient of the dog, as he had not felt disposed to journey so far without a reasonable prospect of sport. Our friend made no pretence of owning a fox-covert, but hares abounded upon the stony hillsides of his demesne, and, despite the widow's loud asseverations, it was generally believed that she had not got a fox upon her lands. The Master and he had therefore decided by secret agreement that a dog was to be brought over, properly prepared, and was to be let loose in case of need to provide the hunt with a straight run to his own house, in the environs of which puss was fairly certain to be found at home. Unhappily the dog had succeeded in prematurely wriggling out of captivity, even before the hounds had gone through the farce of drawing the widow's covert, but our friend assured my grandmother that this

*contretemps* had only saved the hunt an hour's waste of time.

The old lady had certainly heard both sides of the story, but to the best of my belief all her efforts to patch up a truce proved of no avail.

Whilst I was still very young, I was invited, in company with two of my cousins, of whom one was of my own age and the other some years older, to pay a visit at a hospitable mansion, the owner of which was a very old lady, almost stone-deaf. She lived entirely in her own rooms, and but seldom appeared, leaving it to her son and his wife to do the honours. My younger cousin and myself were installed in the same room, which contained an enormous fourpost bed, whilst the elder girl was given a room to herself. Like every other family home in Galway with any pretension to antiquity, this house had the reputation of being haunted, and during our first evening beneath its roof the conversation turned upon ghostly apparitions and visitants. We were told of the banshee that belonged to this particular family—a little old woman, bent and hooded, who appeared sobbing and wringing her hands before the death of any of its members. So small was she that more than once those to whom she had appeared had taken her for a child in distress, till suddenly an old eldritch face had peered up at the affrighted beholder. The result of these narrations was that we went up to bed in a very eerie frame of mind. I and my bed-

fellow were trying to put disquieting thoughts out of our heads and to compose ourselves to sleep, when the door of our room opened and my other cousin appeared, candle and book in hand. Her overwrought fancy had conjured up sounds that had terrified her; she had heard a dragging footstep approaching her door, and hands rattling at its handle. She declared that she could not, and would not, sleep in that house alone; and she insisted, despite our remonstrances, on making a third in the fourpost bed, lying sardine-fashion between us with her head at the foot of the bed. Even now sleep was impossible to her, and she said she would read awhile, placing the brass candlestick for convenience upon her own chest.

Twelve o'clock had just sounded with long reverberating strokes from the clock upon the stairs when the door opened once again, very slowly and gradually, and an old bent figure came in. It had a dark drapery over its head, and carried something very carefully in both hands. With one wild shriek of terror my cousin hurled the candlestick with all her might at the apparition, and plunged down beneath the bedclothes. There was an answering scream of even greater terror, a crash and splash, and the thud of a heavy fall, whilst we were left in total darkness, since the candle had been extinguished. There were no matches in those days, and whilst one of us younger girls strove with fumbling fingers to get a light from the



tinderbox, the other groped equally futilely in the embers of the turf fire, and all the while there were little gasps and moans coming from the floor, where the intruder, manifestly too solid to be a ghost, had fallen. The mystery was only solved by the arrival of some of the household who had been roused by the noise and had come to see what was the matter. The visitant was none other than our hostess herself, who, having heard from her maid that one of us had caught a heavy cold, had prepared a hot drink with her own kindly hands and come to administer it. It was almost impossible to explain to the poor old deaf lady why she should have been accorded such a reception by her young guests.

The most notable event of our youth, however, was the battle between the Martins and the O'Flaherties. We were not very actively concerned, the combatants being Thomas Martin, our kinsman and member for the county, and George O'Flahertie, descendant of the "Ferocious O'Flaherties," for deliverance from whom the citizens of Galway used in olden days to pray.

The point at issue was a strip of bog, of no particular value, which lay between his estate and which was laid claim to by both. A few waste acres more or less, in those great tracts of mountain and bog and heather, would not have seemed of any great consequence; but family pride and family honour were held to be involved, and instead

of seeking a settlement of the dispute in a court of law, after the modern and prosaic fashion, the belligerents mustered their tenants, and marched down upon the debatable land, where with spades, flails, and graips a most furious battle was fought. Thomas Martin, who was a man of gigantic proportions and herculean strength, led his forces into action himself. He did not, indeed, avail himself of any weapon save his fists, but with those he dealt sledge-hammer blows upon the enemy.

News came to us of the battle in progress, and my grandfather drove off at top speed in his gig to endeavour to stop the affray. Just as he reached the scene of conflict the lacework, unmortared wall that fenced the bog went down flat upon the road, with all the O'Fflaherties tumbling behind it, in headlong rout before the Martins, who remained in triumphant possession of the field of battle.

Both leaders were brought to trial for riot and disturbance of the peace. Thomas Martin, who had taken the most prominent part in the encounter, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment in Galway jail; while George O'Fflahertie, who had done somewhat less doughty deeds, was let off with half that penalty.

Thomas Martin's confinement was not made unduly irksome to him. The governor of the jail hastened to place his residence at the county member's disposal, and his friends were allowed to visit him without let or hindrance. He gave

dinner-parties nightly to all the neighbouring gentry, and was wont to declare afterwards that he had never enjoyed himself more than within jail walls. Nor did his incarceration lower him in the least in the eyes of the electors. He returned straightway from prison to the House of Commons, where he continued to represent the County Galway till his death in the black year of '47.

He died of the famine fever, as did so many of his own order in those evil days, for the pestilence which hunger had engendered infected rich and poor with its deadly breath. Before his death he had piled yet more debt on his already burdened estate to buy meal for his starving tenantry, and the fatal disease was contracted by a visit which he paid to those of them who lay stricken with the fever in the wards of the Clifden work-house. His last words ere he turned his face to the wall were: "Oh, my God, what will become of my poor people."

He lies buried in the Franciscan abbey in Galway, and on a dank dreary afternoon we stood at our gate in the rain to see our kinsman's funeral go by. Scarcely any one followed him to his grave; the peasantry who had revered him were dying by hundreds upon the mountain-sides; the gentlemen of Galway were too intent on measures to save those of their own people who still remained alive to have leisure to pay respect to the dead, even to the last Squire of Connemara,



with whose passing an epoch ended. The English insurance company which held the mortgages upon his vast estates foreclosed them, and Mary Martin, after supporting herself for a time chiefly by her pen, died upon the other side of the Atlantic, far from her mountain home and the people over whom her fathers had ruled for nearly two hundred years.

Those two deaths were but a drop in an ocean of tragedy.

THE END.

to create a rural civilisation with an organisation which will bring to the country dwellers something of the intellectual pleasures so easily procured in big towns? It is not impossible, if the will <sup>and looking</sup> at industrial problems by Delegates from various countries, speaking various among those connected with industry in any capacity. extends to nearly thirty countries and is drawn from later. Membership in this organisation already French, and German. All the speeches were trans- periences. Three languages were used, English, America, India, Japan—pooled their views and ex- munity. Delegates from an over the world.

to maintain that the objections are based entirely on the fact that under this system the minority obtains their fair share of Parliamentary representation. The old constituencies were awkward to handle; they tended to eliminate the personal element in politics which counts as much in the North as in the South; even powerful and well-equipped organisations found it difficult to keep in touch with their supporters or rouse interest in regard to disputed issues. Lord Craigavon and his Ministers could make a strong case for their decision to return to single-member constituencies, but they have done their best to destroy their own arguments by the manner in which they propose to effect the change. In Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh the new divisions, instead of being more compact, struggle fantastically across a country area with a complete disregard of geographical considerations or of the convenience of voters. So obvious is the plan to weight the balance against Nationalists that even the Unionist Press does not defend the redistribution scheme on its merits, and contents itself with denouncing P.R., though the merits or demerits of the system are entirely apart from the question of whether the new areas have been fairly delimited. Fortunately there is ground for thinking that in spite of all the ingenuity displayed by Lord Craigavon's experts, the strength of the National League will not be sensibly reduced in the new Parliament, and such advantages as the official party may gain will be mainly at the expense of Labour and the Independent Unionists.

**T**ROTSKY has hung aside the cloak of mystery and taken the world into his confidence in a series of articles as to causes of the quarrel with Stalin and his colleagues which led to his expul-



Immediately a darkness descended upon the earth, so that no man could see an inch before his eyes. The soldiers, confused and alarmed, began to fight among themselves. Many were killed. With his remaining followers the King fled to Tara.

But the savage ruler was not yet completely vanquished. On the following day, Easter, he again ordered St. Patrick to be brought before him. He offered the Saint, in apparent friendliness, a cup from which to drink. Suspecting that it contained poison, St. Patrick blessed it, whereupon the contents solidified and when he turned the vessel over the congealed mass fell out. Then the cup filled with clear spring water.

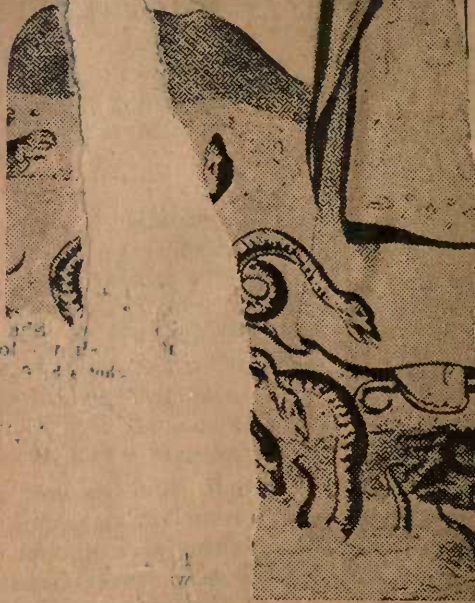
There were many who doubted the power of St. Patrick's God. A Druid priest, watching the clouds and elements, announced that he could cause snow to fall. He murmured an incantation and shortly afterwards a white blanket covered the land. St. Patrick said: "Thou canst perhaps do evil, but no good." He then blessed the land and the snow melted in a trice. The pagans were greatly impressed.

The story about how St. Patrick and the shamrock are connected is one of most engaging in all Irish folk-lore. It appears that the Saint, who was gaining a larger following, was having difficulty explaining to his people the Holy Trinity. He looked about him for a helpful illustration.

One day he picked a shamrock, a three-leafed plant, and showed those who gathered around how the three small leaves grew on one stalk and made up the complete leaf; and how they were equal in all respects as to size and shape. He pointed out how the Trinity consisted of Three Persons—equal—and yet but One Person. This cleared up the difficulty and many were converted. From that time to this the shamrock has held a place of affection in the Irishman's heart.

Another of his more famous miracles concerned the banishment of snakes and reptiles from Ireland. Certainly Ireland is today free from any sort of snake or reptile. St. Patrick's faith is credited with accomplishing the miracle.

At the beginning of the Christian era, St. Patrick and his adopted people were forced to live in a land where



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