

J O H N D O E

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BY

THE O'HARA FAMILY.

"Quid? ille ubi est Milesius?"

What has become of the Milesian?

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JOHN DOE.

CHAPTER I.

THE old devotion to private skirmishing of the Irish peasantry is well known. Skirmishing would indeed be too mild a word to express the ferocious encounters that often took place amongst them—(we speak in the past tense, for from a series of wretchedness the spirit has of late considerably decreased)—when parties, or, as they are locally termed, factions, of fifty or a hundred, met by appointment to wage determined war; when blood profusely flowed, and sometimes lives were lost.

But, apart from the more important instances of the practice those pitched battles presented, accident, and the simplest occurrence of their lives—pleasure, rural exercise, sport, or even the sober occupation of conveying a neighbour to his last home—supplied, indifferently well, opportunities for an Irish row.

On festival days, when they met at a “pattern” (patron, perhaps) or merry-making, the lively dance

kitchen fire ; business was beneath him—he left all that to the “vanithee ;” and his hours lapsed, when matters of moment did not warn him to the field, either in wetting his sticks with a damp cloth, and then heating them over the turf blaze, to give them the proper curve ; or in teaching a pet starling to speak Irish and whistle “Shaun Buidhe ;” or haply in imbibing his own ale or whiskey, and smoking his short black pipe, or *dhudeen*, as he himself termed it. And here he gave audience to the numerous suitors and ambassadors who day by day came to seek his aid, preparatory to a concerted engagement. His answer was never hastily rendered. He promised, at all events, to be with his corps at the appointed ground ; and then and there he would proclaim of which side he was the ally. This precautionary course became the more advisable as he was always sure of a request from both factions ; and time, forethought, and inquiry, were necessary to ascertain which side might prove the weaker ; for to the weaker (the more aggrieved formed no part of his calculations) Jack invariably extended his patronage.

The vanithee, good woman, when she heard of an approaching fair or other popular meeting, immediately set about preparing plasters and ointments, and this resulted from a thrifty forecast ; for, were she to call in a doctor every time her husband’s head wanted piecing, it would run away with the profits of her business. Jack, indeed, never forgot his dignity so far as to inform his wife that he intended being engaged on such occasions ; but she always took it for granted, and with the bustle of a good housewife set about her preparations accordingly ; till at length a breach happened in his skull which set her art at defiance, and ~~ever~~ since she lives the sole proprietor of the public-house where Jack once reigned in glory. The poor widow thriven since her husband’s death, and is now :

not having lately had Jack's assistance in spending (she never had it in earning). She recounts his exploits with modest spirit; and one blessing, at least, has resulted from her former matronly care of the good man: she is the Lady Bountiful of her district; a quack, it may be, yet sufficiently skilful for the uncomplicated ailments of her country customers.

Such ordinary facts as we have here glanced at never fail to strike with astonishment, if they do not greatly interest, the English visiter to "the Sister Isle," when he first made acquainted with them. In both ways, perhaps, they were regarded by two young English officers quartered at a remote, though no very remote period, in the inland town of Clonmel, before whom a native acquaintance desecanted with natural ease on these traits of local character, as he and his military friends sat over their evening bottle. The bottle was emptied, and the Clonmel visiter gone, and Lieutenants Howard and Graham remained together, still occupied with the new and extraordinary anecdotes they had heard. They separated for the night, and continued to recur with interest to the information of their friend. They were amazed, if not shocked; they could not understand how the thing should happen. In a civilised country, indeed, a motive to the cool, scientific punishment that Spring and Neate, or Spring and Langan, bestowed upon each other, was easily comprehended; but they stared with utter consternation at the mystery of an Irish fight, because it was discussed with shillelaghs and alpeens instead of fists and knuckles.

Next morning they met, after their early parade, at Graham's private lodgings; for, at the time we speak of, the officers of a regiment were afforded, even in considerable towns in Ireland, but scanty accommodation in barracks. It was a hot, oppressive forenoon in the close of July, promising a day

of even more relaxing influence; and ten hours of sunlight were before them, to be spent in one way or other. To the man of business, or to the professional man, in London, to the needy author, the toiling lawyer—nay, considering the various rounds of metropolitan amusements, perhaps to the cornet of the Guards himself—this ~~may~~ seem no very embarrassing prospect; but to ~~the~~ fashionable English lieutenant, on country service in Ireland, it might well appear an endless vista, beset with doubt and fear, and all the little fiends of apathy and idleness.

In their want of something to do, and while they again recurred to the topics of the preceding night, the friends felt curious to behold, as they had previously been surprised to hear of, an Irish row; and—

“Oh for the fight of alpeens!” said Graham, as he rose from breakfast, throwing up the window, and drawing one of those heavy sighs that denote the mixed reign of heat and listlessness; “for, Howard, what is to become of us this ferocious day?”

“There’s nothing to be done with the fishing-rods,” said Howard; “Izaak Walton himself could not tempt to a bite any trout in his senses, till evening at least; and I am tired of the two Misses O’Flaherty.”

“And I of the three Misses Nicholson, and the four Misses Pattenson,” said Graham; “their prattle and tattle, their tastes and their raptures, are death to me; though here they have all been escorted through the streets, and on their public promenades, and to church, mass, or meeting, by the poor ensigns of the last score of regiments quartered in their native town, saying the same fiddle-fiddle things, and exhibiting to each set, successively and in vain, time immemorial, the same faces and fascinations.”

"Then their brothers and male cousins are such sots, asses, or puppies!" said Howard, in a complimentary strain, towards people who thought themselves the apple of his eye.

"And their mothers and maiden aunts such worriers!" rejoined Graham, continuing the same strain; "and the girls themselves, too—they walk so much and so fast, and while they clack on so fast, they force one so here and there, that a man had better be on a real forced march at once than by their sides in such weather. But suppose billiards?"

"Monstrous!"

"Then the racket-court?"

"Terrible!"

"Then a cool hand at whist till mess-hour?"

This proposal was also considered and declined; and the friends having thus nearly exhausted all the means of enjoyment supplied by their situation and ruling tastes, remained for some time hopelessly silent, picking crumbs of bread off the breakfast-table, and gently tipping them out at the open window, until the entrance of their last night's guest gave a fresh and pleasing turn to their ideas. Renewing with him a conversation about Irish fights and merry-makings, they were cheered to find that a pattern was that day holden a few miles from Clonmel, where they might hope to become acquainted, at a civil distance, with the prowess of the alpeen and shillelagh.

A proposal from Mr. Burke, their Clonmel friend, to guide them to the spot, was immediately accepted; and, though the sun grew fierce in his strength, they resolved to proceed on foot, for Mr. B. could lead by a short cut through fields and meadows. The breeze of the open country was reviving, and they would saunter along, resting in the occasional shade and by the side of clear cool brooks. No hurry was in the case; indeed, it were better to come upon the scene of festivity towards evening; and altogether

everything was now practicable and delightful. So, after sinking the military character in peaceful suits of clothes, a precaution prudently hinted by Mr. Burke, and when each gentleman had furnished himself with a respectable shillelagh, the little expedition was commenced forthwith.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER a pleasant saunter through an open, interesting country, Howard and Graham, and their friend, gained the spacious plain on which the pattern was held. For some time they rambled about amongst the people, looking on at their diversions, or occasionally joining in their mirth; and assuredly there was a sufficient variety to engage attention. Some were employed at the wonders of the show-box, or listening with open mouths, and looks of respectful amazement, to the oratory of its accomplished exhibitor. Our gentlemen did not themselves refuse an approving laugh to one turn of the fellow's eloquence. He had in his hand the knotted string which guided the movements of a picture of a certain battle, celebrated in the annals of the Irish rebellion, for a triumph over some regiments of Irish militia by a mob of peasants, assisted by a part of the handful of French who landed at Killala.

"Look to the right," said the showman, "and you shall see the Wicklow Militia scampering off the ground, my Lord Monck at their head on the gallant occasion; and small blame to his lordship, for the French are at his heels."

Passing from this group of rustic connoisseurs, our visitors next noticed a swarm of simple clowns, who stood, all their faculties of acuteness and comprehension brought to a focus, watching the coils of a strip of old hat, as the cunning knave who professed this species of gambling folded it up in good affectation of plain dealing; and then, certain that they

had kept an observant eye during the process, they proceeded, with hope almost raised to certainty, to stick a wooden peg in the proper loop. A halfpenny was paid for the venture, and if successful they were to gain thrice the sum; but, with all their sagacity, bitter disappointment was sure to follow. Many staked their money on the fascinating evolutions of the wheel-of-fortune, and always with certain loss; others threw a stick at some wooden pins placed upright in the ground, ever filled with honest surprise that they could not hit any of them, though but a few yards distant. There were beggars with every boasted ailment under the sun, clamorously insisting on the charity of "the good Christians;" and ballad-singers with cracked lungs, squeaking forth ditties of unique composition; such as—

As I did ramble,
Down by a bramble, &c

There were vendors of cake-cheese, of apples, and of gingerbread, all striving with incessant uproar to attract custom; but the principal diversion, and that to which the greater number were attached, was dancing on the green sod. As our trio stood a little elevated above the concourse, they counted ten pipers within ken, each surrounded by a crowd of "boys and girls," footing it away with every mark of utter glee and happiness. The manner in which a piper set up his establishment was simple enough. If he had a wife—"as which of them had not?"—he brought a stool, and, lacking that convenience, a stone served the purpose; he seated himself; struck up a merry jig; one or two friends patronised his muse; and presently he had a group around him, and was prosperous.

By-the-way, an occurrence noticed by our party, on their walk to the pattern, should here be mentioned. A few fields from the scene of festivity

they perceived a young fellow, rakishly dressed in his holiday garb, stop, unconscious of observance, before one of those tall stones occasionally to be met with in the country parts of Ireland, but of which the use or meaning is unknown to us, notwithstanding that we have anxiously inquired after their tradition. The athletic fellow held his hat in his hand, bowed to the stone with all the air he could assume; bowed again and again; then replaced his hat, and began to dance rapidly before his stationary partner. He kept his eye fixed on his feet, as if to watch how they did their business; and after some time, and now seemingly pleased with his performance, he took off his hat again; again bowed profoundly to the stone, and with an exulting shout scampered off to the pattern, where he was soon recognised, using to a pretty girl, as he took her out to dance, the same graceful ceremonies he had before lavished on an object not so sensible of his perfections.

"Tents," or booths, constructed in a very primitive manner, were, to the number of forty or fifty, erected along the field. Long, pliant wattles, stuck in the ground at regular distances, and running some thirty feet, then meeting at top, and covered with blankets, sacks, or such like awning, made up each tent. The description of the whole interior of one will give a proper idea of the rest. A long deal table, or rather succession of deal tables, were placed nearly from end to end; forms were ranged at each side; and on these sat a mixed company of old and young. Here a youthful fellow was placed by a pretty girl, his arm round her neck, while he whispered his best soft things, and she smiled, and pouted, and coquetted; opposite sat two or three old men discoursing on the weather, the crops, and the prices; the young folk no way bashful in their presence, and little reason had they to be so, for the ancients quaffed their liquor often and heartily;

taking not the least notice of what passed at the other side. Here too was a piper, and the dance went on as vigorously within as without. The landlord and landlady, stationed near the entrance, were provided with a good store of ale and whiskey, at the call of their customers, attended by a wench as comely as possible, eternally out of breath, running here and there, as the incessant knocks of the empty quarts against the table challenged her attention. It was her business to see that the same quart did not thump a second time, and to be prepared with her best smile and ready joke, and perhaps something else, equally ready and desirable, for every customer who should choose to laugh, or bandy wit, or struggle for a stray favour, with the decently-coy Hebe.

Having walked everywhere their curiosity directed, without observing any promise of an Irish row, our amateurs were, in some disappointment, about to return home, when their unconscious acquaintance, whom they had seen bowing to the stone, made his appearance from the aperture of a tent, his hat doffed, and leading by the hand a blooming lass. It was evident he had seen the party of gentlemen from within, and now, stopping and scraping before them—"Gentlemen," said he, "here's a merry young girl wants a partner for a dance." His fair charge whispered him, and he continued, addressing himself to Graham, "Will you, sir, take a small dance wid the colleen dheas?"

She sent, on her own part, a merry invitation from her black eye, and Graham's Clonmel friend answered, "This gentleman never said no to a pretty girl in his life." The girl curtseyed, still looking to Graham, who, of course, repaid her with a bow; whereupon she offered her hand, and rather led than was led by Graham into the tent, Howard, Burke, and the posture-master following.

Here they found themselves in the presence of

fifty or sixty country people of both sexes and all ages—some singing, some spouting love, some dancing, and some conversing vehemently, and with at least spirited gesticulation; but, though thus separately engaged in the detail, all were unanimous in one accompaniment, namely, the consumption of ale or whiskey, more or less; their hearts wide open as their mouths and eyes, and their animal spirits ecstatic from the genial influence of the liquor.

With officious eagerness they made room for the strangers, whose "health an' long life" was immediately toasted round from mouth to mouth; and, according to the local usages of hospitality, Graham, Howard, and Burke, had to pledge every soul within view, each in his or her own magnum. This was much more than an inconvenience; but the visitors had determined to conform in everything to the taste of their circle, and in the entire good-will of their neighbours they found the benefit of their policy; for when in turn they ordered some whiskey-punch, and pushed it round, they had enlisted for ever the affection of every creature present.

"Arrah, thonomon-dnoul, gintlemin, bud here's your hearty welcome among us! Here's long life an' glory to ye! Upon my soul, bud I loves the likes o' ye in the bottom o' my heart, that wouldn't be shy or afeard to sit down and take a dhrop wid the country boys; ye deserve the best in the tent, an' ye must have it as long as Paddy Flinn has a laffina in the 'varsal world. Halloo, there!" and thump went the empty quart against the table; for Mr. Patrick Flinn, the knight of the stone, had emptied his vessel at one draught, out of the good-will he bore them, and now pounded with a force that set all the other vessels dancing, while the tent echoed the sound.

During his delivery of this speech, Howard had time more closely to observe the face and probable character of their quondam acquaintance. He

seemed about twenty-three years of age, tall, wiry, and athletic; his features expressed rather shrewdness than openness; the eyes grey and small; the nose aquiline, and the mouth in a perpetual play of waggery and good humour, which perhaps was as much a convenient affectation as a natural habit. His whole manner and dress, too, appeared ostentatiously disposed to claim notice for him as a queer, scapegrace-looking fellow. He now wore his hat on one side; and the collar of his shirt being open, displayed a throat and neck red as scarlet, and rough as a cow's tongue.

While Howard made his observations, he was interrupted by a husky, gruff voice at his other side, saying, "Here's tow'ds yer good healths, gintlemin, an' that ye may thrive an' prosper, an' that I may live to see ye here again at the patthern this day twelve months, I pray Gor!"

The voice that pronounced these words was not in unison with them; and when Howard fixed his eyes on the speaker, he felt that neither in person nor feature did they find a correspondence. The man was, in fact, of that outward description termed ill-looking. His face, large and gross, beamed with nothing kindly; in stature he was short and broad, but of Herculean symmetry; under a bushy black eyebrow lurked a deep, and if not scowling a watchful eye, and the whole expression of his features was solemnity of a disagreeable kind. At variance with the general costume around, he wore an ample sailor-like jacket, and a red handkerchief, that coiled like a cable round his throat, unconscious of a shirt. In other respects his dress accorded with the usual one, being composed of a nameless-coloured shirt, breeches open at the knees, pale-blue stockings, ungartered, and part of an old hat, tied with "sug-gans" or hay-ropes about the small of each leg, and covering the tops of his brogues. His age might be forty-five.

But Howard was again converted from his studies by "Musha, yer healths, an' kindly welcome to the patthorn, a-hinnies-ma-chree," addressed to him and Burke by a sedate old matron, whose clothing, being of the most costly kind worn by the class to which she belonged, showed her to be "comfortable," and that she could well afford to spend a little on such occasions as the present. She had on the good blue rug cloak, the falling hood, lined with purple satin, and the large silver hook-and-eye to fasten it at her neck; a flaming silk handkerchief, tied on her head in the way peculiar to her country, and the costly lace of her cap peeping from under it; and there were a cordiality, an earnestness of voice, and a moist benevolence of smile accompanying her words, that formed a strong contrast to the last salutation.

"Healths apiece, genteels, all round, not forgetting you, sir," added a rosy lass, with a stammer, a smile, and a blush, and her eyes half-raised over the vessel, as in the last words she addressed herself to Howard. And in this strain arose the civilities of every individual in the booth. the phrase and sentiment varying with the age or character of the speaker.

In the mean time, Howard and Burke were lookers-on at the dance between Graham and his partner. When the jig was first about to be struck up, Graham, under the tutelage of Burke, requested to know the tune the lady wished. He was answered, according to invariable custom, with a set phrase—"What's your will is my pleasure, sir;" but here the fair one proved over-complaisant, as from his total ignorance of native music Graham could name no tune likely to be understood. In this dilemma he had recourse to the piper, who sat with his instrument prepared, awaiting orders; and in a whisper desired he would give his own favourite air.

But, before we proceed further, let us introduce

more particularly Mr. Thaddeus Fitzgerald, or as he was called by his own friends, Thady Whigarald, the piper.

This popular votary of Apollo was, if his physiognomy furnished proof, as happy in playing his pipes as those they set a-capering. He sat, a good bulky personage with a fat, pleasant orb of countenance, which while he tuned his pipes simpered like a joint of mutton in the dinner-pot, and when at work his sightless eyeballs kept rolling about, as his head went backward and forward, and up and down, in unison with his own beloved strains, while every other feature expressed correspondent applause and ecstacy. His rusty, broad brimmed hat was encircled by a small hay-rope instead of an ordinary band, and in this his pipe was stuck, the leaf turned up all round; so that if Thady happened to be out in a shower, he must have a rivulet running round his head.

His grey frieze coat and waistcoat were much broken, the knees of his breeches open as usual, and his stockings so peculiarly tied below the fat knee as to serve for convenient pockets. Into one he slipped the halfpence, the result of his professional skill, and from the other occasionally extracted a quid of tobacco, which with a dexterous jerk he deposited in his mouth, scarcely ever allowing this digression materially to interfere with the progress of his music. Thady was facetious withal; from time to time encouraging the dancers as good sportsmen cheer on their dogs. When he heard the feet beat loud time to his jig, which in his estimation was the *beau ideal* of dancing—"whoo! success attend you, my darlin'—~~whoo!~~ ma colleen-beg! that's id, à-vich-ma-chree!—whoo! whoo! that's your sort, Shaunus!—these and similar ejaculations joyfully mingled with the notes of his instrument.

To Graham's request for his own favourite air,

Thady replied, "Why, thin, agra, because your lavin' it to myself, I'll give you somethin' that's good—so here goes, in the name o' God;" and instantly he set his arm in motion to inflate his bag, and then volunteering a prefatorial shout, struck up a jig, the rapid canter of which set Graham's extremities going at such a rapid rate as quickly to put him in a violent heat, and leave him panting for breath. Mean while Graham's mountain-partner, possessing better lungs or being more of an adept at the exercise, seemed little exhausted, and through common shame and gallantry he rallied his own spirits, and resolved to dance the bottle out; but notwithstanding the encouraging shouts of Thady, the lively and really mirth-inspiring air, and the importance which he could not fail to perceive was attached to durability (for at different intervals he was addressed by the spectators with—"That's id, your sowl! hould on as long as Thady has a screech in the chanter!")—notwithstanding all this, Graham was at last compelled to make his bow, and retire to a seat, completely blown and crest-fallen.

His partner, seemingly but just fresh for the sport, looked triumphant, and still timing the music, jigged towards Howard, with a rapid curtsey and—"I dance to you, sir, i' you plase." Refusal was out of the question; and, although he had his friend's fate before his eyes, up sprung the desperate man she had pitched upon. After some time, Howard had the gratification to observe that his blooming adversary began in her turn to betray signs of fatigue; and he was about to congratulate himself on a speedy victory, for he had fully entered into the spirit of competition he observed ~~so prevalent~~, when another damsel bounced up, flung her mantle with a jolly air, cocked and secured her coarse straw bonnet, assumed the place of the first, and set upon Howard with all her might. This reinforcement soon decided his fate. ~~Burke~~ took the hint from what had

been done by the second girl; Mr. Patrick Flinn relieved Burke; other "country boys" took part with the strangers, for it had now become a real contest between the sires; and the fun waxed uproarious. Thady blew with redoubled fury, and grew downright clamorous in his cries of encouragement; the excessive effort creating excessive heat, our military *incognitos* and friend indulged in frequent glasses of punch to prevent bad consequences; so that in a little time they joined in the loud mirth of their companions, and unconsciously expressed their delight in the same manner as those around them. They turned their partners with a shout, and became *au fait* at the Irish screech. All in the tent felt flattered by the jocular and heartiness with which they entered into the rustic mirth; and they had to undergo exclamations of good-will, shakes of the hand, and even hugs and kisses from old and young. Every draught of ale and toss of whiskey went down freighted with "health and long life to the gintlemin, every inch o' them;" and all declared their readiness, nay, anxiety, to die on the spot if it could be of the least service.

CHAPTER III.

HOWARD, sitting down to rest during the progress of the dance, found himself again by the side of Paddy Flinn, who immediately addressed him.

"Musha, then, beggin' your pardon, sir, agra, will you taste a dhrop of ale from a poor boy?"

Howard tasted accordingly, and Paddy then caught his hand in his immense fist, as hard as his own plough-handle, with a pressure that nearly caused the complimented person to shriek out in pain; and—

"Sha-dhorth,"* continued Flinn, "agra-machree; upon my conscience, but I'd bear to be kilt stone-dead for you or any friend o' yours; show me the man, standin' afore me, that 'ud say black is the white o' your eye!—whoo!" (We have no better translation for the screech.) "Whoo!—ma chorp an dhiaoul!—but I'd batther his sowl to smithereens!"—and, letting Howard's hand go, he smote the table with such might, at the same time emitting a tremendous yell, that the quart from which he was drinking jumped into his lap, and there emptied its contents. Paddy took it up very leisurely, and looking at it for a moment, while his face borrowed an expression of unique waggery, and lost the menacing appearance which a moment before it had worn—

"Why, then, fire to your sowl!" quoth Paddy,

* Your health.

apostrophising the vessel—"an ill end to you, for one quart! Couldn't you be asy wid yourself, an' not to go spill a body's dhrop of liquor? Where do you think I'm to make out the manes o' fillin' you so often?" He again thumped the table with it, however, and the smiling tapster appeared in a trice. "Here, na colleen dheas," he continued, "an' give us a quart the next time that won't be losing the dhrink, agra."

"A pretty girl, Paddy," observed Howard.

"Arrah, then, isn't she, sir? an' all o' them, the cratur, considerin' sich as them that lives on phaties one-an'-twenty times in the week?" But here a sudden stop was put to the dialogue; Howard, from what immediately followed, imagining the fellow had lost his wits. Paddy sprang up; gave his hat a violent shove, that made it hang quite at one side of his head; jumped across the table; in his transit overset two old men who were talking Irish; and, without waiting to apologise for his rudeness, brushed up to where the dance was going forward, and bellowed out, as he flourished a stick he had snatched in his progress—

"Show me the mother's son o' you that daare touch *that*! Whoo! daare *you* touch it?"—whisking round, and playing the stick over the head of a young fellow near him.

"No! but I'd strike the man that would! whoo!" was the answer.

Paddy, after waiting for some time, hallooing and brandishing his weapon in defiance of the whole world, stooped down and raised a hat from the ground, which, with many professions of esteem and love, he presented to Graham, from whose head it had fallen in dancing, and who, in the full fling of the sport, had scarcely observed his loss. Paddy then moved quietly back to his place; but Howard

* *i.e.* Three times a-day.

shifted his quarters, not choosing any longer the immediate proximity of 'so turbulent a spirit.

Perhaps Howard had another reason for a change of place. No intimate or cordial fellowship seemed to exist between Flinn and the short dark man we have before described as attracting Howard's notice; yet, on more than one occasion, he thought he observed a peculiar intelligence take place between them. It was interchanged slightly, indeed, by the rapid elevation of an eyebrow, the compression of the lips, a shrug, a faint smile, or even a stare; but these simple indications bespoke, in Howard's mind, a closer acquaintance than it was evident the parties wished to proclaim; and the mystery interested him.

Another circumstance, too, assisted the interest. At the very upper part of the tent sat a young man about twenty-four years of age, better dressed and of better air than most around him. From the moment our party came in, he had occupied the same place, sleeping, or appearing to sleep, through all the uproar, and the only person unconnected with it. He was booted and spurred, and soiled with travel; and hence, perhaps, the weariness he could not or would not cast off. Once, however, he was perfectly awake for a moment, and, bending rather a stern eye upon Paddy, as he sat conversing with our friends, the young man called out, "Flinn!" in a harsh and quick tone. The word seemed to strike with equal effect upon Flinn and the gruff-looking man, for both rose, when Flinn said to the other, with a wave of his hand, "'Tisn't you, but me, Jack Mullins," and proceeded alone to wait on the young person who had summoned him.

As they conversed rapidly and secretly together, Howard perceived, by the frequent recurrence to him and Graham of the stranger's keen blue eye, that he and his friend formed the subject of their

discourse. Displeased, if not offended, his own brow and lip curled, and he turned fully round in the direction where the young man sat, and challenged his attention. His remarkable manner was scarcely noticed by the person to whom it was addressed, except by a careless aversion of his glance, when, looking once more to Howard, their eyes encountered for an instant. Immediately after, Flinn returned to his place; and the person with whom he had conversed turned his side to the company, crossed his legs, leaned his head on his hand, and relapsed into sleep or apathy.

Howard now took a seat beside Jack Mullins, as he had heard Flinn call the surly fellow, whose manner during the whole evening was taciturn in the extreme; for since he drank the strangers' health, upon their first appearance, he had never spoken to those near him, nor indeed opened his lips, except to afford passage to the inundations of ale, against the influence of which he seemed completely proof, or to send forth his tributary yell to the general mirth.

When Howard sat down by him, he turned his face slowly round, then, with a continued dull stare, moved his hand to a quart, and holding it before him, said, "Sha-dhorth again, avich;" drank, and sank into silence,

Howard, from a variety of motives, wishing to draw him into dialogue, remarked, "My friend Paddy is a queer fellow, I believe."

"You may say that, aroon," observed Mullins.

"Then you know him?"

"Ayan?"

Howard repeated the hypothetical question.

"Why, about as well as you know him yourself; an' sure that's a raison for saying as much of him as you do, avich."

"Och, we all knows poor Paddy well enough,"

said a curious little old man, with a rusty buckle-wig, who, sitting opposite, overheard the conversation. "He's a boulamскеich iv a devil, that never minds nothing but his divarsion; bud, for all that, he's as *good a boy* as any in the place, or the next place to id, by Gor;" and here the old fellow's eyes twinkled, as he benevolently brought forward the virtues of Paddy's character.

"I'm glad to hear you say so," said Howard. "I perceive he is over fond of his drop o' drink, as he calls it, and that temperance is not among his good qualities; but I suppose he is an industrious lad?"

"We never hard much to say fur him in the regard o' that," replied the old man.

"Let me see, then; he is a dutiful son, supporting infirm parents, perhaps?"

A rude "Ho! ho!" here sounded from the throat of Mullins; but he corrected himself as Howard turned round, and now presented a face of impenetrable indifference. The old commentator continued.

"Ullaloo, avichmachree, Paddy doesn't live with his father or mother; he's a stranger among us, like; a labourin' boy that goes the country, doin' a start o' work for one body or another, just whin he wants the price of a gallon, comin' on a patthern, or a fair, or a thing that-a-way. Bud, for all that, as I said afore, he's the *best boy* among us."

Howard, though easily comprehending that the willing expositor knew less of Paddy than Mullins, who professed to know nothing, was inclined to another question—"The best boy!—I should like to know what you mean. Paddy is good-natured, I suppose; obliging, and willing to serve a friend or a neighbour?"

"Why, ahinny, Paddy 'ud be as dacent an' as willin' as another to do a dacent thing; bud sorrow a much has the poor gorçoon in his power, barrin'

the one thing, an' maybe he'd do that as free fur fun as for love; yes, mostha—he'd fight fur you till he was kilt out-an'-out."

"Still you do not tell me how he is 'the best boy.'"

"Musha, God help you, an' beggin' your pardon, sir, avich, but I *did* tell you: a better boy than my poor Paudheen never walked a fair;" and he looked affectionately at Flinn, who was, and for some time had been, dancing. Divil a four o' the clanest boys in the country bud he'd stretch with his alpeen afore you could screech, ahunny."

Their conversation was here interrupted by the hero himself, who, as he sat down at some distance, commenced, in consequence of a general request, to exhibit as a singer. He sang in Irish, and Howard necessarily lost the literal sense of his verses, but the air to which they ran had such a character of downright waggery as could not for a moment be mistaken. Paddy prefaced each verse with a prose introduction, spoken in all the mock-seriousness of a finished quiz; and the effect produced by the whole on the audience was most surprising. They seemed frantic with delight, they jumped about, screamed, howled, banged the table, and greeted the close of every verse with a general shout of ecstatic approbation. What would an applause loving actor give for such an audience!

Howard, wishing to fathom the taste of his rustic friends, longed to be made acquainted with the nature of the composition, and for this purpose applied to a decent-looking man, who seemed more orderly in his demeanour than the others, and to whose opinion a universal respect was paid whenever he deigned to deliver himself, which was not often, however. In fact, this was the mountain schoolmaster, and Howard could not have applied to a better person. After some preliminary remarks, composed of the biggest and most obsolete words

the pedagogne could recollect, he supplied a literal translation of one verse, which ran as follows:—

Oh, whiskey, the delight and joy of my soul!
 You lay me stretched on the floor;
 You deprive me of sense and knowledge,
 And you fill me with a love of fighting;
 My coat you have often torn from my back;
 By you I lost my silken cravat;
 But all shall be forgotten and forgiven,
 If you meet me after mass next Sunday!

The song passed away, and Howard again sought to penetrate the rhinoceros kind of caution in which Mullins wrapped himself.

"An accomplished fellow every way," said he, turning to his neighbour.

"Ay, faith," was the reply.

"I saw him speaking to that strange young man, some time since," continued Howard.

"Did you?" said Mullins, unmoved.

"And therefore conclude they are acquainted."

"Ay, in throth!" (Asking rather than assenting.)
 "Well."

"Pray, do you know that sleepy young man?"

"Me?—how could I?"

"Why, I thought when he spoke——"

"Haakee, avich," interrupted Mullins, with, for the first time, a slight approach to interest; "I know little of anybody, and don't care how little anybody knows of me: I never ax questions, for fear I'd be tould lies. But," he continued, changing his manner into an affectation of communicativeness, as he perceived Howard's displeasure, "sure we all know *that's* the farmer's son that comes to hire us now an' thin to dig the phaties, or the likes o' that; an' sure Paddy Flinn, or any other labourin' boy of his kind, may know as much of him as another, an' no harm done."

Howard was here called on to take his place in the everlasting dance, and rose accordingly. The

fame of the "gintelmin's exploits" had gone abroad, and the boys and girls poured in from the neighbouring booths, totally abandoning the pipers without, to partake of the superior glee that was going on in the favoured tent. The place became excessively heated by the throng; and, since dancing must be the order of the evening, it was proposed by Howard and his friends to substitute country-dances for jigs, in order to do away with some of the monstrous labour of the occupation. The novelty of the thing made it highly acceptable, although, except the strangers, there were not perhaps two individuals present who understood the evolutions of a figure. Immediate preparations were, however, made for commencing. The gentlemen chose their partners amongst the very prettiest lasses; took the upper places, in order that the others might study the figure before their turn came round; and with an encouraging whoop from Thady Whigarald, at the same time that he struck up "Mrs. McLeod," set off in high spirits.

In a little time the lads and lasses began to understand the dance, and then, wondering at and delighted with their own cleverness, the glee became deafening. Every soul in the tent was infected with the devil of boisterous enjoyment. The dancers shouted as they bounded along; the piper drowned his own music in his own shouts; children, and old men and women, shouted as the performers whisked by, and with gesticulation accompanied them in their career; those who sat at the table beat time with their fists, so that the quarts, pints, and tumblers went through the mazes of a figure of their own; and two urchins, bestriding an empty barrel, and kicking with their heels, provoking a sound that, while it assisted in the chorus, told equally well for the pocket of the landlord and the guzzling capability of his guests.

In the midst of the sport, Howard, who had oc-

asionally reconnoitred the upper part of the tent, where the persevering sleeper sat, observed that from time to time Mullins sidled his way in that direction, and was now within a few yards of the young man. Naturally of a romantic disposition, this increasing puzzle had its effect on Howard, and he brought his mind to consent to a finesse that under other circumstances he should certainly have rejected, no matter how urged by curiosity or interest. Having danced to the bottom with his partner, he pleaded to her a slight illness, enjoining her not to make any remark; left the party, bearing a glass of water in his hand, and stretched himself on a form nearly opposite Mullins, and about equidistant from him and the other person, who still seemed wrapt in sleep. To a gruff question from Mullins, he urged a bad head and stomach, and much fatigue, and then apparently composed himself to slumber, and in a short time gave natural symptoms of deep repose.

The *ruse* was successful. After a lapse of about ten minutes, Howard could hear Mullins move higher up on his seat, and then a quick whisper from the other. "No, no: stay as you are—no nearer. Do you think he sleeps?"

"Like a top," answered Mullins in the same whisper. "But let us step out, if you like, for a surety."

"Idiot!" said the other; "how can you propose *that*? Don't you fear we are watched?"

"Well, avich," answered Mullins, passively.

"Well or ill, listen to me; and don't turn round so and gape at me. I see you with my side-sight. Turn off and look away from me, as I do from you, there; and now answer me in that position, but no louder than I question you. I have ridden hard at your appointment up from the harbour; and a damned fag it is to one so long unused to it. Since I entered this tent and saw you, I have suffered hell's

torments in not being able to ask you one question. Is he at the pattern?"

"I saw him on the road, an' he tould me he was for comin' here, as a good place to hire his men for the harvest."

"How long is this ago?"

"About five hours agone, I think."

"Are you sure he is to come alone?"

"Not the laste sure in the world, but all the other way. Didn't I tell you he guessed you were somewhere in the country? Didn't you say yourself this moment he may be on the watch? An' sure he wouldn't come here widout a few alpeens, any way. The red divil himself can call his faction about him, an' so can *he*."

"Well, how many of us are here?"

"Only myself, an' Flinn, an' six boys more; but I often riz a good faction in a worse place, out o' nothin' at all but good-will for a scrimmage."

"You know you must not appear to him unless we are successful out-an'-out. The six other lads are abroad?"

"Yes; here an' there, an' over-an'-hether: an' Flinn, you see, for all his caperin' an' his divil's thricks, is watchin' the mouth o' the tent."

There was a pause, broken only by one or two impatient sighs that came from the younger person, who again resumed in a hasty whisper:—

"Damnation! if *this* fellow is only giving us the fox's sleep."

"Avoch, don't fear him. 'Tisn't a soft omadhaun like him could think of any sich thing."

"But I saw him speaking to you."

"Well; an' if you did? Sure I knew how to answer him: don't fear."

Another pause ensued, and the young man again led the conversation.

"Mullins, now listen attentively to me."

"Well, avich."

"*His* life must be spared on this occasion. Let us first secure and get him down to the harbour. That's all I want for the present."

"An' that's little enough. I remembered you tould me so afore, and sure I tould Flinn too, as you bid me. We'll all mind it."

"Again I warn *you* to keep out of his sight. The moment the game is up, take to the road and wait for us a little way forward. If we fail, your continuing to live on good terms with the rascal is what we must mainly depend on for success another time. Do you hear me?"

"Avoch, to be sure I do."

"Then move down from me now as easily as you can: I see another of these fools coming."

Mullins obeyed this order as Graham advanced in some anxiety to look after Howard. He found his friend seemingly asleep on the forms, and Howard allowed himself to be often called and shaken before he would acknowledge the restoration of his senses. At last jumping up, he declared his illness to be quite gone, and, wishing for a private word with Graham to communicate the strange conversation he had heard, advanced towards the dancers, first observing that the young man had reassumed his drowsy mask, and that Mullins had slid a good distance off, and was now looking at and cheering on the crowd, with as much affectation of enjoyment as his gross and lethargic features could assume.

"The very devil's in that fellow!" said Graham, pointing to Flinn as they approached the revellers: "he has been continually out of place since you left us; jostling and plunging, and setting every one astray; expostulation was thrown away upon him. I endeavoured to give him some directions, and he listened pretty tamely for a moment; but as we spoke the precious piper emitted such a blast and shout as were too much for him; off he went like a shot, thump against another man's partner, who had not time to

get out of his way, and brought her to the earth; but, without at all ceasing the motion of his feet, Paddy instantly caught her up, gave her a kiss, to which Petruccio's in the church was mere billing and cooing, and adding, 'There, alanna! sure I'll kiss you an' cure you,' on he went, as if nothing had happened."

Howard now made an effort to move through the crowd to the opening of the tent, beckoning Burke and leading Graham. Considerable difficulty occurred in the very first step, as well from the good-humoured officiousness of the people as from their number and bustle; but a moment after, other circumstances completely foiled any continued exertion.

Paddy Flinn was just about to lead the dance, the last couple had just finished, and at the entreaty of his partner, he seemed endeavouring to bring his mind to a focus, and try to understand what he had to do, his face being turned to the entrance of the tent, when suddenly he sprang forward, snatched an alpeen that lay quietly beside the piper, and then, with a tremendous yell, upsetting every person and thing in his way, flourished the weapon, and made a deadly blow at a gentlemanly-dressed man who was just entering. The foremost of a considerable body of peasants who came in with this person guarded off the blow, and in turn struck at the aggressor. Their sticks crossed and clattered; but at last Paddy felled his man, crying out at the same time, as the rest of the hostile party pressed upon him—"Where are ye, my boys, abroad!—Come on, for the right cause! Look after Purcell! he's goin' to escape!" Then, turning to the people in the tent, "Neighbours, neighbours!—neighbours an' all good Christhens!—stand up for honest men! This is the devil's bird, Purcell! Stand up for the orphans he made! for the widow he kilt! for the daughter he ruined, and the son that's far away!—whoo!"

As he spoke, Howard looked with amazement at the sudden and almost incredible change that in a moment was presented in the face and manner of Flinn. His features lost every trait of the levity and drollery that had hitherto appeared to be their fixed character, and now bent and flashed with natural sternness and ferocity. His figure became erect, firm, and well-set, all previous jauntiness and swagger cast aside, like a disguise; and his whole mien was that of a man made up to the accomplishment of a desperate purpose, and seemingly incapable of a moment's trifling or good-humour.

The instant he concluded his speech, the shout at the finale was echoed from abroad, and some six or seven — evidently the friends he had invoked — pressed upon the rear of Purcell's party, and gave the greater number of them something to do, while Flinn, after levelling the foremost of the van, for some time singly engaged the remainder. And well did he uphold the character given of him to Howard by the little old man in the buckle wig; for within a few minutes he had stretched four additional enemies by the side of his first victim to his invincible arm and murderous alpeen. But presently he was saved the trouble as well as the glory of a single stand against shameful odds. Every male creature in the tent flew to arms, and, the greater proportion siding with Flinn, he became the leader of the most numerous faction.

And now ensued a scene of truly astounding and appalling uproar. The tables, on which the landlord had disposed his good things, were upset in an instant; his jars and bottles went smash, and rivulets of good ale and whiskey inundated the tent; bread, and meat, and cheese, were trodden under foot; Thady Whigarald was tumbled from his seat, his pipes were crushed to atoms, and the last desperate and expiring sob of the wind-bag, and scream of the chanter, mingled ludicrously enough with his own

pathetic lamentations for the loss of his darling instrument. The landlord uselessly endeavoured to harangue the combatants; in vain he pointed out the utter ruin hurled upon him; the girls and old women screamed, and tried to escape by the entrance; but it was crowded with battle, and all chance of retreat, except with danger to limb and life, thereby rendered hopeless; so that after a time they flocked to the upper part of the tent, keeping shrill and fearful chorus to the war-whoops of the men of fight, the frantic oratory of the landlord and landlady, the clashing and clattering of alpeens, and the rapid and too audible blows that resulted from them.

But the worst is to be told. Arms were scarce; and, woeful to relate, the frail tenement that had hitherto afforded the combatants shelter and merriement was demolished in a twinkling, to supply the pressing want. The wattles on which the awning was suspended were torn up, and the blankets and sacks, that had formed the roof, pulled down and trampled to rags. Howard had before now seen a battle "in the tented field;" Graham had long fondly imagined one, and both had speculated even on an Irish row, but such an exhibition as the present, neither had ever yet beheld or contemplated.

They and their friend endeavoured to make peace, counting upon the previous devotion expressed to their sweet persons; but, such is the fickleness of all human influence and popularity, that broken pates were likely to be the only result of so ill-timed an assumption of superiority. No one, indeed, struck at them; but they were shoved and shouldered aside, and sent helpless and unnoticed through the tide of battle, like bubbles dancing upon the war of ocean, or straws or atoms whisked through the conflict of the whirlwinds. Meantime the hand of Chance alone shielded them from the promiscuous blows that were dealt around, and some of which they would in all probability

have shared, had not a providential rescue occurred in their behalf.

An Amazonian maiden, to whom Graham had been particularly "sweet," as she would herself say, in the course of the evening, observed his dangerous situation, and, with the energy and disinterestedness of a primitive heroine, plunged forward to snatch him from it. Dashing aside the waves of battle, she won her fearless way to Graham's side, clasped him in her arms, and, bearing him to the top of the tent, set him down on his legs amid the peaceable cohort of women who had there taken up their position. Some four or five, stimulated by her example, made the same exertions, and with the same success, in behalf of Howard and Burke; and our three friends being thus safely disengaged, the treble files closed upon them, clamorously refusing to afford further opportunity for peace-making.

One of the first observations which Howard made assured him that neither Mullins nor his drowsy acquaintance remained where he had left them. In fact, they were nowhere to be seen; and as, so far as he could recollect, they had not advanced to the belligerents, it was plain they must have retired through the space left after the demolition of the tent. Before he had been spirited away from the immediate scene of action, Howard could ascertain that Purcell, as he had heard Flinn call the gentleman who had served as a provocative to the engagement, was also missing; and the yelling exclamations which now broke from Paddy, proved that he must have effectually baffled his foes, and escaped whole and uninjured, whatever fate had been allotted for him.

We have taken up some time in describing a scene, and the rapid succession of events, that in reality did not occupy above five minutes; for, counting from the moment that Flinn gave his first blow, down to that during which Howard made the obser-

vations just attributed to him, not more time had certainly lapsed. As he concluded his reflections, Flinn, with a yell of mingled anguish and desperation, pressed his men through the opening of the tent, to scour the plain abroad in search of the absconded foe. Purcell's party made feeble opposition to this movement, and presently the skeleton mouth of the booth, the only remnant of it that had existence, disgorged the throng of combatants, and our visitors were left unmolested with the crowd of women. These, too, soon disappeared, following, with screams of apprehension and terror, the fate of their "kith and kin," engaged in the sanguinary conflict. Some hasty and hearty kisses, and prayers for everlasting long life and good health, were indeed bestowed on the "gintlemin," before this final separation; but at last all withdrew, and Howard, Graham, and Burke, were left alone in the first twilight of a beautiful summer evening, to seek their way back to Clonmel, and congratulate themselves as well on their escape from, as their introduction to, the novelties and haps of an Irish skirmish.

They quickly struck out of the pattern-field, choosing in the first instance a circuitous path, rather than exposure to the continued tumult that Flinn kept up all over the plain. They could, however, observe at some distance, as they retired, vendors of all kinds of trumpery removing their stalls, and pipers' wives running off with a stool under one arm and a blind husband under the other, in order to yield prudent way to the approaching stream of combatants. For a full half-hour, too, the shouts of the field came on the evening breeze; and they had gained a near view of Clonmel before distance completely divided them from all echo in the scene of struggle.

Howard, in talking over with his friends the conversation he had heard between Mullins and the stranger, felt pleasure in expressing his certainty

that the proscribed victim had escaped their vengeance. His curiosity, indeed, continued excited to know the certain close of the matter, as well as the provocations to hostility, and all other circumstances of the case; but after some time he gave up the thought, and was content to regard the whole as "a mass of things" indistinctly seen, and never to be discriminated. He was, however, mistaken in the latter part of his conclusions.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW days before the occurrences detailed in the last chapters, some of those rustic depredations, so utterly disgraceful to the unhappy country in which they take place, had been committed in the neighbourhood of Clonmel, on a scale much inferior, however, to their late magnitude and atrocity. Howard and Graham had, among others, become acquainted with the rumours of such events, previous to their sortie to the pattern; but as their scene was laid in another and distant part of the county, and as they had yet assumed no formidable aspect, nor created much sensation, they were not thought of sufficient consequence to interfere with the day's enjoyment.

In about a week after the era of the pattern, more alarming reports of continued outrage spread through Clonmel, and the public mind became considerably agitated. Bodies of nightly depredators, or *terriers* at least, traversed the county, attempting to enforce their own wild views in their own manner. These bands were, according to their private taste, variously designated; and the terms *Shanavest* and *Caravat*, invented by themselves, were adopted by the community at large in reference to them. *Shanavest* means "old waistcoat;" *Caravat*, "cravat;" both words compounded of equal portions of bad English and bad Irish, and intended to describe the parts of dress by which the association chose to be distinguished. But, without dwelling on strange

words, it will be sufficient to say, that the spirit of these combinations, one and all, was a resuscitation, in some shape or other, of the old spirit of Whiteboyism, concerning which we assure ourselves every reader has by this time the proper ideas.

It appeared that each body had a captain or leader, with a mock name, which was conferred at the pleasure of himself or his constituents, and also acceded to by the public. In recurring to these names, a singular feature of Irish character invites attention. The inheritor of misery and neglect, and sufficiently proving, in the continuance of all this turmoil, his too impatient sense of so hard a lot, it is remarkable that in the very act of proclaiming his real or imaginary wrongs, and committing himself to the black passions attendant on a course of ignorant self-assertion and unbridled revenge, the Irish peasant should evince a levity that can be supposed natural only to a body of men associated in the spirit of eccentric enjoyment. In fact, the president of a club of "queer fellows" may receive or assume such appellations as the most terrible leaders of Irish depredation invent and promulgate for themselves; and in the exercise of his mock dignity, or while he quizzically enforces his conventional pains and penalties, may affect about the same character that the Whiteboy captain puts on at the very moment that he issues his ill-spelt manifestoes, of no sportive tendency, and while he is prepared and determined to exact the letter of their demands.

The local reformer of the mountain, the bog, or the desert—the legislator for an almost uncultivated tract of impoverished country—the desperate neck-or-nothing leader of a throng of desperate and sanguinary men—disguises his identity in a humorous ideal; writes his threatening notices in the tone of an April-day hoax; denounces a foe as one friend might promise to another a hit over the knuckles;

f a midnight visit as the same friend might

propose a pleasurable surprise to that other; and performs his whole part as if he were tom-fool to a corps of Christian mummers. If this be the affectation of demoralised habits of thought and feeling, it is hideous and demoniacal; something in the nature of the jeer and levity in which Goethe has so shockingly well characterised his Mephistopheles.

But there is a bitter eccentricity often resulting from a long-cherished sense of wretchedness: a kind of stubborn braving of ill-fate, that ostentatiously shows itself in outward lightness and recklessness: there is a mockery of the heart by the heart itself; a humour, in fact, which the inspired writings would seem beautifully to describe, when they declare, that "even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness;" there is this step between our conjectured opinion and the miserable creatures it would make tenfold more miserable; and, all national distinctions apart, to leave us a better sympathy than such an opinion could, with the common tendencies of human nature.

Craving pardon, according to the established custom of all ramblers, for this unintended digression, we resume by proceeding to notice some of the names affected by these rustic Lyeurguses. One called himself Captain Starlight, perhaps; another, Captain Moonshine; a third, Jack Thrustout; a fourth, Richard Roe; and all who are familiar with rather recent Irish affairs will remember the doughty CAPTAIN JOHN DOE.

This quaint title, as well as two others above-mentioned, originated from the fictitious names that the law, in its own roundabout and strange mystification, inserts in ejectments served on those whom it is gravely about to dispossess of their tenements; and it must have been curious enough to observe the incipient Shanavests or Caravats putting their heads together, spelling over the jocose piece of parchment, and making a variety of shrewd conjec-

tures as to whom this Richard Roe or John Doe could be, until, to their cost, they found him a very formidable personage, and, by some crude association in the recesses of their own minds, resolved, while they adopted his name, to be as quizzical and as devastating as their merry prototype in his best day.

Our hero was, indeed, of sufficient character to engage, almost as soon as he had announced his political existence, the attention of his Clonmel neighbours. Meetings were called to arrange a plan of warfare against him; and proclamations of rewards to a large amount issued for his apprehension. In these official documents, his face, person, dress, and age, were on good authority set forth; and as the more peaceable inhabitants, and the old ladies, servant wenches, and little boys of Clonmel, read therein details of his swarthy complexion, stout figure, forbidding features, and wild attire, all belonging to a man of the stern age of forty-five years, great was the reverential panic inspired, and universal the abhorring homage paid to Captain John Doe's grim assemblage.

From week to week, from month to month, his fame spread proportionately with his excesses; and he at last approached pretty near to Clonmel, and was said to hover about the town, now at this side, and now at the other, from the adjacent heights of Slievenamon and the Galteigh mountains. Parties of military accordingly marched, from time to time, against him, but with no material success; and Captain Doe's adroitness, and uniform good fortune in baffling a superior enemy, became as notorious as his desperate resistance to, or triumph over, an equal or inferior one. His hair-breadth escapes, his rapid movements, and the various disguises he could at pleasure assume, were the theme of every tongue; and, in the vulgar apprehension, equalled, if they did not surpass, the subtlety and wonderful finesse

of the whole corps of primitive Irish Rapparees, with Redmond O'Hanlon at their head, and Cahier-na-Choppell bringing up the reserve.

Seven months after the pattern day, that is, in the end of the succeeding February, Lieutenant Howard was ordered from the head-quarters of his regiment at Clonmel, to relieve, with a considerable party, another detachment which for some time had been harassing John Doe among the mountains about thirteen Irish miles distant. Howard set off in good spirits; he was heartily tired, as we have observed, of the refinements of the town; excited and pleased with the prospect of seeing more of the interior of the country, particularly on such a service; and withal confident in the strength of his party, and vain by anticipation of the success which others had missed, and of which he made no question. He had but one regret in undertaking his little campaign, and this grew out of his separation from Graham, between whom and Howard a sincere esteem had long been cemented. To remove or alleviate this disagreeable feature, it was arranged between the friends, that Graham should apply for an occasional leave of absence, and visit Howard for a day or two at a time. For the first leave he was immediately to apply, and in order that Graham might promptly commence the desired intercourse, Howard was to write him an intimation of his quarters as soon as he took them up.

Three days after Howard's departure a letter accordingly reached his friend, but without proposing so immediate a meeting as had at first been contemplated. Howard mentioned, in explanation, that he had scarcely gained his field of action when the movements of Doe demanded his best measures; that he had since been marching and counter-marching from point to point; that after twice eluding his very grasp, Captain John had now escaped all observation; and that he, Howard, ne-

cessarily proposed to scour the country in search of him, and could not, therefore, name any place, nor indeed any day, for receiving Graham. He would, however, write from time to time, and anxiously hoped that the nature of his service might afford him a speedy pause, and thereby at once give opportunity for their seeing each other.

All the occasional advices now came to Graham dated from one spot, yet still declining to see him, on the ground that the writer could not answer for his remaining one hour after another where he was. Doe's hiding-place continued a mystery, although night by night some traces of him were left abroad. Howard had assumed his present quarters as the best point from which to take general observations, and originate at a moment's notice the most effectual sorties; and, while his sojourn in them was daily uncertain, there still arose a daily necessity for remaining stationary, until circumstances, that an hour, indeed, might produce, should call for a change of place and measures.

At last, Graham received a note dated from new quarters, though only three miles from the last, which, on the strong probability that Howard should now, for a few days at least, occupy them, invited Graham to the long-wished-for meeting. It further hinted, that Howard's change of position was owing to a successful manœuvre against Doe, which, as he was thereby hemmed in, embarrassed that formidable captain, and no doubt would end in his destruction. The writer addressed his note from a miserable Irish cabin, where he at the present time bivouacked, and to which his messenger would conduct Graham.

Early on the following morning, by the light of the moon, Graham, attended by the single soldier who had delivered Howard's letter, commenced his journey. It was Sunday morning. The stars still twinkled joyously throughout the deep blue sky,

cleared by the influence of a frosty atmosphere; and those brilliant, mysterious hosts of light might, to the rapt vision, seem shining forth in universal jubilee that their nightly course was run, and the relieving day in expected progress. As Graham and his follower gained the broadway that led on the outside of Clonmel, towards the recesses of Slievenamon mountain, and as the crisp frost crackled under his horse's step, he felt all the buoyancy that to youthful hearts such a morning, enjoyed in bounding liberty and the near prospect of pleasure, never fails to communicate.

His attendant, a staid old soldier of sixty, systematic as a machine, grave as an owl, and commonplace as an old pinchbeck timepiece, was, however, a considerable drag on his happiness. This man rode a very indifferent hack; added to which, he had been some forty years out of the saddle; and, from both circumstances, could neither keep up with Graham's spirited animal, nor take much pleasure in the extra effort necessary in endeavouring to do so. Accordingly, it became his interest and policy to curb by all prudent means Graham's uncalculating career; and for this purpose he more than once suggested to his "honour," awkwardly essaying each time to carry one hand to his cap, the propriety of pushing on abreast, that his honour might have the immediate service of an old soldier on a road by no means safe at such an early hour in the morning.

"Why, Evans," said Graham, at last pulling up, "I wonder what danger you can fear, man. Lieutenant Howard writes me word, and you confirm it, that this Doe is surrounded, almost taken prisoner, I may say; besides, we are both well armed."

"Please your honour," said Evans, slowly and gravely, "Doe, what they improperly call captain, may be surrounded, or may not be surrounded."

"I can't understand you, sir," answered Graham.

"Your honour won't think I mean but that his

honour, Lieutenant Howard, is very sure he is surrounded," continued Evans, still more gravely, and with an additional shade of visage, that might be called the shade mysterious; "but, after all his escapes from our hands, when the oldest soldier didn't think it possible, and with all his disguises and outlandish tricks, that were never equalled but in a play played on the stage in a play-house, it is hard to say—that is, to be very certain—that he is, at the present time ——"

The speaker here interrupted himself with a "Hush!" and stopped his horse to listen, as the noise of another horse was distinctly heard approaching in a side direction towards the main road, which still was Graham's route, but which had recently lost much of its broad and level character as it turned among the first outpost or introductory inequalities that flanked the main base of Slievenamon.

Graham also paused to listen, and, as audibly as his videt, heard the near approach of a horseman down a wild and narrow bridle-road, or, as it is there called, bosheen, about ten yards to the right of the way. He immediately took a pistol from his holster; Evans unslung his musket, which had hitherto dangled most awkwardly and inconveniently across his back; and both halted and sat up in their saddles, observing profound silence, except that Evans whispered to his officer a respectful hope, that the horse he bestrode might stand fire better than he knew how to trot.

In a moment they heard a noise accompanying that of the horse's feet; namely, a lusty stentorian voice, sending forth, in measured and prolonged notes, some kind of musical composition. But it was too deep and serious for song, unless a song of very severe and doleful character. At first, Evans, taking the latter view of the case, thought he could recognise in the strain a generic likeness to his

reminiscences of "The Death of Abercromby," or some of its interminable similitudes; but having vainly cocked his ear, while he cocked his musket, to catch a word of the old ditty—in fact, having ascertained that the singer gave utterance to a language that, whatever it was, was not English—Evans instantly became assured it must be Irish; and also recollecting, that among many curious things, Doe was much in the habit of carolling aloud his own rebellious songs, a conviction flashed upon him, which he communicated in a whisper to Graham, and both stood doubly prepared on the defensive.

The appearance, almost immediately, of a man from the bosheen, was not calculated, all circumstances of time, place, and prepossession considered, to allay the nerves of our travellers. He was well mounted on a strong, active, though not handsome horse; his figure seemed over-large, enveloped from the chin to the boot-heels in a dark top-coat; on his head appeared a white mass of something, which the imperfect light did not allow Graham to discriminate or assign to any known class of head-gear; and upon this again was placed a hat, with a remarkably broad brim, and a low, round crown. As he emerged on the main road, this apparition still continued his voluminous chant, and was only interrupted by the challenge, "Who goes there?—stand!"—of Graham, and its instant echo by the mechanical old soldier.

"Stand yourself, then!" answered the stranger, in an easy, unembarrassed, but by no means hostile tone; and, continuing rather jocosely, he repeated an old schoolboy rhyme—

If you're a man, stand;
If you're a woman, go;
If you're an evil spirit, sink down low.

"Did you say 'Fire,' sir?" asked Evans, in an aside to Graham, and levelling his piece.

"No!" said Graham, aloud; "hold!—and you, sir, I ask again, who and what are you?—friend or foe?"

"A friend to all honest men, and a foe, when I can help myself, to no man at all," was the answer.

"That's no answer," whispered Evans.

"You speak in untimely and silly riddles, sir," said Graham; "advance and declare yourself."

"Begging your pardon," continued the stranger, still in a good-humoured tone, "I see no prudent reason why I should advance at the invitation of two persons armed and unknown to me."

"We are the king's soldiers," said Evans, rather precipitately.

"Silence, man!" interrupted Graham; "I am an officer in the king's service, sir, and my attendant is a soldier."

"Oho!" quoth the stranger: "an officer, but no soldier."

"What, sir!" exclaimed Graham, raising his pistol, while Evans had recourse to his musket.

"Hold! and for shame, gentlemen!" cried the other seriously, altering his tone. "What! on a defenceless and peaceable poor man, who has given you no provocation? Upon my life, now, but this is unceremonious treatment, just at the end of one of my own bosheens. In the king's name, forbear—if indeed ye are the king's soldiers, as you say, though I can discover no outward badges of it;" for Graham rode in a plain dress, and Evans had disguised under his grey coat all appearance of uniform, a foraging cap alone intimating to an experienced eye his military character.

"I pledge my honour to the fact," continued Graham, in answer to the stranger's last observation, as he lowered his hand and was imitated by Evans; "and you will at least respect the word of a gentleman."

"'Tis my habit to do so, sir," said the strange

man; "and in proof of what I say, I am willing now to advance to you, if you also pledge your honour not to be fingering your triggers there."

"I do, sir; you may come on in perfect safety: but hold! I have also my terms to propose: are *you* armed?"

"Me? God help me! what have I to do with such matters?"

"But how am I to be assured?"

"Why, I'll tell you, then," answered the other, resuming the jocular tone: "you can easily see by the moonlight, and indeed by the morning, too, which is just breaking on us, that in my two hands, at least I have neither gun, blunderbuss, pistol, nor cutlass; so I will hold out both my arms in this manner."

"Stop!" roared Evans, as he saw the arms in motion, and suspecting some finesse, while he again levelled his musket.

"Recover arms!" cried Graham, "and fall back, Evans, and keep yourself quiet."

"God bless you, sir! and do manage him now," continued the stranger, as Evans obeyed orders; "I will hold out my arms, I say, as they are at present, and we'll just leave the rest to my horse. Come, Podhereen, right about face, and march!"

The obedient animal moved accordingly, and a few paces brought his master and Graham face to face. "And now, sir," continued this person, "I suppose you are satisfied, and I may just lift the rein from the baste's neck as before."

To this Graham assented, rather because he saw no reasonable ground for refusal than because he was perfectly satisfied; while Evans from behind whispered, "Search him first, your honour; 'tis Doe, I'll take my oath of it, in one of his disguises: look at him."

Graham did look; and in truth, if his moral certainty was not so strong as Evans's, he still had mis-

givings in common with the crafty old campaigner. The white protuberance on the stranger's head he could now ascertain to be some species of wig, bloated out over his ears and the back of his neck to an immoderate compass, and lying close to his forehead and the side of his face in a rigid, unbroken line, while it peaked down in the middle of the forehead, much like, in this respect, the professional head-disguise of the gentlemen of the long-robe. The broad-leafed, round-topped thing on the pinnacle of this still seemed to be a hat; and the dark loose coat, with a small cape reaching between the shoulders, hid all detail of the figure. By his face the stranger was between forty and fifty, exactly Doe's age; and his heavy depressed eyebrows, broad-backed nose, well-defined and expressive mouth, together with the self-assured twinkle of his eyes, that gleamed on Graham like illuminated jets, and a certain mixed character of severity and humour that ran through his whole visage, indicated a person of no ordinary caste, at least.

And still Graham looked, at a loss what to make of a costume so *outré*, and, as to his experience, unprecedented, till at last the subject of his admiration again broke silence.

"And I suppose I may go my road, too, without any further question, captain?"

"May I ask which road you travel, sir?" said Graham, with an obvious meaning.

"Hut, tut, now!" said the other; "that's too Irish a way of answering a gentleman's question on the king's high-road. Danger has often come of such odd answers. You see I am unarmed, and I see you have it in your power, that is, if you liked it, to strip me of my old wig and hat in a minute, and no friend of mine a bit the wiser. In fact, sir, you now give me sufficient cause to look after my own personal safety. I have no wish to offend any

gentleman, but you must excuse me for saying I cannot be quite sure who or what *you* are: you may be Captain John as well as any other captain, for aught I know."

This was said with much gravity; and Graham hastened, in some simplicity, to make the most solemn and earnest declarations of his loyalty and professional services and character.

"Well, sir," continued the stranger, who had now turned the tables and become catechist accordingly, "all this may be very true, and from your appearance and manner I am inclined to think the best of you; but if *you* are not he, how can I be so sure of that suspicious-looking person at your back?"

Evans, shocked to the bottom of his soul, as well as displeased, that under any circumstances he could be confounded with a rebel, traitor, and desperado, shouted out at this observation, and was with some difficulty restrained by Graham from taking instant vengeance for the insult. When he was restored to order, Graham assured the stranger, with emphasis equal to what he had used on his own account, of Evans's real character.

"Then pass on, gentlemen, and let me go about my lawful business," continued the man, drawing up at the roadside to allow them to pass. Graham accordingly put his horse in motion, and, followed by Evans, both still holding their arms, trotted by. Graham and the stranger touched hats to each other as they parted; but Evans only bent on his now detected foe a ferocious look, which was returned in a burst of suppressed laughter.

"He's either John Doe or the devil, please your honour," said Evans, when they had advanced a little forward; "and ~~now~~ why does he follow us?" he continued, as, with some difficulty turning round in the saddle, he saw the stranger trotting after them at about the distance of thirty yards.

"Never mind him, Evans," said Graham. "If he keeps that fair distance, we can't hinder a peaceable man from pursuing his journey."

"But who is that coming down the hill-side before us?" asked Evans, pointing off the road to where the moon threw a shadow over the side of a declivity, which the day had not sufficient influence to relieve or dissipate.

Graham, looking in the direction to which Evans's hand pointed, saw a form in rapid motion down the hill; and both almost simultaneously pealed out their usual "Who's there? stand!" but the form still continued to descend.

"Stand, on your life!" repeated Graham; but no notice was taken of his threat; and at this moment the horseman behind quickened the pace of his horse, and approached much nearer.

"We are surrounded, please your honour," said Evans.

"Fire, then!" said Graham aloud, and continued in a lower tone, "I will turn round to meet this other man."

"Nonsense!" cried the stranger from behind, who seemed to have heard Graham's orders to Evans; "stop, man, stop! don't fire! 'tis a harmless creature of my own!" but his words had little effect on Evans, the report of whose piece was almost instantly heard, succeeded by a loud bellow from the hill, and then the form continued to tumble down more rapidly than before, now evidently impelled by its own gravity, till at last it splashed through the thin ice into a little stream of water at the side of the road.

"There!" continued the stranger, who had by this time come up, "now you ~~have~~ done it, and a brilliant affair it is for the king's men to boast of."

"What do you mean, fellow?" said Graham, confronting him; "stand off, or you must take the consequences!"

"Ullaloo! I'm not another calf, to be treated in such a manner," replied the stranger. "I tell you I'm no mark for such doughty knights; but, stop! here's a second foe breaking the fence at the top of the hill; make ready!—present!—fire!"

"'Twas a poor calf, of a certain, please your honour," interrupted Evans, who had now returned from an investigation at the spot where the enemy remained stationary.

"A *poor* calf!" retorted the horseman: "'twas as thriving a calf as was ever seen at this side of the country; and of all creatures in the world, the very one I had my eye on for my next Christmas beef; and I must say, gentlemen, that if ye are what ye pretend to be, I take it rather ill of the king to train up his soldiers in hostility to any poor man's meat. I thought that he had some other employment for them."

Evans's antipathy, now increased by a sense of shame and a growing apprehension of the stranger's ridicule, turned off in dogged dudgeon, while Graham said,

"This is all extremely ridiculous, sir, but perhaps mostly owing to your own strange and unsatisfactory conduct; and as to the loss you have sustained, if, indeed, the animal was yours, or whether it was or not, here is pecuniary recompense; and so good morning to you."

"Stop a moment, sir," answered the horseman. "I have no claim on your money; 'twas an accident, and must be arranged as such. You will put it up, if you please," with a wave of his hand, an inclination of his head, and altogether the assumption, for the first time, of an air, a voice, and a manner, that were impressive, if not gentlemanly and commanding. Graham mechanically complied with the felt influence of this change of character, and returned the money to his purse. The stranger continued:—

"With respect to the other part of your implied

terms, sir, it must be 'Good morning,' or 'Well met,' just as you insist on it."

"Good morning, then, if you please, sir," answered Graham, and slightly bowing, again set off with Evans. Yet he was scarcely two minutes on his way when he felt a kind of regret at having so cavalierly rejected the stranger's half approach to fellowship. In the improved light of the gradually expanding morning, this person's face became more distinct, and more pleasingly distinct during the last words he had spoken. Graham now thought over more argumentatively the easy self-assertion with which he had refused the money, and recollected that the language adopted in his explanation was much more that of a gentleman than the idiomatic turn of his previous discourse, while it also had less of the brogue of his country. In fact, Graham felt half sorry and half curious, and was getting deeper into the feeling, when the object of it again diverted from himself this dawn of favourable impression.

The noise of his horse's feet in rapid motion first awakened Graham from his reverie; and, looking behind them, our travellers saw the stranger nearer them than they had reckoned, holding out one arm, and crying, "Halt! halt!"

Evans concluded that they were now in reality to be attacked; and Graham, impatient of so incorrigible an intruder, mended his pace to avoid him.

"Will your honour please to leave me behind?" asked Evans, thumping his spurless heels against the sides of his hack, and applying the butt of his musket for a common purpose, as he vainly endeavoured to keep up with Graham.

"Halt, I say!—your purse! your purse!" cried the horseman, still closing on them.

"I'll shoot you as dead as Abercromby first; shiver my limbs if I don't!" roared Evans, facing round.

"Why, you stupid and provoking fellow!" said the pursuer, slackening his speed, "won't you let me give your master his own?"

"Fall back, Evans!" said Graham, advancing.

"Your purse, sir," continued the stranger, extending his arm; "it fell from you on the spot where we last halted; and, again, good morning to you, sir."

"I'm much obliged," said Graham, taking it; "and now that we can all see each other better, suppose, sir, if our routes agree, that we push on together?"

"My way does not hold for more than a hundred yards further along this main road," answered the stranger, carelessly; "I must then turn to the left."

"Please your honour, that's exactly our route," whispered Evans.

"Then we *are* to be together, sir, if you have no objection," resumed Graham.

"None in the world," was the reply; and, much to the astonishment of Evans, Graham fell into line with the stranger, leaving the galled, and jaded, and fretted orderly to follow as he might.

The day was now almost fully up, and the thick vapour that had slept out the night on the bosom of Slievenamon whitened in the returning light, and, lazily obeying the summons of the breeze, began to crawl towards the peak of the mountain, and there once more deposit itself, as if to take another slothful nap. Graham remarked on the picturesque effect; and his companion replied, "Yes, it was odd enough that ould Slievenamon should put on his night-cap just as all the rest of the world was throwing off that appendage."

Graham, too proper and systematic in the succession of his ideas to like this trope, did not notice it; but proceeded, with a little vanity of his travelled lore, to allude to the superiority of Italian over our island scenery.

"Superiority is a general word," said the traveller, "in the way you use it. I presume you do not mean mere height, as applied to such mountain scenery as surrounds us; in other respects the Italian landscape, principally owing, of course, to the influence of atmosphere, is more beautiful than the English one, and, from the scarcity of trees in Ireland, much more so than the Irish one; but among the mist and shadow of our island hills, as you call them, particularly in Kerry, I have always felt a fuller sense of the sublime, at least, than I ever did in the presence of Continental scenery, either in Italy or in Spain. Switzerland alone, to my eye, first equals us and then surpasses us."

This speech gave information of rather more acquaintance with the distinctions in a knowledge of which Graham took it for granted he might shine, than it seemed practicable to turn to advantage; so he avoided the general subject, and, taking up only a minor division of it, protested he could not understand why, unless it was attributable to the indolence of its people, Ireland should be so "shamefully deficient in trees."

"Indeed!" his companion replied, in an indefinite tone; then, after a pause, added, that "he thought so too." But Graham did not notice—it was intended he should not—the scrutinising, and afterwards rather contemptuous look, and finally the severe waggery of face, that filled up the seeming *hiatus*.

So, having to his own mind hit on a fruitful theme, Graham diverged into all the ramifications of Irish indolence: obstinacy was his next word—Irish indolence and obstinacy; they would neither do nor learn how to do anything, he said: they would not even submit to be educated, out of the very ignorance and bad spirit that produced all this **Whiteboyism**. There was a national establishment, he was well assured, in Dublin, with ample means,

that proposed the blessings of education on the most liberal plan; yet the very ministers of the religion of the country would not suffer their ragged and benighted flock to take advantage of so desirable an opportunity: the bigoted rustic pastors actually forbade all parents to send their children to the schools of this institution.

"Yes," the stranger said, "the parish priests, the bigoted parish priests; and all because a certain course of reading was prescribed in these schools."

"Precisely, sir," continued Graham.

"The bigotry of the priests is intolerable," said the stranger, "and only equalled by its implacability; nothing can bring them to consent to the proposed terms, because, forsooth, they plead a conscientious scruple; because they say their approval would be a breach of their religious duty, as if we had anything to do with the private conscience and creed of such people."

"Or as if the body of respectable gentlemen who framed the regulation should accede, by rescinding their law, to the superstitious prejudices of such people," echoed Graham.

"Very true, sir; the Medes and Persians, I am given to understand, never repealed a law, and why should the gentlemen you speak of? Besides, there is so little necessity for the concession—the liberal and wise association can so easily accomplish their professed object without it."

"Pardon me, sir: there we differ. The object proposed is the education of the poor of this country, and I cannot exactly see how they are to be educated if, as is on all hands undeniable, the parish priests have sufficient influence to keep them, now and for ever, out of the school-houses."

"Oh, sir, nothing can be easier. But first let me see that we understand each other. You and I, suppose, are now riding to the same point; well, a pit, an inundation, or a fallen mountain, occurs a

little way on, rendering impassable the road we had conceived to be perfectly easy, so that we cannot gain our journey's end by this road. If you please, the place we want to reach shall stand for the education of the poor Irish, the object professed; *we* may personify the educating society, taking our own road; and the bigoted priests are represented by the monstrous impediment. Well, sir, we reach that insurmountable obstacle to our progress; and now, would it not be most humiliating, and inconsistent, and all that is unworthy, if we did not instantly stop, and declare we would not proceed a foot farther by any other road till our favourite one, that never can be cleared, is cleared for us? So far I understand you, sir."

"Then I protest you have an advantage I do not possess over you, sir," said Graham.

"All will be distinct in a moment," resumed his companion. "I say we are both exactly of opinion that the society should not, with ample means and professions, take a single step towards their end, unless by their own blockaded way; that, in dignified consistency, they should not vouchsafe to teach one chattering urchin how to read or write, or cast up accounts, unless they can at the same time teach him theology: in other words, till they see the mountain shoved aside, or the deluge drained, or the bottomless pit filled up: in other words, again, till the bigoted Popish priests consent to sacrifice their conscience, whatever it may be; though, meantime, the swarming population remain innocent of any essential difference between B and a bull's foot, or between A and the gable-end of a cabin. We are agreed, I say, sir."

"Upon my word, whatever may be your real drift, I must admit you have substantially defined, though in your own strange way, the very thing I but just now endeavoured to distinguish; and I must repeat, from what we have both said, that the main object

of the society still seems shut out from attainment. This, however, was what you appeared to deny, I think; I should be glad to hear your remedy."

"We come to it at once, sir. By no means look out for another road, but try to get rid of the irremovable barrier."

"I protest, sir, you rather puzzle me."

"That's the way, sir," continued the stranger, running on in his wonted delight and bitterness. "No time can be lost, and no common sense and consistency compromised, in the hopeful experiment; that's the way."

"What, sir! what do you mean?"

"Convert the parish priests; there is nothing easier."

"Pardon me, sir; but I begin to fear you trifle with me," said Graham, mortified and displeased at having so long exhibited for the amusement of so strange a person.

"I should be sorry, young gentleman, to say anything to offend you. I am sure I have not intended to do so. But farewell, Lieutenant Graham. Present my compliments to your friend, Lieutenant Howard, and tell him he shall soon hear more of me. Farewell! My road lies up against, or rather round about, the breast of this hill; you will find your quarters two miles on. A good morning, sir;" and without more pause he turned off the byroad they had so long pursued, into a rugged and narrow path strewn with stones and rock; and, after a few words of encouragement to Podhereen, his athletic horse, disappeared among the curves and bends of encircling hills and inequalities.

Graham stared almost in consternation when he heard the stranger mention his and Howard's names; and his rapid disappearance along so wild a path, together with what Graham now regarded as the uncommon assurance of his late manner, induced, more than ever, serious apprehensions as to his identity,

in the formation of which he was abundantly assisted by Evans. Both seemed to think it was their policy to push forward to Howard's quarters with all possible speed; and even Graham allowed the suspicion of an ambuscade by some secret pass to shadow his mind. Evans accordingly put his back to the utmost stretch, requiring but little occasional accommodation from his officer now to keep him in view.

They gained, however, a near prospect of Howard's mountain quarters, without any further adventure. An untenanted cabin served for Howard's bivouac. It was built in a desolate little valley, fronting the road over which Graham travelled, but considerably below its level, having one knoll of mountain at one side, another at the other, with an open background of flat and apparently marshy country. Before the door of the cabin Graham recognised his friend, surrounded by the few soldiers who formed his immediate body guard, and who, with the exception of a sentinel, seemed employed in furbishing their arms and accoutrements: about a quarter of a mile in the open ground, the main force of his party was also discernible in a line round the marsh, standing to their arms.

Howard almost at the same time saw his friend's approach, hastened to meet him, and then led, laughing at his own means for hospitality, into the cabin, where, however, a good ordinary breakfast was prepared, and a bright furze-fire was blazing in the ample chimney.

CHAPTER V.

DURING breakfast Graham did not fail to mention to Howard his adventures on the road, and the individual who, for a great part of the journey, had been his almost self-elected companion, became an object of equal interest to Howard and to himself. The fact of his seeming to know Graham's person and the purpose of his route, and his parting allusion to Howard, which the friends now construed into a threat, won on their apprehension; and, notwithstanding Howard's strong assurances that he could not be the man they almost feared to think he was, conjecture was still busy, and doubt uppermost.

After some time spent in discussing the matter, Howard recollected an engagement of importance which he wished to keep. It was to meet, at the Roman Catholic place of worship of the mountain district, a Protestant clergyman, who was also a county magistrate, and with him a Roman Catholic priest of eminence, from whom they expected an address to the rude congregation, on their secret associations. This latter gentleman Howard had already met, he said, at the house of a Roman Catholic proprietor in the neighbourhood, where he had passed the last fortnight previous to the change to his present quarters. He proceeded to speak of him as a man who had gained much character by his writings and preachings to the common people. "Here," continued Howard, "are some of his pamphlets to the Whiteboys, which you will read and

judge of for yourself; but I have to add of my good friend Father O'Clery, that *he* is the friend of Flood, Grattan, Curran, Lord Avonmore, and the other Irish talents, who have unanimously elected him a member of their festive body, quaintly denominated 'The Monks of St. Patrick;' and that he has officially received notice of the gratitude of government for his most useful as well as talented exertions.

"The second fact I have mentioned reminds me," pursued Howard, "of the facetious social character of O'Clery. Indeed, I have scarcely ever met a person of rarer vein: Nature seems to have stamped him a wit and a satirist; but he contrives with peculiar good-humour to exercise her gifts most generally in a harmless way. Then everything about him is, to me, eccentric: his swollen, old-fashioned white wig; his curious round hat; and he rides a robust horse, that he calls Podhereen, or 'Beads,' I think——"

"That he calls what?" cried Graham.

"'Tis a curious name," answered Howard, "like everything else in this curious country, and I do not wonder at your admiration. I am right: Podhereen is the title borne by his horse, which, as I have translated it, means 'Beads;' and hence the point of so calling a priest's horse, perhaps, from the circumstance of the rider often saying his rosary on the animal, as he journeys from place to place."

"If Podhereen be indeed the creature's name," resumed Graham, "and if such a hat, and wig, and manner, as you describe belong to O'Clery, then have I been an ass, and the priest knows it, too, Howard."

"What!" cried Howard—"but I have it! I have it! O'Clery was to have ridden this morning from a friend's house near Clonmel, to keep the appointment at the chapel to which his Protestant fellow-labourer, with whom he lives in some amity, invited; and, as I live by the sword, you met him on the road; and, lo, your Captain John!"

"Nothing can be more evident, I fear," replied Graham.

"About two miles from where we sit," continued Howard, "a straggling path diverges among the hills towards the friend's residence where I have met him, and where he had engaged to breakfast, and lo, again, your mysterious disappearance! He knew you were coming hither; I am to see him at the chapel, and again and again—lo, lo!"

"All too true, Howard," resumed Graham; "and the worst is, I was goose enough to read him a lecture on the bigotry of Popish priests, in which the old Jesuit seemed to join, till he had meshed me in a confusion of I know not what ideas; but from all you say of the man's satirical turn, I now clearly understand how I have been bamboozled."

"Exquisite!" cried Howard. "O'Clery will live on this for ever and a day! But, come; you must see him in his true character; the hour of appointment is at hand, and we can scarcely be in time at the chapel."

The friends accordingly proceeded across two or three uncultivated fields, to the mountain chapel of the district. It was visible from a distance: a low, almost squalid-looking building, contrived, according to universal usage, in something of the shape of a cross, with small narrow windows, many of which were broken; and thatched with straw, that in some places was decayed and blackened by the weather. No "venerable yews" shaded this less than humble conventicle; in fact, not a single tree was in sight; and no enclosure ran round it: even the burial-ground was exposed to all intruders.

"Can this be a Christian place of worship?" said Graham, as they approached. "I rather thought we were going to yonder smart-looking building, with blue slates and a steeple, at the brow of the hill."

"To say the truth," replied Howard, "being good

and loyal Protestants, that should be our destination; for it is a Protestant church, where the beneficed clergyman reads prayers, as Swift often did, to one old lady who lives near, and—if the roads be good—to two. Sometimes, indeed, as was also occasionally the case with the humorist I have mentioned, the clergyman's clerk represents, in a large and cold church, the imaginary congregation of the parish. Nay, O'Clery gravely asserts that, upon a particular occasion, even this parliamentary kind of representation ceased. His story is, that the old clerk died of a pleurisy, caught during a winter's attendance in the damp and deserted building, and that for three months, as there was no second Protestant of his rank in the parish, his office remained vacant. Some bungling endeavour at a schismatic substitute was, however, made: a young Popish peasant, attracted by the salary, promised to attend; but as the fear of a long penance, and I believe everlasting damnation to boot, forbade him to be present at heretical ceremonies, he contrived to reconcile his conscience to his interests in the following manner: During service the fellow walked outside of the church, spelling the tombstones, or whistling an Irish ditty; it was conceded that when the clergyman came to any part that required the response of a clerk, he should ejaculate, 'Hem!' and at this signal the young man ran to the church door, thrust in his head, and having roared out 'Amen!' returned to his private amusements, and so got through the service."

After a laugh at this conceit, Graham wondered how a clergyman could be well paid for having nothing to do. In fact, the question was by whom, when he had no congregation. Howard answered, by the Roman Catholic landlords, farmers, and peasantry of the country; and Graham thought that odd, when he observed that it was evident those persons could not afford, for the purposes of their

own worship, a better edifice than the one now in view.

This conversation brought them to the entrance of the chapel, and Graham, from what he there saw, thought the matter still more odd. The body of the building was stuffed with people; and outside the door hundreds continued to kneel in the open air, along the wet and miry approach to the chapel.

From the profound silence that reigned within and without, interrupted only by the monotonous voice of the priest, it was evident that prayers, or, technically speaking, mass, had commenced; and, whether habit or piety produced the effect, our gentlemen could not avoid noticing how deeply attentive the outside congregation appeared to be. The old women and old men of the crowd held in their hands long black beads, or rosaries, to which, as they slid down every bead, their lips moved in seemingly fervent prayer; a few young persons of both sexes had books; some girls again had rosaries; and even those who knelt unsupplied with any such clue to devotion kept up the general appearance of an attentive feeling.

As Howard saw no means of entering the chapel through the crowd without disturbing their good order, and as he knew of no other entrance than by this principal one, the strangers remained for some time disagreeably situated, particularly when in a few moments they began to attract the notice of the people, and fear, if not consternation, seemed the result of the discovery. After standing still for about five minutes, with their heads uncovered, through a wish to conciliate the favourable opinion of those around, Graham pressed his friend's arm, and pointed to a side-face in the rustic assembly. There was no mistaking it, although several months had elapsed since the gentlemen had before seen it: its proprietor was the bowing knight, Mr. Patrick Flinn.

"I caught him watching us," whispered Graham; "but when my eye met his, he turned round with an affectation of unconsciousness, and assumed the deep abstraction of visage and that rapid movement of the lips you now perceive."

Immediately after, Flinn again looked towards his old friends; and, as if acting on a second thought, bounced up at once, and with his old scrape and bow, and peculiar swagger, approached, and in an anxious whisper addressed them.

"Musha, long life an' honour to ye, gintlemin, and praise be to God for the day I see ye agin! an' won't ye come round to the sacristy where Father O'Clary, an' the ministher—good loock to him!—an' Mr. Grace, *your* ould friend, Captain Howard, is waitin' fur you?"

After due recognition, Paddy's offer was accepted, and Howard and Graham accompanied him round to the back of the chapel, where, by a small private door, he introduced them to what he had called the sacristy; and then, with repeated *congrés* and fervent prayers for their worldly and immortal happiness, disappeared; Howard not a little surprised at the intimate knowledge of his arrangements and acquaintances that Flinn's speech seemed to imply.

According to the usage of his superiors, Flinn was correct in the name he had given to the small apartment into which the visitors now entered, as, even on the dwindled and sometimes wretched scale that the Roman Catholic religion is practised in Ireland, its professors fondly continue some shadow of its various primitive accompaniments, of which the names, whether as applying to buildings or parts of buildings, to persons, ceremonies, or the materials for ceremonies, had a different import in the olden time.

The sacristy, then, was at the back of the altar: the place where the priest put on his vestments, previous to his appearing before the multitude to

celebrate mass. Here, too, was a confessional chair; and the sacristy was also occasionally appropriated to the better order of parishioners, who might choose to hear mass distinct from the pressure of the crowd. The floor was earthen, the walls were whitewashed, perspiring with chill rather than heat, and altogether presented an aspect of little comfort.

At the very inoment our friends entered, Mr. O'Clery, attended by the parish minister, issued from the sacristy by another door, that led into a round railed space before the altar, called the sanctuary. Mr. Grace, the gentleman at whose house O'Clery had breakfasted, and the common friend of Howard, was about to follow, when, recognising Howard, he turned back, and in profound silence led him and Graham after the clergyman. Graham remarked that as Howard passed out he bowed with a very amiable smile to a young lady who stood veiled at the door, and who, amid much abstraction and decent piety of manner, graciously returned his salute.

From the sanctuary, where seats were provided for them, the visiters saw with amazement the immense surface of heads in the body of the chapel, undulating like a sea, and thick and wedged as paving-stones in the streets of a city. Some incidental pause had occurred in the service, which afforded proper time for the delivery of an exhortation; and of this the human mass seemed aware; for there now arose a universal pressure forward, attended with the scraping and clattering noise of hundreds of hobnailed brogues against the clay floor of the chapel; and simultaneously an uproarious coughing, and blowing of noses, and hawking, and hemming, and sneezing; by which, as a matter of course, an Irish congregation prepares and becomes qualified for a decorous attention to the harangue of its preacher.

Mr. O'Clery was not of the parish to which on

this day he devoted his eloquence, having only been invited thither, as Howard informed Graham, in consequence of his established character. Mass had been celebrated by the true parish priest, who now stood with O'Clery on the altar, while the Protestant clergyman remained on the side steps; and, before the honorary preacher could begin, the *bonâ fide* occupant thought it necessary to address his parishioners.

And he did so, good man, in a strain, and on a subject, and with a manner, little eloquent. Advising them that Mr O'Clery was to follow in reference to their wicked associations, he contented himself with reprobating their general incorrectness in the payment of his Christinas "dues." He protested that "he had not received a pound of their money since Easter; and how did they think he was to live, and keep the poor horse, that morning, noon, and night, was on the road in their service? Then, again, his horse. Mickie Delany had promised to send him in a grain of oats, and Tom Heffernan a bundle of hay, and Jack Hoolahan a wisp of straw; but nor oats, nor hay, nor straw, had he ever seen since. The very chapel above their heads, and above his head, they would not cover. He had kept his bed for a week with the rheumatism, imbibed from the droppings of the roof as he said mass on the last rainy Sunday. And what did they intend at all? Was it their wish to remain in their ignorance, and their sins, and their wickedness, like a drove of bastes, without priest to give them the Word of God, or to christen for them, or to marry for them, or to confess them of their abominations, and then to go head foremost out of the darkness of their life in this world into the eternal shadow of the next?"

This, and much more, the afflicted and really worthy man addressed to the gaping throng, who, whenever he gained a climax of denunciations, sent up such a wail of singular pathos as to the unin-

tiated ear might promise a speedy arrangement of the last Christmas "dues;" though we have never heard that, eventually, it was of much benefit either to their own souls or to the bodies of the complainant and his horse.

At last Mr. O'Clery began his exhortation, in a style and manner very different indeed. In setting out, he addressed himself at once to the hearts of his hearers, ingeniously and successfully endeavouring to insinuate himself into their affections and their confidence. He called them his dear though unhappy children; grafting, as he went along, his disapprobation of their crime upon his sympathy with their misfortunes, and winning them, by a mutual sympathy, to become the judges and denouncers of their own excesses. When he had sufficiently prepared his opportunity, the reverend gentleman did not withhold the broadest statement of the atrocities that had been committed; but still he kept his kind tone and manner, dwelling, rather in sorrow than in anger, upon the national disgrace, and, to him, the personal anguish of such a statement. Presently he argued with his audience upon the utter uselessness of their projects and acts, when disciplined forces were brought against them; when they were not countenanced by a single individual of their own religion who from station and education might afford them counsel; when the wisest heads in the country were leagued against them; and when they had the experience of the utter failure of all their previous attempts. After thus disheartening them, the preacher next recurred to the moral delinquency of their deeds, and now, for the first time, got in a view of their illegality; strengthening himself by giving the religion they professed as the rule of civil obedience, and fully defining the duties that according to it they owed to their king and country, and the deadly sin that followed a breach of those duties. And here, at last throwing aside the olive

branch, and arraying himself in all the sternness and terror of ecclesiastical power and authority, he called on the thunders of the church to assist the voice of the law, and uttered the deep threats at which the Irish peasant has been in the habit of trembling, though recent events prove to us a growing indifference towards them. An evident awe resulted from this; and the speaker hastened to complete his impression by once more touching the human feelings. As Irishmen, as Christians, as fathers, brothers, sons, and husbands, he invoked them to adopt the course that would save their country from opprobrium; their little children, their aged parents, their fond wives, from the ruin, and shame, and sorrow, that must follow a perseverance in crime, and themselves from shameful death here and judgment hereafter; and in conclusion the preacher, in his own name, and in the name of all their priests, invoked them, with tears upon his cheeks; and then falling on his knees, prayed a merciful God to give strength to his supplications.

The final effect was decisive. For some time an intense silence waited on Mr. O'Clery peroration; but, as he rose to a climax, the weeping wail of women bore testimony to its natural influence; some even shrieked in anticipated agony; while, in the pause they left, sobs, "not loud, but deep," intimated the laborious working of grief and repentance in harder hearts; many a rough cheek, which since childhood had been dry, now ran tears respondent to those shed by the reverend preacher; and when he suddenly knelt, one mighty burst attended his unexpected movement; every knee simultaneously sought the ground; and, for a minute after, clasped hands and upturned eyes proclaimed the continuous sentiment and conviction.*

Indeed, to those who have never been present at

* The sketch of a usual scene.

such a scene as we describe, and are unacquainted with the Irish character, this attempt to convey a true picture will perhaps appear exaggerated. Howard and Graham, taken by surprise, acknowledged, however, its immediate influence: for they found themselves kneeling at the close, along with every other individual of the congregation. The Protestant clergyman, too, did not withhold, under a dissenting roof, the natural testimony that was only an admission of the great and general sway of those broad principles which, in common with the preacher, he devoutly advocated.

And it was now his turn to say a few sentences to the people. He was handed up to the altar by the two Roman Catholic priests, and began, his eyes still moist, and his voice affected, to state, that it was under their permission he had ventured out of his place to speak a friendly word to his, as well as their, common flock. After the powerful appeal that had been delivered, he would not, he said, hazard a single general observation; and all he had to propose was peace and good-will, and, so far as in him lay, the measures to attain both. He then alluded to the difficult question of tithes; volunteering concessions, and suggesting arrangements, by which he hoped, in his own person at least, to alleviate the hardship he was aware existed; and promising for himself, to the utmost extent of his influence, not only pardon, but protection, to such as would speedily give up their wicked courses, and conform to the advice and precepts they had just heard.

His address seemed to produce, if not so powerful an effect as the last, certainly one more pleasing; and the mass was resumed, under every appearance and hope of good results.

When it had concluded, and while the people were pouring out of the chapel, Howard and Graham gained the sacristy, where the one friend presented the other to Mr. O'Clery and Mr. and Miss Grace;

which lady Graham recognised to be the same to whom Howard had bowed on his way to the sanctuary. O'Clery, even so soon after an occasion and exertion that had intensely affected himself, let fly at Graham a few significant glances of his deep black eye, while his lip curved in a provoking smile. He shook him heartily by the hand, however, and hoped for the pleasure of his acquaintance.

An invitation to dinner by Mr. Grace was declined by Howard, and by his friend, of course, on the plea of attending to his present position; and while O'Clery and the Protestant clergyman, accepting it, accompanied Mr. and Miss Grace to their house, the military gentlemen sought their Irish cabin and casual camp-mess, loud in approbation of the eloquence they had heard.

CHAPTER VI.

"WELL, your prophecy holds," said Graham to his friend after dinner, as he sipped a glass of genuine potteen punch: "I begin to like your smoky beverage better than I thought it possible."

"'Tis the only thing I can offer you in my wild quarters: and though, being both smoky and illicit, it goes against your palate and my conscience, yet necessity, you know, Graham ——"

"Has little to do with squeamish tastes or the parish gauger. Potteen you call it?"

"Potteen; derivative, *pot*; which utensil, with a crooked tin tube, forms, I can learn, the whole distilling apparatus. The natives, who ever mix up with aberrations of this kind a quaint and singular humour, further term it 'mountain dew;' in joint allusion, I believe, to the situations and witching time of night in which it is generally manufactured."

"Well, Howard, I have now for the first time opportunity to inquire after your romantic campaign here. You are sure that he is completely hemmed in?"

"I am positive, from the intelligence of my spies, ~~that~~ at this moment the formidable Doe and part of his gang, surprised in their retreat homeward, as usual after a mighty depredation, lie at some concealed point within a circle of three or four miles I have formed round them. We repeatedly started

and chased him during the course of yesterday; towards evening, however, he eluded us; but ever since the men stand to their arms, where at a distance you have seen them, they and I certain that he is within their lines, and that if he does not appear he must starve within them."

"Why not close in and take him at once?"

"You are unacquainted with the nature of the ground. He has retreated among the recesses of a bog, the area of which is some miles, and where regular soldiers, ignorant of the novel impediments and ambuscades of the place, cannot follow him: it would be madness, indeed almost sure destruction, if they did. You have yet only the aspect of the situation, softened by distance; but in reality it abounds in alternate pools of deep water and marshy spots of soil, while here and there huge clumps, as they are called, of turf, create frequent hiding-holes, and of course dangerous impediments. No; the advantage is mine, and I must not hastily forfeit it. He shall, as I have said, creep out to us, or rot where he is; the men are content to watch him, as on the edges of the bog all round they have in turn their occasional bivouacs, like myself, and are in no want of rashers."

"Are you aware of the number of the enemy?"

"I believe they are rather numerous, and, what is more, brave and desperate."

"Then all is not yet certain; for, instead of crawling out to be hanged, they may break out and escape, if they do not absolutely annoy you."

"It is possible; though, from our at least equal numbers and commanding discipline, not probable."

"You have often seen this bravo?"

"Never: that pleasure is in reserve for me; but I have often heard from him."

"Indeed! in what way?"

"In the shape of sundry written warnings to draw

off my men and go quietly about my business, if I valued life or health."

"How did these notices reach you? by what hand?"

"I do not know. Sometimes, in the morning, I found them on my pillow; sometimes nailed to the very door of my bivouac: nay, I got one of them dangling at my sword-guard."

"In good earnest, now, what is the treason of these silly as well as desperate men?"

"If by treason you mean disloyalty to the person of our gracious king, I believe they are not guilty of that specific crime."

"No!"

"No. I have assured myself that their vices do not involve the most distant aim at the throne. On the contrary, I believe they indulge a kind of wayward love and reverence for their present good sovereign; and as to the church, they take, in the way of resistance to tithes, or rates, or dues, almost as much liberty with their own as with ours."

"You surprise me. What is their object, then?"

"They state it to be the lowering of rack-rents and tithes. This Captain Doe professes not to allow any person to set or take land, or to pay tithes, but on his own terms; and upon any that transgress his orders he wreaks, when he can, summary and often horrible vengeance."

"Is the grievance real or imaginary?"

"That is a question, Graham, that, if you had my duty to perform, you would scarcely wish to discuss. At all events, I believe we could not, as Englishmen, understand its naked merits. The great relative differences between landlord and tenant, and pastor and flock, in each country, must incapacitate our judgments till we are better informed."

"Be it so, then. Of what rank and education may this Doe be?"

"His excellency either does not know how to

write, or else takes a new secretary at every turn; for no two of the state papers he has done me the honour to address to me were written alike."

"Have you any of these precious documents to show?"

Howard searched his pockets, and while thus employed—"By the way, Howard," continued Graham, "that was a pretty little Papist you smirked at to-day in the chapel—was she not?"

"I think I have some of these papers," said Howard, most properly replying to the first question first: "yes, here is one, predicting my annihilation in two short days if I do not forthwith return to head-quarters;" and he looked towards the fire, his face emulating the colour of his jacket.

"And not a word about the little devotee? Well; monopolize as you like. But let us see this other matter. Holloa!" continued Graham, reading—"what the deuce is all this?" and now he read aloud.

"'Captain John Doe presents his compliments to Lieut. Howard'—oh, thou particular fellow! (an interpolation by Graham)—"'to Lieut. Howard, sending this private note to warn him, that at the same time that he would do well to draw off his men, Lieut. Howard might also find it for the best to give up——'"

"Stop, Graham!" interrupted Howard—"I've made a mistake."

"'To give up,'" continued Howard, still reading out—"all pretensions——'"

"I say 'tis a mistake. That's the wrong note; give it me;" and Howard rose and advanced; but the other, anticipating him, also started up, and holding Howard off with one hand, kept the note in the other, and went on.

"'To give up all pretensions to the rich attorney's daughter.' Ha! ha! sly-boots!—love and war?—ch!"

"This is unlucky—ill-timed, I meant," mumbled Howard.

"'For, by the moon and stars he reigns under,'" pursued Graham, still from the paper, "'Captain John swears he can never permit *purty* Mary Grace'—what! the little idolater?"—'*purty* Mary Grace to be carried off from a gossip of his own by an English red-coat.—(Signed) Doc'—and countersigned, too!—'Lieutenant Starlight—Sergeant Moonshine.' Why, Howard, how close and prudent you would be! Pretty Mary—no, *purty* Mary Grace, the rich attorney's daughter! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Nay, Graham," said Howard, resuming his seat, and the least in the world sulky, "since you have at your pleasure possessed yourself of my secret—though, I own, I was just debating how I should best escape your cursed laugh in breaking it to you—but, since you have it, there is no need of that cursed laugh, Graham. I'm not so ashamed of the matter."

"What!—matrimony in good earnest?" and Graham also sat down, returning the note.

"Really!" answered Howard; "a pretty girl, as Doe himself has defined her——"

"*Purty, purty*—no perversion of text."

"A handsome girl, an amiable and sensible one, and five thousand Graham. Laugh if you like, but you know the proverb."

"Ay, they laugh that win By Jove! hero of ours, let me congratulate you, rather. When did all this happen? how could it? or you have made quick work. Why, you are not yet a month on the service."

"What need of a century? I had a pleasant billet at her father's house for a fortnight."

"Ah! necessity for remaining stationary, yet could not appoint to meet his friend, as he might be obliged to change quarters at a moment's notice, and so forth," said Graham, alluding to the notes

he had received from Howard, and of which we have before spoken. "But what will you do with the Holy Father? Purchase his dispensation? That will cost a world of money."

"Give him one, rather: that is, dispense with *him*; for I cannot see how he comes into the matter. You know, Graham, I have ever said I should not trouble myself about my wife's religion: enough for me if she has the spirit of any; and such I believe to be the case in the present instance."

"And of the disapprobation of his high mightiness, Captain John!"

"Oh! let to-morrow or the next day settle that."

"Well, a bumper to your success in the rival fields of Venus and Bellona! And now, Howard, 'tis time I was on the road."

"What! abandon us so soon?"

"Why, yes; after all our disappointments in meeting, when each time I was prepared for a long visit, I could not, on the present occasion, get leave of absence longer than to-night. I must present myself in Clonmel to-morrow; but the next time shall be an age."

"Then you will have to travel all night?"

"Yes, but with old Tom Evans I shall not much mind it."

"Take him, though indeed I intended him for my own body-guard on a march I propose to steal across the country this evening."

"Humph!—*purty* Mary Grace."

"Perhaps you guess it. But no matter about Evans. The certainty I have that Doe is out of the way enables me to go alone, except, it may be, with a peasant for my guide, as my path is a cross one, almost unknown to me."

"How far?" asked Graham.

"Not more than three miles—Irish ones, though."

"Oh, doubtless, you may venture it. Come."

"With you; but, Graham——"

"Well? well?"

"No need of remembering my little affair at garrison, you know."

"Pretty Mary and the rich attorney?"

"Indeed, Graham, I must insist——"

"Ha! ha! Fear nothing—I'm prudent;" and the friends, after mutual farewells, separated on their different routes; Howard and his guide towards Mr. Grace's house, and Graham—with Evans, grumbling in every aching joint of his body, at being again, and so soon, called upon to shake for thirteen miles, say sixteen English, in an uneasy saddle—towards Clonmel.

We are here obliged to close a very short chapter, in order to afford proper scope for the events now to be detailed.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER conducting his old acquaintances to the sacristy at the chapel, Flinn returned to his place among the kneeling crowd, and watching his time till the service allowed, according to established form, general liberty to stand, he then pushed on into the body of the chapel, and heard attentively the separate exhortations of his parish priest and the Rev. Mr. O'Clery, together with the few words spoken by the Protestant clergyman.

When all was over, Flinn left the chapel with the rest of the people, but dallied near the place till he thought he might proceed, without their observation, to keep an appointment with a particular friend. With his hands plunged into his breeches' pockets, his hat hanging, as usual, on one side of his head, and while he whistled a lively air, Flinn then turned down a bypath, which led from the chapel over a considerable declivity, towards a wretched little thatched hut called the "forge." It was, in fact, the smithy of the district, erected distinct and far from any neighbouring dwelling-house, and exclusively devoted by the proprietor, whose residence was a cabin at some distance, to the purposes of his trade; so that on a Sunday he made no use and claimed no right of possession over it: and apprehending that little seduction to theft was held forth by the massive anvil or gigantic and shattered bellows, the only available property left during the Sabbath on the premises, he had never gone to the expense of a door for the hovel, and it consequently

gave an open, and, so far as in it lay, a hearty welcome, one day in each week, to all chance comers. And the year round, the forge had—we are compelled in shame and sorrow to admit—almost systematically, upon that day, its particular visitors. Some of the very lowest order of Irish peasants are passionately attached to card-playing—rather, it would seem, for the sake of the amusement than with a gambling view; and of all convenient places in a neighbourhood, the snug corner of a field or the depths of a sandpit not excepted, though both haunts are often resorted to for the same purposes, none surpass in attraction the deserted and isolated forge.

To the adjacent forge, then, our friend Paddy Flinn directed his steps. As he advanced he met in succession two or three little boys, whom the party engaged in forbidden pastime had sent out and stationed as scouts, to give them timely notice of the probable visitation of their really good, zealous parish priest, from whom they had vainly heard repeated prohibitions against such breaches of the Sabbath, and who, failing in words, had often surprised them with his more convincing cudgel or horsewhip, while they were engaged in the very fascinations of their game. The little urchins rapidly inquired of Flinn, as soon as he appeared, the destination of their dreaded pastor; and having ascertained that, from his being gone to dine with Mr. Grace, no visit this day might be apprehended from him, they immediately abandoned their disagreeable posts, and separated to seek some more congenial occupation.

As Flinn, pursuing his path, entered the forge, he found Jack Mullins, the friend he had appointed to meet, deeply absorbed with three others in the climax of a long-contested game. The anvil substituted a card-table for this rustic party, who sat round it on large stones piled one over another.

They used cards which might baffle the discriminating faculties of more accomplished gamblers, as long fingering, and the hue and shape thereby left on each, confounded, to the uninitiated eye, all distinctions of number, colour, and suit. Habit is everything, however; and the present proprietors of these mysterious symbols appeared to recognise their fifty-two subtle subdivisions with as much ease as, in a more fashionable hell, gamblers of a higher order distinguish the differences of an untouched pack; though rumour adds, that their means for arriving at such conclusions were not derived from much positive evidence of the marks originally stamped on the pasteboard, but rather from subsidiary hieroglyphics that had gradually succeeded to the original signs, and had as gradually become acknowledged, from month to month—nay, from year to year—by the persevering and watchful observers.

No notice was taken of Flinn's entrance, if we except a slight raising of the eyes, and an accompanying noise, like a grunt, directed to him by Mullins, and meant, we presume, for avowed recognition. The men pursued the critical turn of their game with all the *gout* and abstraction of their caste, and with all the attendant symptoms of deep study: that is to say, bent brows, protrusions and compressions of the lips, and occasional long pauses and unmeaning stares at the wall or out at the door. Flinn, too, after his first unnoticed salutation, kept silence for some time, standing behind Mullins, and watching his play and hand. At last the interregnum of a deal allowed him a few words; and—

"Well," he said, "I was at mass, boys."

"An' you're all the better o' that, aren't you?" | said Mullins.

"To be sure I am, you gallows-bird, you!" | answered Flinn; "an' wouldn't anything, not to |

talk o' that, be better nor the prayers you get out o' the devil's hornbuke you hould in your hand there?"

"Well, avich?" said Mullins, dealing the cards.

"What do you call *uell*?" resumed Flinn: "I don't know what's well or ill, myself; but I know the day that's in it is the day o' days; fur, sayin' nothin' o' the strange priest's sarment, little did any of us think we'd live to see a Sassenach ministher prachin' to us off o' the same altar wid our own soggarth, an' two red-coats kneelin' down by his side to pray the blessin' o' God on us, poor divils that we are, along wid Father O Clery—good loock to every ouch iv him!"

"They'd do anything to sell us, betuxt 'em," said Mullins. "An' what rhaumaush did you hear from Father O'Clery?"

"It was no rhaumaush, you hell-hound," replied Flinn, "bud plenty o' good sense an' love for us, an' the right thing afther all, an' I'll stand by it."

"You'll stand by the gallows," said Mullins, in a jeering tone and manner.

"To see you swingin' on it," retorted Flinn, "when you'll be afther walkin' in sarch of it, an' your own coffin followin' you, two or threc miles of a market-day. I often tould you not to fear the wather, Jack. But the short an' the long is this: Father O'Clery said nothing but God's truth this blessed day; thore wasn't a dry eye in the place; an' if you can do any good, Jack, by spakin' to any friend o' yours, or the likes o' that, it's nothin' but what 'ud become you well; and so I'll tell the farmer's son himself, when I see him next."

"Let us play our play, abagur," said Mullins, "an' don't be botherin' plain people wid what they know little about. Come. Now all the loock is his that has the five fingers."†

‡ Nonsense.

† Five of trumps.

"Ay, you'll play your own play, Jack; an' maybe you'll have the loock o' the five fingers too; the skibbeea's, I mane, while he's takin' your measure for the hemp cravat," observed Flinn, as the gamblers now resumed their pursuit. "But, stop, fur I think you'd betther," he continued in an under-tone, "an' just turn round till you see who's lookin' at you;" and with these words Flinn escaped from the forge, hastily pointing to an orifice, meant for the double uses of window and chimney, which was situated in the wall of the hovel behind Mullins's back.

The men with whom Mullins was playing first took advantage of Flinn's hint, and fixing their terrified eyes on this opening, saw it almost entirely filled by the round red face and fat shoulders of their parish priest, who, notwithstanding other engagements, could not conscientiously overlook, on this particular Sunday, the chances of the notorious forge, and had accordingly paid it a speculative visit.

"Ho! ho! ye Sabbath-breakers!" roared the worthy man, precipitating himself into the forge, and, whip in hand, falling with might and main on the backs of his profane parishioners. "Have I found ye again! have I found ye again!—at the old work!—at the old work!" Each iterated sentence was accompaniment to a repeated lash, and Mullins's three gaming friends quickly, and with loud screams, escaped through the open doorway, while the priest turned round upon a whole nest of old and young, who, we forgot to premise, sat on the hobs of the forge fire, or on the ground, anxious spectators of the ambitioned game. Among these the zealous pastor also made terrific use of his heavy horsewhip; and it was ludicrous to hear the cries and shouts of tall, raw-boned fellows, of from six to seven feet high, as they quailed or jumped beneath the hand of a little round man, whose entire physical strength

was not equal to that contained in one of their fingers; or at least, and to illustrate less poetically, who by the merest show of resistance might have escaped his flagellation. But as the beasts of the forest all tremble at the lion's roar, so do the greater portion of Irish peasants shrink at the voice of their priest. We have seen a mob of some hundreds, even in the excitement of mutual passion and conflict, fly, forgetful of everything but the moral terror of his presence, as the waters divide and splash when a heavy stone is dropped into them; and on the present occasion the flock of idlers in the forge bore similar testimony of a similar influence. In fact, the place was in a few minutes cleared of all except the clergyman and Mullins; for Mullins would not run as the others did, but now stood doggedly, and, as well as he could, indifferently. His side turned to the parish priest and his eyes fixed on the landscape abroad.

"And do *you* face me, you unfortunate sinner?" said the priest, screaming at Mullins when he discovered him. "But I'll convert you—you as well as the rest; if there's virtue in whalebone and whipcord, I'll convert you one after the other!" and he wound a good lash at Mullins.

"Nonsense, soggarth! nonsense!" ejaculated the suffering party when he had felt the smart of the horsewhip; "an' don't be doin' that agin, I advise you."

"I see you now, an' I know you now," said the reverend operator, somewhat daunted by the bad expression of the man's face. "You are one of those that have brought sin and trouble into my poor parish—you and your crony the jig-dancer." (Mr. Flinn, we presume, was meant.) "But I disown ye; I renounce ye; ye are two diseased sheep among my innocent flock, and two strangers that 'tis hard to speak about."

"Then don't spake about us at all, please your

reverence," said Mullins; "an' if we're strangers, let us alone."

"Go, man, go!" resumed the clergyman. "I know you not; and all I have to say is this: come in next Saturday to your Easter duty, and show your bad face at mass next Sunday, and behave yourself like a Christian creature in my parish; or if you don't, lave my parish. I won't give you my curse upon it—that's an awful thing to do; but I'll mark you, you Sabbath-breaker! I'll mark you!" And the virtuous, though, as we have seen in the chapel, scarcely accomplished pastor, hastily left the hovel, Mullins uttering an "Avoch!" as they parted.

He stood a few minutes after the clergyman's exit, apparently in deep thought; then suddenly turned to leave the hovel, when he was met by Flinn.

"Come wid ~~the~~ up by the side of this brook," said Flinn, rapidly walking in the direction he pointed out, "an' let us get among the hills before we spake anything more about it."

They accordingly continued their way until they had got into the solitude of a wild little valley, and here Flinn again paused and addressed his companion. "What are you goin' to do with Purcell?" he suddenly asked, staring Mullins full in the face.

"Bad end to him! how do I know?" said Mullins; "only he axed me, yesterday evenin' afther my work was done, an' I said yes, because it was as good as to say no."

"You wouldn't, you curse-o'-God limb!" resumed the other—"you wouldn't be afther sellin' the pass¹ in that way on whatever poor fellows you knew anything about—would you?"

* "Selling the pass," a generally diffused proverb through Ireland, is perhaps derived from the circumstance of an officer of James's army at the siege of Limerick, in 1690, having disclosed to Ginckle, William's general, a favourable part of the Shannon, by means of which Ginckle put an end by treaty to the long-contested siege of the city.

"Ho, ho! who are you spakin' to?" replied Mullins.

"I don't well know, maybe," said Flinn. "Bud I know, an' I think you know too, there would be neither honour nor glory, gain nor savin', in tellin' your thoughts to such a hound as Purcell, for all his magistrates' warrants an' the like: though I say agin, Jack, the strange priest tould us enough to-day to make us do our best in the fair cause."

"Hould your tongue!" said Mullins. "I know nothin' at all iv id. Don't be botherin' me for ever. What can you do bud spake, spake, spake? If you could do anything else the evenin' o' the pattrern, I wouldn't have the trouble o' meetin' this black Protestan' this blessed and holy night; an' others 'ud be saved trouble too."

"'Twas none o' my fault, Jack. I done my best, if ever I done it, while you had only to look on wid your sailor's noose in your pocket. That, I say over an' over, you'll be matched at, at last. But how does Purcell trate you?"

"Well enough, considerin' the likes of him; and the likes o' me, too, that only works whin the fit is on me. Yet he's always soft wid me; maybe too soft, for all we know. Bud make off wid yourself; I see him just turnin' into the glin—bad loock to him! an' how 'ticlar he is, an' the evenin' only fallin'. Here, you scapegrace! get behind this big stone, an' lie quiet if you can, an' say your prayers, if you remember any of them: I'll soon send him off."

Flinn obeyed the instructions of his companion, completely hiding himself behind a tall rock that sloped from the path against some adjoining masses of stone that skirted the valley, and which was also partially surrounded by brushwood, as if to add to its present usefulness. When he had lain down in his ambush, Mullins walked slowly away from the spot, and then up and down at a little distance, while he awaited the approach of Mr. Purcell, the

gentleman in whose employment, as a garden labourer, he now was, and the same who had given rise to the fray at the pattern some seven months before.

"I am glad you are punctual, Mullins," said Mr. Purcell, as he came up. "But—are we alone?"

"Didn't you see we are?" answered Mullins.

"I thought I saw another by your side when I first entered the valley."

"You thought wrong, then, Mr. Purcell, unless it was *who you know*, keepin' me company, for your sake, till you came yourself."

"Whom do you mean?" said Purcell, half guessing from the nature of the man, as well as from a recollection of the confidence he had given him, the probable allusion.

"Hould your ear an' I'll tell you: the *ould bouchal*, Mr. Purcell," answered Mullins, very calmly; "an' I'd make little wonder if you thought right, after all."

"Tut, tut, Mullins!" said Purcell, laughing, yet perhaps somewhat disagreeably affected—"no more of that folly; indeed, 'tis worse than folly in such a place."

A pause ensued, during which it would seem that Purcell wished Mullins to say something; but whether or not such was his intention, he was himself compelled to continue.

"I have trusted you very freely on this matter, Mullins, because I think I may trust you; and, besides, the more you know of it, the better you can serve me."

"Maybe so, Mr. Purcell."

"Mullins, I have loved Mary for years; I have addressed her for years."

"I know that. You tould me afore."

"At first, as I said, she slighted me, on account of that unfortunate young lad Kavanagh; but when he was put out of the way—that is, when his own

doings put him out of the way—then I found favour with her."

"Are you sure, Mr. Purcell?"

"No doubt of it; and had no fear of success till this English interloper came between us. Do you think I would propose to force a woman who had not given me the first encouragement? Not I, Mullins, and you know I would not; but you see, as I said over and over, all is owing to this English ensign."

"Ay; the red-coat Sassenach. Well, aroon?"

"Don't you think it a shame and a pity, now, Mullins, that the girl and the money should leave the country with a red rag like him, when I offer to keep her as she ought to be kept, and make her an Irish lady on my own estate?"

"Thonomon-dhiaoul, yes! The grounds you took over poor Kavanagh's head are as good as an estate to you."

"Come, come, Mullins; nothing of that."

"An' the blood-money you got for huntin' him to the black North made a gintleman o' you."

"What has this to do with the business, Mullins?"

"An', sure, you're a justice o' the pace, too."

"Do you mean to insult me?"

"Avoch, no; only you see how it is."

"Well, then, to business. You will assist me?" continued Purcell, thrusting a bank-note of some value into Mullins's hand.

"Try me, avich," answered Mullins, crumpling the note hard, after he had looked close at it, and then buttoning it up in his pocket.

"I believe you're a steady fellow, Jack; and the rest of the lads are ready."

"Are they? Who's to head 'em?"

"Why, myself, Mullins."

"Yourself!—ho, ho!"

"Why do you laugh? Yes, disguised as Doe, and under his name, I will this night carry her off."

"Will you? Chorp an dhiaoul! that's a bright thought."

"But, Mullins, one uncomfortable thing has happened. You know, we thought Howard was to stay away from the house for some time, and that all would therefore be snug."

"Well; an' isn't he to stay away?"

"No; I have just discovered he is to set out for Mr. Grace's in an hour."

"Well?"

"If he comes, we are bedevilled and ruined."

"Well?"

"Isn't there any way to prevent him?"

"I don't know, faith, Mr. Purcell."

"Suppose ——" and Purcell paused a moment, then resumed quickly—"couldn't *you* prevent him?"

"How is that?" demurred Mullins.

"He is a worm in my path, Mullins; you know he is. He has crossed me at the very moment of hope."

"Ay; so he has.—Well?"

"I ask you, now—leaving yourself to guess it—how many journeys more ought he to take?" I think, but one," and Purcell slid another note into Mullins's hand.

"An' that one is ——" said Mullins slowly, as he put up the second bribe.

"From this world to the next!" interrupted Purcell in a whisper, yet of so sharp and audible a kind that the banks and rocks around indistinctly repeated it.

"Whisht, man!" replied Mullins, seizing Purcell by the arm, while his tone, though deep and hollow, was less revealing than Purcell's whisper.—"How do you know what ear the stones may be cellin' it to?"

Even in the imperfect light, Purcell stood visibly pale and trembling, and this hint increased his nervousness almost to a paroxysm.

"Have you deceived me, you scoundrel?" asked he, drawing a pistol and stepping back.

"Me? For what or for why? Put up your barker, Mr. Purcell, or give it to myself for Howard. Sure I meant nothin' at all; only I was just as much frightened as yourself about it, but I don't look so white, an' shake after a manner; an' yourself knows walls have ears, an' walls are made o' stones like the stones near us."

During this harangue, Mullins had contrived, without giving any suspicious appearance, to stand directly between Purcell and the rock under which Flinn lay concealed.

"I must continue to trust you now, however," resumed Purcell after a pause, and as he returned the pistol to his pocket.

"Well?" said Mullins, coming back from this digression, and assuming an earnest air.

"I have bribed another friend to *guide* him to Grace's house," continued Purcell. "Howard thinks the man is loyal to himself, because Mr. Grace pointed him out as a proper person for such services; but he's mistaken, maybe."

"Then, what use o' the likes o' me?" asked Mullins.

"Much, Mullins—much. My other friend might miss the thing, may be overpowered; for Howard is bold and active. You can follow them."

"So I can; an' I see it now, Mr. Purcell."

"Mullins, there is a pass a little way on, between the wood and the river; they will get into that; 'tis crossed by the mountain stream; that stream is deep and headlong, and at last it meets the river."

A pause succeeded.

"Ay," Mullins at length resumed; "when once in, we needn't fear he'll rise agin."

"Right; or you know well how to prevent it if you like, Jack. Weren't you taught how to make a

basket to put a stone in, when you were a man-o'-war's-man?"

"I could thry, I think; never fear, Mr. Purcell."

"You know how little *we* can be suspected. It is just the time and place for such a man as an English ensign to be looked for by such a man as Doe or some of his people: then I'm a loyal person and a magistrate, and you're in my employment. Mullins."

"Ay, faith; sure I understand it entirely, Mr. Purcell."

"Come now. But, stay: we must not walk together towards my house."

"No, an' you'd betther go home to the colleen that's expectin' you, Mr. Purcell. An' what 'ill you do wid poor Cauth, I wonder?"

"Oh, d—n her, Jack! let her go her ways," answered Purcell, his brow and eye darkened by this sudden question: "I'm long tired of her."

"An' so let her, sure enough," said Mullins; "'tis good enough for any of her sort. An' yet, Mr. Purcell, she was a clane, likely girl when you saw her first; an' now her best days are over, faith she has few 'ud give her a welcome, I'm thinkin'; but if we get Mary Grace for you, Cauthleen must take the door, anyhow."

"Good-bye, Mullins," said Purcell, evading further explanation on this last point. He walked a few steps away, then returned, and again spoke.

"When it is done, and well done, come to my house by the back way. You'll find me in the parlour; and then we can prepare for the other business."

"I will," responded Mullins. Purcell stood a moment silent, and again turned off, with a "Good-bye."

"Good-bye, then," echoed his companion.

"Stay an instant here till I'm out of sight," Purcell continued; "and you remember everthing, and mark me."

"I do," said Mullins, and Purcell rapidly walked away.

"Or," muttered the other when he was out of hearing, "if I didn't, the divil has marked you, an' that's enough for us both. Flinn!"—and Mr. Flinn accordingly appeared.

"The false thief!" pursued Mullins, "the bloody informer! wid his acres round him that he schamed an' swore out o' the hands of honest people! an' he thinks he can buy me up! an' he thinks to do what he likes without our lave! Where's the farmer's son, Paddy?"

"At hand, I'm thinkin'," said Flinn. "But *what bolg is on you** now, black Jack? I didn't see you in a right kind of a passion afore since the day the ministher offered to lave the oats on your field if you went to church next Sunday. What was Purcell sayin' to you at all, at all?"

"Go, tell the farmer's son," resumed Mullins, "that Purcell, the Rapparee, is goin' to take off poor Mary Grace."

"Musha, Jack, was that all the omadhaun wanted wid you?—an' did he cross your fist?"

"Did he gi' me a bribe, is it? Avoch, bad loock to the laffina he offered me; an' if he did, d'you think I'd touch it, Paddy, frum the likes of him?"

"Maybe not, Jack aroon; bud I'll tell you what I was considherin' while you both left me to get could under the stone, there: faith, I was thinkin' there was no raison in the wide world why we couldn't manage Purcell where he stood, and so get over, quietly and handsomely, the little obligation we are owin' him this long time fur another man's sake."

"Maybe I was thinkin' o' the like myself," said Mullins; "it was so new a thing to see him from home without his red-coats about him. But all fur the best, Paddy; an' it's a long lane has no turnin'.

* What is the matter?

Let us go tell the farmer's son what he wants to do in the regard o' Mary Grace."

"The farmer's son knows it already; bud fur the night that's in it, he can't help it, poor fellow."

"Chorp an dhiaoul! an' why so, man?"

"I thought you could tell the raison of your own accord, Jack. All his tenants on the spot are doin' somethin', an' the rest too far off to be here in time."

"That's throe enough; bud no matter. He's at home?"

"Where else 'ud he be?"

"We must spake to him, thin, about another snall matter that Purcell has on hands. D'you know, Paddy, avich, he wants to have the red-coat to himself?"

"Musha, how, Jack?" asked Flinn.

"He wants just to stretch him in the glin, below there; an' I'm to help him, you know."

"Och, sure I know," said Flinn, laughing.

"Ho, ho!" echoed Mullins; "fur the matter o' that, I'd have little objections to make a hole in a red-jacket, any day; bud we must hear what the farmer's son says about id. Come, there's no time to be lost; Howard is on the road by this time;" and the two friends went on their errand.

Meantime, Purcell approached by another path his own house, deeply and sternly revolving a purpose that for some months had occupied his mind, and that now, bent as he was on making Miss Grace his wife, and so near the time of his attempt, too, engaged every bad energy of his soul. And the poor individual to whom Mullins had just directed his attention, and whom he described as expecting Purcell at his home, was the object of Purcell's thoughts. She sat, indeed, expecting him; him, her sole earthly protector, the self-elected substitute for every other, her heart's early and only love, for whom she had sinfully abandoned the world and the

world's smile, to keep, in friendless and otherwise cheerless solitude, a constant place at his side. Alas! she did not think what a requital he contemplated for her.

Purcell had not found the destruction of this now helpless creature an easy exploit. She had withstood his smiles, his oaths, and his ardours; his gold she at once spurned; until, in the fervency of passion, even the constitutionally calm villain had given her in writing a solemn promise of marriage. Then she fell, and with her all her influence, attraction, and hopes. Years passed over without any disposition on Purcell's part to perform his contract; and the victim could at first only weep, and kneel to him for mercy and justice; and then, when she gradually saw the nature of the man to whom she had abandoned herself, and felt in words and acts the effect of that nature in reply to her supplications, the wretched girl could only mourn in silence; or, if she did speak, it was in the tone of a poor slave abjectly begging a favour, rather than in the voice of conscious right demanding the fulfilment of an obligation. She could compel Purcell to nothing, even if her weak and self-accusing heart dared meditate a severity towards the master, that, even with a knowledge of what he was, it still worshipped. The forlorn girl had no friends to advocate her; her crime, along with other things, had scattered them over the earth or sunk them in its bosom. Since her ruin, too, Purcell had by all available means thriven in the world, and fortune thus added another link to the mean as well as guilty chain that bound her to him. Increasing wealth lent him increase of sway; and while her love remained unabated, at least in nothing but its independence, her awe increased, and tame subjection soon followed.

Yet, though she did not continue to plead her own cause, she still had Purcell in her power, and

he knew it too. Cauthleen held the written promise of marriage, nor could lures or entreaties prevail on her to trust it for a moment into his hands. Purcell had lately expressed some slight curiosity to see it, but Cauthleen had never attended to his wish. The man's designs on Miss Grace prompted him in this instance. As he himself truly stated to Mullins, Purcell's long and strenuous endeavours had been directed to a union with that young lady; and among many other firm objections urged as well by her father as by herself, the written engagement to Cauthleen, which was generally talked of, met him at every step. Purcell therefore determined to remove that one obstacle, even though the unhappy Cauthleen should become still more a victim.

In truth, he had now for some time brought himself to contemplate with indifference the expulsion of Cauthleen from his house, and her subsequent wandering alone and in shame through the world. Nor can it be said that his passion for Miss Grace caused a disgust of his old mistress. Purcell bent his ambition, not on the person of the lady, but on the alliance with her father's wealth, to which, as she was an only child, he would, in the event of becoming her protector, also become heir; and his new-sprung name and pretensions must thus gain strength and countenance in the country. No; he had not even the poor pretext of alienated and ungovernable passion to urge for his neglect of the wretch whom, once having made so, he should never have abandoned. He knew but one plea for his disgust—for his hatred: she had tired him; and perhaps with lengthened investigation we could not advance a better reason, duly considering the character of the man.

With a breast and brow made up to the prompt execution of his purposes, Purcell now gained his own door. Poor Cauthleen herself answered his

knock: it was her constant practice to anticipate the servants in doing so, when, by the fond fidelity of ear that can distinguish the step, nay, the breathing of an esteemed object, at some distance, she had learned to interpret this signal of Purcell's approach.

She smiled faintly, holding a candle in her hand as Purcell entered; but he only returned her mute welcome with a ruffianly gathering of the brow; and then, slapping the door and hastily passing her, he flew out into a brawling passion against the servants for neglect of their duty in not attending to his knock.

A foul purpose will thus seek to nerve itself in preparatory and cowardly excitement, as men not over sure of their own mettle have recourse to dram-drinking before they enter the ring.

Cauthleen slowly and silently followed Purcell to the parlour, vainly endeavouring to stem the tears that flowed plentifully in his absence, and, only dried up at his approach, that again sought vent under this fresh sorrow. Her seducer flung himself rudely into a chair; as she timidly took an opposite seat her tears became evident; and he instantly seized on this as a new theme for dastardly reproach and outrage, exclaiming, in the idiom of a vulgar ruffian—

“D——n! am I for ever and ever to be met in this manner? Nothing but cry, cry, cry, from morning to night? What do you wish me to do? Have I left you in any way unprovided for? Is there a lady—a married lady—in the land who has more of the comforts of life?—who is more her own mistress? Why don't you speak to me? what is the matter with you?”

Cauthleen only wept on.

“You won't answer me then? I advise you to speak. By the great ——! if you do not speak, I'll make you repent it, Cauthleen.”

He had now wrought himself up to a climax of impotent rage, and he uttered the last words with a violent knock on the table, while his teeth set and his eyes flashed upon her.

"My dear Stephen," said Cauthleen at last, much terrified, "indeed it is not obstinacy; only I could not answer you in a moment; and these tears—I—I cried first because you were away from me, and now because you are come home to me; and indeed I did not mean to vex you, and I will cry no more. There! if 'tis my poor smile you want instead, there it is for you, Stephen, and from my heart, too, I am sure—from the bottom of my heart. Don't, don't be angry with your Cauthleen, Stephen; don't frighten her in such a way."

Nature, even in the bosom of a scoundrel, asserted her sympathy to this appeal, and Purcell, turning his face to the fire, remained silent for a moment.

"Cauthleen," he then continued, "you can be a good girl when you like. Have you since found that little paper? You'll let me look at it to-night, won't you?"

"Indeed, Stephen, some other time; but to-night I'm too—too——"

"Too what?" interrupted Purcell, resuming his boisterous tone. "Are you sick, or too stupid, or too insolent? or why can you not oblige me?"

"I can never be too anything not to oblige you, Stephen; but that unfortunate paper——"

"Where is it? Cauthleen, I must see that cursed scribble, for your own sake; I have a particular reason. Go for it. 'Tis in your room, isn't it? Why don't you go? Then I'll go myself; and drawer, box, or press shall not keep it from me: I'll break them into splinters sooner than let it escape me;" and he rose and took a candle.

"Stay, Stephen!" said Cauthleen, also rising: "it would be useless—quite useless; indeed it would:

that paper is not in any room in the house—I declare solemnly it is not.”

A startling apprehension crossed Purcell’s mind at those words, and, resuming his seat, he said—

“Then you have sent it to the attorney? What! is that the way you would treat me?”

The reproach, the insult, the voice and manner, completely overpowered Cauthleen, and she sank into her chair, convulsed with tears.

“Answer! have you sent it away? have you put it out of your hands? Answer, I say!” and he shook her violently by the shoulder.

“Spare me, spare me, Stephen!” cried Cauthleen, falling on her knees. “I have not sent it out of the house to any one; I could never send it where you say; indeed I could not.”

“Where is it, then, woman?” he asked, stamping, and holding out his clenched hands. At this moment Cauthleen drew a handkerchief from her bosom, and a crumpled slip of paper fell on the carpet. One glance of Purcell’s eye recognised the long-sought document, and he was stooping to pick it up; but Cauthleen hastily anticipated him, snatched it, and restored it to her bosom.

“I’ll have it, by heaven!” exclaimed Purcell, stooping towards her; but Cauthleen, starting up, rushed into a corner, and there again, kneeling, addressed him.

“Do not, do not, Purcell!” she said. “I’ll give it to you when you hear me; to-morrow, when you hear me calmly, I’ll give it to you. Do not!” raising her voice, and wringing her hands as he approached—“for the love of that heaven whose love we have both missed!”

“So,” resumed Purcell, now standing over her, “you had it about you at the very time I asked for it, and you would not let me see it?”

“You should not be angry with me for that, Stephen. I’ll tell you about it. When you are away

from me, and that I am quite alone in the world, I draw out that paper, and read it over and over, and kiss it, and cry over it, and lay it on my heart. 'Tis my only hope; and, if there is any, my only shadow of excuse to myself and before God."

"Nonsense! trash! folly! Give it into my hand this moment!" and he caught her by the wrists.

"And sometimes, Stephen," she ran on, out of breath, blinded in tears, and struggling with him—"sometimes I steal up with it to the cradle where our last and only boy lies sleeping—the rest were taken from us, one by one, for a judgment—we deserved that curse—and there I kneel down by the infant's side, and ask him, in a voice that would not waken a bird, to look at it, and understand it, and see that he is not entirely the child of shame, and that his mother is not entirely the guilty creature they will tell him she is."

"Come, Cauthleen," interrupted Purcell, bending on one knee and using more force, "give it me if you have any fears for yourself." But, in the paroxysm of passion that Cauthleen felt, he encountered more resistance than he had expected; and, exasperated to the utmost by her continued struggling, the mean and cowardly ruffian did that which we blush and burn to record: he raised his clenched hand—it fell—Cauthleen fell under it—and Purcell got possession of the paper, and instantly approached the fire. Cauthleen, though stunned and stupefied, wildly understood his movement, and screamed and tottered after him; but she was too late. Purcell cast it into the flame, and then saying, "There! since we have so often quarrelled about it, that's the only way to end disputes," sank into his seat.

Cauthleen, with clasped hands, and her tears now dried up at their source, looked a moment at the fire, and then in the hollow tones of despair said—

"And now you can wive with Mary Grace to-morrow!"

Purcell, at first startled, turned quickly round; but his features only wore a bitter mockery while he asked—

“Who told you that fine story, Cauthleen?”

“Never ask me, Purcell, but answer me!” she exclaimed, in a manner the very opposite to her late meekness and timidity. “Is it true? Am I not to be your wife indeed? After all your oaths—the oaths that stole me from my mother’s side, and then broke my mother’s heart—will you take Mary Grace to yourself, and leave shame as well as sorrow on Cauthleen?”

“Fear nothing; I’ll provide for you.”

“It is true, then? And this at last is to be the lot of Cauthleen Kavanagh, and at your hands? Whose? The hands that brought ruin on all of her name!”

“Silence, Cauthleen! or ——”

“Or what? You’ll make me? How? Kill me? Do! I wish it—ask for it—expect it. Yes, Purcell, I expect it: the robber, the perjurer, and the murderer, need not disappoint me!”

“Fool! take care what words you speak, and listen to me in patience. I courted and won you, because I loved you. Listen to me! I can love you no longer; and why should we live in hatred together?”

“Cursed be the hour I saw you, Purcell! accursed the false words that drew me, from virtue and happiness, under your betraying roof—your roof that I now pray God may fall on us, as we stand here damning each other! Oh, I am punished! I trusted the plunderer of my family, and the murderer of my mother and my brother, and I am punished!”

“I told you to have a care, Cauthleen,” said Purcell, starting from his seat, pale, haggard, and trembling with rage. “I warned you to weigh your words, and you will not;” and his distended

eye glanced on a fowling-piece that hung over the chimney.

"I know what you mean, Purcell!" resumed Cauthleen, in a still wilder frenzy: "I saw where your eye struck; and knowing and seeing this, I say again, robber and murderer, do it!"

"By the holy saints, then!" he exclaimed, snatching at the weapon of death.

"Ay, by the saints and all! the murderer will not want an oath—pull your trigger, man! But, stop a moment!—first hear that!"

Purcell had the piece in his hand and was raising it, when the faint cry of an infant reached them from an inside room; his face grew black, and he flung the weapon on the ground and turned away.

"Leave my house!" he added, after a moment's pause. "You and your brat together, leave it this instant!"

"I will," muttered Cauthleen; "I intended to do it." She rushed through a door, and returned with the infant on her arm.

"The night draws on, Purcell," Cauthleen continued; "and it was just in such a night you sent my mother from our own old home, that in her agony and sickness, too, the cold blast might deal on her. I leave you, praying that it may so deal on me! My mother cursed you as she went; I pray to have that curse remembered; and I add mine! Take both, Purcell—the mother's first—the daughter's last: may they cling to you!"

Having spoken these words, Cauthleen caught closer in her arms the wretch they encircled, and, bareheaded and unmantled, rushed out of the house of crime. After an instant's lapse, Purcell heard her wild and already distant scream mingling with the wail of the baby and the bitter gust of the cold winter night.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE the last events were occurring Howard was on his way to Mr. Grace's house. The guide, for whose honesty, as Purcell had stated, Mr. Grace gave a guarantee, was a man of unusually large stature; in height above six feet, and broad, well-set, and muscular in proportion; so that he appeared a good subject to inspire Howard with confidence or apprehension, according to the degree of trust his presence induced.

Had Howard taken the main road to his friend's house, no guide would have been necessary, but he did not choose to expose himself to the too frequent observation of all passengers, and therefore adopted a byway, which was also much shorter than the approach by the road. It first led, after crossing the road from Howard's bivouac, over two or three marshy fields, in which a path was scarcely distinguishable, and then continued through a wood, which, with the exception of a few old nut-trees, was recently planted, and therefore, from the slowness of the stems and the want of brushwood, together with the total absence of foliage, afforded no facilities for an ambuscade.

We should say that this wood clothed the sides of a declivity; and consequently, as Howard followed his guide along a winding path, he sank step by step from the level of the road they had crossed.

After leaving the wood, without danger or any symptom of it, they entered on a level sward, through which at about ten yards' distance a mountain stream hurried along. To gain Mr. Grace's residence it was necessary to pass this impediment; and Howard was preparing to make the attempt, when his guide warned him of probable hazard at that point, and said that a little way on, by keeping the course of the water, they should meet with an accommodation for crossing. This was all well, and Howard followed in the man's heavy steps.

He followed without any positive misgiving, and yet with little confidence in his guide. The fellow had from the outset resisted Howard's efforts to draw him into conversation, and exhibited none of the native good humour or heartiness that the stranger had been accustomed to since his first acquaintance with the Irish peasantry. Absolutely rude indeed he was not; yet his short and apparently abstracted answers, and the deep tone in which they were given, fell ominously enough on the ear of the doomed victim.

Pursuing their way, they had left the wood behind them, but were still coursing the long ridge of hill on part of which it grew, and which now presented a rough termination of broken bank and rock to the level ground that Howard and his guide walked over. The moon rose on them, and by her sharp illustration of light and shade began more distinctly to bring out such rugged features of the path as we have just noticed. In passing a particular spot, where an unusual group of rocks formed a considerable recess in the side of the hill, the guide, who was some yards before Howard, suddenly started back, and at the same moment Howard thought he observed a figure glide into the recess. After a moment, however, the man continued his way, seemingly unembarrassed; and Howard then asked—

"Whom have you spoken with? what man was it that crossed you?" for Howard fancied he could hear a hasty whisper as the fellow paused.

"Me spake, sir! who could I spake to" No one crossed me; an' 'tis only some shadow has frightened you in this lonesome place."

"Very likely," Howard replied; but with sword in hand, having gained the rocky recess, he thrust his head into it and looked around. So far as he could distinguish, no one appeared, and they continued their route.

The stream now made a sudden bend, widely deviating from the line of the hill to which it had hitherto run almost parallel; and exactly at the apex of the angle it formed, the guide paused, and pointing to a tree that was flung over the water, told Howard that at this place they must cross.

"It is a slippery and dangerous passage over," said Howard, "and the water is much deeper and wider than it was above. I should rather have tried the leap when we got out of the wood."

"Och, musha, it's very safe, sir," replied the man; "sure I know it well this many a day."

"Lead on, then. What! are you fearful? Why do you step back?"

"Troth, an' I am not afeard," said the fellow; "only I can do the best for you by followin' close."

"Take your hand out of your breast, you scoundrel, or I'll run you through the body!" cried Howard; "and pass on, and quickly!"

"Hoght mile dhiaoul! go on yourself then!" replied the man. "Dhar a Christ! go on!" And with his left hand he shoved Howard, as if he had been only a child, within a few paces of the stream, while with the other he presented a pistol.

Howard, recovering from the push, darted on the assassin like a wild-cat. Ere they closed the pistol had been snapped, but it only burned priming; and as Howard pressed on, he with a desperate pass ran

the fellow through the thigh. In an instant he was in the ruffian's giant clutch; and after a few unavailing struggles Howard was dashed on the ground, and then he felt himself dragged towards the stream. In vain did he resist and cry out; the strength that tugged him along was almost superhuman; and the verging prospect of his terrible fate had almost made him insensible to his continued progress towards it, when the startling whizz of a bullet by his ear, and the immediate report of a pistol, called back his powers of observation. Instantly he was free, for his colossal antagonist fell, with scarcely a groan, on the earth. 'The bullet had gone through his brain!

"He's quiet now, I believe, captain," said a voice by Howard's side, while he was at the same time assisted to rise by an unseen hand; and when he had gained his legs, he beheld close by him a young man of rather slight figure, buttoned to the chin in a tight grey surtout, and wearing on his legs leather gaiters, also closely buttoned.

"Dead, by heaven!" said Howard, in reply to the stranger's remark. "Sir, for this timely aid I must ever be your debtor—if, indeed," he added, in an undecided tone, "the bullet has hit its true mark."

"I don't well know what you mean, sir," said the young man, proudly drawing himself up. "I fired at this fellow to save your life."

"I readily believe it, sir," rejoined Howard; "but we were so close, 'twas rather nice shooting."

"Tut, tut!" said the other, "it was nothing at all to talk of. I could do it as well if you both stood cheek-by-jowl."

"Then, sir, I must cordially repeat my thanks and gratitude."

"Oh, no thanks. What is it but what one gentleman should do for another? I only wish you had been with me half-an-hour ago on the road; you might then have conferred the first obligation."

"May I ask to what you allude?" said Howard.

* "Why, yes," replied the stranger with indifference. "I have just been stopped and plundered by Doe and three of his men."

"What do you tell me, sir?" asked Howard in some consternation. "I thought I had left him pretty securely guarded."

"He's out, Captain Howard, I assure you."

* "Perhaps some other?"

"No, no: I saw the fellow face to face."

"You know his person then? have seen him often?"

"Often."

"They plundered you, you say?"

"They did, and I said so."

"Of what, pray?"

"Of what! of my money and arms, to be sure."

"Your arms?" repeated Howard, glancing at the pistol the stranger had just discharged, and which he still held in his hand: and immediately after, Howard, fixing his eyes on this person's face, thought he should recollect to have seen it before.

"Oh! ay—this little pistol," the young man answered; "I found it on the hill after them, and you're just as welcome to it as the slight service it has done you." He offered it.

"Thanks, but you see I have my sword. Will you allow me to ask if ever we have met before, sir?" continued Howard, again reading the pale, interesting features of his companion.

"Upon my soul! not that I know of," was the answer.

"But you seem to know my person well," resumed Howard.

"You have been pointed out to me, to be sure, captain," said the other; "and I have often been looking at you when you little thought of it—that's all."

"Pray, what like man is this Doe?"

"Something of your own height, I think," said the stranger, surveying Howard from head to foot; "or mine, as I believe you and I stand about the same men in our shoes; but he is much stouter than either of us, and perhaps twice as old."

"About forty five, then?"

"Let me see. Yes: about five-and forty."

"Well-favoured, sir?"

"No: black complexion, black hair, strong and rough features, a lowering brow, a haughty, cruel mouth, and altogether a face of much ferocity."

"Thus I have heard him described by all; but I too shall see him, perhaps."

"Perhaps," echoed the stranger, drily; or as if, joining in the general opinion of John's cleverness, he slighted Howard's pretensions to outmanœuvre him. The stranger's tone fell disagreeably on Howard's ear; nor, indebted to him as he was, could Howard well receive the easy kind of swagger that ran through every word, look, and action of his new acquaintance; so that he now turned rather sharply round, with a peculiar "Sir?"

"Let me exhort you, Captain Howard," said the young man, without at all seeming to notice this change of manner, "to return with speed to your corps, who must now, I think, require your presence; pardon my freedom."

"You have purchased a right to use it, sir: may I beg to know to whom I am so much indebted?"

"My name is Sullivan; I live at my father's house, some miles up the country. I have yesterday been to a fair near Clonmel to sell cattle, and was this evening returning with the money, when Doe stopped me. Curse the fellow! these are new tricks, that he might better let alone."

"You are farmers, then—you and your father?"

"Farmers in a small way, captain: we had been better off, but rents and tithe-proctors now leave us little by the trade. If you think of returning to

your men," Sullivan continued, in a manner that had all the appearance of interest, though it still wore a feature of something like dictation, "I shall be very happy to lend you my company: 'tis a bit out of my road, but no matter."

Howard, rather conciliated by this proof of attention, and overlooking the dash in which it was conveyed, and which he now began to attribute to the country rather than to the individual, answered—

"I thank you. I intended to proceed farther—to Mr. Grace's house; but your information, and indeed this accident, determined me to return, and a brave friend like you may be useful."

"Very likely," Sullivan replied.

"Before we proceed farther," Howard continued, "I shall trouble you to accompany me to the nearest place, to despatch a messenger with a note of apology to Mr. Grace."

"First of all," said Sullivan, turning on his heel to where the dead body lay, "let us quietly dispose of this fellow's prodigious carcass. O C—st! what a Goliath! and what a pretty David am I that gave him his huzh-o, just by the edge of the brook, too! Upon my conscience, captain, I thought I should have split with laughing when I saw the d—d queer figure you cut, dangling after him like a calf tied to an ox's tail."

"It was very ridiculous, no doubt, sir," replied Howard, rather offended; "and perhaps more than ridiculous to one of the actors, though not to the spectator. But, pray," he continued in a changed tone, "what are your views towards this wretched carrion?"

"Why, to begin," answered Sullivan, kneeling, "I claim the well-known right every honest man who can shoot a robber possesses over him: I beg to see what kind of lining he has got to his pockets; and if I don't mistake, the inquiry will be worth

our while:" and he engaged at once in his investigation.

"Worth *your* while, I presume you mean, sir," observed Howard.

"Thank you, captain," said Sullivan; "that's blunt and kind, and what I expected from you. Another poor ensign in your place would be crying halves, or quarters at least. But you remember my loss on the road just now, and so leave me all the luck. And see, here it is, by holy Saint Patrick, crozier and mitre to boot! Here it is! One—two—three—four: four one-pound notes, and almost another pound in silver; he drank a drop since he got the big five-pound slip whole and entire. Well, I believe I know whom I may thank fur my good fortune to-night."

While Sullivan was speaking, he extracted from the most secret pocket on the person of the dead man a small piece of old rag, carefully tied up, and from this again the bank-notes and silver he had enumerated. Throwing away the envelope, he now very coolly deposited the money in his own pocket, and jumping up continued:—

"And the very next thing I intend to do, captain, is, to drop him in the very spot he had an eye on for yourself. Come, my lad! it's all one to you now, you know." He stooped to move the body, but was interrupted by Howard, who, during the entire last scene, had felt disgusted at the levity and hardness of the young man's manner and proceedings.

"I protest, I cannot see," said Howard, "why this should be done. Even for our own sakes, we ought to leave the wretch where he has had the misfortune to fall."

"Nonsense, man!" replied Sullivan, with an unkindled eye and in an impatient voice. "I know well what I am about; just leave me to myself. I commit no crime, I believe? And let me assure

you, captain, 'tis the best thing for *yourself*, too: indeed, what concern of mine is it at all? There may be visitors here in an hour or two, perhaps in half-an-hour, perhaps in a moment, who will expect anything but to find him in your place; and you might not be the safer of the discovery for the whole night after. Just let me have my own way, I say."

"You will do as you please, then, sir," said Howard, turning off and walking from the spot. As he proceeded, he could distinctly hear the noise caused by the trailing of the body over the crisp soil, and a moment after, the heavy plunge in the water. In another moment Sullivan was by his side.

"And now about your note of apology to Mr. Grace," he said, as he came up, with an unembarrassed tone.

"I shall have to ask admission into some house to write it," said Graham. "Whose house is that, yonder?"

"A black villain's," answered Sullivan, his voice completely altered to a subdued, hissing cadence.

"What is the name of the proprietor?"

"Purcell."

"Let us try to get in there," said Howard.

"Never!" cried Sullivan, almost in a scream, and while he stamped his heel into the sward.

"And why so, sir?" asked Howard, coolly; for he began to tire of the whimsical impatience of the young person's manner.

Sullivan, changing rapidly into a deeper tone, and almost speaking through his clenched teeth, went on: "Never, I say, but in defiance, shall my foot rest on his threshold; never shall I darken his door, but when I come, as the shadow of death and destruction might come—to darken it for ever! To your quarters!—Or, stay!—here are pen and ink," and he produced a small tin case containing both;

"and here is a scrap of paper, and yonder I see a light in a cabin. Write the line there, and I will faithfully carry it: 'tis on my way."

Howard assented, and they rapidly bent their steps towards the cabin. Meantime he said—

"This Purcell must indeed be a villain, or your prejudice against him is strong."

"Troth, an' you have just said the truth twice over," replied Sullivan: "he *is* a hell-born villain, and I hate him worse than I hate hell—or fear it, either."

"He has deeply injured you, then?"

"Injured me!—ha! ha!" and he laughed a bitter laugh; but whether the emanation of a sense of wrong, or in mockery of Howard's question, could not easily be distinguished. After a moment, however, he checked himself, and then added in an easier voice: "*Me*, captain?—no, not *me*; but his doings to others mark him for the detestation of every honest man."

This was not well carried; but Howard contented himself with asking, "Who or what is he?"

"What he is now, and for years has been, everybody knows; what he exactly sprang from no one can tell; at least, I cannot. But he first appeared here the follower of a lord we never saw; some kind of collector, I believe: soon after he became a tithe-proctor, then a firebrand, and at last a bloody traitor and informer, and of course a land-jobber, gentleman at large, and county magistrate.

"Pray explain," said Howard, much interested and completely astonished.

"The particulars would be a long story. Privately he stirred up the wretched and ignorant people around him to resist rack-rents, that he throve by as privately exacting; when he got them involved by his agents, he informed against them, turning their blood into money; those who held lauds on reasonable terms he thus contrived to turn

adrift on this world, or launched into the next, bidding for the vacant land himself, and then letting it at tenfold its value to starving creatures, who, though they sweated like the beasts of the field—which they do—could not meet their rent-day. There was one family in particular—— But, come, captain; let us push on to the light. I delay you."

"By no means; you have rather interested me. There was, you say, a particular family?"

"There was: a mother, and a son and daughter, and an old grandfather—the father was long dead. Purcell by his underhand practices ensnared the son, a lad of eighteen or nineteen, in nightly combinations; then he arraigned him before the landlord; and then—for their lease was expired—son and all were turned out of their home; the old man and all—all except the daughter."

"And what became of her?"

"Villain! eternally-damned villain!" exclaimed Sullivan, in another burst, and while his youthful face and figure took a stern and formidable appearance—"what became of *her*? He had trodden her down beforehand—seduced her—and she went with him into his house. She left her sick mother, and her ould grandfather, on the field before their own dour, and turned to the menial hearth of him who—Pardon me! the night wears—we walk too slow."

"Pray continue. What of the rest of this poor family?"

The narrator, touched, perhaps, as well by Howard's evident sympathy as by the subject he was about to enter on, answered in a broken voice—

"The mother, as I said, was ill; she could get no farther than the ridge that gave her a last look of her ould cottage; she sat there till night came on; 'twas a bad night—and—she died in it," he added, with a voice scarcely audible.

"Dreadful!—and the son?"

"The wretched son was not then at home. He returned, with an oath to revenge his poor mother. Purcell gained information of his purpose, and at the head of a body of soldiers hunted him through the country. In the North the boy escaped him, and there, it is believed, took shipping for America."

"It is indeed a shocking story, and I will not press you to enter the house of such a man; but, since you are so kind as to offer, I can write my note in the cabin, which, when we have got over this hedge, I presume we shall have gained."

Both accordingly prepared to surmount the impediment. It was a fence of earth and stones running straight across their path, with here and there a bunch of fuize or of dwarf thorn shooting out on the top and at the sides. As they prepared to clamber over, they were struck with a low, moaning plaint, which arose from the opposite side; and looking across, a young and beautiful woman appeared sitting on a large stone, her hair dishevelled, her face pale as marble, with an infant resting under her bosom. The moon flared fully in her front, and as she was not above two or three yards distant, developed, almost as perfectly as the daylight could, her face, figure, and drapery. Her head turned and inclined over her shoulder with an expression of utter woe and hopelessness, and the thick sighs, which every moment interrupted her wild lament, swelled and distended her brilliant white bosom, as if they had power to explode through it. Her clothes were also white. The infant seemed to have just dropped asleep, after leaving the young breast that, completely bare, abandoned itself to him; and the urchin now lay upon his back, along the beautiful round arm that tenderly stole under him, with his little knees slightly drawn up and his hands nearly open, approaching his mouth, in that infantine repose that Westmacott so well and so pathetically feels and executes.

Howard, first gaining the top of the hedge, saw with deep surprise and interest the poor mother and her infant, and was silently continuing his gaze, when Sullivan, who soon stood by him, quickly seized Howard's arm, and uttered a deep curse, the tone of which indicated the utmost consternation and astonishment. His exclamation reached the female's ear; for she turned her head, ceased her affecting wail, and, fixing her eyes for a moment on Sullivan's face, screamed and rushed into the cabin, which was only some yards distant.

"Don't follow me," said Sullivan to Howard; "this is my affair: I'll be with you in a moment;" and he leaped from the top of the hedge, and rapidly pursued the girl into the cabin.

When he entered he saw her on her knees, with her face hid in an old man's lap who sat by the hearth. One arm hung at her side, the other still pressed her now complaining child, and in reply to the old man's repeated "Whisht, whisht, avourneen!" she uttered, "His ghost—his ghost! come over the waters and the mountains to punish me! Hide me, grandfather, hide me!"

"Ghost or no ghost, Cauthleen, speak no word to me yet," said Sullivan, who now stood at her back. "There is an account to settle for you before we can ever—if we ever do—look straight into each other's faces."

But it was useless for Sullivan to have given this warning, as at the very first sound of his voice Cauthleen had fainted at the old man's knees, her infant still held, however, to her bosom.

"And is this the way so soon?" continued Sullivan, speaking to the old man; "could he not wait for me a little, but add this last, this very last, wrong to all the rest? When did he turn her out, dha-dhu?"*

"This is the first I heard of it, avich," said the old

* Grandfather.

man; "an' sure I didn't think of seein' her to-night, till afther you called to see him yourself."

"Hush!" said Sullivan, pointing out to the door; "did you tell her I was in the country?" in a lower voice.

"How could I whin you bid me not?" said the old man: "though last night, as I spoke to her out of her window, an' scalded her heart wid the story of Purcell's coortin' o' Mary Grace, I was nigh comfortin' her, poor sowl, on the head of it."

"Bring her to the barn, dha-dhu, as fast as you can," rejoined Sullivan; "and—stay! we want you in other matters. You must instantly mount and away to the elm-trees—you know for what." The old man bent his eyes blankly on the ground. "You remember, don't you?" continued Sullivan, as, from a suspicion of the old man's occasional weakness of intellect, he began to doubt his energy and correctness in the business he wished him to undertake.

"Do I remember, is it?" asked the other, as, recovering from his abstraction, he raised Cauthleen in his arms and stood upright, with a vigour that in one of his great age was surprising; while a strong colour spread over his cheek, and his grey eyes sparkled insanely. "Do I remember your biddin', an' why it is to be done? Wid this load in my arms, an' you standin' afore me, you an' do I remember it? Do I remember anything? Do I remember the day that once was, an' the day that is in it, an' the day that is to come agin?—an' if ould age an' the heart-break struv' to make me forget, *could* I? Where then 'ud be my dhramas on the hill-side, an' in the rushes an' the long grass by the water's brink, whin night after night I dhreamt it—when the moanin' came on the hill-breeze, an' the cracklin' an' the roarin' o' the blaze was in the reeds that covered my ould head—whin the mountains fell back, an' the sky grew clear, an' the wide waters were no hindrance to me, an' I saw you through them all, afar off, wid

the soord in your hand, an' *him* twinin' like a red worm at your feet?"

"Hush, hush, dha-dhu!" again interrupted Sullivan. "There is one abroad must not hear or know; and you had better call on God to strengthen you, and make you clear, and watchful, and prudent. And now go your ways to the barn first, and then to the elm-trees; this lost creature is in a long fit, and we have nothing here to serve her. Go! she seems coming to a little: go now, without a word; rest with her abroad in the air, and then she'll walk with you. And now—yet one other word: is Flinn gone to get Father O'Clery out of the way, and to talk to him about the work?"

"'Tis an hour agoe since he went," answered the old man, "and he'll schame him to the barn, as you tould us."

"Then don't lose another moment," said Sullivan; "or just wait where you are till I step out with this rushlight;" and Sullivan took the niggard taper and approached Howard, who still remained at the hedge, his curiosity excited to the utmost, and his fears also stirring on account of Sullivan's statement as to the escape of Doe; Howard feeling as a neglect of duty every moment that kept him from his men.

"We can do it in the cabin," said Sullivan, as he stood under Howard at the bottom of the hedge; "but come down, and I'll hold the light while you scribble on this stone: the wind is low, and won't hinder us."

Howard accordingly descended, and using the implements with which Sullivan had supplied him, wrote his note to Mr. Grace, and handed it unsealed to Sullivan.

"I'll deliver it punctually," said Sullivan, "and within as much time as it will take me to walk and run to the house. And now, Captain Howard, good night, and make haste to your soldiers; and don't

mind walking among these hills with people you are a stranger to, for all the pretty faces about Slievenamon. But we'll talk more of that, maybe, when I have the pleasure to see you next. Good night, sir;" and he turned again into the cabin.

Great as was Howard's anxiety to get to his quarters, he could not withstand the temptation of concealing himself a moment behind the hedge, in order to watch some continuance of the interesting scene to the opening of which he had been a witness. So he recrossed the mound, and stooped his head under it at the side turned from the cabin.

In a few moments he heard Sullivan's voice wishing some one good luck and speed; and almost immediately Sullivan leaped the stream, of which the course continued as far as the cabin, and Howard soon saw him running across the low ground at the other side in the direction of Mr. Grace's house. His curiosity was next bent to catch a glimpse of the female and child; and looking cautiously over the hedge, he saw her, leaning on the old man, walk from the cabin towards the place where he stood concealed. They did not, however, directly pass Howard, but, continuing their way by the other side of the hedge, issued through it at a gap about twenty yards distant, and then, turning to the left, began to ascend a broken and uncultivated declivity.

Howard argued that this declivity must be a continuation of the ridge over which he had descended with his traitorous guide, when he first left the road that commanded his quarters; and he concluded that if he also mounted the hill, in the footsteps of the old man and his charge, it must lead him again to the road, some little distance from the point he wished to regain; so, mistrustful of travelling any longer in bypaths that had proved sufficiently dangerous, and assisted by his anxiety to track the young female, Howard followed at a distance.

After gaining the brow of the ridge, the old man

and his companion disappeared from Howard's view. He also hastened, therefore, to win it; and when he had done so, looked out, and discovered them still walking in a direct line across a wide waste of marshy ground, bounded at some distance by a low wall, on which the moon shone clear and white, distinguishing even the stones of which it was composed. Howard felt surprised that, having passed the hill, so considerable a space should still remain between him and the road; but, assured that the wall he now saw was its boundary, he continued to follow the two figures.

They again disappeared over the wall, and Howard, mending his pace, straddled across the low barrier, which he perceived to be formed of loose stones, and in increased surprise saw another stretch of open ground before him, over which the figures still moved. The lines of the road and the hill, he thought, must have suddenly departed from their parallel; but it was meantime impossible that he should miscalculate his route, and so he persevered in it.

This second wild tract of moor proved nearly twice as extensive as the first; yet it was at length terminated by another loose wall, which was successively passed by the old man, the girl, and Howard. But the amazement of our military friend changed into a disagreeable misgiving when he now found himself at the base of a growing ascent, round which, as he gained the other side of the second barrier, his unconscious guides were just winding. In a moment they had entirely eluded him; and, vexed and impatient, he hurried after them to inquire his way to the road, even yet positive he could not be far astray.

As he rapidly turned the bend of the hill, and looked forward for those he supposed before him, they were not to be seen; but the wailing of a female voice, and the shrill cadence of the man, as if speak-

ing in comfort, guided him in his course. He followed till he found himself at the mouth of a pass, where the hill divided it, and afforded entrance to its own recesses. Up this way Howard turned to the right, and soon saw the female and old man, the one sitting, and the other, with her infant in his arms, standing over her, and both continuing to converse in their mixed tones of anguish and feebleness.

He hastened on to join them. All were now wrapt in the shadow of the hill, and as Howard precipitately advanced, he stumbled over some fragments of rock and fell. The woman and her aged protector instantly uttered a cry of terror, and ran in a contrary direction. Howard rose, not materially hurt, and hallooed after them; but this appearing only to increase their fright and speed, he presently exerted his own legs in pursuit. They fled for some distance along the pass he had last entered, and then turned into another which struck almost at right angles with it. Howard once more missed his guides, till he arrived at the point they had doubled; but he then marked them in the resumed moonlight which the sudden turn afforded, flitting over the side of the divided hill, and apparently bent on gaining its top. Still he held chase.

Pausing on the verge of the ascent, he in treble alarm saw them hastening over a wide spread of sloping country, at the extremity of which a huge peak of mountain took its rise. In fact, he had not felt that all this while, ever since he left the cabin, he had, across moors and all, been rapidly though imperceptibly ascending towards the bleak and craggy summit of Slievenamen. He gazed about, confounded and almost terrified, and hallooed louder than ever after his mysterious seducers into this maze of danger. They heeded his appeal less than ever; and when, resuming once more his efforts to overtake them, Howard endeavoured to hold them

in his eye, the two figures suddenly sank from view, and left him completely at fault.

He ran on in the direction they had taken, until, gaining the verge of the moor, he found himself altogether impeded in his progress by a deep gully, that, like a trench before a stronghold, seemed to guard the base of the mountain. As the weather had lately been very dry, scarcely any water now sought its way through this natural canal: and advancing cautiously to reconnoitre, Howard could perceive that the gully was profound and abrupt, and lined at each side and at the bottom with sharp projecting fragments of rock. His next investigation was to discover in what part of the pass the old man and the female lay concealed, for he could not **suppose** they had been able to cross it; nor could **he** otherwise account for their sudden disappearance **than** by concluding they had descended into it. No trace of them appeared, however; and he paused in much embarrassment, unable to form any plan of proceeding, when they abruptly reappeared at the opposite side of the gully, moving towards a broad flat stone, that, supported at one end by two props, also of stone, was raised in that direction from the ground, while the other end, which approached nearest to Howard, seemed buried in the soil. He looked, without knowing its traditional nature, at the ruins of an old Druidical altar. But had he been a thorough antiquarian, and ever so well acquainted with all that has been said and written on the subject of this rude relic, little interest would it have had for him at the moment. His notice was solely directed to the two figures who now ran towards it, and he hallooed lustily and long in hopes of fixing their attention.

All vainly, however. The figures continued in speed and silence to near the stone; and when they had gained it, and while Howard exalted his voice into the shrillest possible key, they became once

again and finally invisible. But, as if not to allow him to waste his lungs for nothing, Howard had scarcely emitted the last bellow when it was caught up in a contrary direction, and prolonged and repeated beyond his wishes. He paused a moment, in hopes that he might have heard an echo; but when too much time had lapsed to permit, according to natural laws, of its possible iteration, the shouting was again renewed, by more than one person, now sounding nearer, and awaking the deep and real voices of the outspread moors and desolate hills. Howard, though no poltroon, felt a disagreeable qualm at heart, as these wild signals of approaching strangers, and to him foes, closed right and left upon him. He stood one moment in something like consternation, and then the instinct of nature lent him lightning thought as will be seen, scarcely less than thunderbolt action. Behind the flat stone the figures had found a hiding-place; behind it he too would seek safety. He measured the gully with his eye; it was at least six yards over—perhaps more: no matter. Howard drew back for a good run, sprang across the chasm like any chamois-hunter, and lighted on his feet in the shelving sward at the opposite side. But this was only the first consequence of his leap; for, after striking his heels into the soft ground, he next sank through it, and fell, with a falling chaos about his ears and a hellish uproar ringing in them, down—down—he knew not where, into the bowels and mysteries of the mountain!

CHAPTER IX.

AND now could we at our pleasure, and not in violation of the known and admitted privilege of story-tellers, change the scene of our narrative some miles away from Lieutenant Howard, and leave the obliging reader in a consequent agony of suspense as to the issue of his adventure. But we scorn such petty tyranny over the minds of those millions whom it is our wish, in perfect disinterestedness, to treat in the best manner; and therefore we proceed straight forward in our tale.

The first perception of Howard's restored senses brought him the intelligence of his being in the midst of an almost insufferable atmosphere, oppressive as it was strange and unusual. He breathed with difficulty, and coughed and sneezed himself very nearly back again into the state of unconsciousness out of which, it would seem, coughing and sneezing had just roused him; for he gained his senses while performing such operations as are understood by these words. When a reasonable pause occurred, and that reflection had time to come into play, Howard wondered whether he was alive or dead, and whether or no he felt pain; and, due consideration having ensued, he was able to assure himself that, so far as he could judge, he lived, and without much pain of any kind into the bargain. Next he tried to stir himself; but here he was un-

successful. Some unseen power paralysed his legs and arms, feet and hands. He lay, it was evident, upon the broad of his back, and the surface he pressed seemed soft and genial enough. Howard in this position looked straight upward. The stars, and a patch of deep blue sky, twinkled and smiled upon him. This was a help. He remembered having fallen in through the slope of the hill, and, as an aperture must have been the consequence or the cause of his descent, he ventured to argue accordingly. He had intruded, it would rather seem, upon the private concerns of some person or persons, who, from motives unknown to him, chose to reside in a subterranean retreat among the very sublimities of Slievenamon. Here the strange scent again pressed with overwhelming force upon his nose. There was some part of it he thought he could or ought to recollect having before experienced, and he snuffed once or twice in the hope of becoming satisfied; but a fresh, and he conceived a different effluvium thereupon rushed up his nostrils and down his throat, and he had again to sneeze and cough his way into his better senses.

When Howard was successful in this second effort, he next observed that he dwelt not in absolute darkness. A pandemonium kind of light dimly glared around him, clouded by a dense fog of he knew not what colour or consistency. "Am I alone?" He listened attentively. The melancholy female voice that he had heard lamenting at the cabin and among the hills filled his ear, though it was now poured forth in a subdued cadence. Still he listened, and a hissing of whispers floated at every side, accompanied by the noise of a fire rapidly blazing, together with an intermittent explosion that very much resembled a human snore.

Again he strove to rise or turn, but could not. "I will just move my head round, at all events," thought Howard. He did so, very slowly, and his eyes fixed

upon those of Jack Mullins, who, bent on one knee at his side, held his left arm tightly down with one hand, while with the other Jack presented a heavy horseman's pistol. Howard, little cheered by this comforter, turned his head as slowly in the other direction, and again encountered the full stare of another ruffianly visage, while with both hands of his attendant he was at this side pinioned. Two other men secured his feet.

"Where am I? and why do you hold me? and how did all this happen?" asked Howard, as he began to comprehend his situation.

"Hould your tongue and be quiet!" said Mullins.

"I know *you* well, Jack Mullins," resumed Howard: "'tis some time since we met at the pattern, but I know your voice and face perfectly well."

"Nonsense!" said Mullins, "and hould your pace, I tell you."

"You surely would not take away my life for nothing," continued Howard; "and it can be no offence to ask you why you hold me down in this strange manner."

"Bother, man! say your prayers, an' don't vex me."

"Mullins, I have drunk with you out of the same cup, and clasped your hand in good fellowship; and I desire you, for the sake of old acquaintance, to let me sit up and look about me. I never did you an injury, nor intended one."

"I don't know how that is," observed Mullins.

"Never, by my soul!" repeated Howard with energy. "This unhappy intrusion, whatever place I may have got into, was an accident. I missed my way among the hills and wandered here unconsciously. Let me up, Mullins, and you shall have a handsome recompense."

"The divil a laffina you have about yot," said Mullins: "don't be talkin'."

"As you have *found* my purse, then," rejoined

Howard, easily suspecting what had happened, "you are most welcome to it, so you release me for a moment."

"An' who, do you think, is to pay us for the roof of our good snug house you have tattered down on our heads this blessed night?" asked Mullins.

"I will, to be sure," replied Howard: "who else should? Come, Mullins, bid these men let me go, and you'll never be sorry for it. Is this the way Irishmen treat an old friend?"

"For the sake o' that evenin' we had together at the pathern, you may get up—that is, sit up an' bless yourself. Let him go, men, bud watch the ladder."

The three other men instantly obeyed Mullins's orders, and, Jack himself loosening his dead gripe, Howard was at last free to sit up.

"Now, never mind what you see," continued Mullins; "an' in throth the less you look about you at all at all, so much the better, I'm thinkin';" and Mullins sat down opposite his prisoner, still holding the cocked pistol on his arm.

This caution seemed in the first instant altogether useless; for Howard could observe nothing through the dense vapour around him, except now and then the blank and wavering outline of a human figure flitting in the remote parts of the recess. The whispers, however, had deepened into rather loud tones; but here he was as much at a loss as ever, for the persons of the drama spoke together in Irish. At length he gained a hint to the mystery. A young man, stripped as for some laborious work, approached Mullins, and said somewhat precipitately, "Musha, Jack, the *run* 'll go fur nothin' this time, unless you come down an' put your own hand to the still."

Here, then, from all he had previously heard, and could now see, smell, and conceive, Howard found himself in the presence of illicit distillation, at work,

though it was Sunday, in all its vigour and glory. He snuffed again, and wondered at his own stupidity, and indeed ingratitude, that he should not at once have recognised the odour of the potteen atmosphere: a mixture of the effluvia of the liquor and the thick volumes of pent-up smoke, in which for some time he had, under Providence, lived and breathed.

When the young man addressed to Mullins the words we have just recorded, that person's ill-boding face assumed a cast of more dangerous malignity, and after a ferocious scowl at the speaker, he said with much vehemence, "Upon my conscience, Tim, agra, you're just aftlier spakin' the most foolish words that your mother's son ever spoke; an' I don't know what bad blood you have to the Sassenach officer here, that you couldn't lave him a chance for his life when it was likely he had id. Musha, evil end to you, Tim, seed, breed, an' generation! Ma chorp an dhiaoul! what matter was it if the whole shot went to Ould Nick this blessed evenin', providin' we didn't let strangers into our sacrets? Couldn't you let him sit here a while in paze? But since the murther's out, take this, you ballour o' the divil"—giving the pistol—"while I go down to the spot. An', Tim, lave well enough alone now, an' if you can't mend what's done, try not to do any more. Don't be talkin' at all, I say; you needn't pull the trigger on him fur spakin' a little, if it isn't too much cntirely; bud take care o' your own self, Tim, an' hould your gab till I come to you agin."

After this speech, the longest that Mullins was ever known to deliver, he strode away from Howard's side towards the most remote end of the place, where the fire was blazing. Howard, comprehending that Jack's indignation was aroused because of the revealing summons of the young man, and that

his own life might probably be sacrificed to his innocent advancement in knowledge, very prudently resolved to avail himself of the hints contained in the harangue he had heard, by observing, in Mullins's absence, the most religious silence, and withal the most natural unconsciousness. The latter part of his resolve was, however, soon rendered superfluous and unavailing. The wind rose high abroad, and entering at the recent aperture, attributable to Howard, took an angry circuit round the cavern, agitated the mass of smoke that filled it, and compelled the greater portion to evaporate through another vent at the opposite side. In about five minutes, therefore, the whole details of the apartment became visible to any observer, nor could Howard refuse to his curiosity the easy investigation thus afforded. And what he saw is now to be written.

The place was evidently an excavation scooped in the side of the hill, and then, as Howard could remember from his observations abroad, added to his present survey, roofed over with trunks and branches of trees, and covered with sods level to the contiguous soil. Into this den one entrance was now visible; for, looking across, Howard saw the rude ladder of which Mullins had spoken, guarded by the three fellows he had ordered to that point. Against the sides of the cavern, almost all the way round, turf, furze, or well-filled sacks, were piled. One end appeared to be dedicated to the purpose of a barn; for it was stuffed with sheaves of corn at one side and straw at the other, while on the ground lay two flails, half hidden amid a litter of a compound description.

At the other end—heaven bless the mark!—the Genius of potteen had established his laboratory. On a tremendous fire of turf and furze sat a goodly pot, of comprehension sufficient, perhaps, for thirty gallons of pot-ale. This cauldron was well covered

with a wooden lid, which, at its junction to the sides of the vessel, as well as over all its casual crevices, received an earthy *impasto* of some kind, to make it air-tight. Out of the top of the lid issued the worm, so called in courtesy only; for it bore little resemblance to its licensed prototype in loyal distilleries, and was in shape no logical symbol of the word. Truly, it did not coil; but rather ran in and out, crinkum-crankum, in sharp angles, right, acute, or obtuse, at every turn. Its material was common tin, daubed most uncouthly with solder; the clumsy production of some hill-tinker, who was but too well remunerated for his work by a few draughts of the first oozing it brought forth. The greater part of this curious apparatus passed through a large tub of cold water, called familiarly the cooling-tub, and representing the condenser of more formal establishments. At length the end protruded, free of all impediment, over another wooden vessel, and therein deposited, drop by drop, its precious and fully-matured product—in fact, the *bona fide* potteen, regularly distilled.

Around the fire, and at the end of the worm, and from vessel to vessel of different compass, in which the yielding corn underwent its different processes of fermentation, previous to a final enclosure in the pot, Jack Mullins now appeared busy, the presiding and directing spirit of the scene. He moved about heavily and silently, with bent brow and closed lips, only condescending to the various questions levelled at him, "Bother!—don't be talkin'." Two or three other men were also busy at the vats, and an old woman with lank streaming locks, and her neck almost entirely bare, and a dirty girl of about fourteen years, stood near the worm, pouring from time to time upon it, and into the vessel through which it passed, their contributions of cold water. Around the blaze, on straw, lay perhaps a dozen men, old and young, keen observers and anxious expectants.

The fire glared on all, throwing into sympathetic shadow many a wild or sinister eye, and touching with red light the top edges of their shaggy eyebrows, their vulgar cheek-bones, hooked or snub noses, and ample chins.

Howard, continuing his observations, surveyed the height from which he had fallen. It might be about seven feet; but he sat elevated above the floor of the cavern; and this remark, causing him to examine the material under him, enabled Howard to account for having escaped so well. In truth he had descended, where he now remained, upon a heap of litter, composed of the residuum of the pot, and some bundles of straw strewed lightly over, so that the whole substance was soft and unresisting as any man in his circumstances could have wished.

He was, however, little pleased on the whole with the scene thus become revealed by the partial expulsion of the smoke. Mullins's late hints still rang in his ears; and while contemplating the faces of those round the fire, the unintentional visitant thought he looked on men who would have little hesitation, all circumstances of prejudice and relative place duly weighed, to assist the master-ruffian in any designs upon an Englishman and a red-coat. Then he recollected his untimely absence from his men, the intelligence Sullivan had given him, the disastrous consequences that to them might therefore ensue, and his cheek and brow flamed with impatience; while the next moment a recurrence to his own immediate peril corrected, if it did not change, their courageous glow.

The young man who had relieved guard over Howard well obeyed the parting orders of Mullins; for he did not open his lips to the prisoner, contenting himself with watching his every motion and keeping fast hold of the pistol. Utter silence, therefore, reigned between both, as Howard also strictly observed his own resolution.

After he had fully investigated every thing and person around him, and when thought and apprehension found no relief from curiosity, this blank pause disagreeably affected him. It was uncertainty and suspense, fear for others and for himself; or, even if he escaped present danger, the unhappy accident might influence his future character and prospects. Under the pressure of these feelings, Howard most ardently wished the return of Mullins, in order that his fate might at once be decided.

And in his own due time Mullins at length came. Everything about the pot seemed prosperous; for with a joyous clatter of uncouth sounds the men now gathered near the worm, and one by one held under it a large turkey egg-shell, which was subsequently conveyed to their mouths. Mullins himself took a serious loving draught, and, refilling his shell, strode towards Howard, the bumper in his hand.

"First," he said, as he came up, "since you know more than you ought about us, taste that."

"Excuse me, Mullins," said Howard; "I should not be able to drink it."

"Nonsense!" resumed Jack; "dhrink the queen's health, good loock to her! in the right stuff, that is made out o' love to her an' no one else; dhrink, till you see how you'd like it."

"I cannot, indeed," said Howard, wavering.

"Musha, you'd betther," growled Mullins. Howard drank some.

"So you won't finish it? Well, what brought you here?"

"Ill luck," answered Howard. "I knew of no such place, but, as I told you, lost my way, and—and—in truth I tumbled into it."

"An' well you looked—didn't you?—flyin' down through an ould hill's side among ppaceable people? An' this is all throe? no one tould you?"

"Upon my honour, all true, and no one told me."

"By the vartch o' your oath, now? Will you swear it?"

"I am ready for your satisfaction to do so."

"Well. Where's our own soggarth, 'Tim?" continued Mullins, turning to the young guardsman.

"In the corner beyant, readin' his breviary," replied 'Tim.

A loud snore from the corner seemed, however, to belie the latter part of the assertion.

"Och, I hear him," said Mullins. Run, Peg," he continued, speaking to the girl—"run to the corner, an' tell Father Tack'em we want him."

The girl obeyed, and, with much shaking and loud screaming in his ear, called into imperfect existence a little bundle of a man who there lay rolled up among the bundles of straw.

"What's the matter now?" squeaked this vision, as, badly balancing himself with the girl's assistance, he endeavoured to resume his legs, and then waddle towards Mullins at a short, dubious pace.

"What's the matter at all, that a poor priest can't read his breviary once a-day without being disturbed by you, you pack of ——"

"Don't be talkin'," interrupted Mullins, "but look afore you, an' give him the buke."

"The book!" echoed Father Tack'em—"the book for him! Musha, happy death to me! what brings the likes of him among us?"

"You'd betther not be talkin', I say, bud give him the buke at once," said Mullins authoritatively; and he was obeyed. Howard received from Tack'em a clasped volume, "much the worse for the wear," as its proprietor described it; and at the dictation of Mullins, swore upon it to the truth of the statement he had already made.

"So far so good," resumed Mullins; "an' hould your tongue still, plase your reverence; it's betther for you. An' now, Captain Howard ——"

"I only want to ask, is the *shot* come off?" inter-

rupted Tack'em; "for, happy death to me! I'm drouthy."

"Here, Tim," said Mullins, giving the shell to the young man and taking the pistol, "go down to the worm an' get a dhrop for the soggarth."

The shell returned top-full, and Tack'em, with a prefatory smack of his lips, was about to swallow its contents, when, glancing at Howard, he stopped short and offered him "a taste." The politeness was declined, and Tack'em observed—

"Ah! you haven't the grace to like it yet. But wait a while. I thought like yourself at first, remembering my poor ould Horace's aversion to garlic—which, between ourselves, avich, is a wholesome herb after all;" and he repeated with much amusing flippancy the beginning of the

Parentis olim si quis impia manu,
Senile guttur fregerit —

"Bother!" interrupted Mullins: "ould Hurish, whoever he is, an' barrin' he's no friend o' your reverence, could never be an honest man to talk o' '*gutter*' an' the potteen in one breath."

"Och! God help you, you poor ignoramus!" replied Tack'em, draining his shell. "An', now I think of it, what a blessed ignorant crew I have around me! Do *you* know humanity, avich?" he continued, addressing himself to Howard.

"Nonsense!" interposed Mullins: "we all know *that* in our turns, and when we can't help it. Don't be talkin'. bud let me do my duty. I was a-saying, aroon," pursued Mullins, turning to Howard, "that all was well enough so far. Bud, somehow or other, I'm thinkin' you will have to do a thing or two more. 'Tisn't clear to myself, agra, bud you must kiss the primer agin, in the regard of never sayin' a word to a Christhen sowl of your happenin' to stray down through that hole over your head, or

about any one of us, or anything else you saw while you were stayin' wid us."

Howard, remembering that part of his duty was to render assistance at all times to the civil power of the country in putting down illicit distillation, hesitated at this proposal, doubtful that he should be guilty of an indirect compromise of principle in concealing his knowledge of the existence and situation of such a place. He therefore made no immediate answer, and Mullins went on:—

"There's another little matther, too. Some poor gossips of ours that have to do with this Captain John—God help 'em!—are all this time in the bog, we hear, in regard o' the small misunderstandin' betuxt you an' them. Well, avich, you could just let 'em out, couldn't you?"

"I can engage to do neither of the things you have last mentioned," said Howard, who, assured that concession to the first would not avail him unless he also agreed to the second, thus saved his conscience by boldly resisting both.

"Don't be talkin'," rejoined Mullins: "throth you'll jist be afther promisin' us to do what we ax you, an' on the buke, too;" and his eye glanced to the pistol.

"It is impossible," said Howard; "my honour, my character, and my duty forbid it. If those unfortunate persons yet remain within my lines, they must stay there, or else surrender themselves unconditionally as our prisoners."

"I don't think you're sarious," resumed Mullins. "Suppose a body said—you *must* do this?"

"I should give the same answer."

"Thonomon dhiaoul! don't vex me too well. Do you see what I have in my hand?"

"I see you can murder me if you like; but you have heard my answer."

"Stop, you bloodhound, stop!" screamed Tack'em.

"Happy death to me! what would you be about?"

Don't you know there's wiser heads than yours settling that matter? Isn't it in the hands of Father O'Clery by this time? An' who gave you lave to take the law into your own hands?"

"Bother!" said Mullins. "Who'll suffer most by lettin' him go? who bud myself, that get's the little bit I ate an' the dhrop I taste by showing you all how to manage the still through the counthry? An' wouldn't it be bettler to do two things at once, an' get him to kiss the buke for all I ax him?"

"You don't understand it," rejoined Tack'em; "you were never born to understand it; you can do nothin' but pull your trigger or keep the stone in your sleeve. Let better people's business alone, I say, an' wait a while."

Mullins, looking as if, despite previous arrangements, he considered himself called on, in consequence of a lucky accident, to settle matters his own way, slowly resumed:—

"Then I'll tell you how it 'ill be. Let the Sas-senach kneel down in his straw, an' do you kneel at his side, plase your reverence, and give him a bettler preparation nor his mother, poor lady, ever thought he'd get. Jist say six patterin-aavees, an' let no one be talkin'; sure we'll give him a little time to think of it."

"Murderous dog!" exclaimed Howard, with the tremulous energy of a despairing man, "recollect what you are about to do. If I fall in this manner, there's not a pit or nook of your barren hills shall serve to screen you from the consequences; nor is there a man who now hears me, yet refuses to interfere, but shall become an accessory, equally guilty and punishable with yourself, if indeed you dare proceed to an extremity!"

"Don't be talkin'," said Mullins, determinedly, "bud kneel down."

"I'll give you my curse on my two bended knees if you touch a hair of his head!" said Tack'em;

"and then see how you'll look, going about on a short leg, an' your elbow scratching your ear, an' your shins making war on each other while all the world is at pace!"

"An' don't *you* be talkin' either," resumed Mullins, who seemed pertinacious in his objection to the prolonged sound of the human voice; "but kneel by his side an' hear what he has to tell you first, an' then say your patterin-aavees."

Evidently in fear for himself, Tack'em at last obeyed. The other men, with the old hag and the girl, gathered round, and Howard also mechanically knelt. He was barely conscious, and no more, of the plunging gallop in which he hastened into eternity. He grew, despite of all his resolutions to die bravely, pale as a sheet; cold perspiration rushed down his face; his jaw dropped, and his eyes fixed. Strange notions of strange sounds filled his ears and brain. The roaring of the turf fire, predominantly heard in the dead silence, he confusedly construed into the break and surge of angry waters about his head; and the muttering voice of Tack'em, as he rehearsed his prayers, echoed like the growl of advancing thunder. The last prayer was said—Mullins was extending his arm—when a stone descended from the aperture under which he stood, and at the same time Flinn's well-known voice exclaimed from the roof—

"Take that, an' bloody ind to you for a meddlin', murtherin' rap!"

Mullins fell senseless.

"Bounce up, avich! you're safe!" said Tack'em, while, kneeling himself, he clasped his hands and continued, as if finishing a private prayer that had previously engaged him—"in secula seculorum.—Amen! Jump, I say—jump!—*O festus dies hominis!—via sum apud me!*—jump!" But Howard did not rise till after he had returned ardent thanks for his deliverance; and he was still on his knees when

Flinn rushed down the ladder, crying out, "Tattu-an'-tundher-an'-ouns! it's the greatest shame ever came on the counthry! a burnin' shaine! Och, captain avourneen! are you safe an' sound every inch of you? An' they were goin' to trate you in that manner? Are you in a whole skin, avich?" he continued, raising Howard and clasping his hands.

"Quite safe, thank you, only a little frightened," said Howard, with a reassured though faint smile.

"Oh, the murtherin' thief! where is he?" resumed Flinn—"where is he till I be the death of him! Get up, you'mloocky bird!"—giving Mullins a kick—"get up, if the brains are in your head. Musha, I pray God the stone mayn't have left 'em! Get up an' go on your errand. Purcell is waiting for you, an' the farmer's son is there. Get up—an' that you never may!"

"Musha, I meant all for the best—don't be talkin'," muttered Mullins, as, recovering from the stunning blow, he scrambled on his feet: "an' is Purcell ready?"

"Yes, you black dog, he is," answered Flinn. "Go your ways to him; an' tell him you're after doin' all he axed you—be sure o' that."

"Father Tack'em must come wid me," said Mullins. "Purcell wants him to make all sure, an' I promised."

"I'll not budge a peg in your company," said Tack'em; "there's neither luck nor grace at your side."

"For that matther, there's a priest in the house already," observed Flinn, carelessly.

"Is there, honey?" asked Tack'em, much interested; "then where's my breviary?"

"An' you'd betther go, for another raison," rejoined Flinn. "There's one abroad that came wid myself to the barn—(only I left him a little way off, when I saw the hole in the roof, to make his own way)—that your reverence wouldn't be over-plaised

to see.—By the powers! here he comes down the ladder!" Howard looked in some alarm, but was greatly relieved to see the portly person of Father O'Clery in the situation Flinn had described. The friends, in mutual surprise and pleasure, advanced to each other.

"Move aside, plase your reverence," continued Flinn to Tack'em, as the gentlemen conversed apart; "an' stale out wid Jack as soon as you can: it's the best way for you both."

Poor Tack'em seemed to agree with the speaker; for, folding round his fat body, and over the relic of a coat that once had been black, a loose dark-blue dread-nought, and hiding his bald head in a slouched hat, while at the same time he tucked his breviary under his arm, the fallen apostle tottered after Mullins towards a dark corner of the cavern.

But Father O'Clery's quick eye rested on the uncouth figure while it was in motion, and rapidly advancing, and asking, "Who's that?" he confronted in terrible severity his lost brother.

"Wretched man!" he then continued, his brilliant black eyes half hid by the angular depression of eyelid that accompanied his stern frown—"do I again find you in such a scene, and indeed in such a state as you had solemnly promised never to relapse into? Is it thus you are to be trusted? And has this one absorbing vice sunk you so very low that you have no terror, either on your own account, or on that of the anointed brethren whose cloth you disgrace, of the shameful death such connexions as these must inevitably end in?"

"I rejoice, reverend sir," answered Tack'em, in a doleful whine, disconnected by the clipping propensity of his tongue—"I say I rejoice that you mercifully allot me but that one unfortunate failing. I like it, sir—I like it, God help me! and I believe—that is, I am afraid—that while heaven spares me a

mouth to open, I must be tasting it. Every one has his fate. I don't mean it hetero—c—doxically, sir; for through all I'm firm in the faith. I'm a sinner, but I believe—but I nevertheless fear, somehow, that we are all born to some misfortune we can never get over; and as to the cloth, all I can wish is, that having once called me into it—'Many are called, but few are chosen'—and—'*Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*,' as we say in syntax—having once called me into it, I wish you could call me out of it again. I am humble enough to admit I can never wear it well; and little sorrow would I have to strip it off on any other account; for, happy death to me if I get as much by marrying stray couples, up and down, at the sides of ditches and hedges and such places, as would keep a second-hand black coat on my back half the year round!"

"Go, you miserable creature!" rejoined O'Clery; "hide your head for shame, and when you get sober think and repent if you can. I can only advise and pray for you; of punishment you have already had your share: a poor exile from the pale of God's church; a bad branch of the tree, lopped off, and cast aside, I fear, for the burning; and yet are you obstinate in your sin and scandal; and yet, alas! the name of priest is abused in your person——"

"Ay, troth, sir," interrupted Tack'em, getting valiant; "'a priest once, a priest for ever:' that's the bite on us both; and the worst is, we can't help it. Good night, brother, and *benedicite*!" and he moved towards the ladder.

"And where now?" asked O'Clery.

"I must go home to read my breviary," answer Tack'em, hobbling up the rugged steps.

"Stop!" cried O'Clery; "who is that before you?"

It was Mullins, who, taking advantage of the conference between the two clergymen, contrived to steal up, unnoticed until this moment, when, his aft

orb became visible to O'Clery. As soon as he heard the question directed after him, Jack redoubled his efforts, and removed out of sight every part of his unwieldy person. Tack'em followed as he might, and in silence too, like his leader.

"Here has been infamous work!" resumed Mr. O'Clery, addressing Flinn and the other men. "Where is the fellow who, as Captain Howard informs me, meditated a deadly outrage on his person?"

"Your reverence saw the hinder part of him just now, I believe," answered Flinn.

"I thought so," rejoined O'Clery. "Well, then, my good men, let us settle the business you have invited me here to assist, you in. First, Captain Howard, a word with you." He drew Howard aside, and continued, in a low voice: "You are of course as surprised to see me here as I am to see you. I have your story, and now listen to me. Sitting at Mr. Grace's table, about an hour ago, I learned that some person wished to speak with me; and when I went down, this young man," pointing to Flinn, "was in waiting. From a long conversation that ensued between us, I could collect that upwards of one hundred stand of arms were ready to be delivered into my possession for you; and, indeed, other concessions volunteered, which promise to put an end to this petty warfare: on one condition, however, which it is in your power to grant or refuse. But let us continue before the people." Both advanced, and O'Clery went on, aloud:—

"I have informed Captain Howard that you propose, my good people, to give such information as shall lead to the finding of more than a hundred stand of arms, with other things, provided he thinks it safe and prudent to take under his protection the few misguided men—you have told me they are few—now within his lines; and you engage that these men shall approach his soldiers without arms in

their hands, leaving them behind, and remaining as hostages until they are, according to true instructions, found on the spot where they have grounded them."

"We just tell you, Father O'Clery, what we were bid to tell you by some of our gossips that knows more about it; but we'll stand by every word you spake, howsomdever," said Flinn.

"How say you, Captain Howard?" asked O'Clery.

"On the terms proposed, I shall venture to protect these men," answered Howard; "but with one exception. Their captain, Doc, must surrender himself unconditionally."

"I fear that will be fatal to the treaty," said O'Clery.

"Not in the laste, your reverence," said Flinn. "Poor people that are badgered into corners in such a manner must look afther themselves; an' so, if the captain just promises to lend a hand to the rest, he's welcome, I hear, to Doc, afther all."

"I promise, then," said Howard; "but good faith must in the very first instance be shown, by giving up the arms."

"We have little to do wid 'em, plase your honour," resumed Flinn, "only as friends to both sides an' pace-makers. But I'm tould we needn't go far for the guns an' pistols, anyhow. Arrah, Shawmus," he continued, addressing an old man near him, "wasn't it somewhere here the woman bid us look for 'em?" And taking down some bundles of straw, Flinn exhibited a considerable depôt of old muskets, fowling-pieces, pistols great and small, carbines, and blunderbusses.

"All this is very well," said Howard, restraining his pleasure as well as amazement; "and now I have to say that, if these things remain as they are until morning, when with some of my men I can get possession of them, and if the other concessions and submissions spoken of by Mr. O'Clery are made

with a good grace, I shall then see about performing my own part of the treaty. But," he continued after a short pause, and now pressed by a goading recollection—"but, my dear Mr. O'Clery, I fear I have even yet made a childish arrangement. Doe, I can learn, is not in my power."

"Indeed, Captain Howard! Do you speak on good authority?"

"I am afraid I do. But come; 'tis a point easily ascertained if I were once at my quarters: how shall I safely get there?"

"I will with pleasure accompany you, and this young man will guide us," said O'Clery, pointing to Flinn.

"Wid a heart an' a half, your reverence," said Flinn, "an' don't let the captain be so much down in the mouth about Doe. Whether he's in the bog or out of it, we'll show him to his honour, Captain Howard, some time or other, an' sooner than he thinks, maybe."

"Come on, then; there's no time to be lost," rejoined Howard; and he, O'Clery, and Flinn, prepared to leave the cavern by the ladder.

In passing by a recess which was studiously surrounded with piles of straw, furze, and fern, Howard observed, in deep shadow, the young female and child who had been the first, though unconscious, cause of his stumble on such a nest of disloyalty in every shape. She still sat holding the infant to her bosom; but her voice was hushed, and she only kept that peculiar to and fro motion of the body by which the women of her country gesticulate a heavy sorrow.

"Who is she?" asked Howard of Flinn, as they passed.

"Throth, plase your honour, I dunna," was the reply.

Howard looked round for the figure of the old man who had accompanied her over the hills; but,

of all those in the place, none resembled his. O'Clery in leading the way had not noticed the young person, and Howard now hurried after him up the ladder.

"Let your reverence an' the captain take care o' your heads," said Flinn as he followed them; "the stones covers the hole all over, an' you'll have to stoop fur it a little "

O'Clery, from his exploring and assisted descent, was prepared for this information and cautiously observed it; but Howard, whose entrance had been in an independent way, found much difficulty in lowering his person, neck and knees, as he almost crawled once again up to the face of the earth

The moon had gained her zenith as the party emerged into her reviving beams; and Howard and O'Clery both paused an instant to examine, in the broad light, if any appearance of suspicion were attached to the secret entrance they had just cleared. As Flinn truly premised, the large flat stone completely jettied over the mouth of the excavation; and at either side, as also at its elevated end, fern and furze-bush formed such a screen as must beguile the eye of any uninformed wanderer. After remarking that the concealment was perfect, the gentlemen, attended by Flinn, pursued their mountain-path to Howard's quarters.

"I must say, Mr. O'Clery," observed Howard, after they had made some progress downward, "that though other things agitated me more, nothing through the course of this eventful evening so utterly astonished me as to find a person of your profession in such a place—and such a person!—I mean Father Tack'em."

"Poor creature!" said O'Clery, "he is our shame indeed: though it will also be acknowledged how very rarely such instances of vicious infatuation are to be found in our body."

"I know it, sir," resumed Howard; "but my only

wonder is, why, when you have ascertained the obstinate unworthiness of a minister, you do not at once discard him from your brotherhood. Tack'em, if such be his name, is evidently in priest's orders still."

"We cannot canonically do what you suggest," answered O'Clery: "the rule in such a case differs in our separate churches. You have heard the poor fellow himself say, a priest once, a priest for ever; and such is our discipline. We deem that, although we assist in sanctioning the vow by which an anointed priest dedicates himself to the service of his Master, we have no power to declare the mysterious contract annulled, under any circumstances. All we can do in a case of irreclaimable error is to forbid to the unworthy priest the exercise of his priestly functions, and to deprive him, so far as in us lies, of all lawful power of assuming them."

"Meantime," asked Howard, "can he assume them if he please?"

"Certainly, and we say, with as much spiritual efficacy as ever; for we argue, that the grace, having once adopted its human conduit, cannot, by any accident that may befall that conduit, be defiled in its transmission to other human souls. In other words," continued O'Clery, striking on one of his less serious tones, "Tack'em—which you have sagaciously surmised not to be his real name: in fact, 'tis only an expletive of his present contraband trade—may (and he does) splice in wedlock scores of runaway couples, who dare not solicit the good offices of their parish priest or any of his curates."

CHAPTER X.

HOWARD had sent word that he would be at Mr. Grace's house at seven o'clock, and he left his quarters at six in order to keep his appointment. Seven o'clock came, and Howard did not appear. But it was about this hour that Mr. O'Clery, while sitting with Mr. Grace and the Protestant clergyman, Mr. Somers (the parish priest had been some time gone), received an invitation to speak with a strange man in the hall. Returning to his company, and generally hinting the result of his conference with Flinn, O'Clery was strongly dissuaded by his friends from returning alone on such an invitation. Mr. Grace urged, that even O'Clery's spiritual calling was no certain shield against the displeasure of the deluded people, whom, he said, the exhortation delivered in the course of the day might have provoked into blind hostility towards the preacher. Neither did he suppose an unprecedented case. It had before now happened that a Roman Catholic pastor was visited with the vengeance which a sense of his efficacious interference had aroused.

"And on my conscience, Father O'Clery," continued Mr. Grace, "I know not what to make of Captain John: he will legislate for us all in our ns. I thought my poor old Papist name, Mr.

Somers, might have been respected; but no later than last night he sends me a notice to lower my rents, and plead gratis for all defendants in the tithe-proctor's court."

"Ay," said O'Clery, smiling, "and this morning I tore off the chapel door, before daylight, a paper signed by him, advising the clergyman at whose house I slept to give over all sermons against his government, as he was pleased to call it; to take two shillings per annum for his Christmas and Easter dues; to marry at five shillings a pair, and christen at twopence a-head. Then Father Doyle, in the next parish, has had a visit from him and his men. These are strange times, and Doe is a strange fellow; yet will I hazard the visit this young man invites me to: there is nothing to fear."

He left the house accordingly, and his friends remained anxiously speculating on his return. Mr. Grace, consulting his watch, began to feel additional uneasiness on Howard's account also. It was now half-past seven, and no sign of Howard; it was eight, and yet he came not; and Mr. Grace and Mr. Somers grew seriously alarmed.

To another person under the same roof, his absence caused even livelier pain. Mary Grace had, before seven o'clock, retired to her apartment to make some little preparation for receiving her lover, as also to discharge some religious observances of the day. She proceeded half-way in her toilet; the fair long hair was first dishevelled and then newly bound up, and a simple flower braided through it; and Mary, her upper robe laid aside, consulted her glass, in, it must be admitted, much modest satisfaction at her progress; when, recollecting her unperformed task of gentle penance and Sunday reading, a reproving blush mounted on the young cheek that had before its shade of healthy bloom; and she hastily drew a chair to the fire, opened her prayer-book, and strove, with all virtuous seriousness, to detach her

and heart from personal vanities, from Howard and everything earthly, and fix them on sublimer objects. She chided herself for having indulged the inclination to make her toilet previous to the discharge of her spiritual obligations, and she would not proceed in dressing, would not even look towards the glass, until she had said and read her penance, and, kneeling at the chair, attentively perused a religious tract.

While just commencing her devotions, the clock audibly struck seven. This was an untoward intrusion. Howard was always punctual to his appointments; he would surely come to the house in an instant, if indeed he had not already arrived; and he would have to wait for Mary, and out of good-nature Mary did not wish to keep him waiting. Her eyes wandered a moment as she listened for his knock; she caught herself inattentive, again brought her heart to task, and again resumed her devotions.

In about half-an-hour she had finished, with few further temptations or distractions; but as Mary rose her feelings changed, first into impatience, and then into anxiety, at the absence of Howard. He could not have knocked without her hearing it; and, even if he had, Nora, her attendant, must have come according to arrangement to inform her mistress of his arrival. Her heart sank as, just standing up, a thought of danger and treachery to Howard crossed her mind; and Mary unconsciously sat on the chair, her toilet again forgotten, to pursue her sad reverie. And in this situation we substitute a slight graphic sketch of Mary, and of her chamber, for a detailed description of her character.

Having doffed her outside dress while proceeding with her toilet, she sat in tight-laced stays and a white petticoat, leaning back in the chair, her ankles crossed, her left arm and hand hanging by her side, and in this hand her prayer-book, still open. While sinking in the chair, Mary put her rosary on the

toilet-table, but at the same time took up a miniature of Howard, which she now held in her right hand; her face was, however, unconsciously turned away from the likeness, as, with big tears in her soft blue eyes, she sighed forth a gentle storm of intercessions for his safety. Her figure, rather round and slight, was fully, indeed luxuriously, developed by her undress, the short petticoat and slippers permitting a more than usual exhibition of her plump though not heavy ankle, while her polished shoulders and dimpled neck and back abandoned themselves to the guardian sylphs who alone enjoy (married men excepted) the chances of a lady's happy chamber.

Upon the toilet, and immediately beside the red morocco case out of which she had taken the miniature, stood a carved ivory crucifix. A little farther on was a tall glass vase half filled with water, and holding a monthly rose, just blown and newly plucked. Emulative groups of flowers, the creatures of Mary's pencil, hung on the walls over the table; and in the midst a Madonna and child, in crayons, also executed by herself. A small book-shelf appeared to the right-hand side, and under her glass lay (of course, even in Ireland) an album, of which the covers were tastefully ornamented.

Immediately behind Mary was her bed, draped with virgin white. As she sat, the fire blazed strongly upon her, heightening the colour of her cheek and the golden cloud of curls around her forehead, and enriching the already rich carnation tint of her neck and shoulders. Through her figure, her attitude, and her expression, as well as through the detail of all the accompaniments we have described, there ran a blended character of alternate elegance and purity, and subdued, though subduing, voluptuousness. In such a situation, and in the eloquent presence of such indications of pursuit and sentiment, vice might at first contemplate her with

unholy throbs, but would at length retire on tiptoe, awed and relenting, if not abashed and converted.

It was some time before Mary had spirits to rise and complete her toilet; but the startling sound of the clock striking eight at last roused her, and she pulled the bell for Nora.

Nora entered: a fast-fading maiden of forty, with strong, staring features, her head surmounted by a stiff-starched "high-cauled cap," which pinned under her throat; and further wearing a brown stuff gown, tucked up behind, and leaving her arms bare from the elbows; a blue check apron; a flaming silk handkerchief drawn down between her shoulders; blue stockings, and sharp-pointed shoes, with large square silver buckles in them.

"Not come yet, Nora?" asked her mistress, after engaging the abigail to assist in her toilet. "But what is this, you nasty woman" Get away from me! you have again been indulging in that ugly habit I so often checked you for, and which you so often promised me to give over."

Nora solemnly protested that "never a single shaugh o' the pipe had herself taken since the blessed mornin', now six months ago, when Miss Mary forbid her doin' iv it." This was, however, a rash assertion; for, in good sooth, Nora, after many laudable efforts, could not possibly prevail on herself to surrender a much-indulged and long-loved gratification. "It rises my poor heart," she often said in soliloquy, "better nor anything else in the world; an' sure there's neither sin nor shame in givin' in to it a little, now an' then, whin I'm done my work an' nobody the wiser, an' the dours shut to keep the smoke in the kitchen;" and Nora accordingly sought her own opportunities for solitary enjoyment: nay, the tingle of her mistress's bell had just summoned her out of the centre of a good cloud, that for the previous hour she had been industriously accumulating.

"I scarcely believe you, Nora," said her young lady, in reply to Nora's rapid defence; "only I cannot think you are so vile as to tell a fib this holy evening. But Captain Howard has not yet come?"

"Musha, uo, God presaarve him!" said the attendant.

"Oh, Nora!" sighed Mary; "heaven send no evil has overtaken him on the road!"

"Oh, yeah, amin, from my heart!" groaned Nora. "You love the handsome captain dearly, Miss Mary, that you are so unasy fur him."

"Indeed, Nora, I do love him well and dearly, and better than I thought I could ever love again."

"Agin? Musha, good loock to you! I never thought you loved anybody afore."

"Fie, Nora! you knew it well."

"Avoch! poor young Kavanagh, is it?"

"Alas, yes! poor young Kavanagh."

"Ullaloo, Miss Mary! that was all nothin' in the world but childher's folly, you know."

"It was childish, yet sweeter that it was so. It was silly, too—vain and romantic: still, my good Nora, its recollection is innocently sweet."

"Why, sure it's now four years agone; an' you were then only thirteen, an' he a slip of eighteen."

"No more, I believe, was either of us."

"Well, if ever I hard o' the like! Musha, Miss Mary, 'twas an early notion, wasn't it? Throth, fur the matter o' that, there's many a colleen in the country, as ould as you are this blessed day, that never yet thought of it; and no wonder. Here's myself, that might be your mother, God bless the mark! an' I believe I was a start past eighteen afore an idaya of it ever crossed me; and many long years ather I had my first sweetheart. Thin, there was sich a differ betuxt ye in the world, sure I never guessed you could dhrame of anything o' the kind. Lord save us! did ye ever spake to ache other?"

"Scarcely, Nora; but it gave my childish heart a secret pride and pleasure to see, by his looks and manner, that Kavanagh also loved me with all a boy's love. There was a distance, I know; yet my father was not then so rich, and Harry and his mother were well to do in the world, and thriving fast to something better; and, only for that vile Purcell, heaven knows what might have come of it."

"Well to be sure! Were you ever tould what became o' poor Harry, misthress?"

"Yes: he escaped from the North to America."

"An' the mother died; an' they say—Lord pre-saarve us!—that the ould grandfather roves about the country, for mad, like any ghost, frightenin' the people out o' their lives; though, musha, I don't grudge it to some o' them. He came across Purcell once or twice, and turned him white wid his curses."

"Then he must have cursed deep indeed."

"An' that villian o' the world, Miss Mary—that Purcell—to have the impidence to look at you, afther all his black doin's, an' wid his upstart consequence that cum in sich a way!"

"Yes, Nora; and while he kept in the shadow of shame and sorrow the poor creature he had sworn to be just to, and she holding his written promise. Surely that was enough to make me scorn him, even if there were no other reasons, and although it were possible I could ever love such a man. All was the wildest presumption on his part. But I am now, thank heaven! free from his pursuit; protected, or soon likely to be, by a brave and honourable man."

"Musha, yes; an' we hope an' 'spect you'll do your duty by him, Miss Mary."

"How do you mean, Nora? Something very silly and impertinent, I'm sure."

"Avoch, no: only make a Christhen o' the Sas-senach, Miss Mary. Throth, it's your duty afore God an' us."

"Hold your foolish tongue, Nora! and—hush!—there is his knock at last: louder than usual, indeed. I hope he is come safe to us. There, take away your hands; I am very well. Run to the door—or, stay: I shall first ask my father;" and Mary accordingly hastened to the parlour.

"'Tis Howard at last, I'm sure, father," she said, gaily entering.

"Most likely, Mary; but are the doors and lower windows all barred?"

"Yes, sir, as usual: do you fear anything?"

"No, but better leave them so till we ask a question of this late visiter, whoever he may be:" and Mr. Grace threw up a window, and called out, "Who's there?"

"A friend of Lieutenant Howard," replied a sharp voice from below. "I have a letter from him."

"Is he well, sir?" asked Mary at the window.

"He is: let me in, mistress, 'till I give the letter; the night is cold, do you know, and grows too bad for tarrying here."

"Throw in the letter, and if it be from Lieutenant Howard you are welcome; and, meantime, you must excuse a precaution that the times render very necessary, sir," resumed Grace.

"Here, then, and I could quite excuse your over-caution if the night were finer," replied the voice; and immediately after the letter dropped into the room.

Mary took it up, and, glancing her eye over the contents, said, "Oh, we should instantly admit him, father. Howard writes—'Be kind to the bearer for my sake, as he has just rendered me a signal service.'" Mr. Grace went down-stairs.

In his absence, Mr. Somers inquired of Mary if anything disagreeable had happened to keep Howard away, and she answered, "No; he only mentions a necessity for not quitting his present post."

While she was speaking, Mr. Grace re-entered,

introducing Sullivan, and saying, "Welcome, sir; and if you have to travel farther, better not to speak of it till morning."

"I thank you, sir," Sullivan said bluffly, "and at once accept your hospitality."

"Sir, you are welcome," echoed Mary, curtsying.

"I thank you too, mistress," resumed Sullivan; then, thinking his words—"Will she know me?"

"Captain Howard speaks of a particular service you have just done him. On any danger, sir," resumed Mary, advancing a little.

Sullivan was absent for a moment, while he mentally added, gazing on her—"No. years, and grief, and travel, and the growth of new habits and passions under a warmer sun, must have completely altered me." Then, recollecting himself, he added carelessly, "Hut, tut! no, fair mistress. I pointed him out the best road to his wild quarters, as I met him marching in quest of them; that's all."

"Sit, sir," said Mary, much embarrassed; and then she too had her revenge. "Why did he not answer me? Gracious God! that side-face!"

"Ay, sir, sit," said Mr. Grace, "and let us have the pleasure to drink your health here."

"In genuine mountain-dew, I hope?" said Sullivan, in a kind of condescending pleasantry, as he and Mr. Grace sat to the table with Mr. Somers.

"The right sort, sir; only Mr. Somers, there, makes it a case of conscience, and has some 'parliament' to himself."

"I reverence the minister's scruples," rejoined Sullivan, bending on Mr. Somers an inquisitive and rather intrusive glance.

"Exactly such a change," continued Mary to herself, "as I have dreamed came over his face and person: the bright bloom gone, the round cheek sunk, the features sharpened, the eye grown quick and daring, and the mouth bold, open, and haughty; and so I have seen him, night after night, though

now long ago, standing sternly erect, and walking and moving like another creature than the innocent boy he was when we first met. But, no," she continued, as after his deep gaze Sullivan turned easily away and sat to the table: "it cannot be him, so unmoved and light of heart to see me. This is childishness, or worse;" and she too sat down by her father's side.

"Anything new of Doe, sir?" asked Grace, after a rather disagreeable pause.

"Why, yes," said Sullivan: "I heard just now—that is, your friend Howard told me—he had escaped. Is there no mention of it in the letter?"

"No, sir," said Mary; "and that omission and your account are alarming."

"No need of alarm, I think, mistress," resumed Sullivan, without raising his eyes from the glass in which he was compounding his pottcen punch. "Howard is too many for him."

"Doubtless," said Mr. Grace; "and welcome once more, sir. May we add a name?"

"Now!" thought Mary, in continued and irresistible anxiety and apprehension.

"Surely that, at least, is in the letter?" said Sullivan.

"It is *not*, sir," said Mary, strangely.

"Then my curse on him for forgetting!" muttered Sullivan. "I forget it myself now. { Let me see: no matter—any name will do—you may call me Butler, sir," he added aloud to Mr. Grace.

"Mr. Butler, your health;" and the old-fashioned greeting went round. When Mary took a wine-glass in her hand, Sullivan, as at his pleasure we must continue to call him, rapidly glanced at her; a new misgiving crept into life in the very bottom of her soul, and in addressing him she pronounced the name of "Butler" so broken and indistinctly as scarcely to be audible. Sullivan withdrew his eyes, and his breast rose and fell as if

inflated by a deep sigh, all sound of which he was able to suppress.

Another general pause ensued, which Mr. Somers at last broke, by renewing with Mr. Grace a conversation that the knocking at the door had interrupted.

"I did not think," he said, "Purcell had acted so very foully towards this unfortunate young person."

At the mention of Purcell's name, Sullivan slightly though quickly started, but concealed or diverted his sudden movement by turning sideways on his chair and crossing his legs. Then he appeared to listen with set attention.

"I tell you the fact, Mr. Somers," said Grace. "she holds his written promise of marriage."

"I am astonished," resumed the clergyman; "for in the discharge of what I conceive my duty, and as Mr. Purcell is a Protestant, I spoke to him on the subject, when he assured me with solemn oaths that he had never entered into any such engagement: in fact, that the connexion was not of his seeking."

"He lied and was perjured, then, like the liar and perjurer he is!" said Sullivan, deliberately.

Mary looked; but no extraordinary interest, sufficient to lend positive confirmation to her suspicions, was visible in the face or manner of the speaker.

"And his assertions with respect to her unhappy young brother appear, from what you now say, equally unfounded," continued Mr. Somers, still addressing his host.

"Why, what did he say different from what I tell you, sir?" asked Grace.

"Everything different; but in particular he stated that young Kavanagh had, joined to his disloyal combinations, provoked the laws of his country by robberies on the highway."

A more decided agitation was here evident in

Sullivan as Mary still looked; he writhed round again, pressed his hands across his brows, and she could hear him draw in his breath and grind his teeth together.

"Then you are quite right in terming it another slander, false and malignant as the first, Mr. Somers," said Grace. Touched and fired by this kindly vindication, perhaps, Sullivan at last burst out—

"Hell's torments! a mean thief!—a common thief!" and he stamped violently and walked about the room.

Mary grew sickly pale, and Grace and the clergyman looked at each other. In an instant, however, he was apparently calm, and turning to the company added, "I beg pardon for speaking rather warmly on what little concerns me. But here is an instrument—you play, Miss Grace?" Sullivan pointed to a piano-forte.

"Poorly, sir," said Grace; "but if you are no hard critic, Mary will be happy to give you a song."

Sullivan slightly bowed, and Mary moved like a machine to the instrument. Her limbs trembled, and her heart failed within her; yet she sat and busied herself with the sheets of music that lay by her side, till Sullivan, stooping over her shoulder, took up a song she had just put down, and mutely placed it on the stand. Bowing her head, Mary rapidly and without coherent thought commenced.

"You used to sing that, too, Mary," said her father, when she had struck a few notes; "and, as 'tis a pretty song, you will favour us with it now, I am sure."

"Pray do, Miss Grace," said Sullivan, as he continued to stand at her back: "it is a sweet song."

Mary, endeavouring to compose her hand and voice, complied. It was a native melody, of the wildest and most plaintive cast, set to the following words, of which, doubtless, Sullivan and Mr. Grace

had both spoken too highly. But, such as they are,
we subjoin them:—

I.

'Tis not for love of gold I go,
'Tis not for love of fame;
Though Fortune should her smile bestow,
And I may win a name,
Aileen;
And I may win a name.

II.

And yet it is for gold I go,
And yet it is for fame;
That they may deck another brow,
And bless another name,
Aileen;
And bless another name.

III.

For this, but this, I go; for this
I lose thy love a while;
And all the soft and quiet bliss
Of thy young, faithful smile,
Aileen;
Of thy young, faithful smile.

IV.

And I go to brave a world I hate,
And woo it o'er and o'er,
And tempt a wave, and try a fate,
Upon a stranger shore,
Aileen;
Upon a stranger shore.

V.

Oh! when the bays are all my own,
I know a heart will care;
Oh! when the gold is woo'd and won,
I know a brow shall wear,
I know a brow shall wear.

VI.

And, when with both returned again,
My native land to see,
I know a smile will meet me then,
And a hand will welcome me,
Aileen;
And a hand will welcome me.

Mary, while entering on this song, and particularly from the circumstance of its having been so placed before her, felt her misgivings increase. In fact, it had been a favourite ditty of the person now uppermost in her thoughts; she had often, often sung it at his request, as, previous to their unfortunate separation, he long entertained a notion of seeking his fortunes in a foreign country, and the words became romantically applicable to their then felt situation. A crowd and bustle of associations, sorrows, doubts, and fears, attended therefore her execution of the ballad; yet she went through it with peculiar expression: perhaps the very hurry and agitation of her soul lent to the song a wild energy and pathos. She was just prolonging the last note when a warm tear fell on her neck; another, and another, and another, fast as the big drops from the swollen and sultry cloud, when it has at last been able to weep its concealment. She started—shrank—burned—cringed under them; now they came like tricklings of molten lead, parching her skin and sending a fierce glow through her frame, and now like the drippings of a thawed icicle, making her blood run chill and her very bones to shiver. Yielding at once to her feelings, Mary leaned back in her chair, and raised her head to a pier-glass immediately opposite; but this was no relief; for there, dimly reflected from the back of her chair, stood the very man she had before failed to recognise—his face now relaxed to all its primitive character, clouded in anguish and in re-

collections, and his eyes sadly bent in the mirrored image of his boyish love. Their looks met in the glass. Mary, taken by surprise, could no longer restrain herself: she screamed wildly and dolefully, and with clasped hands rushed to her father.

Mr. Grace and Mr. Somers instantly rose, and were about to inquire the cause of her emotion; but a new sound of alarm arrested their attention. Mary's scream had scarcely subsided when a loud shout arose outside the house, accompanied by the discharge of a gun or pistol.

"Not Captain John, I hope!" exclaimed Sullivan, instantly resuming his reckless appearance—Mary, her father, and Mr. Somers, suspended in silence. Another shout, with exclamations of "John Doe! John Doe!" broke forth.

"By heaven! but it is, though!" resumed Sullivan, approaching a window. Ejaculations of apprehension and terror rapidly escaped the others, and Mary, her arms dropped, stood the very picture of dismay, leaning against the wall.

At the same moment Nora rushed in. She had been surprised by the noise while taking her customary relaxation in secret, and, thrown off her centre of caution by the immediate pressure of bodily fear, the pipe was entirely forgotten; so that she now entered with a short black stump in her mouth, firmly secured in a spasmodic compression of the jaws, while speaking through her teeth she cried out—

"Misthress! masther! we're all undone! ruined for ever! ruined for ever!" Then running to Mr. Grace, she got behind his back, clasped her hands round his hips, and continued—"Mr. Grace! Mr. Grace! your house is destroyed! your house is destroyed! it's all over wid us! over wid us!" and totally unconscious of the promulgation of her forbidden pastime, Nora mechanically made a short puff between every sentence, and at the end fell into

a boisterous hysteric of laughing, crying, and screaming.

Meantime the uproar abroad increased every moment. To the shouts and exclamations was now joined a loud rapping at the front-door, mixed with cries of "Open! open!"

"Merciful God! what will become of us!" Mary exclaimed from time to time. During her last words, Sullivan cautiously approached her, and in a changed tone said impressively, close at her ear, "Mary!"

"Ha!" with another faint scream, "that was in the voice I know—Kavanagh!"

"Hush! and fear not: I am here to protect you." Then turning to her father, "You have arms, Mr. Grace?"

"Yes, yes," answered Grace; "but you know they are the first things we must give up."

"Shame, shame! arm yourself, and the minister there, and we may yet beat them off. Your arms, sir!" he continued in a commanding tone, which Grace instantly obeyed by leaving the room.

"My weapons are my words, sir," Mr. Somers said. "I am a soldier of peace."

"Mine are under my frock, sir; and though I'm no soldier, I'll fight," said Kavanagh; for we are at last free to give him his true name.

Grace now returned with a blunderbuss and pistols. "Mary, be of good cheer, and stand near us," he said while passing her.

"Och! yes, masther, yes!" cried Nora, confirming her grasp round his waist.

"Speak to them first through the window," said Kavanagh. Mr. Grace accordingly threw up the sash, and asked—

"What do you want here?"

"Open your door, and you shall know," exclaimed two or three rough voices together.

"Do you seek arms?" demanded Sullivan.

"No: who are you that asks the question?" they answered.

"We have no money in the house at present," said Grace.

"Not a rap, good Christhens!" screamed Nora, still at his back; "it's all in the bank! all in the bank!"

"We do not want your money," resumed the voices.

Kavanagh, who for the last minute had been anxiously peering out at the window, as if to distinguish a particular object, now suddenly dropped on one knee, and, leaning his carbine on the edge of the framework, cried in a suppressed yet sharp voice, "Mullins! Mullins! move an inch aside. He moves, though he does not hear me. Now I hit him! No! sink that idiot! he covers the scoundrel again!" and he continued kneeling, and still on the watch.

The shouts and knocking grew louder and louder, and Mr. Somers in his turn advanced to the window. "Misguided men!" he said, "what brings you here? Retire, in the name of religion and honesty!"

"Sure we don't want the lives o' you," answered a voice.

"Though, since the minister is there," added another, less coarse than the first, and apparently feigned, "we may borrow him for an hour or two, as he may be useful."

"My God! father, what can they mean?" said Mary, her fears taking a more poignant turn as she listened to this last announcement.

"Och! we're lost! lost! Our vaartue isn't worth the turnin' of a pin!" cried Nora, concluding with an odd scream, rattled through her throat, and dancing with her heels in an excess of tribulation, as she still held by her master.

"Open! open! 'Tis better for you, Mr. Grace!"

Open, or we'll break in!" continued those below, amid still increasing shouts, and while they battered still more violently at the front-door. At this moment, Nora, to the surprise of all present, rapidly left the room and ran down-stairs.

"Do you rely on the strength of the hall-door, Mr. Grace?" asked Sullivan quickly, turning his head as he still knelt.

"It ought to be able to withstand all the force they can bring against it," answered Grace; "but the back-door, most unfortunately, is worse formed for resistance.

During this conversation Nora was heard slowly ascending the stairs, with heavy and toilsome groans and strange mutterings. She entered at length, carrying a tremendous stone in her arms, while the epitome of a pipe still remained wedged between her teeth. All looked in some amazement as she continued her laborious way towards a window immediately over the hall-door. This Nora opened, and with much caution deposited her burden on the window-cill outside; then squatting down, she watched, with a mixture of the cat and the hare in her position and manner, proper time and opportunity for a valiant deed. Nor had she to wait long. The crowd of assailants all gathered to the hall-door and commenced a serious attack upon it; Nora shoved her stone, and with its deadening fall a loud groan was immediately heard, and then the hurried noise of feet running in confusion from the door. Nora, uttering a hideous giggle, sprang up and resumed her old place behind her master.

As the crowd dissipated, Kavanagh seemed to look out with increased earnestness, and in an instant after he again levelled his piece, and with a loudly whispered "Now!" discharged it. His head and neck were almost at the same time thrust out to mark the effect of his shot; but as quickly he started up with a vehement bitterness of action, and flung

the carbine on the floor, exclaiming, "No! curse that angle! I've missed him. Fire, Mr. Grace! fire! and give me a pistol. Yet, no; it is now useless, I see: they flock to the back-yard."

"And over that," said Grace, "we have no command from any window in the house."

To the back-door, indeed, the besiegers now directed all their efforts; and enraged, it would seem, by the joint outrages of Nora and Kavanagh, attacked it in good earnest. Amid a continued clatter of kicking, shoving, and knocking, as if with sticks or the butts of fire-arms, one mighty bump was heard, perhaps the effect of a ponderous stone hurled at the door by the united strength of two or three men. Profound and painful silence reigned above after this terrible intimation of present fate. A second thump and the crash of the yielding door followed, mingled with a triumphant yell from the assailants.

"Heaven shield us! they are in!" exclaimed Grace. Mary fell on her knees, and Nora flat on her face.

"I will breast them first," said Mr. Somers, as the victorious party were heard rushing up-stairs.

"All is vain for the present," said Kavanagh, coolly; then advancing to Mary, he whispered, "Yet, Mary, be firm, rational, and fear nothing."

He had scarcely done speaking when a crowd of at least a dozen men with red waistcoats, and having their faces blackened, broke into the room, headed by another, who wore a red waistcoat also; but a black mask disguised his features, instead of their being smeared over like those of his party. Around his waist was tied a red sash, as if to proclaim his superiority; and all were strongly armed and completely disguised, except the last man who entered, and who, having taken no precaution either with his face or person, exhibited to all whom it might concern the identity and totality of Jack Mullins.

"John Doe! John Doe!" shouted the leader, as he appeared, and this shout was well re-echoed. "Speak for me, Mullins," he continued, aside, as this person followed.

"Unhappy creatures!" exclaimed Mr. Somers, approaching them, "what seek you in this peaceable and unoffending house, and in so lawless and savage a manner?"

"First your arms," said Mullins, presenting, while all followed his example. The arms were given up.

"Mullins," resumed the leader, still aside, "get the minister with us. 'Tack'em will not be sufficient, as Mary and I differ in religion: 'twould not be a legal marriage, though the priest may satisfy *her* scruples."

"Well, unfortunate people!" rejoined Mr. Somers, "your demand is answered, and now why not depart in peace? You have said you did not wish money, and what else seek ye?"

"Why, then, next, by your reverence's lave, no less than yourself," replied Mullins, laying his hand on Mr. Somers's shoulder. "Here, men, take the best care o' the minister;" and Mr. Somers was accordingly guarded by two men.

"And next, my handsome mistress," continued Mullins, approaching Mary, "our captain has a word wid you."

Nora started up. "Me!—wid me, you ugly Christhen!" Purcell walked across. "Never lay a finger on me!"

"Stand out of the way an' he won't," said Mullins.

"I guessed it," exclaimed Mary, as Purcell stood by her side: "all along I guessed it. Father, father, save me!" and with a desperate spring she reached and clung to her father's knees.

"My child! my Mary! my only and my good child! Men—if ye are men—spare my Mary, and

you shall have all I am worth!" said Grace, in the father's agony, and while tears ran down his cheeks.

"Dare not to touch the young lady, if you fear God or man!" added Mr. Somers.

"No harm is intended her," said Mullins; "only a pleasant ride in the moonshine, wid all her friends about her. Come, miss—we are waitin' for you." He seized her arm, and Mary shrieked and struggled in desperation.

"Do not tire yourself with useless resistance," whispered Kavanagh; "and still fear not."

"Mullins, seize that man!" said the leader, pointing to Kavanagh.

"Musha, I believe it's the best for a sartinty," observed Mullins, as uninterestedly he laid hold of Kavanagh. The leader now raised Mary, whom the last intimation seemed to have somewhat assured; and "My daughter! my dear daughter! is it thus we are parted?" cried her father.

"Not parted at all," said Mullins: "sure you're comin' wid us, Mr. Grace."

"Away!" cried the leader, holding Mary by the waist. "Are the horses ready?" (to Mullins.)

"Yes; all below. Lade on, captain!"

"Come!" said the captain, and left the room with Mary, who, more dead than alive, now submitted passively.

"The ministher next!" said Mullins. Mr. Somers was led out.

"An' now the ould attorney!" and Mr. Grace followed, also guarded.

"Go on!" he continued to the rest, who obeyed his command, and Mullins and his prisoner remained alone in the apartment.

They stood some time in silence, listening the descent of the party. At last—

"Now, are your measures well taken?" asked Kavanagh, starting into sudden energy.

"I think so," answered Mullins.

"You lead them by the elm-trees?"

"By the elm-threes, please God."

"But Purcell understands you are to conduct him to the old castle?"

"He does. What of that, avich?"

"Why, the other place is out of the straight road!" said Kavanagh, impatiently.

"Well; leave me to manage that."

"Our ground is distant. Let me see—how far?"

"Two miles—into the heart o' the hills."

"Pshaw! do you tell me where? All's right. Come on!"

CHAPTER XI.

ASSUMING our prescriptive privilege of scene-shifters at pleasure, we now look back after Lieutenant Howard and his friend Father O'Clery.

They were faithfully guided by Flinn to Howard's quarters, where the military gentleman found his soldiers in some alarm at the long absence of their officer. A sergeant was in waiting, of whom Howard immediately inquired concerning the probable escape of Doe. Nothing had been heard of the matter.

"'Tis very strange!" said Howard: "my information was particular, and such as I have no reason to doubt."

"To satisfy you, sir," answered the sergeant, "I can inform you that to the centre of the bog I have myself seen a fire, that must have been kindled by no others but Doe and his men. Precaution had been taken to screen it from us by lighting it between some clumps of turf; but I gained a particular point from which it was visible."

"Then, hasten, sergeant; return again to the men, with orders to keep a more watchful eye than ever: for this night let them do good service. You may mention that it is likely to-morrow morning early will give them relief." The sergeant touched his hat and left the cabin.

"I am resolved," continued Howard, turning to

O'Clery, "to draw a complete line round the bog at the very first light, and one by one get those poor wretches out, so that their leader may not escape me. And now, Mr. O'Clery, let us do something to rest and refresh you. Our fire is pretty good; sit—and here is the potteen. You, sir," he added, addressing Flinn, who all this time had deferentially stood aloof, seemingly unconscious of what was said—"you too shall warm yourself and take some refreshment: advance!"

The party were all disposing themselves to be comfortable, when a woman, rushing past the sentinel at the door, pushed into the cabin, and with loud screams cast herself on her knees, then sat back on her heels, and clapping her hands—

"Wurra! wurra!-an' ochone! ochone! your honour an' your worship! an' mile murders!—we're all undone!" she shouted forth.

It was Nora; the pipe still between her teeth, her starched and heretofore unwrinkled and spotless cap now soiled and torn, her lank hair escaped from under it, one shoe off, and her face a universal convulsion. Howard and O'Clery started up, and Flinn permitted himself to seem a little interested.

"What do you mean, Nora? Is any one ill or dead? How is Miss Grace?" asked both gentlemen in a breath.

"Och! little duv I know; but it's all over wid us!—over wid us!"

"Foolish woman! speak! what's the matter?"

"Captain John, ahinnies machree! Captain John!"

"What of him? Where is he?"

"He came to take me off wid him!—pillaloo-oo! to take me off wid him!"

"You rave, woman! She's mad," said O'Clery.

"Did you see him?" asked Howard.

"Saw him an' hard him! He came to ruin me—to ruin me!"

"But you have escaped—you are safe," said Howard.

"He has not taken you off—he has not ruined you," echoed O'Clery.

"That's nothin' at all—nothin' at all!" still howled Nora.

"What then? What has he done?"

"Run off wid the ministher—the ministher!"

"Is that all?" continued Howard, much relieved

"An' my poor ould masther!"

"Why, you brainless creature!" began O'Clery.

"And where is your lady, then?" bellowed Howard.

"An' my poor young misthress!—my poor young misthress!"

"Death, idiot! why not say that at once?" cried both gentlemen. "When? how? whither?—Sentinel!" continued Howard.

The man entered.

"How long since, Nora?"

"Avoch, I dunna!—I dunna!"

"Ass! beast! stupid hound!" both went on; then Howard—"Sentinel, I say! forego your post. Has White gone with my last orders?"

"Yes, he has."

"After him quickly! Fire your piece as a signal; see him—let him countermand my orders—which road, Nora?—and draw off all the men instantly. Doe is out—has been to Mr. Grace's. Let them meet me there. Quickly! begone!—Stay!—which road, Nora?"

"Which road, you wretched woman?" screamed O'Clery, losing all patience.

"Avoch, I dunna! I dunna!"

"Away then, sentinel! And now, Mr. O'Clery, to Grace's house first. I know you will with me—come!"

"They're afther lavin' me!" continued Nora, still in her first position, and with uninterrupted clapping

of hands. A shot was heard; she stopped herself with a sudden "Och! I'm kilt dead! I'll be ruined again!—worse an' worse!—worse an' worse! Captain! soggarth! captain!" and she ran howling out of the cabin.

"Throth," said Flinn, by way of soliloquy, when Nora was gone and he remained alone at the fire—"maybe this turn 'ud sarve our poor gossips in the bog, widout waitin' for the mornin'. It's a bad wind, avourneen, that blows nobody good; an' if a body could get to spake to them, faith it's likely enough bud they'd help Mary Grace betther nor the red-coats themsefs. We'll try it, anyhow;" and, after coolly helping himself to a bumper of potteen, Flinn also left the cabin.

Meantime, the motley cavalcade continued on its route from Mr. Grace's house.

When Mary, led by the captain of the night, gained the end of the winding approach to her father's residence, she saw, standing under the shade of some old alder-trees, a horse, bridled and saddled, with a pillion behind the saddle, such as is used by the humbler class of Irish females; and to this pillion her companion unceremoniously assisted her to rise: in a moment after, he sat in the saddle before her. Her father was obliged to mount one of his own horses, Mr. Somers another; Mullins and his prisoner got on the bare back of a fourth; and the rest of the party also rode double, and without saddles. When all were in travelling order, the leader ordered four men on two horses to the front; after these Mr. Grace and Mr. Somers were compelled to fall in; four other men followed, then Mary and her companion, and then the remainder of the party; and when Mullins, with his charge Kavanagh, got at the head of all, on an understanding to act as guide, the journey was commenced in a brisk trot.

Avoiding the wild bridle-road, which if pursued would lead in the direction of Howard's quarters, Mullins guided the party up another narrow and rugged lane, that at some distance ran by the front of Mr. Grace's house, and continued beyond it, towards the bare solitudes of the country. Much inconvenience occurred on this way from the deep ruts that time out of mind indented it, as it was a constant passage for the turf-cars that received their loads among the recesses of the hills around; large stones also profusely strewn it, with here and there pools of water or patches of miry slough. Neck or nothing, however, the party pushed on; horses tripping, and stumbling, and falling, and riders cursing, laughing, or crying out, as with different tempers they bore their mishaps. The rapid and uncomfortable motion first called Mary out of the torpor into which she had lapsed; and one or two serious stumbles of the horse, at whose discretion she was, had the effect of causing her to use some precaution for holding her seat and balance on the pillion. Perhaps there never occurred a stronger proof of the power of the animal instinct of self-preservation than when Mary, escaping once or twice the near danger of being flung to the ground, mechanically clasped her right arm round the body of the man before her; thus claiming a support, if not protection, where her heart and mind owed and paid the most utter loathing.

After about half-a-mile's progress, the way continued over an unenclosed space, by the verge of a descent to the left-hand side, which, though also passed by cars and horses, was less rough than the commencement of the journey; and, taking advantage of this favourable change, the party now went on at a gallop. The wind about the same time rose high; and in the rush through it Mary almost lost her breath and senses, and was again

in danger of falling. She rallied herself, however, and tried to collect her thoughts and make observations.

Looking before and behind her, she saw herself surrounded by the guardians of the night. With much hazard she was also able to keep her eyes sufficiently long in an averted position to discover the figures of her father and Mr. Somers before. She listened for the sound of their voices, but the rushing of the wind nearly overmastered even the noise of the horse's feet, and no other prolonged sound reached her. Now and then, indeed, a hoarse laugh or the burst of many voices came in some pause or turn of the breeze; or the distant watchdog's bark or howl; or the sudden dash or shriek, heard and lost in the same moment, of some concealed stream, that held to hill and fell its wild and sleepless plaint. She strove attentively to consider the scenery around, for the purpose of noting, by old and well-known landmarks, her probable destination. But this effort was also vain. Mary could only apprehend that hill gathered into hill, and valley running into valley, lay tossed around and beneath her. The black masses varied in shape each time she looked, and even while she looked; line chased away line; the moonlight faded into shadow, and the shadow became light; heavy clouds, that for some time had been mustering in the lower part of the sky, mixed and blended with the curving of the mountains, and all comprehension of form and locality was lost; while the stars around and over her head, breaking through thin vapour, seemed also to run disarranged through their deep blue field of space, and, she thought, glittered in bright terror on her fearful speed.

Another half-mile might have been passed, when the party emerged on a byroad, that, with all and more than the distance they had come between, ran parallel to that which led to Howard's quarters.

The reins were now tightened, and along this road the party went with less suspicious hurry, till, some distance on, there was a moment's halt before a wooden-barred gate, that opened into the back part of the demesne of the principal proprietor of the district. Mullins dismounted to open the gate, and, holding it till all had passed, resumed his uncomfortable seat on the bare-backed horse, and commenced a hard trot through a neglected plantation of old trees, and over a narrow path that was barely visible to any but a habituated eye. And here the mishaps and distresses of the party were renewed to excess. All over the path, and around in every direction, the roots of the trees, protruding through the spare soil, spread and coiled like serpent things, and, rendered slippery by the state of the weather, opposed obstacles at every step to the safe progress of the horsemen. Many horses, straying from the path, tripped, fell, and rolled about with their riders in darkness among the trees; the animal on which Mary sat, though evidently of gentle blood, twice came to his knees; while in other respects the way proved difficult and hazardous, from the constant interference of branches of trees, that shot directly across at the level of the men's breasts or faces. More than once these unseen impediments, giving sudden resistance to a rider, tumbled him to the ground; and Mary's guide suffered severely from the same cause. The cries and imprecations of the scrambling party added to the wild character of this unusual scene; and it was further heightened by what might seem the terrified quivering of the moonshine through the leafless branches overhead, the whistling of the night-wind through them, and their own clatter and groaning, as the grove tossed its thousand bare arms, as if in torture and agony, to the breeze.

At last this unsafe path was cleared, and through another gate, which, like the first, was not well se-

cured, a second byroad was gained. This kept straight only for a little way, and then suddenly turned to the left round a hill. Mullins stopped at the first inclination of the turn, and, waiting till the leader came up, gave him to understand that to their destination the way by the road was a great round, while, if he chose to walk straight over the hill, he could gain it in about five minutes: the horses, Mullins added, might be sent round under the care of two men. The person to whom Mullins addressed himself yielded, after some consideration, to this arrangement; and accordingly the whole party dismounted, and through a gap in the fence of the road began to ascend the hill, observing the same order in which they had ridden; Mary still by the side of the captain, and, with the exception of those sent with the horses, the men still divided as at first.

Owing to her feebleness and terror, Mary made but slow progress. Her companion remained, however, closely and attentively at her side; and it would seem that Mullins, taking advantage of this circumstance, used main efforts to outstrip with his prisoner the rest of the party. They walked at a very rapid pace against the hill, gained its brow before any of the others, and then ran down its descent, and jumped on a narrow and rough road at the bottom.

"Do you think them two gorçons will ever find us by the road they took wid the horses?" asked Mullins, jocosely, as they gained a covered side of the way.

"I'm thinking not," answered Kavanagh; "but this is the place, is it not?"

"Thry," replied Mullins: "jist give the laste bit of a whistle in the world."

Kavanagh did so, and was immediately answered from a little distance. "You hard that?" said Mullins.

"I did—all's as it should be. But, see! who is this coming up to us on horseback? Stand close."

The horseman was passing them at lightning career, when Kavanagh resumed, "Flinn, or the devil, by Saint Senanus! Stop, you rider of the wind!" he continued, waving his arm; "come under the shelf of the hill here, and in six words and a hard whisper tell us what you are about."

"Howard is afther you wid his men, Jack," said Flinn to Mullins in a rapid whisper; and, while he quickly obeyed the directions of Kavanagh, "bud, the cat gone, the mice may play, an' so I axed them he left behind to help you; an' they will, plaise God—keeping him in sight, an' if he finds you out ——"

"Away!" interrupted Kavanagh; "I hear the voices coming down afther us—that's enough. Go—meet them; steal quietly by this hedge for a while, and then spur! Move, and curse ye!" Flinn disappeared in a moment.

"His poor reverence, Father 'Tack'em, that thinks we are so in earnest to-night, ought to be somewhere here, too," resumed Mullins, when he and his prisoner were again alone, "an', faith," he continued, having made his observations, "I think I see some-thin' like himself an' his ould grey mare standin' in the shelter o' the corner beyant."

Mary and her leader had now won the rugged road on which Mullins and Kavanagh stood, and she distinctly recognised her situation, though she concluded that they had led her to it by an unusual way, or that her speed and agitation had prevented her continuous notice. At the hill-side of the bridle-road there ran a fence; but at the other the ground was open, stretching in the moonshine, flat and cheerless, to some distance. Hither she had often walked with Howard; and in the sequestered space to the right hand Mary distinguished five or six gigantic trunks of trees, that had repeatedly attracted the

notice of herself and her lover. Perhaps they were the last relics of a plantation attached, a century, if not centuries ago, to some ancient edifice near the spot, but of which all traces were at present lost. To whatever accident they owed their existence in this place, the trunks were very aged: they should, indeed, be more properly called shells than by any name that invested them with solidity; for they stood completely hollow, though from the top of each a few branches still shot, which in summer were sprinkled with scanty foliage. Mary and Howard had occasionally sauntered into them, by low openings that appeared as Gothic doorways, of rude and fantastic shape; and, struck with the unexpected spaciousness of the interior, calculated with surprise that a body of at least twelve men could find shelter in each, while to half the number these primitive receptacles might afford ample accommodation for sitting, standing, or other common movements.

Mary was interrupted in her remarks on the place by the voice of her guide calling "Mullins!" when they had descended to the road.

"I'm here," said Mullins, advancing: "you were very long comin'."

"This way—a word," continued the other, beckoning. "How much farther is the retreat you have chosen?"

"About half-a-mile."

"So far still? Then, fellow, you have misinformed me."

"Thonomon dhiaoul! no, to the best o' my knowledge; sure we'll see it very soon."

"Why not keep our horses, and push on with all speed?"

"Chorp an dhiaoul! is a gintleman so stupid? Why, I tould you that the short cut over this hill is a good mile off o' the road."

"You are sure you have got accommodation for the night in the old building?"

"Yes—fire an' candle, an' good fern beds, an' the atin' an' drinkin', an' plenty of everything."

"Where is Tack'em to meet us?"

"Can't you see hun yet? He's snug under the fence, farther up."

"Shall we meet our horses soon?"

"Ay, in a minute."

"Proceed, then." And he once more drew Mary's arm under his, and was slowly following Mullins, when the old man whom Kavanagh had previously spoken to in the cabin issued from one of the hollow trees, and, confronting the captain, drew himself up to the full of his usual height, and with a shivering and shrill voice exclaimed, "Let go the colleen's hand!" All paused.

"Death, Mullins!" whispered the captain, "it is that old madman, Kavanagh, and his cursed brawling may spoil all."

"Ay, faith," observed Mullins, drily enough.

"Stand away, idiot!" resumed the leader, passing, or endeavouring to pass.

"Stand you where you are, an' let her go, I say!" resumed the old man, in a yet shriller tone, to which through the passings of the wind the hills rang. "Let go the hand o' Mary Grace; free her of a touch she should never feel! Perjurer and informer! let her go!—tyrant o' the poor, an' spoiler o' the wake an' ould, an' o' the humble fireside—Purcell! Stephen Purcell! let go her hand!"

Mary screamed out, thrilled to the marrow of her bones; and her father and Mr. Somers, also uttering exclamations of surprise, gathered round with their guards.

"He is stark mad, and raves wildly," said Purcell. "Stand back, old man! Mullins, remove him."

"He would not lay a hand on me to harm me," resumed the old man, "though it war to save *you*, body an' sowl, from what is prepared for you! Purcell! Purcell! let the colleen go to her father!"

"Fool! you call me by a name I know nothing of," answered Purcell, still trying to move on.

"Och! that's another lie as black as the thousands you have lived an' thriven on! as the thousands that brought shame, an' wreck, an' madness on us all!—that lifted the tatch from the poor man's cabin, an' made his hearth as cold as a gravestone!—that took my daughter from me, an' my daughter's daughter, an' left my white head houseless to-night, to meet you by this wild hill an' bid you prepare for a reckonin'! Purcell! 'tis nigh at hand! 'tis nigh at hand!" he continued in a pitch of enthusiasm; and then, by a sudden and unexpected movement, the old man plucked the mask from Purcell's face, and added, "Do ye know him yet?"—do ye know him yet for the liar he is?"

Mary, now fully convinced, struggled hard to escape from Purcell's gripe; and Mr. Somers, taking her disengaged hand, cried out to Purcell—"Monster! ruffian! dare you attempt such an outrage? Yield me the young lady's hand this moment!—yield it!"

There was an increased struggle, when Purcell at last loosened his hold, and Mary just felt herself clasped in her father's arms when she fainted.

"I yield it up, Mr. Somers," said Purcell, after a short pause, "that you may bestow it as I command you. Ye know me now; 'tis but a little sooner than I purposed, and I care not. Hear me, Mr. Somers; Mr. Grace, hear me: I love Mary, and she shall be mine."

"Never!" exclaimed Grace.

"Never is a big word," resumed Purcell. "Remember she is in my power, and Mary Grace might, according to any form, or without any, be mine."

"Never according to any form: though here you shed our blood, we will resist while we have a drop to spill!" answered Grace.

"And I swear by my holy function," resumed Mr.

Somers, advancing to Mary and taking her passive hand, "the arm that tears this virtuous hand from mine shall first be raised against my life!"

"Hear me, I say! No blood shall be spilt—no force but what is necessary used—no advantage taken but what is lawful and honourable. The young lady shall be my wife—here! now! Mr Somers, do your office! Mr Grace, stand by your child! Resistance is vain; I have taken my measures too well; you are here in a solitude where no help can reach you; and look round upon my men—they are armed and numerous—do not cross, and perhaps provoke me!"

"These men will not assist you in a sacrilege—they dare not!" exclaimed Mr. Somers.

"They will see me through my present purpose, sir: they are my own tenants; I have sworn to them not to touch life or limb, and they have sworn to do anything else I command. Have ye not?" continued Purcell, turning to them.

"We have, we have!" shouted his followers.

"But you do not recollect that all this must be useless to you," rejoined Mr. Somers. "Even supposing that, by threatening our lives, you can force us into your measure—that you can force me to go through a nominal ceremony—it would still be only nominal."

"Pardon me, Mr. Somers," said Purcell; "I think I am aware of what I do. Your marriage of a Protestant and a Roman Catholic is as legal and binding as it could be between two of your own persuasion."

"It is, sir, with a certain proviso," said Mr. Somers: "that is, after publication of banns, or under license, my ministry is legal in both cases; but, without one preparative or the other, the contrary in both."

"By heaven! and I forgot that!" exclaimed Purcell. "But come; all is safe yet—Father Tack'em!"

"Happy death to me! here I am, honey!" said

Tack'em, emerging on his blind grey mare, as the unusually loud summons of Purcell reached him, above all the late conversation.

"And a long ride and a cold station I have had of it," he continued. "Why, I'm a cripple sitting there so long."

"Are you ready, good father," resumed Purcell, "to join in holy wedlock myself and this young lady?"

"Ready and willing, avich, if you behave decent and consider everything," answered Tack'em.

"I am quite prepared to do so," said Purcell.

"The out-o'-the-way ride, and my long waiting, and the time o' night, and all?"

"Everything," answered Purcell, handing him a bank note; "and now begin at once."

"You surely cannot think, sir," said Mr. Somers, addressing Tack'em, whose character and person he knew, "of proceeding in such a ceremony without due permission and allowance?"

"And, happy death to me! why not, sir?" quoth Tack'em, who also knew Mr. Somers. "What do you call allowance and permission? Do you think we, poor unbenedicted missionaries of the old and pure, though persecuted church, are to stick at nice provisions, like you of the established schism of the state? How would you have us live, then? I'm in the habit of permitting and allowing myself, sir, on my own lawful account and business."

"I see your reverence does not understand me," rejoined Mr. Somers. "I ——"

"Understand you, sir!" interrupted Tack'em; "happy death to me, man! I'm able to understand anything you can say from this to the day of judgment. I'll discourse theology with you, mystical theology; I'll go through the Scriptures with you; I'll scan a line of the *Bucolics* with you; I'll translate an ode of Horace with you, or I'll go through this present controversy with you in pure ould

Latin: happy death to me but I will! Come, and now mind your *propria quæ maribus* ——”

“Father Tack'em ——” Mr. Grace began.

“Let me alone, avich,” continued Tack'em; “just lave him to me for a minute; I'll expose him here in the face of the country, never fear but I will; and then let him take care in future how he comes so far out of his way to snap the bit and the sup from a poor priest's mouth.”

“Still I beg to assure you, sir, I am entirely misunderstood. I dispute neither your collegiate nor your professional learning, nor your power and freedom to go on with this ceremony: nay, I am prepared to admit both; but I shall only ask if a gentleman like you, an accomplished divine, and an honourable man, can undertake the proposed task against the will and consent of all parties concerned —except, indeed, *his* will and consent who by outrage alone seeks to accomplish his base ends?”

“Proceed, Father Tack'em!” Purcell exclaimed, assisting the dignitary to dismount.

“Wait a bit, Mr. Purcell, honey!” said Tack'em; then waddling towards Mr. Somers — “now you spake raison, sir. Will I proceed, you say ——”

“Against the will of the wretched father of this young lady, who now addresses you, and with tears on his cheeks implores you, as a man and a Christian priest, not to send his grey hairs with shame and sorrow to the grave?”

“I'll double the fee,” whispered Purcell.

“Why, you see, avich,” resumed Tack'em, at first much moved, and then pleading for the double fee, “I have a mission that does not always oblige me to insist on the formal consent of parents in such cases: according to my practice, it is usually enough if the two young people know ache other's minds, and ——”

“But if one of them refuses consent,” exclaimed Mary, who, recovering her senses, had heard the

latter part of the debate, "will you, sir, proceed, not only against the will, but to the abhorrence and the certain destruction, here and hereafter, of the poor creature before you, and who now joins her own tears and supplications to those of her father, praying you, if you believe in God or have a human heart, not to make us both irrecoverably miserable?"

"Eh, honey?" whined Tack'em, snuffling the tears than run down his own cheeks.

"I'll treble it—I'll double it twice over!" again whispered Purcell.

"No!—nor if you squared it—nor if you cubed it, twice over!" squeaked Tack'em, suddenly turning on Purcell with all the fierceness his poor face, voice, and manner were able to express. "Happy death to me! I'll wash my hands of it."

"First, then, give me up that bank-note," cried Purcell, advancing angrily to Tack'em.

"What bank-note, avich?" demurred Tack'em, taking his place in the opposition ranks: that is, between Grace, Mr. Somers, and the old man, who stood a stern spectator of this scene. "Wait a bit till I bring you to raison. You see, Mr. Purcell, I was to be paid for ahe distinct part of my agency in this matter, and for the extraordinary trouble, as well as for the job itself. Well, avourneen, the last understanding between us, for the whole, was four times the amount of that shabby bit o' paper you talk of. Now, let us say that three parts of the gross sum were to come down for the wedding-money, sure the fourth part at laste 'ud be little enough for the long ride, an' the sitting there beyond on my ould grey mare for a long hour, like a pelican in the wilderness, or a solitary sparrow on the house-top; an' what more am I asking from you? Happy death to me! 'tis a case of conscience; an' as clear as day; I'll lave it to your own honest minister, Mr. Somers here, an' let him decide between us."

"Give him back the note, Father Tack'em, and I will make it up to you," said Mr. Grace.

"Will you?" asked Purcell, assuming, after another short pause, all the ruffian of his character. "And so you, and he, and all of you, think I am baffled, or to be baffled, amongst you? You shall see. I cautioned you not to cross and provoke me too far, and I promised forbearance only under the belief that you would not—that you dared not. Now, let us see what else I can do. Men!" he continued, addressing his followers, "you are witnesses of the trifling and imposition practised on me, particularly by this outcast priest, who is a shame to your religion, and in this instance would doubly disgrace it. If you are faithful to me, or sensible of my past kindness and services, and alive to those that are to come, you will see me righted—you will! I am assured of it. Bind the excommunicated wretch to his saddle, and lead him after us to a still more silent and distant place." The men advanced to obey.

"Desperate and unprincipled madmen!" exclaimed Mr. Somers, stepping before poor Tack'em, who sent up a most pathetic lament, "what are you about to do?—on your own priest! I am not one of your persuasion, but I vow to God it makes my blood run cold! What! lay your hands on him!—on the head that other hands have visited in another spirit, and for another purpose! He is a degraded minister, your leader says. What have you, or I, and, least of all, what has *he* to do with that? How can—how dare any of you judge it? His church still allows him the name of priest, and will you commit a ruffianly outrage on that name? Could you even stand by to see it done?"

The men hesitated; Purcell stamped and raved; and poor Tack'em, now crying like a child, took off his broad brim, and extending his hand to Mr. Somers, said, piping all the time, "I give your re-

verence thanks; for now I cannot refuse you the title that shows you to be what you are—a missionary of peace and good-will to men on earth. I give your reverence thanks, I say, for this defence of a poor erring brother. I ask pardon, at the same time, for my late mistake and for my words; and, as your best reward, I promise, happy death to me! from this moment to watch, and pray, and strive, and wrestle, that at last I may grow more worthy of the fellowship that to-night your charity and humanity alone ——”

He was interrupted by Purcell, who, after holding out, in whispers, abundant reward to his party, and having succeeded in rallying their bad determination, came on with loud threats to 'Tack'em, and cries of encouragement to them

“Seize and bind him, I say! Mary, we once more proceed together.”

“Touch her not!” exclaimed the old man, again unexpectedly raising his shrill voice; “and you—blind slaves of an accursed master!—touch not the white hairs of the father, nor the holy head of God’s priest! Too long I have stood here, waitin’ to see and to hear somethin’ that her tears, an’ their words an’ tears too, might work on him, but did not; an’ now there is only time to ax ye, will ye, afther all that has been said, assist Stephen Purcell in his bad scheme?”

“They will assist me!” shouted Purcell, and was echoed by his party

“More, then, are ye ready to stand the struggle and do your best, if he is prevented?”

“Prevented! mad and doting wretch! can *you* prevent it?” cried Purcell.

“I say, are ye ready?” resumed the old man.

“We are ready for anything that comes,” they answered.

“Then, Stephen Purcell,” continued the aged speaker, “I do not say *I* can prevent you, but—(try

to get aside, Mary Grace, wid your father, an' the priest, an' the ministher, too—run for the elm-trees, an' stay behind them)—but, Purcell," the old man went on, turning to him after he had spoken the last words in a hasty whisper to those by his side. "maybe there's one near you that can and will. Stand out, grandson!—Harry Kavanagh, stand out!"

"Kavanagh! Kavanagh!" shouted the person who was addressed, springing forward with Mullins from the midst of Purcell's people; and "Kavanagh! Kavanagh!" shouted Mullins. At the same moment Kavanagh blew a horn that hung under his frock, and at the sound an overpowering force, wearing loose blue great-coats and strongly armed, rushed from the hollow trees. At the first intimation from the old man, Mr. Somers and Mr. Grace, apprehending the result, had contrived, with Mary and 'Tack'em, to edge away from the immediate ground of contest, so that when Kavanagh winded his horn they were within a short run of the trees; and they gained them just as, to their utter surprisc. the ambushed allies issued forth on the plain.

CHAPTER XII.

"On, and flash away!—Kavanagh!" continued the summoner, as the men advanced, taking with Mullins a place at their head. All repeated his word and cry, and set, yelling like demons, upon Purcell's party.

Purcell at the first signal of attack had also headed his men, and now made desperate resistance. He rapidly formed them into a close body, with their backs to the hedge that fenced the hill, and thus awaited the assailants.

And on they came, armed with pistols, fowling-pieces, muskets, and bayonets screwed on the ends of poles. Before the two parties closed, a volley was exchanged betwixt them, from the effects of which two of Kavanagh's people fell, one dead, the other wounded, while only one man went down on Purcell's side. Amid the smoke and confusion that reigned for a moment after, Purcell judiciously got his men across the fence, over which they knelt, and, reloading their arms, prepared in this strong position to continue battle.

"Steal round, with six of the boys, by the slope of the hill, and attack them behind, Mullins," said Kavanagh, when he had observed this movement; "and of all things keep your eye on Purcell.

Meantime we will have another blaze at them here."

Mullins readily obeyed; and after a pause the other volley was given and returned, Kavanagh still the sufferer by the loss of two men more, and Purcell this time untouched.

"Do that again, my boys!" shouted Purcell, "and the next shot we are safe, and the outlaw our own into the bargain!"

"Are you sure of it?" bellowed Mullins, now within a few yards of Purcell's back, as he and his detachment hurled themselves down the hill on the rear of the whole party.

"Now, every man up the fence!" cheered Kavanagh, pushing with the rest of his battalion into Purcell's front.

An appalling struggle followed. Three of Purcell's faction lay in the trench at the back of the fence; the rest fled over the hill, hotly pursued. Kavanagh singled out Purcell. Both were too close to use their pistols, and could only twist and strain for a fall. At last Kavanagh slipped, and his antagonist, discharging at him a random shot, jumped over the hedge upon the road; but Kavanagh, unharmed, was on his legs in an instant; and in the next, and when Purcell had scarcely touched the ground outside, he made a desperate spring after and over him, and landed on the road some yards beyond his foe, so that Purcell stood between him and the fence, and could not therefore readily escape.

Both glared on each other a moment, panting, foaming, and equally excited by effort and aversion. At last Kavanagh exclaimed—

"Do you doubt the word you heard, that you look on me so hard? Villain! accursed villain! it is Kavanagh!" He covered him with a pistol.

"I see you, and know you well now," answered Purcell; "but it is so long since we met, no won-

der I like to look at you, Kavanagh;" and he moved a little, in order to recover an upright position, which since his leap he had not yet assumed, having been surprised by his pursuer in an effort to rise; so that, with his body and neck half stooped and wrung round, Purcell to this moment returned the gaze and challenge of Kavanagh.

"Stand to me, and yield!" exclaimed Kavanagh, when he saw him move. "Love alone could pay you with a poor shot and a moment's pain—I owe you more than that. Yield, abhorred wretch!—yield!" He advanced as he spoke.

"Thus, then!" cried Purcell, suddenly discharging into Kavanagh's face a small pistol that he had hitherto kept concealed. Kavanagh reeled and fell, mechanically, and without any effect pressing the trigger as he went down.

At this moment the old man, returning with Mullins from the pursuit, saw his grandson stretched on the ground. With a wild cry he ran, knelt, and raised him in his arms. Blood profusely flowed down Kavanagh's face from a wound in the temple. The old man commenced a heart-rending lament, of which the shrill tones soon had the effect of restoring his grandson to perception.

"Who is this?—where is Purcell?" he said, disengaging himself and standing up. The ball had only grazed his temple, and Kavanagh was no more than stunned, though, from injury done to a branch of the artery, the flow of blood was considerable.

"Curse on the false weapon or false hand that never before failed me!" he continued. "Come, Mullins; come, grandfather. Mullins, a pistol! Let us take different directions—spread out the men—come!" and the whole party left the scene of contest.

Meanwhile, Mr. and Miss Grace, Mr. Somers, and Tack'em, had, previous to the discharge of a shot, gained the rear of the hollow trees. Of all

the group, Tack'em displayed, from the first moment of danger, the greatest degree of cowardice. He fell on his knees, and, alternately in good Latin and bad English, prayed for deliverance. He groaned, he chattered, and sent forth very agonized ejaculations, as the firing and shouting increased. At last a better thought occurred. He looked round, embracing, however, a circuit of observation sufficiently prudential, and his companions could hear him mutter, "Nabocklish! Nabocklish! where is the unlucky baste?" where can she be? Nabocklish!" and they understood that he repeated the name of his grey mare, which name, translated for the Britannic reader, signifies "Never-mind-it" an appellation, by-the-way, frequently bestowed by Irish sportsmen on their favourite animals of the same species. We recollect a racing-mare of much worth so called on the Curragh of Kildare, the Newmarket or Ascot of the sister island.

But for some Nabocklish did not appear. It seemed, however, that Tack'em became aware of her proximity; for after a pause he was heard to add, "That's she — that's she! Come, achorra! come, avourneen!" accompanying these coaxing words with his best coaxing tone; and as he spoke, his party also recognised the approach of a horse, indicated by a succession of hysteric snortings, that, if the language of quadrupeds may ever be rendered, loudly proclaimed the excessive astonishment and mortal fear of the said Nabocklish. At length she made her appearance at the side of the hollow trees, occasionally cocking or lowering her ears, standing quiet, or rearing on her hind legs, and prancing upward and forward, and to this side and that, her feelings still expressed, as has been intimated, and her white, sightless orbs rolling fearfully in their sockets.

"I'll promise her oats," continued Tack'em, still muttering to himself; and thereupon he took off

his ample hat, and, stretching his neck as far as he dared towards the animal, shuffled his hand in the crown of the beaver, his supplicating and beguiling tones and words rapidly continued. The finesse succeeded. Wheedled out of her fears, the gaunt animal approached, with outstretched nose and neck, in the direction where Tack'em stood; when she was within arm's length, her master dexterously succeeded in catching her by the forelock; after two or three unhappy failures he next deposited himself on her back; and then, spurring with all his might, Tack'em and Nabocklish soon disappeared over a path diverging from the bloody plain. As they receded, her snorts and his groans were audible through the whole roar of battle, and, ere they had become entirely lost in distance, Tack'em could be seen lying down on her neck, his arms clasped round it, while, Gilpin like, his bald head remained uncovered: a distinct object even at a great distance, as the moon brilliantly illuminated its bright surface.

After he had departed, Mr. Grace and his daughter, with their worthy friend, Mr. Somers, continued, in anxious and by no means unapprehensive silence, to await the result of the struggle on the plain. The shots and yells became less and less, as Mullins pursued the defeated party over the hill; and there was an aching pause left after Purcell and Kavanagh had terminated their personal encounter. When the cries of the old man arose, Mr. Somers ventured to look out towards the ground of action, and so became a witness of the ensuing scene; and when, in obedience to Kavanagh's commands, all separated in pursuit of Purcell, he communicated the state of affairs to Mr. Grace and Mary.

"Our foes have been routed, and are fled," said Mr. Somers; "thanks for this great though terrible preservation."

"Oh, Mr. Somers!" said Grace, "yet do I fear

we have only escaped one bad fate for another. My child! my child!" He caught his daughter to his breast.

Mr. Somers demanded what he meant.

"You recollect the unfortunate young man, Kavanagh, about whom we this very evening conversed? Well, then, our preserver is the very same person; and ——" Grace hesitated, while Mary added—

"In truth, Mr. Somers, Kavanagh paid me some early attentions."

"And do you fear he may now renew them, Mr. Grace?"

"What else can we expect from a desperate man like him—an outlaw, and evidently with force at his command?"

"Do not speak too harshly, my dear father," said Mary; "perhaps we need not fear such very bad things from Kavanagh. He had once a gentle, if not a tender heart." She checked herself, and an accusing blush spread over her pale cheeks.

"Why cannot we take advantage of his absence, and now, while the way is apparently clear, fly from him?" said Mr. Somers.

"If you think we may venture it, come, then. Come, my Mary, and heaven guide us!"

"Stay a moment, my dear father, and let us rather consider the use of this," said Mary. "Whatever may be Kavanagh's views towards us; whether he means to protect us to our house, or—or, in fact, make *me* the subject of a claim in his own person—still, we may be assured, he will expect to find us here, and will speedily return to seek us. If we appear to avoid him, after receiving an obligation at his hands, it becomes a question, I think, how safely we may venture to arouse his displeasure. He has many active and desperate men at his side, and supposing him inclined to pursue, I doubt that we could escape him. This very moment, I fear, it would be impossible to proceed far without meet-

ing him or some of his party. Therefore it appears to me, that however Kavanagh may be inclined to treat us, there would be no use, and might be danger, in leaving our present place."

Mr. Somers drew his friend aside. "Permit me to ask you—and excuse the abruptness of the question—in what feeling did Miss Grace seem to receive the addresses of this young man?"

"You probe me on a subject," answered Grace, "that this instant occupied, while it distracted my mind. I must candidly tell you, Mr. Somers—but Mary was then a child, a mere child, and he was quite a boy also—yet I must admit that, from my anxious observations on Mary, I thought she was foolishly partial to the lad."

"Then excuse another question. do you think that in her present advocacy of Kavanagh—advocacy, or whatever else we call it—there is any recollection of the past, and—any wish to renew it?"

"God have pity on me if there is!" said Grace.

"But what do you think, my good friend?"

"I cannot believe it, yet I fear it," he replied, with increased distress and apprehension.

"Then let us, at any risk, try to escape homeward," resumed Mr. Somers. "Your father and I, Miss Grace, have considered the matter we were speaking about, and it seems best, after all you have said, to remove immediately out of the presence of a desperate man, of blasted character and ruined prospects," he added, with solemnity and some severity. But all further movement was impeded by the appearance, at the instant they were about to turn towards the hill, of Kavanagh at one side and Mullins at the other. During his absence, Kavanagh had contrived to wash the blood from his face, and his cool, forward manner was again adopted.

"Stop, Mr. Grace!" he said, as soon as he saw the party: "stop, sir, till I am ready to attend you:" then, turning to Mullins, "Have you seen him?"

"No, nor nobody else: this time he's safe," answered Mullins. "The only thing we found was the horses strayin' by the wrong road, an' the two grooms looked so quare when we axed 'em!—ho! ho!"

"He's safe but for a day," resumed Kavanagh. "for that matter, I might at once order you and those fellows on a pursuit he could hardly even now escape; but here we have work yet to do."

"You have saved us, sir, from outrage and shame," said Grace, addressing Kavanagh. "we owe to you the preservation of our honour, of our lives, and we deeply thank you."

"Do you remember me, Mr. Grace?" asked Kavanagh, abruptly turning his full front to the speaker.

"After the services you have just conferred on me, sir, I should be very forgetful, indeed, if I did not easily recognise you," replied Grace, unwilling to admit any acquaintance of more ancient date.

"And do you know me no better?" rejoined Kavanagh. "Let me inform you, Mr. Grace, that our old friendship might be renewed without present odium to your name, station, or fortune. I too have grown wealthy since we last met. I believe," he continued with composure, and as if following a mental calculation while he spoke—"I believe I could, this moment, purchase you out and out, and then throw all you are worth into the bottom of the sea, and still be a comfortable man."

"It is very probable, sir," said Grace.

"As to the slander I have suffered from foul tongues," Kavanagh ran on with vivacity, "a tithe of my possessions were enough to ensure eternal silence on that head; and you know in your heart, sir, I have never been really guilty of a moral crime or a dishonourable action in my own country. What say you, Mr. Grace? shall we be old friends on the old understanding?"

"It would afford me sincere pleasure, Mr. Kavanagh, to meet you on terms of perfect equality."

"You evade me, sir," his eye kindling and his voice rising. "I can fully conceive your meaning: first, you doubt my declaration of ability to establish that character; and then, even supposing all the power on my side, you would prudently step back and watch me setting to work in the endeavour to do so, refusing your countenance—your assistance is out of the question—till you had ascertained my success or failure. Oh, brave! I thank you, sir, for your condescension. And so it is, the world round; and so are the unfortunate, the wronged, and the oppressed, always sure to be treated. Show me the man of what you call most benevolence and charity amongst you, and I will, at the same time, show you the over-cautious hypocrite, who can wink, or shrug, or whisper, or cast up his eyes, over the lying story that deprives an innocent fellow-creature of rank and estimation; who will never be the first to meet him half-way in his solitary struggle towards reinstatement in the world's opinion—if so contemptible a thing were worth the struggle—but, mark you, who will ever be the very first—oh, yes, the very first, that I allow—to hail him with the holiday smile when he has fought and won his own battle, and sprung, without a hand, or voice, or wish to assist him, back again to the firm ground he would never have lost, if villany and perjury were not too strong for single, unbefriended innocence."

Kavanagh, having delivered this speech with much energy, strode about in chafing silence, Grace remaining prudently without an answer. The speaker, coming to a sudden stand, then continued:—

"And, so help me God! here I am, the most belied and trampled of innocent men, and I have not a friend under the blessed canopy of heaven, wide and beautiful as it spreads above and around—who would this night lend me a moment's counsel, kindness, or confidence, to save me from the worst fate, here and hereafter!—not one!—to save me

from *my own* counsel; and in my state of lonely recollections and temptations—the dark things it urges me to, every hour I trust it!—not one to give me the composing shelter of a Christian roof, or to fling me a Christian pillow, that my aching brows might take Christian rest, and waken out of it with Christian temper, passions, and consolations! Not one!” He resumed his quick walking, every step almost a stamp, while his clenched hand was often raised to his forehead. And once again, while he continued in motion—

“This, then, is no country for me!” he said. “I owe it nothing—nothing but my birth, and for that I curse it, and pray that in utter woe it may be confounded! It gave me nothing—nothing but a name, which in cruelty and wrong it wrenched from me again. Why should I love it? What are its blue hills and its pleasant fields to me? Though in distant and dreary banishment I have thought of them, till, as the foolish tear filled my eye, their shadowy forms wavered through the sultry horizon, and the fresh noise of their streams, and all their old sounds, came on my ear, and were heard in my soul, and at last I wept and sobbed to see them again, yet why should I love it? and, least of all, why should I fear it? And, since it will not cherish or assist me, why should I hesitate to do, in the teeth of its arbitrary prohibition, whatever may for a moment assert, satisfy, and revenge me?”

Mary Grace, who had listened with intense interest to all he said, could not now refrain from breathing one word of appeal, remonstrance, and comfort—one word; but its tone and spirit contained a volume of persuasion.

“Kavanagh!” she aspirated. He stopped, turned, looked tremblingly upon her; then walked slowly and solemnly to some distance; again stopped; and after some thought, muttered—

“She is in my power—and I love her still!”

"Young man!" at this moment said Mr. Somers, "all the gratitude, all the services, we can command, are yours; and we doubt not but your final disposal of us will still be honourable and just."

Kavanagh returned no answer; but to himself he went on, unconscious of having been addressed:—

"I know that once she loved me too—Mullins!"

"Here!" answered the summoned party, walking to his side.

"Did you not say—answer me below your breath—did you not say that to-morrow night Roving Jack is expected at the harbour?"

"Yes, wid his tight ship: as fast a sailer as ever ran in an honest hogshead."

"And how soon to weigh again?"

"How soon? Why, the same hour if he can; jist as soon as the ship's lightened."

"Well—leave me. 'Tis a happy dream," he continued, after Mullins strode away. "Though country be given up, I should still have with me the only creature that now makes country dear; and, perhaps, though my character is altered, and though men have stamped a brand on my name—perhaps, even yet, Mary might remember the past, and love the outlaw."

"He does not answer," whispered Mr. Grace to Mr. Somers, "but there stands, as if planning some wild or terrible scheme. Heaven befriend us!"

"In truth," answered Mr. Somers, "I do not like his pause, and least of all his secret communication with that bravo. Young man," he continued aloud to Kavanagh, "we have spoken to you, to offer our thanks and our gratitude, and, notwithstanding all the sad discourse you have held, our services, if need be."

Still Kavanagh made no answer: did not seem to hear, in fact.

"Yes," resumed Grace, "and to express our full reliance on your manliness and honour."

"Can we trust you?" asked Mr. Somers, after another silent pause.

"We can!" exclaimed Mary.

Kavanagh caught his breath, and with face half turned towards her, seemed to await her further speech.

"We can!" she repeated; "yes! alone with him, and in his power in a desert, I fear not the honour of our deliverer. Whatever he does, whatever his feelings may lead him to attempt, he will act with delicacy, and at the proper time and season. In any views he may have, Kavanagh is not the man to imitate a mean villain. Kavanagh is not the man to blacken a noble action with a bad one!"

The person addressed heard this appeal evidently in checked feeling. He pulled his hat over his brows, and changed frequently from one foot to the other, as his clenched hands hung by his sides, gripping the folds of his frock. When Mary had ceased, and in the deep silence that followed, the breath was heard to labour in his throat, rapidly coming and going, as if with alarmed precipitancy it struggled to make way for a burst of combated resolution. Then he beckoned Mullins with two or three impatient motions of his hand. When the man came he turned quickly upon him, and, with flashing eyes fixed on his, gasped and gaped in an effort to pronounce a word: the difficulty seemed, by irritating him, to increase his paroxysm of passion. He waved his hand and arm over and over again; and at last, stamping violently, was able to utter, in a choked tone, half scream and half whisper—

"Lead on!"

"Whither? whither?" asked Mr. Grace and Mr. Somers, both advancing.

"Oh, Kavanagh! whither?" echoed Mary, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, confronting him.

"To your father's house!" he exclaimed, in a burst of voice. "There we can find your proper time and season! Mullins, get those horses sent round to meet us at the other side of the hill, and do you direct our course—I cannot. I will remain far behind: I must not yet approach her; must not look upon her. My heart is racked; my breast and neck are choking; but lead on!"

*CHAPTER XIII.

THE narrative left Howard and Mr. O'Clery setting out after Nora's intelligence, in great speed, to Mr. Grace's house.

They soon gained, by the short path well known to O'Clery, their destination. As the gentlemen hurried along, it occurred to both that much reliance was not to be placed on Nora's raving information, and all the way they had hopes she might have misconceived or exaggerated the real circumstances.

The first thing that raised Nora's credit was the appearance of the little avenue gate wide open. The friends looked at each other and pushed on to the house. As they approached the door, Howard stumbled over something, and a moment's examination showed them the dead carcass of a fine mastiff watch-dog, which it had been the intruders' first care to despatch. This was a worse symptom; but, as a still worse, the hall-door remained unclosed. They entered the house. The hall and staircase were in darkness, and with some difficulty they ascended to the sitting-room where O'Clery had left his host and Mr. Somers in convivial discourse. Here was a scene of dreary, and, to the spectators, afflicting desolation. Of four lights, two had burned out; one lay crushed and extinguished on the carpet, and one only lent imperfect illumina-

tion to the apartment. The fire was black, the hospitable hearth chill and cheerless. On a table near it lay, some broken, and all in disorder, glasses and decanters. The chairs were disarranged or overturned, and the carpet was soiled and crumpled, in evident token of the recent intrusion of a vulgar crowd. The window which Grace had thrown up, in order to parley with the assailants, still remained open; and at it, in the faint rays of the moon, sat a little, long-eared, silky lapdog, Mary's own favourite, piteously howling forth its sense of abandonment and loneliness.

With rapid words of alarm and consternation, the friends ran to the door through which they had entered the room, and called loudly and anxiously the names of those they scarcely expected should hear them.

"Mr. Grace! my dear friend, Mr. Grace!" cried O'Clery.

"Mary! my beloved Mary!" echoed Howard.

The empty apartments and staircases feebly answered, like the inarticulate efforts of a child, in a shadowy sound of the same words they had spoken, and deep silence again fell around. The friends, snatching the lighted candle, rushed through the other rooms, one by one. At last they gained what they knew to be Mary's chamber. There was her little toilet, surrounded by the books and the drawings; and upon it still lay the crucifix, the glass vase with its hectic rose now drooping, the rosary, the prayer-book turned down, and Howard's miniature. As his eye glanced on the likeness, he saw on its crystal cover traces of the tears Mary had shed, while, as we have already described, fearing for his absence, and a gush of bitter grief blinded his own eyes for a moment. He glanced towards Mary's bed. It stood, white, pure, and unpressed, as it had been arranged for the night's repose. "O God!" he exclaimed, "and where, instead, is she."

to lie down to-night?" The thought was madness, and Howard, dropping into a chair, gave vent to his feelings.

Mr. O'Clery, his own soul afflicted and agitated, strove to administer comfort to his friend, but for some time in vain.

"If we had even a trace of the road," said Howard—"if that accursed woman could inform us which way they went—there might be some hope; but as it is, nothing is certain but the ruin of the young lady; and," he continued, wildly, "my ruin also; for I will outlive no shame that this outrage must fix on Mary Grace!"

"Hist!" O'Clery said. "here are your soldiers"

The rapid and heavy tramp of the men was, indeed, now audible, as they advanced in double-quick time up the approach to the house; "And all is not yet lost, with help so near us," added O'Clery. "Come, Mr Howard, man yourself; dispose them over the country by every path and road the ravishers may possibly have taken;—and, hark! that bewildered creature comes with them I hear her demoniacal yell ringing through the house Come down; let us again speak to her; and perhaps she is at last calm enough to collect her senses and yield us some particular information."

They accordingly descended, and in passing the door of the sitting-room they had at first entered, Nora rushed by them into it, and squatting herself as in the cabin, on the middle of the carpet, set up her old pillaloo, eked out by the incessant clapping of her hands The little dog, which Howard's and O'Clery's appearance had for a moment diverted from his howling, now sympathetically chimed in with Nora, and a duet arose from the efforts of both, sufficient to startle the dull ear of the dead.

"'Tis hard to say which is the purer brute," said O'Clery, as with Howard he advanced at Nora's back. "Silence, you obstreperous fool!" he con-

tinued, addressing her; "and get up and inform us which road these ruffians have taken with your master and your young lady."

But Nora accorded no answer, neither did she suspend her part in the performance.

"Answer us, you unfortunate woman!" cried Howard; "tell us, if you know, which road they first pursued; answer instantly, or I'll cut that tongue out of your head! Which road, I say?"

"Och! little duv I know. But there's no one here! They're all gone—gone! The hearth is could—could! Ochone! ochone!" and she suddenly started to her feet, and trooped up-stairs, before Howard or O'Clery could stop her.

"Gracious God!" exclaimed Howard, "the moments lapse in which a well-directed effort might be made. But I'll after her, and try one other experiment;" and, separating the sheath of his sword from his belt, Howard retraced his steps to the top of the house.

"Aha! that may do, but you must lay it on lightly," said O'Clery, following him.

Nora's continued outcry soon led them to her presence. She had, by the kind of instinct that enables a blind man to do the same thing, made her way in utter darkness to Mary's chamber; and, when the friends entered with the candle, they saw her in her usual position and gesticulation, half-way between the bed and the toilet, while, with tears plentifully rolling down her cheeks, Nora went on:—

"You're not in your room!—there's no one to read your prayer book!—an', och, alauna machree! you won't put your darlin' white skin under your own white sheets to-night, an' sink down among the feathers like a lily as you are, goin' asleep on its bed o' daisies! You won't—no, you won't! Mile murthers!"

Somewhat affected by the tears and poetical lament of Nora, Howard hesitated in the first

treat her too roughly; and it was not till after repeated conjurations, she still obstinately or heedlessly withholding all rational answer, that Nora felt the scabbard gently introducing itself to her broad shoulders. At the touch she uttered a louder cry than ever, and again succeeded in escaping from her pursuers, first through the chamber-door and then down the stairs.

They still followed her. She issued through the hall-door, and looking round for the huge stone she had lately precipitated from the window overhead, was moving towards it, when her interminable cry became changed into a sudden squeak, and she hastily ran back to the door. The gentlemen, advancing, discovered the cause of her terror. Beside the stone lay the man on whom it had fallen, his thigh crushed to pieces, so that he was deprived of all power to move, while, weakened by pain and fear, the wretch remained stretched on his back; his features—made more hideous by the black smearing they had undergone, and which was now half rubbed off—set in an agony of dread, and his eyes staring straight upward, with the most ghastly expression. Howard and O'Clery shuddered at this spectacle, and could not blame Nora for her cowardice.

The man was sufficiently sensible, however, to comprehend what was going forward. He had heard the repeated inquiries made of Nora, and now muttered, as the friends stood over him—

"Don't kill me! for the love o' God an' the Blessed Vargin Mary, don't kill me entirely, an' I'll tell you where to find 'em."

"Speak, then, and truly," said Howard, "if you hope to live another moment!" He raised his sword.

The man gave a description of the route he had heard proposed by Mullins, and which was really the course taken. Howard listened with increased impatience; ordered two soldiers to garrison the

house till his return, and also to remove and tend the wounded man; and then, heading his party and accompanied by O'Clery, set off with all speed, Nora still bringing up the rear.

Along the very way they pursued, Purcell at about the same moment was hastening, after his escape at the elm-trees, with purpose to call on Howard and his men for assistance; concluding, from Mullins's treachery, that Howard was still available. We need not try to picture his feelings at this juncture; we need not say that all the fiends of hate, disappointment, rage, and bloody impulse, possessed it even unto madness. He ran, he panted, he smote his forehead, and called on the earth to swallow, and the hills to slip and crush, his detested and successful enemy; for at cautious distance Purcell had stopped to ascertain the effect of his last shot, and saw Kavanagh rise, and heard him order the pursuit. By an unusual, and yet for pedestrians a short path, Purcell then fled, bounding alone, with the shouts and curses of the pursuers ringing in his ear, and the effort for life and vengeance bracing his sinews, and giving all but wings to his terrible speed. He broke through fences, dashed over streams, and trampled down indifferently the barren heath and the pregnant furrow; resembling, with blackest hell in his heart and on his brow, and at such an hour and in such solitudes, some spirit of the lowest depths, sent forth upon man's slumbering world to blight, crush, and destroy.

Dripping with wet, his clothes torn and soiled, without a hat, and his face intensely pale and haggard, Purcell, after avoiding the wood and the road which led to it, found himself free from pursuit, on the open ground which commenced an approach to the first bridle-road that had conducted him from Mr. Grace's house. Over this way he was holding his fierce career, when a man appeared running towards him in a cross direction. His nerves strung

to the utmost pitch of sensitiveness, Purcell screamed out a challenge at this person, stooping at the same time for a large stone that lay before him, as he was now otherwise unarmed. It proved, however, to be one of his own men, flying like himself from the late scene of confusion and blood. Reassured, and, from the presence of one associate, comforted, Purcell dropped the stone from his weakened grasp, and poured forth a torrent of inquiries, imprecations, and vows of revenge. Kavanagh, Mullins, and all, should feel, he said, his arm, in time and turn.

"Come!" he continued. "Howard and the soldiers! he is saved for me, though they don't think it! Let us cheer them on! let us swear that Kavanagh himself is the man who has forced her away; that we interfered to prevent him; that we were—were—curses!—that they have by overpowering force reduced us to this breathless condition! Come! baffled in every way, at every turn, and by that boy, still—he that has ever been a stone, a rock on my path!—but we will have it yet—come! the soldiers!"

"The soldiers!" echoed the sharp voice of old Kavanagh, who at that moment started, like a spectre, before him; "dog of an informer still!—I have traced you as the hound traces his prey—stiff an' worn as I am, I have traced you—an' now how do I find you here? how, but on the ould thrack? The soldiers! What do you want with them? Will they assist you to bring shame on another white head? or—crossed in your own endeavour—do you only go to loose them on the game you have before hunted down?"

"Stand out of my way, or—I will make you stand out of it!" said Purcell, balefully glaring on the old man.

"Never! till you unsay that word I hard, an' promise at last to spare him! Haven't you done enough? Haven't you spent yourself on us all? Where's my child's child? where is my child her-

self?—hut, tut!—never scowl an' gnash your teeth at me, Purcell. Where is the comfort you tore like a pillow from me?—the pride an' the pace o' mind? Can you make me as I was agin? Can you make me not mad agin? Oath-breaker an' robber! stay where you are, an' answer!"

"Out of my way, wretch! or ——" He gripped the old man's throat with both his hands—who, however, amid choking breath and utterance, went on:—

"Ay, ay!—do it! do it! Keep them round my neck till I fall stark and stiff under your hands! Kill the ould grandfather, that so you may deal on the three generations!"

Purcell persevered in his purpose till the sound of approaching feet were heard, and the man who stood by his side, crying out, "We're taken!" plunged down the slope at the left hand side, and disappeared. He then released the old man, and, looking forward, saw, to his great surprise and pleasure, Howard and O'Clery rapidly advancing.

"Hold! hold!" Howard exclaimed as he came up, having heard the cries of old Kavanagh; "what shameful outrage is this?"

"Seize him, Sassenach! seize him! He is the man that this night took off your Mary Grace!" the old man gasped out, and then rapidly withdrew from the scene.

"Och! seize him! hould him fast! hang him! shoot him! tare him limb from limb!" exhorted Nora, coming in front.

"Soldiers! take him prisoner!" said Howard.

"Stop, sir!" cried Purcell. "You will not heed, Captain Howard, the ravings of a madman—all can tell you he's mad. What, Nora! do you not know me? am I the person this old fool speaks of?"—for we had omitted to mention that Purcell, so soon as he escaped from Kavanagh's men, took care to divest himself of his red waistcoat and sash.

"Och! no! no! no!" responded Nora.

"You did not, then, see this man at Mr. Grace's?"

"Avoch, no, Captain John! agilla machree, Captain John! this is a very dacent gintleman—if he does his best for us now, I mane," added Nora, in a qualifying tone.

"I will: it is therefore I am here on my way to Captain Howard with intelligence where to find them."

"On your way *from* them, then?" asked O'Clery.

"Yes, sir, directly; this moment from them."

"And may I ask how you got among them, Mr. Purcell?"

"Mr. O'Clery! Captain Howard! look at me: you may guess, by my appearance and manner, what I have suffered and escaped at their hands. I tell you, gentlemen, that, passing the road by chance—by mere chance—I met the whole party—Mr. and Miss Grace, and Mr Somers, and all; and giving way to my feelings—you know how keenly I ought to feel to see Miss Grace in such a situation, Father O'Clery: not considering what I did, I plunged into the midst of them, unarmed; and after a desperate struggle am here, scarcely alive to tell you my adventure."

"Were you alone, as well as unarmed, sir?" still questioned O'Clery.

"Was I alone, sir? To be sure I was! Who could have been with me? I should be glad to know what you exactly mean, Mr. O'Clery."

"Why, I thought that, in the present state of the country, *you* did not usually venture out at night, unattended and unarmed, sir; but I beg your pardon a moment. Captain Howard, a word! By my priesthood!" continued O'Clery, "all this is very mysterious, my good friend. I assume sufficient knowledge of the human heart to be convinced, from Mr. Purcell's character, which also I have good reason to know, that he is not the man to do

any such exploit as he states himself the hero of; nor in my conscience do I believe he met, alone and unarmed, the persons we are at present in pursuit of."

"This, then, involves the truth of his information as to their route?"

"I fear so; and more—and do not let him see you startled when I speak it—Purcell may be the author of this outrage himself—stop, for heaven's sake, and let me go on—and his present appearance before us may be for the purpose of misleading you, while in the mean time his agents shall have secured —"

"I'll run him through the heart!" Howard broke out.

"Tut! that would be a bad way of coming at the truth, under the present circumstances. I wish that old man who first gave us to understand he was the true aggressor were here. Why should he have his hands on the poor creature as we came up? But, no matter. Suppose, Captain Howard, you now seem to place implicit reliance on Purcell, keeping an eye on him meantime. If he does not immediately lead us on the track—or if, at all events, it be finally proved he leads us wide of it—then, you know, he will be in your power still; and in truth, if we now reject his guidance, the country becomes, a little farther on, so full of cross-roads and difficult ways, that I see not what better you can do."

"And all this time is time wasted!" said Howard impatiently. Then, turning round—"Mr. Purcell, we place the utmost faith in your story and your guidance. Pray, have the goodness to fall in with me between these men. And now, sir, is your point far off?"

"Not very far, Captain Howard: I will engage to lead you to it in a little more than half-an-hour."

"Haste, then! which way?"

"For the present, straight on," replied Purcell.

"Come, Mr O Clery! soldiers, attention! double-quick time, and march!"

"Och, no, red coats! double quick time, an' run! run! run! countermanded Nora, putting herself in motion to join the main body. But an accident impeded her further career. To keep clear of the soldiers, and yet trot on at their side, Nora had deviated a little too much towards the edge of the declivity before described, and in an unlucky moment slipped at its edge, and, losing her balance, tumbled to the bottom. There, landing on her feet, she stuck fast in a quagmire, from which in her alarmed and debilitated state of body, it was impossible to extricate herself.

"An' och! Nora cried, 'here I am in throuble, an' nobody comin' to mind me! Sunk apast my hams in could wather an' mud, an' all alone! alone! It 'ill be the death o' me, an' not a soul near me!—an' my new quilted petticoat, an' my Sunday stockins! petticoat an' stockins! stockins an' petticoat!"

And here we must take leave of Nora, sympathising in her distress indeed, but too much concerned in the distresses of others to be able to lend her immediate assistance, though no doubt she escaped in good time, to live over this eventful night during many a long and prosperous day.

CHAPTER XIV.

MULLINS had led his party, and those they escorted or guarded, through the wood before mentioned as part of Purcell's first route, when Kavanagh rode briskly up to him on the road, and said, in a low tone—

"Mullins! Purcell is coming to meet us with Howard and the soldiers; my poor grandfather has just returned from them to inform me."

"Well?" asked or answered the imperturbable Mullins.

"Our number is too small to check them, and it may happen we shall have to take care of ourselves."

"An' so we can, wid God's help and others."

"You think, then, Flinn's new friends will be up?"

"Never fear;" and both relapsed into silence.

"He seems to keep his word, though his manner is so suspicious," said Mr. Somers to his friends, while this conversation was going forward in front: "it is certainly our road homeward."

"It is," said Grace, "and now I scarcely doubt but he will, at all events, guide us to our house."

"Do not doubt at all," said Mary.

"Hark!" resumed Somers, "I think I hear th

approach of a number of persons over the high ground that leads from your residence to this road."

"If so," said Grace, "we are to be attacked again by Purcell with a fresh body of men. He has escaped for no other purpose; the villain is too desperate to forego a settled scheme so easily." Still the advancing footsteps were heard.

"O heaven! who are they?" exclaimed Mary.

"No matter: stand close and fear nothing," said Kavanagh, passing her; and again he rode up to Mullins, and whispered in some anxiety—

"These are the soldiers, Mullins!"

"Well, look far through the moonlight, into the hollow under them, an' thry what else you can see."

"The red waistcoats, I think," resumed Kavanagh, while he obeyed the suggestion of Mullins.

"These are not a crowd of common men," Mr. Somers continued to Grace: "the regular though rapid tramp of their advance leads me to hope they may be soldiers."

"They *are* soldiers!" exclaimed Grace, joyfully. I see the glancing of their caps and feathers over the edge of the height—thank heaven!"

Howard and his party had now, indeed, just gained a point from which the road became observable; and Purcell was the first to point out the opposite phalanx in motion over it.

"There they are!" he exclaimed; "and now it is my time and opportunity to inform your reverend counsellor, Captain Howard, that I fully understood the nature of his doubts and cautions expressed to you a little while ago, though I waited for this moment to say so."

"Praise to God!" said O'Clery to Howard, in a low voice; "these *are* the friends we seek. I can distinctly see my dear Mary Grace in the middle of the party, wearing her white dress and dark mantle."

"I see her too," exclaimed Howard; "and now an instant's pause, Mr. O'Clery. Your suspicions of Purcell seem to be ill-founded."

"Perhaps, Captain Howard; but the whole event, and his future conduct, can alone assure me there were no reasons of any kind for my caution."

"I beg your pardon, Captain Howard," resumed Purcell, advancing a step towards them; "but I think I may have the benefit of whatever new hints his Popish reverence thinks proper to direct to me."

"You are rash, if not intrusive, sir," said Howard.

"Very likely," continued Purcell. "This, then, I have to add: that since I am obtrusive, and since that is the only word for my zealous service, I shall instantly withdraw homeward. You are now in sight of your enemy, Captain Howard, and can no longer require the attendance of an unarmed man like myself, whose strength and spirits are already exhausted; and, indeed, recollecting that, for my first opposition and present services, I must become a mark of especial hatred and hostility to those wretches, there seems an additional reason why I should take care of myself."

"Do not let him budge an inch!" whispered O'Clery, while at the same time he elbowed Howard rather vehemently. "You perceive our friends are returning with a party towards their own residence, not flying from it, and this looks additionally mysterious."

"Why, what do you specifically think, Mr. O'Clery?" asked Howard.

"Nothing specifically: my former grounds of suspicion are certainly altered, but I cannot avoid resting on others, though I am not able distinctly to define them. Yet, one question: if this be really the party that perpetrated the outrage, why, I repeat—why, after such a lapse of time, do we meet them moving on the very point they should of all others avoid?"

"Good night, then, Captain Howard," resumed Purcell; "and I shall perhaps find an opportunity to present my greetings to your prime minister also; but, before I go, I too claim the favour of a private word;" and he turned off with Howard. "I know the kind of enemy you have to deal with better than you can possibly know them, and this is my humble but earnest advice and request—prayer, rather—for your own sake, as well as for your friends: do not pause an instant with these ruffians; they are headed by a marked and branded outlaw: you will know him by his air and dress above all the others. Run that man through the body, or blow his brains out with your own hand; let it be your very first act. If you hesitate, beware of the consequences. *He* is sworn to do the same by you the moment he sees your face. I have the best private information of the fact, I can show it to you to-morrow morning: therefore have a care, I say, and remember my caution."

"I shall certainly think about it, sir," said Howard; "but as to your now leaving us ——"

"There are other reasons why you should act prudently," interrupted Purcell, talking rapidly; "and as this is no time for squeamishness, I shall just hint them to you. You are betrayed, Captain Howard! betrayed by the very friends you now purpose to assist! Listen to me. It would be too long a story, and therefore out of season, to tell you why this is the case; but I can satisfactorily prove it, along with other things, early in the morning: now it is sufficient to say, that Grace, ay, and his meek daughter, too, have a feeling and interest for the very persons in whose power they are."

"What, sir!" cried Howard, threateningly.

"You may well be astonished," added Purcell.

"But, then, Mr. Purcell," continued Howard, as, calling to mind O'Clery's hints, and contrasting them with the present information, he became first

confounded and next irritated—"then, Mr. Purcell, I insist on your remaining with us till this affair is at an end; for——"

"Excuse me, Captain Howard."

"Excuse *me*, sir—it must be so: you have spoken things that require to be explained on the spot; no waiting till morning; no waiting an instant, sir, beyond the opportunity for explanation. I will know what you mean in a few moments. You shall confront my friends, Mr. Purcell, and to them repeat your words—ay, and support them too. Pray fall in again, sir. Sergeant, take care of this gentleman; and now, forward!"

This, as O'Clery surmised, was more than Purcell had bargained for. In fact, his first burst of rage and revenge had not left him capable of framing a rational scheme. In calling upon Howard he obeyed the undigested impulse of the moment; while they came along he had some time to reflect on the danger he must front in facing Mr. and Miss Grace and Mr. Somers, after his known agency in the original aggression; and now, cursing himself that he had at all guided Howard, Purcell's chief anxiety was to withdraw from immediate detection, while at the same time he endeavoured, by incoherent misstatements, that a still cooler moment would also have enabled him to reject, to prepare Howard's mind for what was inevitably at hand. In the fever of agonizing passion, of hope, fear, doubt, and dismay, it is not extraordinary that even a clever villain should thus find all his ingenuity prostrated, and his cunning and consistency reduced to wild assertion.

But when Howard insisted on his remaining with the party, Purcell experienced the most distressing pang: his heart felt a spasm of despair; and with strange energy of manner he blustered, entreated, and raved by turns against the order for his detention.

This unnatural behaviour but strengthened Howard in his resolve, while he was further assisted by the approving whispers of O'Clery; and when Purcell saw no possibility of escape, he could only return to his former tact, and try by every species of falsehood to anticipate the accusations ready to be preferred against him.

"Well, then, 'Captain Howard,' he said, 'relying on your watchful protection against the enmity of these men, I have only to press upon you the advice and cautions you have already heard. I repeat, you will find your old friends with new faces; and, what I have not before stated, you may expect to hear them charge me, in the most violent as well as improbable manner, all in defence of the individual I have before pointed out to your vengeance, and because I am to him and them an object of common dislike. You do not know,' he added, interrupting himself—"you cannot conceive, Englishman and Protestant as you are, to what lengths the Papists of this cursed country will go to stick by each other; you cannot imagine what a web of smooth deceit and treachery they can wind round you."

"Give over, sir!—it is time," interrupted Howard briskly: "we shall soon see all this out. Come, soldiers! But I perceive these people have drawn up across the road, and wait for us."

"They were so placed some time since," O'Clery said; "and, you may observe, our friends still remain exposed in their centre."

"'Tis so," said Howard: "we must go to work cautiously, then. Soldiers! no firing in the first instance: give them the steel, and let it be your chief object to support me in getting five or six file round the lady and her friends. When we have succeeded so far, press those fellows back, and then, your own pleasure and your best. Take as many prisoners, however, as possible; so, forward!"

The whole party were in motion, and about two hundred yards of the sloping ground brought them to the road in front of Kavanagh's men, O'Clery and Purcell remaining close in the rear under the charge of a sergeant and two file.

O'Clery had truly described Kavanagh's position. Miss Grace, her father, and Mr. Somers, were placed in the middle of his line, fully exposed in front, though well guarded behind. At their side and back about six men, mounted on the horses that had previously served Purcell, kept close together; Kavanagh and Mullins also remained mounted; while across the narrow road, at the right hand and at the left, the remainder of the body formed, three deep and in good order.

The whole were less than Howard's force, whose spirits increased, as at the first glance he ascertained this inferiority. But Howard reckoned chances, in complete ignorance of his real situation; and to explain this we must retrograde for a moment.

After Kavanagh, in consequence of Mullins's hint, had perceived the distant approach of Flinn's reinforcement, he fell back some ten or twenty yards, and halted on the road, a good distance beyond the little valley through which in silence and caution his friends pushed their way. This manœuvre was effected for the purpose of inducing Howard to advance upon him after also passing the valley, and so afford ground to the appearance, in Howard's flank and rear, of the new-comers. Kavanagh's only anxiety now seemed to be lest Howard should charge him before the arrival of his reinforcement; but he was relieved by the timely and fortunate pause of Howard's party on the height over the valley.

Gaining, therefore, while his men stood still, a point of the road in which he was hid from Howard, he hoisted his neckcloth on a pole, and waved

on the body under Flinn's guidance. They saw and understood his signal, and in a few moments were up with Kavanagh, consenting to be disposed of as he should direct.

Here we should observe, that the hollow through which they defiled on the road ran at right angles to it, and continued beyond it at the other side, while the road passed across the inequality by means of a rude bridge, affording vent to a rapid mountain stream, that in rainy weather swelled into some compass. Along the road were fences of bank, of bush, and of interstices of dry wall, formed by flat slaty stones laid close upon each other; and the clumsy parapets or boundaries of the bridge continued on both hands the same line of fence.

When the strange men came up, Kavanagh directed Flinn to station them inside the fences to the end of the bridge farthest from his own position: "There keep them hid," said he, "if you can, until Howard passes you by, and until you hear a volley from my people; and at that instant let them jump upon the road and close at his back, while we do the same at his front; then, Flinn, we can disarm the soldiers without another shot. Remember, I will not have a trigger touched on your side."

Flinn hastened to observe these suggestions, and Kavanagh, returning to his own body, continued:—

"Let every man draw his bullet, keeping a charge of powder only; we need not fear that Howard will blaze on his friends here, and there is no use in wasting lead when we can have them just for stretching our hands out. Meantime, attend to what I say: stand perfectly quiet till I speak to you, then fire your blank cartridges in their faces, close in with your prisoners—they dare not return

your fire, but it will frighten them; and while Flinn surprises them at their rear, all you have to do is to assist him in getting up the bran-new muskets and cross-belts. Mind yourselves!"

For Howard now quickly advanced, after passing the valley and bridge, crying out—

"Charge! charge! but draw no trigger without orders!"

"A word before a blow, Captain Howard," said Kavanagh, advancing while Howard spoke. "What, sir! is this your return to a man that has served you, and would still do so?"

"Sullivan, by heaven! Halt, soldiers, and recover arms!" exclaimed Howard. Then turning to Kavanagh, "Sir, that you have served me, my gratitude must ever be a witness: you saved my life; but I have, notwithstanding, to learn how you would now serve me, when I find that lady in your company."

"And is it then so wonderful that I should set a few of my poor tenants to rescue your betrothed lady and her father from Captain John?" asked Kavanagh with composure.

"Have you indeed done me that service?"

"He has rescued us! he has! he has!" cried Mary Grace and Mr. Somers.

Purcell's voice was here loudly exalted, calling on Howard from behind. Howard attended to the summons, as in great perplexity he had just resolved to question Purcell concerning Kavanagh's assertion, backed as it was by the words of his friends.

"These are not, then, the people into whose hands you first traced Mr. Grace and his daughter?" he said, approaching Purcell.

"They are, they are! the very same! Do not heed what the prisoners now would say, for they *are* prisoners, and speak under fear, or perhaps as strong a feeling; for, Captain Howard, what I have

all along hesitated through delicacy to state must now be plainly told: before you met Mary Grace, she and this bravo loved each other."

"Scoundrel!" cried Howard, "dare you presume to assert such a thing?"

"Ask them both the question separately, with this caution—that you do not permit them to answer except in a blunt, simple yes or no. By their own words I am ready to abide; and you, I hope, to act, Captain Howard, in remembrance of the danger I told you to fear from the leader of this infamous outrage."

"Come with me, then, sir, and hear the result. Mr. O'Clery, I cannot consent to your kind and zealous wishes for getting into danger; I must use some well-meant force to keep you where you are. Sergeant, do your duty! Mr. Purcell, forward!"

They again confronted Kavanagh, and Howard precipitately asked, "What, fellow! how do you answer to this charge?"

"Let me hear it first," said Kavanagh, indifferently.

"You presumed to pay attentions to Miss Grace?"

"I loved her to adoration," was the reply.

"Speak, Miss Grace!—Mr. Grace, speak!" Howard cried in frenzy.

"'Tis true," answered Mary in a tremulous tone.

"'Tis true," echoed Mr. Grace; "but ——"

"Silence!" bellowed Purcell. "Pardon me, Captain Howard, but have you not got your answer? and now will you heed whatever evasion they may advance? Listen not to them, I advise again; they are all leagued against you. They will, as I warned you, endeavour to baffle us. I wonder they have not begun to accuse and falsify *me*. Be assured, sir, there is but one way to act: call on these fellows to lay down their arms; if they do not instantly obey, shoot every man of them on the spot—a moment's delay may be fatal to you. Give me a pistol,

and I will make sure of the leader. And, oh!" Purcell continued to his own heart, "heaven and the devil grant he may follow my advice! for in the uproar of the fray is Stephen Purcell's chance, if he can ever have any, to close the mouth of every witness against him, father and all—but the girl's self!"

"I know not what to think, or how to act," said Howard, after a moment's painful and confused pause; "but"—turning to Kavanagh, with a pistol in his hand—"you are my prisoner!"

"Not yet, captain," said Kavanagh, moving back. Howard presented.

"That's the way!—fire! fire!" roared Purcell.

"Oh! no, no, no, no! hold, for God's sake! for the sake of justice!" cried Grace, Mary, and Mr. Somers.

"Let me reflect for a moment," resumed Howard, lowering his pistol. "Some one—the servant Nora—yes, she particularly informed me that the person who took away Miss Grace called himself Captain Doe."

"He did! and that person——" began Grace.

"Silence them, captain, or they will talk us into madness!" interrupted Purcell.

"Silence! cry silence, men!" said Howard, obeying, though he felt not why he did so, the urgency of Purcell.

"I at least may speak," said Kavanagh. "He *did* call himself Doe—you hear he did; and can I, Captain Howard, be that person? I met you, alone and unprepared for such an attempt: more—at about the very moment it was made, I was in Mr. Grace's house, and resisted the assailants."

"He was," interrupted Grace.

"I fired the only shot that was fired, and—I am now glad of it—missed my mark."

"He did! he did!" cried Grace and Mr. Somers.

"And now, when you find your friends with me,

and, observe, on the way to their own home, must I not have just rescued them from Captain John?"

"It would appear so, indeed," replied Howard

"It is not so!" exclaimed Purcell, scarcely knowing what he said, but impelled by a paramount feeling to contradict Kavanagh.

"It is not so!" echoed Grace and his friend.

"True—it is not so!" repeated Kavanagh

"Then, what am I to think of this monstrous tissue of contrary assertion?" asked Howard, more than ever perplexed and irritated.

"I rescued them but from the incarnate fiend that stands by your side," resumed Kavanagh, not seeming to notice Howard's perturbation.

"A lie! a black lie! Now, Captain Howard, begins the falsehood I anticipated," said Purcell.

"No, no!—the truth! the truth!" ejaculated Mary

"What! this gentleman?" said Howard

"Yes, him, that black villain every way—Purcell!" answered Kavanagh: "he who called himself Doe—he who dares attempt in other people's names what he fears to do in his own."

"Here, corporal, with two men!" exclaimed Howard. "Oh, sir!" turning to Purcell, who vainly continued to assert his innocence—"you will excuse any doubt of your honour this may imply; I would only be over-cautious in my duty. Remove him!"

"And now do you know me for the friend I am?" Kavanagh asked, again moving his horse forward.

"I do," answered Howard, "and I beg to stand excused for my mistake. It was indeed a mistake every way; even when I supposed that Doe was the leader of this violence, I should, if my proper senses had served me, have acquitted you altogether."

"Certainly. All was misconception; for, in the first place, captain, Doe could not have been the man, as he was at a distance, and surrounded by your soldiers, when the thing happened."

"But he escaped," observed Howard.

"Indeed!" cried Kavanagh, drily.

"You cry 'indeed,' sir. Now my memory serves, you were the first to tell me he had escaped, long before the unhappy circumstance."

"I might have mistaken; and then as to your blunder about myself—Captain John, you know, is double my age, and black, and stouter, and more like a common ruffian; is he not?"

"Many—nay, yourself—told me so," answered Howard.

"I lied, then!" said Kavanagh.

"Sir!"

"Though that is no reason," he resumed, speaking quickly, "why you should not now believe me, when on the word and faith of a true knight I assure you, that Doe is a man as young as I am—rather like me, too—something as like as a twin brother: by heaven, Captain Howard! as like me as—MYSELF!"

While speaking these words, he engaged his hand in unbuttoning his close frock-coat, that we have described as fitting close to his figure; and when he had ended, Kavanagh, laying the reins on his horse's neck, flung it aside altogether, and displayed an inside dress consisting of a white vest or jacket, over which was a red waistcoat, with bunches of green ribbon for shoulder-knots, and a broad green sash round his waist. He also wore a belt or girdle, in which were seen two case of pistols.

Howard started back at this alarming change of costume, and Grace uttered cries of consternation and despair. Mary, though she too sent forth an exclamation, seemed less affected. Purcell, of all the unarmed party, congratulated himself on the circumstance, as, he rapidly argued, it gave him a better opportunity for revenge, by making his deadly foe an object of more marked hostility.

As all looked on in silence, Kavanagh, in an instant after he had thus avowed himself, turned round

to his party, and exclaimed, "Twelfth subdivision of the flying army of the hills, show yourselves!" and immediately the men all cast off their loose great-coats, and exhibited, individually, uncouth imitations of the fanciful uniform of their young leader.

"Now, see how they stare at us!" he continued.

"Can I believe you?" asked Howard, in unabated surprise; "yet this armed gang, and their and your strange dress ——"

"Sergeant Moonshine!" interrupted Kavanagh, exalting his voice into loud command.

"Here!" answered Mullins, striding forward.

"And, Lieutenant Starlight, appear by yourself!" he resumed, in the same tone.

"And here too, then!" said Flinn, after a short pause, which was occupied by his running inside the fence, past Howard and his soldiers. He sprang over, and stood by Kavanagh's side.

"And now, my loyal officers and men, what is my own hill-name? Answer!" he still continued.

"John Doe! John Doe! and Johnny for ever!" they all shouted; Lieutenant Moonshine throwing up his hat while he cheered, and catching it in mid-air as he jumped buoyantly from the ground.

"If this indeed be true, I am heartily sorry for it," said Howard, stepping back towards his soldiers.

"And why so, captain?" asked Kavanagh, or Doe, as at pleasure we may call him.

"You have served me—served me at extremity, and eternally. You have saved my life, and the honour of my affianced lady; and now, to do my stern duty by you, which as the king's officer I must, will afflict me to the bottom of my soul."

"Your duty! how, brother?" asked the outlaw.

"Unhappy young man!" replied Howard, with the energy of deep feeling, "I must here seize you, to deliver you up to the outraged and impatient justice of your country."

"Two words to that, gallant captain."

"What can you mean? You would not, surely, be so desperate and so foolish as to resist my disciplined force with that inferior one?"

"Indeed I would not," returned Doc.

"And what then? Mercy, alas! does not rest with me.

"Mercy! That is a word unknown to my enemies, as they say it is unknown to me. Pshaw! let us trifle no longer. Moonshine! men! do your work at every side! Spare present life and blood, but disarm them!"

He had scarcely done speaking when the party which he headed rushed forward with tremendous cries, and, as they had been ordered, discharged a volley into the faces of Howard's soldiers—Mary, her father, and his reverend friend, still in the thick of the assailants; while, almost at the same moment, the ambushed foes in Howard's rear jumped upon the road at each side, broke through his ranks, and, more than three to one, instantly grappled with the royal muskets, simultaneously assisted by Kavanagh's men.

The soldiers, taken by surprise, and their arms shouldered, made little or no resistance. In the midst of the smoke, and flash, and explosion of the unexpected volley levelled at them, every man in the line found himself in the sudden gripe of at least three enemies, front and rear, so that every effort was paralyzed. Some few shots, indeed, escaped them; but this happened while they vainly struggled against an overwhelming force, and while their pieces, already seized by tugging hands, were pointed upwards. A few others, who might have fired straight on, saw Howard's friends immediately before them, and remembered his orders; and in fact a minute had not elapsed until Howard found himself at the head of an unarmed body, wearing red coats and military caps, indeed, but deprived of

every other badge of warfare, as even their pouches and belts had been ravished in a twinkling

Himself, too, did not longer than any of his soldiers retain the means of defence. While all was yelling and uproar around him, Lieutenant Starlight advanced with simply a short stick in his hand, and—

"Captain, honey," he said, "I'm comin', first, to keep my promise wid you. I tould you in the barn that we'd show you Doe, some time or other: well, avich, sure there he is. An' now, honour bright; just lend me a loan o' your soord a moment, an' I'll take the best care in the world o' you."

Howard only answered by a pass at his antagonist, which Flinn skilfully parried. They then set to, nearer to each other, and the contest ended in Lieutenant Starlight striking the sword out of the hand of Lieutenant Howard, and immediately flourishing it aloft, and then dropping the point. At the same moment Sergeant Moonshine came up, dismounted, with a sword also girded round his loins, the property, a few moments before, of his more loyal brother, who now accompanied him as his prisoner.

Kavanagh, seeing nothing of Purcell, rapidly questioned his officers concerning him: they could give no satisfactory answer, and he hastened, after some preliminary orders, to seek him.

"Twelfth and fifteenth divisions of the flying army!" he exclaimed, in his most usual tone of mixed authority and humour, "form and close your lines! The soldiers to the rear, doubly guarded; Lieutenant Howard in the front with our friends. Starlight, look to your man!" and, through the confused crowd that now were in bustle to obey him, Kavanagh spurred on in search of Purcell, full of apprehension that he might have escaped.

He found him in good hands, however. In the first moment of attack, Purcell had fled through the hosts of combatants, and was running fast from the field when he stumbled on O'Clery, who, released by Mullins's capture of the sergeant in whose care Howard had politely left him, was rushing on in a directly contrary way, to fling himself among the aggressors and exert his voice for peace. As Purcell and he met, O'Clery, all along influenced by the belief that this man had more to do with the night's disaster than he chose to acknowledge, unceremoniously seized him by the collar, and held him fast.

Purcell remonstrated, implored, threatened, and imprecated, and at last exerted his strength to disengage himself by trying to bring his captor to the ground. To this arrangement O'Clery demurred; and, as both were powerful men, a desperate wrestling-match ensued between them, in which they were seriously engaged at the instant Kavanagh came up, and which, a second afterwards, terminated in the prostration of Purcell, O'Clery falling upon him, and continuing to hold him down by keeping his hands on his collar and a knee on his breast.

"Bravo, Father O'Clery!" shouted Doe, flinging himself from his horse; "I was your debtor before, but this makes me yours for ever. May I never die in sin, reverend sir," he continued, stooping down with a belt and buckle in his hand, "if there has been done this night a better deed in my honourable service! But come, good father; take away your knuckles from the wretch's throttle; the belt is now tight enough; and rise, Purcell—you are my prisoner, and mine only."

"Unhappy young man!" said O'Clery, "it was not to your hands, or to your judgment, I wished to deliver this person."

"Hut, tut! never spoil a pretty action by a bad

compliment. Come, Purcell! on before me! You will follow us, I suppose, Mr. O'Clery?"

They gained the main body, O'Clery attending in silence, when Doe called out the names of Starlight and Moonshine. The men stood by his side; he whispered them for a moment, and they precipitately left the road, on horseback, galloping over the high ground that led to Mr. Grace's house.

"Have mercy on me!" exclaimed Purcell when they had gone.

"I will not kill you *now*," answered Kavanagh.

"Where have you sent these men?" Purcell resumed, his features displaying the wildest anxiety, and perhaps he had caught a part of Doe's whisper.

"You shall learn," answered Doe. "Have patience, Purcell; for, oh! I had patience with *you*!—a patience of years and of distance, of hope and of despair!—patience, while the brain blazed and the sick heart was rending itself with agony; while shame, and hate, and the grief that weeps not, were together fastened upon it! Be patient, therefore, in your turn!"

As he spoke, his face assumed the most baleful expression, and every fibre of his frame seemed knit.

"His words are terrible! Spare us, Kavanagh!" said Grace. Doe took no notice. Mary also appealed to him, and he answered quickly—

"I have not harmed you yet, Mary Grace."

"In the name of the religion whose child you ought to be, and whose minister I am, answer *me*!" exclaimed O'Clery, standing out erect and sternly before Kavanagh. "I fear not your daring and unlawful gang, nor your lonely power among these bare hills and solitudes, and in this fitting hour of the dead night! I fear you not, man, though the sword is in your hand, and your foes bound at your feet! Hear my voice: in the silence of your heart answer me! What deed have you done? what vic-

tory gained? whom have you vanquished? and in whose name, and in what spirit? Have you stood forth in the land of your birth for its pride or its happiness? Have you overcome its foes, who would give it up to the sword, or its chosen soldiers, whose power is from the Power that hath rule from above, to watch for peace while the husbandman turns the furrow, and while the hand of labour is busy with the culture of the earth? Crime is unwashed upon the hands of *your* unhappy followers. What crime? Who are the widows and orphans it has made? and were the voices that ascended for what it has done the voices of women that were as strangers to you? were their wailings in tones and a language strange to your ears, and to the wild echoes that gave back their outcry? Wretched children of many sorrows and many sins! have the wives of your bosoms, and the offspring that sat on your knees, never wept or lisped in the same cadence? Men of blood and of outrage! what do you here in unnatural warfare? While even the birds of prey have cowered in their nests, why are you alone disturbers of the sleep of the world, wanderers in darkness, intruders on the deep slumber of the heath and the mountain? Why are ye away from your household hearths?—those hearths that are indeed chill and comfortless; but are there none to be comforted around them? Hear ye not the cries of many ye have left helpless, rising in vain to you for help? Where are *they*? and what eye and hand is over *them*? Not, perhaps, the eye and hand that, by all breaches of command, heavenly and human, yourselves have averted from them. Sin not, amid all your offences, the sin of wild presumption to say it; lay not that too flattering unction to your souls! It is declared that the curse descended on the father shall visit him in his third and fourth generation; and are ye, miserable men, blessed or cursed, while your church proclaims you beyond the pale of her obedient children, while

in bitterness only she names your names, and while her voice has gone forth among the desert places, calling you back, as an angry shepherd, to the flock and the fold you have abandoned? Woe to the ear that hath not heard that voice! to the rebel that arms himself for the battle that voice hath not ordained! to the hard-hearted and the hardened!—perishing woe on earth, and the woe of gnashing of teeth in the fire that never quencheth! Hear it from my mouth! take it from the word of my lips! I speak it to you in your hour of bad triumph, while you are strong in your sin, while your leaders are by your side, and while your captives are delivered for a temptation and a curse into your hands! I speak it to you while you are as a host, and while I, as a captive also, stand before you! I speak it to you in the solitude where alone you have dared to gather together, and where the tongues of the hills and the valleys will take it up and repeat it! Woe to the hard of heart, to the deaf and obdurate, to the dweller in his sin! Die or repent! In hope and in soul, and in the life for ever, die, or cast down the sword!”

This address, excited by the impulse of the moment, and more enthusiastic perhaps than the general cast of O’Clery’s studied exhortations, made an evident impression, which even Doe seemed in no haste to interrupt. On the contrary, he allowed some minutes to elapse in solemn silence, and then said, with much deliberation—

“I have heard you, Father O’Clery, now twice to-day, with all respect due to your character and eloquence. As all my men had not the advantage of your first exhortation, you have, under my sanctioning silence, now enjoyed an opportunity to argue with them; and I am glad of it, because it will teach them the nature of the influence under which I this evening despatched an emissary to you, to treat for a happy, or at least peaceful, termination of our sad

warfare. Meantime assure yourself you have done some good; and Lieutenant Howard will perhaps take the same view of the question when he recollects the last disclosure made to him, in the place he had the chance to thrust his head into a few hours ago—in your company, too, Mr. O'Clery. I will not damp your zeal by asserting that any former conviction, or change of policy or feeling, assisted your efforts: enough that you have been partially successful, and are likely to be more so: for the present we rest here. On my own part, however, I beg to volunteer an exhortation in my turn. When my government of these poor creatures is at an end, spare them. Pity and spare the starving creature who comes to *you*, Mr. Grace, or to *you*, Mr. Somers, for whatever assistance the law's mercy allows against the law's cruelty; or to *you*, Mr. O'Clery, for those comforts or ceremonies that sanction the interchange of the poor man's affection. Let not justice, humanity, or religion, be held out at a price too high for the poor man's purchase; let not Mammon sit at the right hand side of the counsellor or the judge, or kneel down within the pale of the sanctuary.—But of what do I talk? If you, sir, and your brethren, cannot of yourselves recollect that, amid all his trials, his wants, his oppressions, and his crimes, the wretch looks up to you for the comfort and forbearance you have been sent to give—the help, the pardon, and persuasion, instead of curses, and exactions, and persecutions—still, if you cannot remember this, why should I bring it to your mind? And now, Captain Howard ——”

“For myself I ask not mercy. The chance is yours, bold outlaw; use it as you will,” interrupted Howard.

“I will not deny, Howard,” continued Doe, with a sudden change of manner, “that for the last month you pressed me harder than was courteous on your part: worse—you checked me from a ven-

geance I had travelled far to take; you thwarted me beyond patience, and I all but swore to have your life."

"If so, why did you save it?"

"I could not suffer you to fall at the hands of this mean villain," Doe answered, spurning Purcell.

"He, then, was the prompting assassin?" Howard asked.

"He was. One of his instruments intended to murder you—and, you may remember, suffered for it. The other, my non-commissioned officer, Moonshine, whom Purcell only slightly knew under another name and character, told me of the plan. I was on the spot to assist you. You passed me while I hid in that rocky recess you thought you had fully explored. I saved you; and *when* I saved you, I was perhaps vain enough to show that I could spare also."

"When and how did you break through my lines?"

"Tut! I never was in them. More than half my men, who came up at your back just now, were, however; and for good reasons I had it whispered that I headed them. Any other question?"

"Yes. Why did you send me this paper?" said Howard, presenting the notice he had before unintentionally exhibited to Graham.

Kavanagh looked at it closely and attentively in the waning light of the moon, and then answered—

"This is a forged notice, signed Doe, commanding you to give up your pretensions to Miss Grace. I never wrote, dictated, sent, nor to this moment thought or knew of it. But do not be surprised; my name is often taken in vain. For that matter, it was popular among you before I assumed it—before I was in the country to do so; and it will, I am afraid, live after me."

"But if you did not send this paper, who then?"

"Just ask yourself who it was that broke into her father's house to drag her from you for ever."

"Purcell again?"

"'Tis in his hand," Doe answered, returning it: "and now," he continued, speaking to his party, "forward!"

"Why forward?" said Howard. "Are this young lady and her father yet your prisoners?"

"They are yet under my protection, sir," he replied, distantly and haughtily.

"In what view?—do you lead them directly home?"

"They shall pass with me directly by their own house," answered Kavanagh.

"By it!—not into it, then?"

"Yes, but not immediately.—*Your* house lies a little farther on, in the same direction," he added, fixing his eyes ominously on Purcell. Purcell winced and groaned.

"Doe," resumed Howard, "you should not be a mean, or heartless, or cruel foe."

"Well, Captain Howard?—go on. What do you mean? We lose too much time."

"Doe, or Sullivan, or Kavanagh—hero or devil!—listen to me one moment; answer me one question, if you are a man."

"Out with it! I'll answer."

"Do you love her?"

"I do."

"What are your views towards Miss Grace?"

"Pshaw!—move on! I will guard my own prisoner on foot. Fall back, Lieutenant Howard, from your men, and take your place with mine; draw off the soldiers first; forward with them! Proceed now, captain; and now your other prisoners!"

As, in quick obedience to his orders, the party of friends passed Kavanagh, O'Clery, Grace, and Somers earnestly besought him to declare his intentions; but he only answered that he should do

nothing but what a wronged and trampled man might on his own individual account dare and stand accountable for; and he added, a few moments would yield satisfaction to all. Her friends unheeded, Mary again addressed him. But—

"Excuse me, Mary—madam, Miss Grace, I should rather say; we cannot converse at present. In a little time I shall perhaps claim that honour. Be of good heart, however. I am this night an armed outlaw, to avenge a woman's injuries rather than—but, excuse me—proceed!" was Kavanagh's only answer.

"I will not—cannot leave you behind, and alone with your prisoner," said O'Clery, pausing, while the rest moved forward. "I wish to walk by your side."

"Begging your reverence's pardon, that would be inconvenient," replied Doc. "Your path is before you, Mr O'Clery. Take it, or I shall have to call back two of my men."

"If you harm him," rejoined O'Clery, "be accursed and anathema!" and he joined his friends.

Kavanagh remained stationary with Purcell. He looked on him. He looked into his eyes, as if they were but the windows of his soul, and that through them he could behold the despairing agony which his own heart wildly and sinfully rejoiced in arousing and contemplating. All grew black and silent around them, as within them. The moon was setting, and the tramp of the receding party grew faint along the high ground that led from the road. Still neither spoke; only Kavanagh looked, and Purcell cringed like a hound. At last his tormentor burst into a hideous laugh; and—

"Now, Purcell, you think I will kill you?" he said.

"I fear it, Kavanagh; but, oh! spare me!"

"You are wrong to fear it, then. I only wished to feel how my heart would leap to my throat, and the

blood boil to my fingers' ends, when for the first time we stood, man to man and eye to eye, together. Now, Purcell, we follow!"

"Be merciful, and I will enrich you!"

"Reptile! no word—no breath! Enrich me?—with the riches you plundered from me—my mother—my sister—my young name? Silence, Purcell, and on!" They followed the party without speaking another word.

CHAPTER XV.

OUR last scene necessarily changes to the grounds before Purcell's house, which lay about three hundred yards from Mr. Grace's residence, nearer to the road that led to and commanded Howard's quarters.

Here Purcell had from time to time undertaken considerable improvements, flattering himself that his house surpassed in every respect those of the old proprietors in the neighbourhood; and such indeed was the case. It was a tasty edifice of modern construction, and he had just planted shrubberies and groves at each side, and against the bosom of a hill that rose at its back, while in front was a spacious lawn with a pond of water, which he filled by turning the course of a small mountain stream that was sufficiently near him for the purpose. A high and well-built stone wall enclosed all those improvements.

Outside the wall, and immediately fronting the house, was a rising ground that afforded a view of the whole, together with the swelling piles of mountain scenery, hurled in disorder around, and shooting up in the distance. In about half-an-hour after Doe had despatched them with the whisper, as mentioned in the last chapter, Mullins and Flinn occupied this height. Mullins shouldered a musket,

and Flinn flourished Howard's sword, as both paced up and down, like sentinels on post, and in deep and unusual silence.

"Mullins," at last said Flinn, "how very still an' quiet the house an' the place look to-night!"

"Ay," his companion replied, continuing to walk about. There was another pause, again broken by Flinn in a strange whisper. "I never saw it so lonesome an' quiet as it is this night."

"You said that over an' over," observed Mullins.

"I wondher what's keepin' him," resumed Flinn; "an' I wondher, too, why he bids us meet him here instead of goin' up to the house."

"Because he took his holy oath," said Mullins, "never to cross the bounds o' the place while they stood in his way to cross 'em."

Again they became silent, till Flinn again rejoined, following Mullins as he strode up and down, "Jack, this seems to please you."

"It *does* please me," answered his comrade.

"An' I think we made sure work of it," continued Flinn.

"I think so too," rejoined the other.

"I set fire to the house in three places."

"And I in twenty. It 'ill be a good blaze."

"I wondher what the captain intends for Purcell?"

"Toss him in, to be sure, or he's no captain o' mine."

"You're a bloody-minded dog, Moonshine! Tell me this: did you ever fall on a good deed in your life?"

"I did, on two."

"An' what war they?"

"I killed a gauger."

"Well?"

"An' I shot an attorney. Don't be talkin'; here they are."

Kavanagh, with Purcell by his side, and the rest of the party in the same order they had set out,

appeared, indeed, approaching the height occupied by Flinn and Mullins.

"Have ye observed my orders well?" he asked when they had met. The men answered in the affirmative. He paused an instant, looked towards the house, then consigned Purcell to the care of Mullins, and, approaching Miss Grace, assisted her to descend from her horse. She set her feet on the ground, weak and trembling, and much exhausted.

"Now and here, Mary Grace, we speak: give me your hand and walk forward with me."

"Kavanagh, have pity on me!" said Mary, weeping and clinging to her father, who had also dismounted.

"Spare my child!" Grace exclaimed, detaining her.

"Touch her not! harm her not!" said Mr. Somers and Mr. O'Clery in a breath.

"Outlaw, touch her not! or let it not be while I can look on! Kill me ere you can injure her!" cried Howard.

"Mother of heaven!" retorted Kavanagh, in rising passion—"what can you all mean?" How have I yet harmed the lady? how am I disposed to harm her? Silence, Captain Howard, till there is reason for your interference! Mary, will you not advance and speak with me?" he added, in an altered and melancholy tone.

She hesitated, wept, wrung her hands, and at last walked towards him, and then suddenly dropped on her knees. "Your heart was once generous and noble; 'tis yet brave, and ought to be generous," she said.

"Rise, Miss Grace! this must not be—must not be said; you should not kneel to me!" he cried, hastily, though gently, compelling her to rise.

"Pity a weak and trembling woman!" rejoined Mary, now submitting to be led forward.

"Be calm, for God's sake, and hear me!" said

Kavanagh, when they had gained a rather distant place, "Mary, you loved me once."

"I did; but——"

"You did, you did!" vehemently interrupting her.

"Oh, Kavanagh! that is *not* generous! You speak of a time when we were children together—a very childish time: I could not love then."

"I could, and did. I loved you with my whole heart, soul, and hope. A villain cast my hopes to the wind. I left you and my native country in despair and nominal infamy, and I loved you still. I settled in a distant land, and under a changed name sought knowledge and wealth, partly for revenge, partly for my love of you. I have come back to my country, and now my revenge is in my grasp; but you, Mary—my adored Mary!—you do not love me still."

"Oh, no, no! My heart, my promise, almost my duty, are another's."

"And that other is Howard?"

"Howard—and no man else—now and for ever!" said Mary.

"Swear to me by heaven that you love him?"

Mary, urged by her feelings and the situation, wildly gave the oath demanded of her.

He paused; his eyes fell on the earth; he groaned aloud; then starting into sudden vehemence, "Answer me one question, on the pledge of your immortal soul! If you were freed, without your own concurrence, of these merely prudent engagements, and if you saw and were sure of a prospect of competency and fair name to be shared with the object of your earliest love—with Kavanagh——"

"Never!" she interrupted, firmly and energetically. "Call them not prudent engagements only. I repeat in the Divine presence——"

"Stop, Mary, and hear me out! The earth is wide, and upon her spreading bosom there are hills

and pleasant valleys, fairer and richer than even the hills and valleys of this green land; the sun shines kindlier upon them; their airs are softer, and their groves and flowers brighter, and in their bowels is hoarded wealth. Oh, Mary! their solitudes, beyond the blasting voice of man and man's hatred, breathe out a paradise; and with you to crown as my queen, and as the lady and the queen of their silent beauty, how happy I could live and die! how happy after all I have suffered! and how changed from what I was, from what I am—and, if you hate me now, from what I must ever be! Do not cast me off, Mary!" he continued, falling in his turn at her feet: "save me from this world and the next!"

"Rise, oh, rise, Kavanagh! You are not to be lost; God never made you to be lost, nor to be an outcast from men! Think of your God, and pray to him for light and patience! I—I will pray for you on my bended knees, in the morning when I get up, and in the night before I lie down to sleep. I will pray for you in tears, in tremblings, and in remembrance of the past; but, Kavanagh, expect no more from Mary Grace. In the Divine presence, I repeat, *he* is proudly and fondly beloved by Mary; and no man, and no circumstance, can ever make him less so!"

"This you swear?" said he, suddenly rising.

"I swear it!" His brow fell blackly. He glared at Purcell. He took her hand, and walking rapidly, led her back to her father; then, after a moment's silence, turning to his victim—

"Monster!" he shrieked out—"my destroyer every way! behold another cup of earthly happiness, the sweetest, the purest of all, your hand has dashed from my lips! You sent me—banished me—tore me from her; you took away the name and the means for native exertion, and all the opportunity in and by which I might have continued present with her and worthy of her love; you branded and

outlawed me, till she first learned to fear, and then—abhor me! God! oh God! this is the hardest stroke!”

“Kavanagh, be just: I am not the man that injured you,” said Purcell.

“Not! Must I again repeat how often and how deadly? My poor mother, Purcell! my gentle, kind, and good mother!—my blooming, happy, and, till you damned her, my sweet and innocent Cauthleen!—my only sister and my only shame! Wronged me! injured me! Oh, deep and cool villain! see these scalding tears, and hear this shivering voice, made childish by the recollection of all your wrongs, and then, fiend as you are, say not that word again!”

He crossed and pressed his extended hands over his face, and the plentiful tears burst indeed through the interstices of his fingers.

“Divil a dhrop ’ud come, Starlight, only for this girl wid the white face,” said Mullins to Flinn, as they observed the scene; “though myself wondhers what ails him about her, when ’tis only to give us the word an’ he has her still.”

“I wondher too,” answered Flinn.

“I’ll jog him on the business, an’ get him out o’ this soft fit,” continued Mullins. He strode to Kavanagh and whispered, “Captain, musha, captain, no more of it now! Only tell us which way to run wid the girl—down to the coast, eh?”

“Silence, and keep your place!” exclaimed Kavanagh, stamping at him. Mullins withdrew, uttering an “Ayoch!” and his captain went on, still addressing Purcell:—“Look at these unhappy men, and learn, over and over, how you have cursed me! I found them, indeed, ripe for my purpose, and some of them stained with crimes that under me they should never have committed: my revenge alone could have sought their fellowship. I leagued with them, professedly for their views, but really

for my own; but I leagued with them—have led and encouraged them—and stand accountable, before heaven and man, for their late perseverance in outrage. Purcell! have you not wronged me?"

Purcell, starting and clasping his hands, here uttered a loud cry, and "Lights in my house! in every window!" he exclaimed: "what is this?"

"Lights in your house! and in hell, tyrant!—a shadow of the flame that shall soon, and for ever, swathe you! Look again! 'tis brighter and redder than the midnight blaze that shone over your costly feasts, and on the worms that crawled round to share them! Look again!"

The fierce light grew stronger at all the windows, then waned, and then flared out again, as it proceeded in its destroying course.

"My house on fire! my property wrecked! my papers! my wealth! my all! And was it for this, plunderer and assassin!—was it for this you led me here?" he continued, turning in fury on Kavanagh.

"For this?—fool, fool! prepare yourself! If you have ever learned a prayer, repeat it!"

"Mercy! I am now below your vengeance!" cried Purcell, suddenly changing his tone and manner: "I am a beggar, and at your feet! Look on me—I am at your feet!"

"There would I have you be! By the round world, I have prayed and wept for it!—for such a scene and hour I have thirsted, and my tongue hath burned with thirst! Thus in my dreams I have seen it, and shrieked and laughed to see it! Look at your house again!"

While he spoke, the crackling of slates and glass was heard, and a second after the flame shot out through the windows and door, clear and straight, like a broadside from some great war-ship. Immediately followed the smoke—the volumes of smoke, massy, thick, and curling, and showing, amid the

red light and murky relief of the hills around, white as a morning vapour that the sun calls from the bottom of the valley. The moon had set, and here and there in the sky black wreaths of clouds moved swollen and slowly along: while through them and between them the "chaste stars" glimmered wildly on the phenomenon, reduced by the contrast of lurid light to the appearance of cold, silvery specks set in a frozen ground of intense blue. The side of every hill, and every break, for miles adjacent, caught the sudden glow, removing it, fainter and farther, into almost desert solitude, till at last it was devoured by remotest darkness. But the rugged features of all the nearer heights became fitfully developed in the blaze, and, grim and haggard, broke out into the night: nay, at a very considerable distance, high peaks, white in snow, blushed faintly and without form, like the shadowy indications of grand scenery caught and lost in a dream. The lawn immediately before the house seemed perishing in light, and the pond of water, flaming like molten ore, reflected and heightened the immediate horrors and magnificence of the scene.

"And now, and at last," continued Kavanagh, "amid this general wreck of your ill-gotten fortune, bane of my wordly hopes and happiness!—amid ——"

"Hold! hold!" cried Mary, her father and the two clergymen springing forward, as Kavanagh stood over Purcell, tugging at a pistol that was held in his belt.

"Kavanagh! stain not your hands with his blood! Leave him to God and his country! You said I hated you: I do not—I never did; but now force me not to abhor!" exclaimed Mary

"Then, I will not myself deal with him," said Kavanagh. "I have never yet coolly shed blood; and the only drop I ever shed was this night,

in protecting the life of him who is most dear to you, Mary.—But, Starlight, lead him down amongst you.”

“Most unhappy man!” said O’Clery, “you dare not assume the disposal of his life! In my presence, whose voice is the voice of that religion you are bound to hear and obey, you dare not!” and he stepped between Doe and his victim. Mr. Somers also interfered to the same purpose. Kavanagh stood a moment silent, whispered Mullins, and then spoke out.

“I am willing, reverend gentlemen, to be guided by what you say. Only answer me one question:—Is it not set down—‘An eye for an eye, and a life for a life?’”

“It is,” they answered; “but the power to exact the penalty lies in the law and authority of the land.”

“It is,” he continued, not seeming to notice the latter part of the answer. “This man, then, for the life of her who was my mother, and which he has cut short, deserves to lose his own.”

“For his crimes of this night his life is forfeit, whatever may have been his previous course,” they replied; “but, again we say to you, leave him to pay the forfeit to those who alone can justly claim it, and embrace not your individual and unpermitted hands in a murder.”

“He deserves to die; you have said it. Are there no other voices here to give in a verdict?”

“He deserves it,” answered all of Doe’s party, in a deep mutter of many voices: “take his life.”

“You have yourselves uttered the word, and now you hear its echo,” resumed Doc, still speaking to the clergymen; “and I have not skill nor time to argue the other question. Enough if I feel that the permission was spoken to all mankind, as well as to a few; and to you or me, as well as to any others; to the injured if to any; to the heart made desolate, and to the survivor left alone. Therefore,

my officers, away with him!" he continued in a sudden change of voice, as Mullins and Flinn, by an unobserved manœuvre, and in obedience to his former whisper, had fastened their talons in Purcell, and were dragging him along. "Take him to his own threshold—there put him out of pain—shoot him—and then ——"

He was interrupted by cries of intercession from the clergymen, who hastened after the men—from Mary, her father, and Howard—and by despairing appeals from Purcell, whose arms had escaped from the belt.

"Come wid us out of his way!—he's always dangerous in a passion," croaked Mullins, tugging him off.

"Kavanaugh, have mercy on me!—Captain Howard!—Mr. O'Clery!—Miss Grace!—speak for me!—a word! a single word!" the unfortunate continued.

"Come, don't give us any more o' your nonsense! come, we be kind to you," Mullins continued. By this time O'Clery had reached them, and with his clenched hand knocked down Flinn. Purcell, a little relieved, struggled some steps with Mullins towards the edge of the abrupt height on which they were situated. Here both fell, and, ere O'Clery could farther interfere, they rolled down the side of the steep, grappled with each other, and straining and foaming at every turn over. They were stopped by the high wall that arose immediately at the bottom. Half-a-dozen men rushed after them, intercepting O'Clery; but, ere any could reach the spot, the report of a pistol, followed by a groan, was heard.

In a moment they men re-emerged from the hollow, bearing Purcell between them by his arms, legs, and feet. His horrent face was sprinkled with blood; his eyes projected, without winking, from their sockets; despair seemed to have fastened on all his features, and yet the remnant of a hideous smile was about his mouth.

"Why does he smile? where is Moonshine?" asked Kavanagh. "Who fired the shot?" he continued, when the men did not instantly answer. It was Purcell, who in the struggle at the bottom of the wall had snatched a pistol from Mullins's girdle, and, with the muzzle at his breast, literally shot him through the heart.

"Poor Jack is gone from us!" the men answered at last: "what are we to do with Purcell?"

"Flinn will tell you. Lead him off! let me not again look on him: he makes the flesh of a man creep and run cold!" cried Kavanagh. They instantly bore away their prisoner, Flinn leading them; and Purcell, stupefied, and still in his fearful smile, now said not a word.

"And your hand again, Mary Grace!" resumed Kavanagh, when they had left the height: "and be quick! be quick! Why do you draw back and shiver? Mine is not yet blotched. Howard! men! let him advance!—here—take her; she is yours—virtuously yours. You will be kind to her, for her own sake, for my sake, Howard. I saved your life; you are free. In the morning send your soldiers to the barn, and they shall there find their arms, along with those you saw, and others. Now they are free also."

"Still generous, though utterly lost!" interrupted Mary. "Kavanagh, Kavanagh! call back that dreadful command!"

"Noble though unfortunate man! leave him, as all of us exhort you, to the laws he has this night outraged; give up your desperate courses; and if my friendship ——" Howard was going on when Doe broke in with—

"Peace! I give them up because I had intended it. Miserable and misguided creatures! return even to the oppression you would vainly and sinfully oppose, and to the hard lot that, embittered as it is by utter poverty and cruel neglect, you can never

