The Tithe-Proctor eBook

The Tithe-Proctor by William Carleton

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PREFACE.

After the reader shall, have perused the annexed startling and extraordinary narrative, on which I have founded the tale of the Tithe-Proctor, I am sure he will admit that there is very little left me to say in the shape of a preface. It is indeed rarely, that ever a document, at once so authentic and powerful, has been found prefixed to any work of modern Irish Fiction—proceeding as it does, let me add, from the pen of a gentleman whose unassuming character and modesty are only surpassed by the distinction which his name has already gained in one of the most difficult but useful departments of our native literature.

I trust that there will be found nothing in the work which follows that is calculated to give any serious offence. Yet, when we look back upon the contentions, both political and polemical, by which this unhappy country in connection with tithe especially, has been so frequently and so bitterly distracted, we can hardly hope, that any writer, however anxious, nay studious, to avoid giving offence, can expect to treat such a subject without incurring animosity in *some* quarter. Be this as it may, I have only to say, on behalf of myself, that in composing the work I was influenced by nothing but a firm and honest determination to depict the disturbances arising from the tithe impost with a fair and impartial hand: and if any party shall feel hurt by observations which the necessity of rendering full justice to a subject so difficult have imposed upon me in the discharge of a public duty, I beg them to consider that such observations proceeded from no wish to offend existing prejudices, but are to be looked upon as arising inferentially from those stern and uncompromising claims of truth and justice, which equally disregard the prejudices of any and every party. After all, I am of opinion that the spirit in which the work is written will be found, whilst it correctly delineates the state and condition of the country during the fearful tumults and massacres of the Tithe Rebellion, to have left little, if anything, to be complained of in this respect.

In constructing narratives of this sort, it is to be understood that certain allowances are always made for small anachronisms that cannot be readily got over. The murder of the Bolands, for instance, occurred in the year 1808, and the massacre of Carrickshock, as it has been called, in 1832. It was consequently impossible for me to have availed myself of the annexed “Narrative” and brought in the “Massacre” in the same story, without bringing down the murder of the Bolands to a more recent date.

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It may be objected that I have assumed, as the period of my story, one which was calculated to bring into light and action the worst feelings and the darkest criminals of my country. This, however, was not my fault. If they had not existed, I could not have painted them; and so long as my country is disgraced by great crimes, and her social state disorganized by men whoso hardened vices bring shame upon civilization itself, so long, I add, these crimes and such criminals shall never be veiled over by me. I endeavor to paint Ireland, sometimes as she was, but always as she is, in order that she may see many of those debasing circumstances which prevent her from being what she ought to be. In the meantime, I trust the reader will have an opportunity of perceiving that I have not in the *Tithe-Proctor*, any more than in my other work, forgotten to show him that even in the most startling phases of Irish crime and tumult, I have by no means neglected to draw the warm, generous, and natural virtues of my countrymen, and to satisfy him that a very few guilty wretches are quite sufficient, however unjustly, to blacken and degrade a large district.

There is, however, a certain class of pseudo-patriots in this country, who are of opinion that every writer, professing to depict our national character and manners, should make it a point of conscience to suppress all that is calculated “to lessen us in the eyes of the world,” as they are pleased to term it, and only to give to the public the bright and favorable side. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the moral dishonesty and meanness of a principle, at once so disgraceful to literature and so repugnant to truth. These thin-skinned gentlemen are of opinion that the crime itself is a matter of trivial importance compared to the fact of its becoming known, and that provided the outside of the platter is kept clean, it matters not how filthy it may be within.

In the days of my boyhood and early life, the people of Ireland were, generally speaking, an honest, candid, faithful, and grateful people, who loved truth, and felt the practical influence of religious feeling strongly, but so dishonest and degrading has been the long curse of agitation, to which forms of it their moral and social principles have been exposed, that there probably could not be found in any country, an instance in which the virtues of the whole people have been so completely debauched and contaminated (I do not say voluntarily), as those of the Irish have been by the leading advocates of repeal. The degeneracy of character, occasioned by those tampering with our national virtues, is such as we shall not recover from these thirty years to come. Many of our best, mellow-toned, old virtues, that pass in an unbroken link of hereditary beauty from father to son, and from family to family, like some sacred and inestimable heirloom, at once reverenced and loved, are all gone—such as our love of truth, our simple devotion and patriarchal piety, our sincerity

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in all social intercourse, and others of the same stamp; whilst little else is left us but a barren catalogue of broken and dishonest promises, and the consciousness of having been at once fleeced and laughed at. And it would be well if we could stop here, but truth forces us onward. The Irishman of the present day—the creature of agitation—is neither honest, nor candid, nor manly, nor generous, but a poor, skulking dupe, at once slavish and insolent, offensive and cowardly—who carries, as a necessary consequence, the principles of political dishonesty into the practices of private life, and is consequently disingenuous and fraudulent.

Let me not be misunderstood. I love truth; and have never been either afraid or ashamed to speak it; and I trust I never shall. I now allude to the principles of Conciliation Hall, and the system by which they were led. I feel bound, however, to exempt the party called Young Irelanders from having had any participation in bringing about results so disastrous to the best moral interests of the country. It is true, that, as politicians, they were insane; but then they were at least sincere and honest; and I am satisfied that there is not a man of them, who would not have abandoned the object he had in view, sooner than accomplish it by sacrificing the popular virtues and moral character of the country for its attainment. I have myself been a, strong anti-repealer during my whole life, and though some of the Young Irelanders are my personal friends, yet none know better than they do, that I was strenuously opposed to their principles, and have often endeavored—need I say unsuccessfully?—to dissuade them from the madness of their agitation.

Having made these few necessary observations, I now beg to introduce to my readers the extraordinary narrative already spoken of—a narrative whose force and graphic power will serve only to bring shame upon the feeble superstructure which I have endeavored to erect upon it. It is termed—

THE MURDER OF THE BOLANDS.

In the year 1808, there lived near Croom, in the county of Limerick, a farmer named Michael Boland. He was an intelligent and prosperous man, and the owner of many hundred acres of the best land in that fine county.

He had two sons and two daughters, all grown up to manhood and womanhood, in this year, and the parish chapel never saw, in their time, a finer family for stature, symmetry, and comeliness, attend its mass than Michael Boland, his wife, and children. With the growth of his family, his ambition and desire of increased wealthiness grew; and, by the agency of some hundred pounds, he became the tithe-proctor, or rector of several patches of tithes throughout the county.

At first he was successful in this speculation, and with his increased profits, himself and his children assumed a higher and more important tone and bearing in society. In fact, his sons and daughters passed as ladies and gentlemen, not only in external appearance, but in elegance of manners and cultivation of mind; for he spared no expense on their education, as well in his original as in his subsequent condition of life; besides that at this period, and for a long time previous, the County of Limerick was the great school-house, not only of Munster, but of all Ireland—vide Carleton's "Poor Scholar."

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The sudden departure of the Bolands from the intercourse and intimate acquaintance of their former companions and neighbors, as well as the long brooding hatred and opposition of the people to the payment of tithes, soon gave rise to loud murmurs and sarcastic retrospective observations against them; and people far and near took every occasion to offend and insult them—both men and women——wherever and whenever an opportunity of doing so, in a galling manner, offered. Often were the Misses Boland asked, when mounted on their side-saddles, did they remember when their mother used to be driving her cart-load of tankards of sour milk to the market of Limerick, and sitting there for days retailing it at a penny a gallon, &c.; and as often were the young brothers asked when bursting over an old neighbor's fence, in scarlet and buckskin, if they remembered when their father and mother bore an active hand and shoulder to the carving out and spreading of the manure to the fields, &c.

Far from being abashed at all this, the Bolands only sought ampler opportunities to annoy and exasperate their ill-wishers by more imperious airs to them, and a closer attendance to the gentlemanly sports of the country, but still they gave no tangible cause to quarrel broadly with them. While matters were going on in this way, they received a nocturnal anonymous letter, ordering them to send a few of their abundant stock of arms to a certain lonely place, for the benefit, of the popular legislators of that turbulent county. This summons the Bolands answered by a letter of defiance, and a challenge to the parties to come and take them forcibly if they durst. They were agan summoned for their arms, and cautioned to lower their demand for tithes. To this they sent an exasperating response of defiance, and a challenge, after which they seriously went about fortifying their dwelling, and putting it into the best posture of defence against the assault which they were very certain would be made on them sooner or later.

They built a line of lofty strong stone walls around their house, offices, and other property, and, thus secure, they awaited anxiously the expected visit of their deadly enemies.

In the meantime the messengers of vengeance passed through all the counties of Munster, with an account of the rebellious designs of the Bolands, against the majesty of midnight legislation; and to collect levies of men, ammunition, army, and friends, for the purpose of making a certain destructive attack upon them.

One evening, about the latter end of November, the roads and paths leading to the little village of Kilteely, a few miles to the east of Boland's house, was observed to be more than usually thronged with men, on foot and on horseback, passing, as it were, to and from Limerick, and strangers, apparently, to all the inhabitants and to each other. Shortly after nightfall, the hill of Kilteely was seen covered with men and horses, and within an old ruined house on the top of the hill a dim light was seen to occasionally flitter. This ruin was full of respectably dressed men, and at one end of it, on chairs, and at a table, provided for the occasion, sat twelve of the most respectable of them, and a

portly important-looking gentleman on an elevated chair at the end of the table. Two or three candies were burning, and some slips of paper were on the table.

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After a silence of a few seconds, the judge asked, in an audible voice, if there was any business to be brought before the court on that night? He was immediately answered in a solemn tone, by more than one voice, that there was a great deal of business, but that only one case, that of Captain Right against Boland, should be brought before him at that present time. The judge then desired that the case be gone into. Whereupon a middle-sized well-set young man, about six-and-twenty years of age, whose name we know, and who sat behind the judge, now brought his chair forward to the table, on the judge's left hand, and unrolling a roll of paper, read in a low, solemn, but audible tone of voice, a series of charges preferred by the said Captain Right against the said Michael Boland and his sons.

The captain was then called up, and he deposed to different charges against the defendants—such as taking beforehand, or in reversion, several small farms over the heads of poor but solvent tenants, turning them adrift on the world, and converting their small agricultural farms into one or more large farms for grazing; thereby adding to the number of the destitute, and contracting the supply of agricultural produce—the payment to his laboring men of only eight-pence a day, which he compounded for in kind—potatoes, milk, &c, at twice, at least, what those commodities fetched him in the neighboring markets. These were only a few of the many charges of petty tyranny preferred against Boland; but the last and greatest of all was his Tithe Exactions.

Several witnesses were called up to prove these weighty offences, after which it was asked if the accused party had been served with notices to desist from those high misdemeanors; and if he had engaged any one to speak for him, or in his favor. After a short pause, a man above the middle size, with snaggy hair and beard, and of a sinister aspect, came up to the table and said, that although he had not been employed or deputed to appear for Mr. Boland and the young masters and misses, his fine sons and daughters, yet justice to the accused compelled him to come forward, and offer a few words in extenuation of the punishment, if any, which should be inflicted for their alleged misdeeds. "First, then," he asked, "was it possible that they, the men then present, should be angry or offended at seeing one of their own race and religion spring up from among them, and take his station with the best of the Cromwellian Shoneens that surrounded and oppressed them? And when he did so spring up, was it any blame to him to avail himself of every means which The Law allowed him to maintain his elevation, though it might be by standing on the shoulders and necks of as good fellows as himself? What had Mr. Boland done but what others had been doing for ages, and were doing still? As for the matter of tithes, sure they should be paid to the minister who they never saw nor cared to see, and if Mr. Boland had profit on them, so much the

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better, because the less tithe that went into the absent minister's pocket the more would they all be pleased. To be sure the tithe-proctor always exacted to the last farthing, and more than the minister—and it is believed that Mr. Boland was not behind any of the trade—and some people say, indeed, that, from his knowledge of farming and the ins and outs of people's little tillage, he sometimes exacted to within a trifle of one-fifth of the produce. Indeed, in my own case—and I am but a poor brogue-maker, with half-a-dozen acres of the |poorest lands of F------, he took from me, between citations to the Bishop's Court and other costs, with the original tithes, at least one-fourth of the entire produce of my little farm; nor do I know any one in the parish that fares better than myself, especially the poor people who don't understand the law, and who are not able, or willing, to get into it. However, I confess, I never regretted my own share of the loss, where I knew and thought that it all went to the glory and grandeur of the Masters and Misses Boland. Nor shall I ever forget the cutting-up which young Mick Boland gave me, with the butt-end of his loaded whip, the day I went to their house to complain that their driver had put all my sheep into the pound, for a debt of sixteen shillings, tithe-money. And now, my Lord Justice, as I have said so much of the truth in favor of Mr. Boland and his family, I hope your lordship will pass a merciful and just sentence oh them, and that this just jury won't find these friends to us, to our religion, and to our country, guilty."

There was a suppressed murmur of approbation, accompanied by an audible stamping of feet, at the conclusion of this merciful harangue. But silence being called, the jurors put their heads together across the table, and in less than two minutes their foreman handed up the issue-paper to the secretary, who sat by the side of the judge on receipt of which that functionary arose and in a solemn, scarcely audible voice, read from the paper a verdict of "guilty" against Michael Boland and his two sons. The judge then immediately arose from his chair, and in a low, solemn, but firm and distinct tone of voice, pronounced the verdict of the court to be, "Death and Dark Destruction to Michael Boland and his two sons," and that the sentence should be executed that very night. On the announcement of the verdict a low shriek of exultation arose from the audience, followed by a simultaneous half-suppressed cry of, "Long life to our Judge! Long life to Buck English!"

The judge stood up again and said: "Now, boys, I know that there is no man here present but a man who has been often well tried in exploits of danger and of death: every man of you is the leader of a party of brave fellows, who, with yourselves, have sworn to sustain the oppressed; crush the tyrant, and right the wronged. Your men are brave, bold, and hearty; keep them to: their duty, and in perfect submission to your orders. Let the old tyrant and his young cubs be cut off, at all hazards, but spare the women—nay, make every possible exertion to save them, but, more especially, and by all means, let the eldest daughter, Miss Anna, be saved, secured, and brought to me, as

you all know how long I have vainly endeavored to make her mine. And now, boys, every man to his post, and I, your commander, shall lead you on."

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Buck English is a real character—his real name was Ryan, and he had been respectably reared, but gave himself up to the intoxicating excitement of the French Revolution—he also fought in ’98, and subsequently, for his intelligence and daring spirit, became the leader of all the lawless and disaffected parties in his native County of Limerick, and, indeed, of all Munster.

The parties within the old ruin now made their appearance on the hill, and every man of them going to the head of his own body, they marched first to Hospital, a contiguous village, where they boldly beat a drum, the sound of which called up, as by enchantment, such a concourse of armed men as frightened the parties themselves. They marched from that, westwards, to Knockany, where they dug up several extensive fields (of grass) belonging to Mr. O’Grady. They marched on then, in the same direction, towards the residence of the Bolands, their numbers increasing as they went along, by voluntary and involuntary parties.

The Bolands, ever on the watch, soon learned that they were to be visited that night by those parties whom they had so long defied, but they never calculated that they Should be attacked by such a strong force as they now learned was approaching them—for it is believed that the actual number could not have been less than five thousand men, contributed by the Counties of Limerick Clare, Kerry, Cork, Waterford, Tipperary, and Kilkenny.

However, they were not daunted, but immediately put themselves in order of battle. They first sent out (off their premises) all their servants, men and women, lest there should be a spy or a traitor among them. They then carried up all their arms and ammunition to the top floor of their (two-story, long, thatched) house. The father and the younger sons planted themselves at one of the window’s facing the front. The elder son and the family tutor, a young man of the neighborhood, who would not abandon them in their hour of danger, took their stand at the window which looked directly at the narrow strong door of the wall which inclosed the house. The two daughters, with their mother, took up their places between the two windows, under cover of the wall, and having been well practiced for som, weeks previous, stood prepared to load and hand up the arms to their heroes when the occasion should arrive. About the hour of one o’clock in the morning, the barking of dogs, and an odd random shot, gave the Bolands certain and unmistakable notice that their hour of terror was at hand. And soon they could hear a monotonous sound of moving feet and suppressed voices, under the outer walls of their fortress. A horn was then sounded, and the besieged were called upon to open their gates and surrender at discretion. But no answer was received from within, where all was total darkness and apparent inactivity. Several attempts were now made to burst the strong yard door, but without effect. The assailants then began

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to fire at the thatch of the dwelling house, as well as on the out-offices, with the intent of setting them in flames; and after several attempts, they ultimately succeeded in igniting the thatch of a detached cow-house, which stood out from the other buildings, and the wind, unfortunately happening to blow from that quarter to the other offices, carried the fire to them, by which they were soon in a blaze. In the meantime, they procured two sledges from a neighboring forge, with which they assaulted the yard door, which they soon broke in. Now there was a dead pause on the part of the assailants—for they knew very well, that to pass on the threshold of this door was certain death. However, the pressure from the rear was so great, that suddenly several men were involuntarily pushed in through the doorway. And now the work of death commenced, for no sooner had the first batch been pressed in, than there was such a well-directed shower of bullets poured out on them from four well-charged blunderbusses, as levelled every man of them with the earth. A moment's pause ensued, and the door was again filled with new aspirants for "fame in the cannon's mouth," who, however, fared as badly as the preceding batch. During this time the assailing party had been busy with crowbars and other instruments, in making several breaches in the yard walls. At length they succeeded in opening entrances in three different places at the same time, and thus in a few minutes several hundred men were precipitated into the yard. And now commenced the work of death in earnest. The assailants were shot down in scores, while the upper windows of the house, from which the deadly firing was so ably kept up, received fifty discharges to the one that issued from them. The house was immediately surrounded, and guards of chosen faithful men were placed at its doors and lower windows, with strict orders to let no one, especially the "old fox," escape, with the exception only of the women.

To add to the dreadful condition of the Bolands, the assailants had now succeeded in igniting the thatch of the dwelling-house, and it was immediately in a blaze. The Bolands and their tutor, ably served by their mother and sisters, still continued to deal death and destruction on the parties outside, without being yet fatigued or disabled. But at length the upper floor became too hot, and the old man, with his wife and daughters, retreated to the lower floor. The brothers and the tutor, however, remained above, but doing less execution, because, when the assailants saw the house on fire, they retreated outside the yard wall, excepting the guard who were placed round the house, and these stood so close to the walls that the party above had not power of injuring them, without fully exposing their own persons at the windows.

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While both parties were thus in a fearful state of suspense, the burning roof of the house fell in on the three young men above, and immediately buried them for ever in its destructive flames. The assailing crowds set up a terrific shout of triumph. The floor above now began to crackle, and so dense was the smoke below, that the old man and the woman were in a state little short of suffocation. At last the Proctor became desperate, and opening one of the ground windows, and taking his poor wife by the hand, he attempted to throw himself and her out through it. No sooner, however, had they appeared at the window, than the old man was riddled with bullets from without, and thrown back into the now blazing room from which he had been endeavoring to escape.

The three young men and the old man being now destroyed, a voice in the rear of the crowd called out, in a fierce commanding them, to rescue the women at all hazards, whereupon the sledges were applied to the front door of the house; but while they were thus engaged, the young women unbarred the back door, and rushing out with their mother, uttering the most piercing shrieks, they ran into a stable which was near, before they could be laid hold of. Here, however, the two daughters were immediately seized on by order of the commander of the siege, Buck English, and carried out, but not violently, until they came to the stable-door, where the eldest daughter laid hold of the iron bolt staple of the door-post, and so desperately did she hold it, that she did not let it go till her shoulder was dislocated. They were both carried off then to the Galtee mountains, the usual resort of the Buck, who retained the eldest during pleasure. I forget what became of the younger girl, but the other became deranged, and in that melancholy state was subsequently taken into the “protection,” as it is called, of a certain banker of Limerick, who shot himself in that city, to my own knowledge, in 1815.
* * *

The scene at the residence of the Bolands, on the morning after the attack, was truly horrifying. The remains of the four men, almost burned to cinders, were dug out of the still burning ruins, nor was the spectacle in the yard and on the neighboring road less frightful; from the multitude of dead bodies with which they were strewn; for most of their stranger assailants who were killed were left on the spot—the party not choosing to be seen carrying them off by daylight. But such of the people of the neighboring parishes as fell, were carried off by friends and acquaintances, and hid during that day, but buried at night at remote distances from their houses, in the newly-ploughed and in the wheat-sown fields. The inquest, &c, being over, the government and the gentry of the county offered a large reward for any information that would lead to the apprehension or knowledge of the actors, especially the commander, in this fearful tragedy. A strong military force was stationed in the neighborhood, and all the bad and suspicious characters of the district were taken up, and committed to gaol on suspicion. However, the original concocters of the murder made their escape, either to England or to the remote parts of Clare, Kerry, and Cork; whilst terror reigned throughout the whole County of Limerick among the farmers at seeing the numbers that were arrested, and the largeness of the reward.

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One morning, as a well-known active magistrate of the county was sitting at his breakfast, a strange woman came to his door, and requested to see him on business of importance. He immediately called up two of his servant men, and ordered them to go to the door and see that the woman was really a woman, and that she had no arms about her. This was soon done, and the woman, a real one, was ushered into his worship's presence. She then told him—the room being first cleared of all other people--that, she was the wife of D---- A------, the brogue-maker of F——, that her husband was an honest, industrious man, who knew his own trade and business well, and who knew a great deal about the business of other people, too, and of what was going on in the country—that he was a man of upright and Christian principles, who would always feel it a conscientious duty to aid the laws of his country to preserve social order and punish crime—that he was not a man to be terrified or bribed by any amount of punishment or reward; but that if he were properly managed and kindly treated, he might be found able to give a good deal of useful information.

His worship had the good-natured poor woman taken good care of for that day—and at a late hour of the same night he took and put her comfortably sitting on a horse, behind one of his constables, and, surrounded by a strong military body, horse and foot, marched her in safety; she showing the way to her own house. They found honest Darby sitting by his fire, reading his prayer-book, and in great grief at the unaccountable absence of his wife. He was dreadfully agitated when he found himself arrested, and strongly protested that he was an honest, industrious tradesman, who knew nothing of the wickedness of the world; and wondered much what this was all about.

His worship advised him to be calm—that all should be well, but that he should accompany himself to his house. After Darby had spent several usefully employed days with his new friend, he was transmitted to Limerick gaol, with orders that he should be well treated, and be allowed to see his wife as often as she desired it. The wife soon found that it would be more convenient for her, and perhaps somewhat safer, to be living near her husband, and therefore went to reside in Limerick. The news of Darby's arrest caused no little alarm through the county, and it was soon whispered about that persons were now arrested, of whose participation in the Boland affair no human being could give any hint except himself alone. His wife's rooms became crowded every day with the wives, daughters, and sisters of the men arrested,—and others not arrested, or suspected by any living being; money in hundreds of pounds was poured into her lap to purchase the ignorance, the silence, or the perjury of Darby—and every one went away apparently satisfied with Darby's promises through his faithful wife.

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The assizes came down at last. Darby lost all recollection of any money but the large public reward, and on that occasion over twenty men were hanged chiefly on his evidence—though it was very difficult for the crown counsel to bring the poor reluctant man to the point; but when he did make a convicting admission, he took care that it should be a clincher, wrung from him, as he wished it to appear, by a cunning counsel. The gallows at Limerick continued for years after to be fed by Darby with victims for this crime; and several hundred were transported, or went into voluntary banishment on account of this fearful butchery. The writer of this knew well, and was at school with the secretary of the Court of Kilteely Hill.

CHAPTER I.—The Chapel Green of Esker Dearg.

The chapel of *Esker Dearg*, or the Red Ridge, was situated in a rich and well-cultivated country, that for miles about it literally teemed with abundance. The Red Ridge under which it stood was one of those long eminences, almost, if not altogether, peculiar to Ireland. It was, as the name betokens, a prolonged elevation that ran for nearly a mile and a half in a north-eastern direction without appearing to yield to, or be influenced by, the natural position or undulations of the country through which it went. The epithet of red which was attached to it, originated, according to popular tradition, in a massacre which had taken place upon it during one of the Elizabethan wars, others imputed it to a cause much more obvious and natural, *viz*., its peculiar appearance during all seasons of the year, owing to the parched and barren nature of the soil, which, in consequence of its dry and elevated Position, was covered only with furze and tern, or thin, short grass that was parched by the sun into a kind of red-brown color.

Under that end of this Esker which pointed nearest to the south-west, stood the chapel we have just mentioned. It was a rather long building with double gables and a double roof, perfectly plain, and with no other ornament, either inside or out, if we except a marble cross that stood against the wall upon the altar, of which the good priest was not a little vain, inasmuch as it had been of his own procuring. A public road of course ran past it, or rather skirted the green unenclosed space, by which, in common with most country edifices, it was surrounded. Another road joined that which we have mentioned, within a few perches of it, so that it stood at what might be nearly considered a cross-road. One or two large trees grew beside it, which gave to its otherwise simple appearance something of picturesque effect, especially during the summer months, when they were thickly covered with leaves, and waved and rustled in the sun to the refreshing breezes of that delightful season.

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It was Sunday in the early part of March—we will not name the year—when our story commences. The Red Ridge Chapel was as usual surrounded by the greater portion of the congregation that had assembled to hear Mass. Within its walls there were only a few classes of youngsters, male and female, formed into circles, learning their catechism from the schoolmaster of the neighborhood, the clerk, or some devotee who possessed education enough to qualify himself for that kind office. Here and there in different parts of the chapel were small groups of adult persons, more religiously disposed than the rest, engaged in saying the rosary, whilst several others were performing solitary devotions, some stationary in a corner of the chapel, and others going the circuit around its walls in the performance of the Fourteen Stations of the Cross. Now, all these religious and devotional acts take place previous to the arrival of the priest, and are suspended the moment he commences Mass; into the more sublime majesty of which they appear, as it were, to lose themselves and be absorbed.

The great body of the congregation, however, until the clergyman makes his appearance, are to be found outside, on what is called the Chapel Green. Here they stand in groups, engaged in discussing the topics of the day, or such local intelligence as may interest them; and it is to one of those groups that we now beg to call the attention of our readers.

Under the larger of the two trees we have described stood a circle of the country people, listening to, and evidently amused by, the conversation of an individual whose bearing and appearance we must describe at great length.

He was a person whom at first sight you would feel disposed to class with young men. In other words, you might be led, from the lively flow of his spirits and his peculiarly buoyant manner, to infer that he had not gone beyond thirty or thirty-five. Upon a closer inspection, however, you could easily perceive that his countenance, despite of its healthy hue, was a good deal wrecked and weatherbeaten, and gave indications of those traces, which not only a much longer period of time, but deep and violent passions, seldom fail to leave behind them. His features were regular, and at first glance seemed handsome, but upon a nearer approach you were certain to find that their expression was heartless and disagreeable. They betokened no symptom of humanity of feeling, but were lit up with a spirit of harsh and reckless levity, which, whilst it made him popular with the unthinking multitude, might have been easily understood as the accompaniment, if not the direct exponent, of a bad and remorseless heart. The expression of his mouth was at the same time both hard and wanton, and his eyes, though full of a lively lustre, resembled in their brightness those of a serpent or hyena. His forehead was constructive but low, and, we may say, rather unintellectual than otherwise. He

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was without whiskers, a circumstance which caused a wound on the back part of his jaw to be visible, and one-half of the left-hand little finger had been shot off in defence of his church and country, according to his own account. This was a subject however, upon which he always affected a good deal of mystery when conversing with the people, or we should say, he took care to throw out such oracular insinuations of what he had suffered in their defence, as, according to their opinion, almost constituted him a martyr. In size he was somewhat above the middle height, compact, and exceedingly well built. His chest was deep and his shoulders powerful, whilst his limbs were full of muscular strength and great activity.

Having thus given a portrait of his person, it only remains that we describe his costume as he appeared on the Sunday in question, and we do so because it may be right to inform our readers, in the outset, that one of his peculiarities was a habit of seldom appearing, for any lengthened period, in the same dress, or indeed in the same locality.

On this occasion he had on a pair of tight buckskin breeches, top-boots and spurs—for he mostly went on horseback—a blue body-coat, with bright gilt buttons, a buff cassimere waistcoat, and a very fashionable hat.

The cravat he wore was of green silk, and was tied in a knot, which might be understood by the initiated as one that entitled him to their confidence and respect. Our readers may not be surprised at this, for, unfortunately so high and bitter have party prejudices and feelings in our disturbed country run, that the very dress has been often forced to become symbolic of their spirit and existence.

The chapel green, as we have said, was covered by the great bulk of the peasantry who were waiting the arrival of the priest. Here was a circle in which stood some rustic politician, who, having had an opportunity of getting a glimpse at some newspaper of the day, was retailing its contents to a greedy circle of listeners about him. There again stood some well-known storyteller, or perhaps a live old senachie, reciting wild and stirring legends to his particular circle. Some were stretched indolently on the grass, or lying about the ditches in the adjoining fields, but by far the greatest and most anxious crowd was assembled under the tree against which Buck English—for by this name was he known—leaned. We should say here, however, that he was not called Buck English, because his name was English, but in consequence of his attempts at pronouncing the English tongue in such a manner as he himself considered peculiarly elegant and fashionable. The man's education was very limited, indeed he had scarcely received any, but he was gifted at the same time with a low vulgar fluency of language which he looked upon as a great intellectual gift, and which, in his opinion, wanted nothing but "tip-top prononsensation," as he termed it, to make it high-flown and gentlemanly.

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Our friend “the Buck,” as he was universally called, was no sooner perceived in his usual station under the tree than there was a rapid gathering of the assembled crowd to hear him.

“Hallo, Paddy! what’s the matther? where are you goin’ to in sich a hell of a hurry?”

“Blood alive! man, sure Buck English is at his post to-day.”

“How at his post?”

“Why under the three where he always is when he comes here af a Sunday.”

“Hut! sure I know that; come, begad, let us hear him.”

“Faith, it’s he that’s up to the outs and ins of everything. Sure the Counsellor himself made mintion of him in a great speech some time ago. It seems the Buck sent him up five pounds in a letther, and the Counsellor read the letther, and said it came from a most respectable gentleman, a friend of his, one Barney—no, not Barney—it wasn’t Barney he called him, but—but—let me see—ay, begad—Bir—Birnard—ay, one Birnard English, Esquire, from the Barony of Treena Heela; bekaise, as the Buck doesn’t keep himself very closely to any particular place of livin’, he dated his letther, I suppose, from the Barony at large.”

“At any rate one thing’s clear, that he’s high up wid the Counsellor, an’ if he wasn’t one man in ten thousand he wouldn’t be that.”

They had now reached the tree, and found that, short as the time was, a considerable crowd had already assembled about him, so that they were obliged to stand pretty far out in the circle. One or two young men, sons of most respectable farmers—for it somehow happened that the Buck was no great favorite with the seniors—stood, or rather had the honor of standing, within the circle, for the purpose of “houldin’ conversation wid him;” for it could not reasonably be supposed that the Buck could throw away such valuable political information and high-flown English upon mere boors, who were incapable of understanding either the one or the other.

“And so, Mr. English,” said one of those whom, he had brought within the circle, “you think the established church, the great heresy of Luther,—will go down at last?”

“Think it, Tom—why, if you get me a book I’ll swear it, and that’s better than thinking any dee. Didn’t Emencipation pess? answer me that.”

“Begad it did so, sir,”—from the crowd. “Well,” proceeded the Buck, “what doubt or hesiteetion can there be that the seem power and authority that riz our own church won’t be keepable of puttin’ down the great protesting heresy?”

“See that now,” from the crowd; “begad it stands to raison sure enough.”

“Certainly,” he proceeded, “none what-somever; but then the question is, how can it be effectualized?”

The crowd—“Begad, and so it is.”

“Well, my friends, it isn’t at oll difficult to determine that particularity: you oll know that a men lives by food—very well; pleece that men in a persition where he can’t procur food and the nethrel kensiquence is that he must die. Eh—ha! ha! ha!—do you kimprehind?”

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“Not a doubt of it,” replied Mr. Crowd, “but sure, at any rate, we will kimprehend it by-an’-by.”

“Very well; take the protesting? church or the parsons, for it is oll the seem—deprive them of the mains of support, that is to see, deny them their tithes—don’t pay a shilling—hold out to the death, as my friend the Counsellor—great O’Connell says—and as we oil say, practice passive resistance,then you know the establishment must stirve and die of femine and distitootion, as a contributive jidgment for its sins.”

Crowd—“Blood alive, isn’t that great!”

“What is it?” from the other circle.

“Why, that the parsons, an’ all belonging to them, is to die of family prostitution for their sins!”

“Devil’s cure to them, then, for they desarve it—at least many of them does, anyhow,” says one segment.

“Faith, an’ I don’t know that either,” says another segment. “The parsons, bad as they’re spoken of, was, for the most part, willin’ to live among us; and, begad, you all know that they’re kind friends and good neighbors, an’ that the money they get out of the parish comes back into the parish agin—not all as one as absentee landlords. They give employment as far as they’re able, an’ thar’s no doubt but their wives and daughters does a great dale of good among the poor, and so, begad, does the parsons themselves often.”

“Who is that wiseecre that spoke last?” asked the Buck; “if I don’t misteek he leebors with Dennis Purcel, the procter.”

“Ay, an’ a very good masther he is,” replied the spokesman of the segment; “gives plenty of employment anyhow—although the pay’s no great shakes—an’ that’s more than some that abuses him does.”

“There’s no one aboosin’ him here, my good friend, so don’t imegine it—at leest I should be extremely sorry to do so. I respect himself and his family in a very elevated manner, I assoore you. An’ what’s more, my friend, I’ll thank you to report to him that I said so.”

Here he looked significantly among the mob, especially as he perceived that the man’s eyes were not fixed upon him whilst he spoke, and having thrust his tongue into his cheek, half in derision, and half as it were by a natural action, he succeeded at all events in creating a general laugh; but so easily is a laugh, among such an audience, created, that it is not altogether within our power or penetration to determine the point which occasioned their mirth, unless it were the grimace with which his words were

accompanied—or stay—perhaps it was the strong evil odor in which Purcel, the subject of their conversation, must have been held.

“Talk of the devil, Mr. English,” replied a stern voice from the listeners, “and he will appear; look down the road there and you’ll see Purcel himself an’ his family drivin’ to mass on the sweat and groans of the people!”

“Not all of them,” replied another voice, in a different tone; “there’s only himself, his wife, and their two spankin’ daughters, upon the jauntin’ car; but, blood alive, look at the sons! Devil so purty a lot of sweat and groans I seen this twelvemonth as the two is riding on, in the shape of a pair of blood-horses, so that you may put the blood, Barney, along wid the sweat and the groans, agra. Well done, tithes!—ha! ha! ha!”

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The individual laugh that accompanied these last observation was cruel, revolting, and hideous. The Buck sought out the speaker among the crowd, and gave him first a nod of approval—and almost instantly afterward added, with a quick change of countenance, but not until he perceived that this double expression was pretty generally understood—

“Don’t, my friend—if they get wealthy and proud upon our groans and tears an’ blood, as you say, it is not their invalidity that makes them do so, but ours. Instead, of being cruel to them it is to ourselves we are cruel; for by peeing the aforeseed tithes we are peeing away our heart’s blood, an’ you know that if we are the fools to pee that way, small bleeme to them if they take it in the shape of good passable cash. They—-meening sich men as Purcel—are only the instruments with which the parsons work.”

“Ay,” replied the stern voice, “but, in case we had the country to ourselves, do you think now, Buck darlin’, that when we’d settle off the jidges, an’ lawyers, an’ sheriffs, an’ bailiffs, that we’d allow the jails or the gibbets to stan’, or the hangmen to live. No, by japers, we’d make a clane sweep of it; and when sich a man as Purcel becomes a tool in the parsons’ hands to grind the people, I don’t see that we ought to make fish of one an’ flesh of the other.”

“Ah, Darby Hourigan, is that you?” exclaimed the Buck; “well, although I don’t exaggerate with your severity, yet I will shake hands with you. How do you do Darby? Darby, I think you’re a true petriot—but, so far as Mr. Purcel is concirned, I wish you to understand that he is a particular friend of mine, and so is every mimber of his family.”

“Faith, an’ Mr. Buck, it’s more than you are with them, I can tell you.”

“But perhaps you are a little misteeken there, Mr. Hourigan,” replied the Buck, with a swagger, whilst he raised his head and pulled up the collar of his shirt at both sides, with a great deal of significant self-consequence;—“perhaps you are—I see so, that’s oll. Perhaps, I repeat, there is some mimber of that family not presupposed against me, Mr. Hourigan?”

“Well, may be so,” replied the other; “but if it be so, it’s of late it must have happened, that’s what I say.”

Hourigan, who was by trade a shoemaker, was also a small farmer; but, sooth to say, a more treacherous or ferocious-looking ruffian you could not possibly meet with in a province. He was spare and big-boned slouchy and stealthy in his gait, pale in face with dark, heavy brows that seemed to have been kept from falling into his deep and down-looking eyes only by an effort. His cheekbones stood out very prominently, whilst his thin, pallid cheeks fell away so rapidly as to give him something the appearance of the resuscitated skeleton of a murderer, for never in the same face were the kindred spirits of murder and cowardice so hideously blended.

Much more dialogue of the description just detailed took place, in which the proctor was not without defenders; but at the same time, as we are bound to record nothing but truth, we are compelled to say, that the majority of the voices were fearfully against him. If, however, he, the proctor and the instrument, had but few to support him, what must we not suppose the defence of the system in all its bearings to have been?

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At length, as Purcel and his family approached, the conversation was transferred from the political to the personal, and he, his wife, and his children, received at the hands of the people that satirical abuse, equally unjust and ungenerous, which an industrious family, who have raised themselves from poverty to independence, are in general certain to receive from all those who are deficient in the virtues by which the others rose.

“Ay, there he comes now, ridin’ on his jauntin’ car, an’ does he think that we all forget the time when he went wid his basket undher his arm, wid his half-a-crown’s worth of beggarly hardware in it. He begun it as a brat of a boy, an’ was called nothin’ then but *Mahon na gair* (that is ’Mat of the-grin’); but, by-and-by, when he came to have a pack over the shoulder, and to carry a yard wan’ he began to turn Bodagh on our hands. Felix, it’s himself that soon thought to set up for the style an’ state.”

“At any rate,” said the friendly voice aforesaid, “no one can deny but he’s a good employer—if he’d give better wages.”

“A good employer!” said Hourigan; “we all know he must get his work done—small thanks to him for that, an’ a small price he-pays for it.”

“We all know the ould proverb,” said another individual; “set a beggar on horseback, an’ he’ll ride to the devil. Whist! here they come.”

As the last person concluded, Purcel and the female portion of his family drew up under the shadow of the tree already alluded to, which here overhung the road, so that he came right in contact with the crowd.

“Ah, boys,” said he, with his characteristic good-humor, “how are you all? Darby Hourigan, how are your family? Isn’t this glorious weather, boys?”

“Blessed weather, sir,” replied Hourigan, who became in some degree spokesman. “I hope your honor an’ the mistress, sir, an’ the young ladies is all well.”

“My honor, as you are pleased to call me, was never better in my life; as for the mistress and the young ladies there they are, so judge for yourself, Darby: but Darby my good friend, you have a d—d sneaking, slavish way with you. Why do you call me ‘your honor’ when you know—for I’ve often told you—that wouldn’t bear it? Am I not one of yourselves? and don’t most of you know that I began the world upon half-a-crown, and once carried a hardware basket on my arm?—d—n it, then, speak like a man to a man, and not like a slave, as I’m half inclined to think you are.”

“Throth, sir,” replied Hourigan, with an indescribable laugh, “an’ for all that you say, there’s many that gets the title of ‘your honor,’ that doesn’t desarve it *as well*.”

“Ah well, man! Why, there’s many a man gets it that doesn’t desarve it *at all*, which is saying more than you said—ha! ha! ha!”

Whilst this little dialogue took place, our worthy Buck had abandoned his place under the ikee, and flown to the car to assist the ladies off—a piece of attention not unobserved by Purcel, who obliquely kept his eye upon that worthy’s gallantry, and the reception it was getting from the parties to whom it was offered.

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“Leedies,” said the Buck, in his politest manner and language, “will you allow me the gallantry to help you off? Mrs. Purcel, I hope you’re well. Here, ma’am, aveel yourself of me.”

“Thank you, Mr. English; I’m much obliged,” she returned, rather coolly.

“Leedies,” he proceeded, flying to the other side, “allow me the gallantry.”

The two young women, who were full of spirits and good humor, were laughing most heartily, *sub silentio*, at the attention thus so ceremoniously paid to their mother by a man whom, beyond all human beings, she detested. Now, however, that he came to proffer his “gallantry” to themselves, they were certainly rather hard pressed to maintain or rather regain their gravity.

“Leedies,” the Buck continued, “may I have the gallantry to help you off?”

“Oh, thank you, it’s too much trouble, Mr. English.”

“None on airth, Miss Purcel—do let me have the high-flown satisfaction.”

“Oh, well,” she replied, “since you will be so polite,” and giving him her hand she was about to go down, when suddenly withdrawing it, as if recollecting herself, she said, nodding with comic significance toward her sister Julia—“My sister, Mr. English, have you no gallantry for her?”

“Ah,” he whispered, at the same time gratefully squeezing her hand, “you’re a first-rate divinity—a tip-top goddess—divil a thing else. Miss Joolia, may I presoome for to have the plisure and polite gallantry to help you off the car; ’pon honor it’ll be quite grateful and prejudicial to my feelings—it will, I assoore you!”

“Bless me, whose is that wedding party, Mr. English?” asked Miss Julia, pointing to the opposite direction of the road.

English instantly turned round to observe, when, by a simultaneous act, both sisters stepped nimbly from the car. Miss Julia, as if offended, but at the same time with a comic gravity of expression, exclaimed—

“Oh, fie! Mr. English, is that your boasted gallantry? I’m afraid your eight years’ residence in England, however it may have improved the elegance of your language and accent, hasn’t much improved your politeness!”

So saying, she and her sister tripped off to the chapel, which they immediately entered. Much about the same time their brothers arrived, mounted, certainly, upon a pair of magnificent hunters, and having handed them over to two lads to be walked about until

the conclusion of Mass, they also entered the chapel, for the priest was not now more than three or four hundred yards; distant.

The jest practised so successfully upon our friend the Buck occasioned a general laugh at his expense, a circumstance which filled, him with serious mortification, if not with actual resentment, for it so happened, that one of his great foibles was such a morbid sensibility to ridicule as was absolutely ludicrous.

“Bedad, Mr. English, you wor fairly done there; in spite o’ the tall English, you’re no match for the ladies. Miss Julia fairly gev’ you the bag to hould.”

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The Buck's eye glittered with bitterness.

"Miss Julia, do you say?" he replied; "why, my good friend, the girl was christened Judy—plain Judy; but now that they've got into high-flown life, you persave, nothing will sarve them but to ape their betthers. However, never mind, I'll see the day yet, and that before long, when saucy Judy won't refuse my assistance. Time about's fair play, you know."

It may be observed here, that Buck English happened to forget himself, which he almost always did whenever he became in earnest: he also forgot his polite language and peculiar elegance of pronunciation. To a vain and weak mind there is nothing more cutting than the consciousness of looking mortified in the eyes of others, and under these circumstances to feel that the laugh is against you, adds one not important item to "the miseries of human life."

The Buck, now that the priest was at the chapel door, walked, with a stride that very much resembled the mock-heroic, towards the place of worship; but, in the opinion of the shrewd spectators, his dignity was sadly tarnished by the humorous contempt implied in the practical jest that had been so adroitly played off at his expense.

CHAPTER II.—The Proctor's Principles and His Family.

For a considerable time previous to the scene described in our last chapter, a principle of general resistance to tithes had been deepening in and spreading over the country. Indeed the opposition to them had, for at least half a century before, risen up in periodical ebullitions that were characterized by much outrage and cruelty. On this account, then, it was generally necessary that the residence of that unpopular functionary, the tithe-proctor, should be always one of considerable strength, in order the more successfully to resist such midnight attacks as hostile combination might make upon it. Purcel, as well as other proctors of his day, had from time to time received threatening notices, not only of a personal nature, but also of premeditated attacks upon his house. The man was, however, not only intrepid and resolute, but cautious and prudent; and whilst he did not suffer himself to be intimidated by threats that for the most part ended in nothing, he took care to keep himself and his family well provided against any attack that might be made upon them.

The history of Matthew Purcel is soon told. It is that of enterprise, perseverance, and industry, tinged a good deal by a sharp insight into business, a worldly spirit, and although associated with a good deal of pride and display, an uncontrollable love of putting money together, not always under circumstances that were calculated to render him popular, nor which could, in point of feeling or humanity, be at all defended. He had commenced the world, as has been already intimated, in character of a hardware pedlar. From stage to stage of that circulating life he advanced until

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he was able to become a stationary shopkeeper in the town of C------m. The great predilection of his heart, however, was for farming, and in pursuance with his wishes on this subject, he took a large farm, and entered upon its management with considerable spirit and a good deal of skill. His success was beyond his expectations; and, as the spirit of agriculture continued to gain upon him, he gradually lost his relish for every other description of business. He consequently gave up his large shop in C------m, and went to reside upon his farm, with a capital of some thousands, which he owed to the industry of his previous life. Here he added farm to farm, until he found himself proprietor of nearly six hundred acres, with every prospect of adding largely to his independence and wealth.

It was now that his capacity as a man peculiarly well acquainted with the value of land, and of agricultural produce in general, induced him to accept of offers in connection with the collection of tithe, which were a good deal in accordance with his ability and habits. In short, he became a tithe-proctor, and in the course of a few years rented tithes himself to a very large amount.

Such is the brief history of Matthew Purcel, at the period when he makes his appearance upon our humble stage; and it only remains that we add a few particulars with regard to his family. Out of eleven children only four survived—two sons and two daughters—all of whom were exceedingly well educated, the latter accomplished. Purcel's great object in life was more to establish a family than to secure the individual happiness of his children. This was his ambition—the spirit which prompted him, in his dealings with the people, to forget too frequently that the garb of justice may be often thrown over the form of rapacity, and that the authority of law is also, in too many instances, only another name for oppression.

It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to find in their native province four such children as called him father. His two sons were, in symmetry of figure, strength, courage, manly beauty, and gentlemanly bearing, almost unrivalled. They possessed the manners of gentlemen, without any of that offensive coxcombry on the one side, or awkward affectation of ease on the other, which generally mark the upstart. In fact, although they understood their own worth, and measured their intellectual powers and acquirments successfully with those of rank and birth, they had sense enough to feel that it would have been ridiculous in them to affect by their conduct the prestige of either; and they consequently knew that both discrimination and delicacy were necessary in enabling them to assume and maintain that difficult bearing in society, which prevented them from encroaching on the one side or giving up their proper position on the other. So far so good. Their characters, however, were not without some deep shadows. Whilst we acknowledge

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that they were generous, resolute, liberal, and of courage, we must also admit that they were warm, thoughtless, and a good deal overbearing to many, but by no means to all, of the peasantry with whom they came in contact. From the ample scale on which their farming was conducted, and in consequence of the vast number of men they necessarily had occasion to employ, they could not but detect among them many instances both of falsehood, dishonesty, and ingratitude. These vices at their hands never received any favor. So far from that, those whom they detected in the commission of them, were instantly turned adrift, Very often after having received a sound horse-whipping. Much abuse also occurred between them and the country people with reference to land, and especially tithes, in which they gave back word for word, and too frequently met concealed or implied threats either by instant chastisement or open defiance; the result of all was, as the reader may perceive, that they had the worst and least scrupulous, and consequently, most dangerous class of persons in the country for their enemies. The name of the elder was John, and the younger Alick; and, soothe to say, two finer-looking, more spirited, or determined young fellows could not be found probably in the kingdom. The relative position, then, in which they and the people, or rather the worst class of them, stood to each other, and the bitter disparaging taunts and observations with which the proctor and his sons were treated, not only on the chapel green, but almost wherever they appeared, are now, we trust, intelligible to the reader.

Of the daughters, Mary and Julia, we have not so much to observe. They were both very beautiful; and, as we have already said, highly accomplished. Both, too, were above the middle height and sizes, and remarkable for the singular elegance and symmetry of their figures. Mary, the eldest, was a dark beauty, with a neck and bosom like snow, and hair black as the raven's wing; whilst Julia, on the contrary, was fair, and if possible, more exquisitely rounded than her sister. Her eyes, of a blue gray, were remarkable for an expression of peculiar depth and softness, whilst Mary's dark brown were full at once of a mellow and penetrating light. In other respects they resembled each other very much, both being about the same height and size, and altogether of a similar bearing and figure. Mary's complexion was evidently inherited from her mother, who was, at the opening of our narrative, a black-haired, handsome woman, with a good deal of determination about her mouth and brow, but with a singularly benevolent expression when she smiled. She, too, had received a good, plain education, and was one of those naturally well-mannered women who, whilst they are borne forward into greater respectability by the current of prosperity, can assume, without effort, the improved tone of better society to which they are raised.

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There were few women in her sphere of life, or indeed in any sphere of life, who dispensed more good to the poor and distressed than Mrs. Purcel; and in all her kindness and charities she was most cordially aided and supported by her admirable daughters. Within a wide circle around her dwelling, sickness and destitution, or unexpected calamity, were ever certain to be cheered by the benevolent hand of herself or her daughters. The latter, indeed, had latterly relieved her, in a great degree, if not altogether, of all her distant and outdoor charities, so that little now was left to her management but the claims of such poor as flocked for assistance to the house.

Mass having been concluded, and the benediction given in the chapel of Red Ridge, Mr. Purcel and his family soon appeared among the crowd on the green, preparing to return home. The car was driven up opposite the chapel door, to the place where they were in the habit of waiting for it. The two brothers came out along with their sisters, and signed to the lads who had been holding their horses to bring them up. In the meantime, Buck English, unabashed by the rebuff he had received, once more approached, and just as the car had come up, tendered his gallantry—as he called it—with his usual politeness.

“I trust, leedies, that as you were not kin-descending enough to let me have the gallantry of helping you off, you will let me have the pleasure of helping you on?”

“That lady behind you appears to have prior claims upon you, Mr. English.”

“Behind me!” he exclaimed, turning about. “Why, Miss Joolia, there’s no leddy behind me.”

In the meantime she beckoned to her brother who, while the, proctor was assisting his wife to take her seat, helped up both the girls, who nodding to the Buck, said—

“Thank you, Mr. English: we feel much obliged for your gallant intentions; quite as much, indeed, as if you had carried them into effect.”

This joke, so soon played off after that which had preceded it, and upon the same person, too, occasioned another very general laugh at the Buck’s expense; and, beyond a doubt, filled him with a double measure of mortification and resentment.

“There you go,” he muttered, “and it was well said before Mass, that if you set a beggar on horseback he’ll ride to the divil.”

“To whom do you apply that language?” asked Alick Purcel.

“To one Michael Purcel, a tithe-proctor, an oppressor and a grinder of the poor,” returned Buck, fiercely.

“And, you insolent scoundrel, how dare you use such language to my father?” said the other. “I tell you, that if it were not from a reluctance to create an unbecoming quarrel

so near the house of God, and so soon after his worship, I would horsewhip you, you illiterate, vulgar rascal, where you stand."

"I would be glad to catch you making the attempt," replied the Buck, with a look of fury; "because I would give you such a lesson as you would never forget. I would let you know that it isn't your father's unfortunate tenants and day-laborers you have before you —and that you scourge like hounds in a kennel."

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Purcel was actually in the act of springing at him, whip in hand, when, fortunately, the priest interfered, and prevented a conflict which, from the strength and spirit by which the parties were animated, must have been a fearful one.

[Illustration: *Page* 374— The priest interfered, and prevented a conflict]

“What is this?” said the worthy man; “in God’s name, what does this scandalous conduct, in such a place, and on such an occasion, mean? Come between these madmen,” he proceeded, addressing the crowd, which had now collected about them. “Keep them asunder!”

The two men were separated; but as each felt himself under the influence of strong resentment, they glared at one another with looks of fiery indignation.

“You had better keep out of my way, you impudent scoundrel,” said Purcel, shaking his whip at him; “and hark ye, make no more attempts to pay attention to any of my sisters, or, by the heavens above me, I will trace you through all your haunts, and flog you as I would a dog.”

“I’ll take care to give you the opportunity before long, Squire Purcel, or rather Squireen Purcel,” replied the Buck; “and what is more, I’ll see you and yours in my power yet.”

“You’re too ready wid your whip, Mr. Purcel,” said several voices from among the crowd; “and you do think it’s dogs you have to dale wid, as Mr. English says.”

“No,” said Purcel, with scom; “I deny it; my whip is never raised unless to the shoulders of some slavish, lying, and dishonest scoundrel, whom I prefer to punish rather than to prosecute.”

“Take. care it doesn’t come aginst you, then, some o’ these days,” said a voice.

“Ay,” added another, “or some o’ these nights!”

“Ah, you ungrateful and cowardly crew,” he replied, “who have not one drop of manly blood in your veins, I despise you. Like all thorough cowards, you are equally slavish and treacherous. Kindness is thrown away upon you, generosity you cannot understand, for open fight or open resentment you have neither heart nor courage—but give you the hour of midnight, and your unsuspecting victim asleep—or place you behind the shelter of a hedge, where your cowardly person is safe and invisible, with a musket or blunderbuss in your hands, and a man before whom you have crawled in the morning like reptiles, you will not scruple to assassinate that night. Curse upon you! you are a disgrace to any Christian country, and I despise, I say, and defy you. As for you, Buck English, avoid my path, and cross neither me nor any member of my family.”

“Alick Purcel,” said English, “mark my words—I’ll put my thumb upon you and yours yet. I say, mark them; for the day will come when you will remember them to your cost.”

Purcel gave him a stern look, and merely said—“I’m prepared for you;” after which he and his brother John mounted their horses and dashed off at a rapid pace towards their father’s house, followed by the groans and hootings of the people—far above all whose voices was heard that of Buck English, in loud and contemptuous tones.

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On relating the occurrence at home, the father, as was his custom, only laughed at it.

“Pooh, Alick,” said he, “what does it signify? Have we not been annoyed for years by these senseless broils and empty threats? Don’t think of them.”

“I, father!” replied his son; “do you imagine that I ever bestow a second thought upon them? Not I, I assure you. However, there is one thing would most unquestionably gratify me, and that is, an opportunity of cudgelling Buck English; because, upon second consideration, horse-whipping would be much too gentlemanly a style of chastisement for such a vulgar and affected ruffian.”

“I regret very much, however,” said his sister Julia, “that I have been the cause of all this; but really, as Mary here knows, the absurdity of his language was perfectly irresistible.”

“Yes,” replied her sister; “but, in fact, he is constantly annoying and persecuting her, and very few would bear such nonsense and absurdity from him with so much good-humor as Julia does. I grant that it is very difficult to be angry with so ridiculous a fool; but I do agree with Julia, that it is better to laugh at him, for two seasons: the first is, because he is a fit object for ridicule; and the second, because it is utterly impossible to resist it.”

“I don’t think he will annoy Julia again, however,” said Alick.

“Not until the next opportunity,” observed his brother, “when, you may take my word for it, he will be as ridiculously polite and impudent as ever.”

“Not a doubt of it,” said the father; “the rascal’s incurable, and little did I imagine when I asked him once or twice to dine here that I was preparing such an infliction for poor Julia. Julia didn’t he write to you?”

“I certainly had the honor of receiving a very elaborate love-letter from him,” replied Julia, laughing, “which I will show you some of these days; but, for my part, I think the fool is beneath resentment, and it is merely on that principle that I have treated him with good-humored contempt.”

“He is certainly as good as a farce,” said the father; “and if the rascal had kept from making love, I should have still been glad to have him here from time to time to amuse us.”

“How does he live at all?” asked Mrs. Purcel; “for, by all accounts, he has no fixed place of residence, nor any known means of support.”

“Faith, Nancy, that’s a subject upon which we are all aiqually ignorant,” replied her husband; “but that the fellow lives, and can live comfortably—ay, and has plenty of money, there can be no earthly doubt. At the same time, that there is much talk about

him, and a great deal of mystery too, is a sure case on the other hand. Well, never mind, Jack; I asked your old tutor, M'Carthy, to dine here to-day; he has come home to the country after having gained a scholarship, I believe they call it, in Trinity College."

"I'm glad you did, father," replied John, "and I'm much obliged to you. Yes, he has gained first place, and I knew he would."

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“He intends going to the bar, he tells me.”

“He will be heard from yet, or I renounce all claims to common sense,” replied the other. “There is, unquestionably, a brilliant career before him.”

“I would rather, in the meantime,” observed Mrs. Purcell, “that he had continued steadfast to his religion. They tell me that he has become a Protestant.”

“Why, I believe he couldn’t gain a scholarship, as you call it, Jack, without becoming a member of the Established Church.”

“No, sir, he could not.”

“Well, then,” proceeded the proctor, “what great harm? Why, I believe in my soul, that if it weren’t for the bigotry of priests and parsons, who contrive to set the two churches together by the ears, there would be found very little difference between them. For my part, I believe a good, honest Protestant will go to heaven when a scoundrel Papist won’t, and vice versa. The truth is, begad, that it’s six of one and half a dozen of the other; and sorry would I be to let so slight a change as passing from one religion to the other ever be a bar to the advancement or good fortune of any one of my children!”

“I would much rather not hear you say so, Mat,” replied his wife; “nor do I ever wish my children to gain either wealth or station in the world by the sacrifice of the highest principle that can bind the heart—that of religion.”

“Pooh, Nancy, you speak like a woman who never looked beyond the range of the kitchen and larder, or thought beyond the humdrum prayers of your Manual. I wish to see my children established; I wish to see them gain station in the world; I wish to make them the first of their family; and I do assure you, Nancy, that it is not such a trifle as the difference between popery on the one hand, and Protestantism on the other, that I’d suffer—that is, if they will be guided by me—to stand between them and the solid advantages of good connection, and a proper standing in the world. I say, then, boys and girls, don’t be fools; for, as for my part, I scarcely think, to tell God’s truth, that there’s to the value of sixpence between the two creeds.”

“Father,” said Mary, laughing, “you’re a man of a truly liberal disposition in these matters.”

“But, papa,” said Julia, with an arch look, “if there be not the value of sixpence between the two creeds, perhaps there is more than that between the two clergy?”

The proctor shook his head and laughed.

“Ah, Judy, my girl, you have me there,” he replied; “that goes home to the proctor, you baggage. Devil a thing, however, like an endowed church, and may God keep me and

all my friends from the voluntary system!—ha! ha! ha! Come, now, for that same hit at the old proctor, you must walk over here and play me my old favorite, the 'Cannie Soogah,' just to pull down your pride. The 'Cannie Soogah,' you know, is the Irish for Jolly Pedlar, and a right jolly pedlar your worthy father was once in his days."

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“By the way, papa,” said Mary, “talking of that—what has become of the pleasant man that goes under that name or nickname—the pedlar that calls here occasionally?”

“I saw him in the market yesterday,” replied her father, “and a fine, hale fellow he is of his years. For a man of fifty he’s a miracle of activity and energy.”

“They say he is wealthy,” observed John, “and I shouldn’t wonder. You ought to give a good guess at that, father—ha! ha! ha!”

“Right, John, I ought, and I think he is. You don’t know how money gathers with a successful pedlar, who is up to his business. I am inclined to think that the Cannie Soogah is the only man who can throw any light on the history of Buck English.”

“Who the devil is that impudent scoundrel, father? for it appears that, as regards his birth, family, and origin, nobody knows anything certain about him.”

“And that is just the position in which I stand,” replied his father. “It is a subject on which he himself gives no satisfaction to any one. When asked about it, he laughs in jour face, and replies that he doesn’t exactly know, but is of the opinion that he is the son of his father—whoever that was; but that, he says, he is not wise enough to know either, and then, after another laugh at you, he leaves you.”

“How does he live?” asked John, “for he has no visible means of support—he neither works nor is engaged in any profession, and yet he dresses well.”

“Well! John;” exclaimed Julia.

“Perhaps I ought not to say—*well*, Julia; but at all events, he is very fond of being considered a buck, and he certainly dresses up to that character.”

“He admits that he was eight years in England,” said his father; “although, for my part, it’s just as likely that he spent seven years of that time in Botany Bay; if not, I should have no objection that something should occur to make him spend the remainder of his life there.”

“Why should you wish the man so ill, papa’?” asked Mary.

“Why, Mary—faith for a very good reason, my dear child; because I don’t wish to see your sister annoyed and persecuted by the scoundrel. The fellow is so impudent that he will take no rebuff.”

“By the way, father, where does M’Carthy stop, now that he is in the country?” asked Alick, with some hesitation, and a brow a little heightened in color.

“For the present,” replied the other, “he stops with our friend, O’Driscol, the new magistrate. Faith, it’s a shove-up for O’Driscol to get on the Bench. Halloo! there’s M’Carthy’s knock—I’m sure I know it.”

The proctor was right; but notwithstanding his quickness and sagacity, there was another individual in the room at that moment who recognized it sooner than he did. Julia arose, and withdrew under some pretence which we cannot now remember, but I really because she felt that had she remained until M’Carthy’s entrance, her blushes would have betrayed her.

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“M’Carthy is a very handsome young-fellow,” observed John—“would he think of entering any pretensions to Katherine O’Driscol?”

“What d—d stuff you often talk, John—begging your pardon,” replied his brother; “he has hard reading, and his profession to think of—both of which he will find enough for him, setting Katherine O’Driscol and love out of the question.”

“Very good, Alick,” said John. “Ha! ha ha! I thought I would touch you there. The bait took, my boy; jealousy, jealousy, father.”

Alick, on finding that he was detected, forced himself into a confused laugh, and, in the meantime, M’Carthy entered.

Nothing could surpass the cordiality of his reception. A holiday spirit was obvious among the family—at least among all who were then visible. Secretly, however, did his eye glance about in search of one, on whose reception of him more depended than a thousand welcomes from all the rest. In about twenty minutes Julia made her appearance, but to any person in the secret, it was obvious that she was combating with much inward, if not with some appearance of external confusion and restraint. After the first greetings were over, however, she gradually recovered her self-possession, and was able to join in the conversation without embarrassment or difficulty.

CHAPTER III.—Mountain Legislation, and its Executive of Blood.

After dinner that day, and while the gentlemen were yet at table, Mary and Julia, who, as we have said, had relieved their mother of those benevolent attentions which she had been in the habit of paying to the neighboring sick and poor, proceeded on their way to the cottage of a destitute woman in the next village, who was then lying in what was considered to be a hopeless state. The proctor himself, while he exacted with a heartless and rapacious hand the last penny due to him, was yet too good a tactician to discountenance these spontaneous effusions of benevolence on the part of his wife and daughters. With a good deal of ostentation, and that peculiar swagger for which many shrewd and hard-hearted men of the world are remarkable, he actually got the medicine himself for the helpless invalid in question, not forgetting at the same time to make the bystanders in the apothecary’s shop acquainted with the extent of his own private charity and that of his family besides. The girls had proceeded a part of the way on their charitable errand, when it occurred to them that the medicine, which their father had procured on the preceding day, had been forgotten, and as the sick woman was to commence taking it at a certain hour that evening, it was necessary that either one or both should return for it.

“You needn’t come back, Julia,” said Mary; “I will myself run home and fetch it. And accordingly her sister went back at a quick step towards her father’s house. The spot where Julia stood to await the return, of her sister was within a few yards of a large white-thorn double ditch, on each side of which grew a close hedge of thorns, that could easily afford room for two or three men to walk abreast between them. Here she had not remained more than a minute or two, when, issuing from the cover of the thorns, and approaching her with something of a stage strut, our friend, Buck English, made his appearance.

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“Miss Joolia,” he exclaimed, with what was intended for a polite bow, “I hope you will pardon me for this third liberty I teek in offering to spake to you. I see,” he proceeded, observing her rising indignation, “that you are not inclined to hear me, but I kim here to give you a bit of advice as a friend—listen to my proposals, if you’re wise—and don’t make me the enemy of yourself or your family, for so sure as you reject me, so certainly will you bring ruin upon both yourself and them. I say this as a friend, and merk me, the day may come when you will oll remember my words too late.”

There was a vehemence in his language, which could admit of no mistake as to the fixed determination of his purpose; his lips were compressed, his eyebrows severely knit, and his unfeeling, hyena eye scintillated with a fire that proceeded as much from an inclination to revenge as affection. Julia Purcel, however, though a women, possessed no whit of her sex’s cowardice; on the contrary, her bosom heaved with indignant scorn, and her eye gave him back glance for glance, in a spirit that disdained to quail before his violence.

“Do you dare to threaten me or my family, sir?” she replied; “I think you should know us better than to imagine that the threats of a ruffian, for such I now perceive you to be, could for a moment intimidate either them or me. Begone, sir, I despise and detest you—until this moment, I looked upon and treated you as a fool, but I now find you are a villain—begone, I say; I scorn and defy you.”

“You defy me, do you?”

“Yes, I have said it, I defy you.”

“Well, then, so be it,” he replied, “you must take the consequences, that’s all, and let your favorite, M’Carthy, look to himself too.”

Having uttered these significant words, ha reentered the double ditch, along which a common pathway went, and in a minute or two was out of sight.

Mary, on her return, at once perceived, by the flushed cheek and kindled eye of her sister, that something had discomposed her. “Why, goodness me, dear Julia, you look disturbed or frightened; what is the matter?”

“Disturbed I am,” she replied, “but not at all frightened. This worthy lover of mine, whom nothing can abash, has honored me with another interview.”

“Is it after the scene between him and my brother to-day?”

“Certainly,” she replied, with a smile, for she now began once more to look upon the matter in a ludicrous point of view, “and has threatened not only myself, but the whole family with destruction, unless I favor his addresses—ha! ha! ha! He has one good quality in a lover, at all events—perseverance.”

“Say rather effrontery and impudence,” replied Mary.

“Yes, I admit that,” said her sister; “but at any rate, they very often go together, I believe.”

She then related the dialogue that took place, at which her sister, who was equally remarkable for courage, only laughed.

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“The fellow after all is only a fool,” she observed. “If he were anything else, or if he had any serious intention of carrying such threats into effect, he most assuredly would not give expression to them, or put you on your guard against them. No, he is only a fool and not worth thinking about: let him go.”

They then proceeded to the cabin of poor Widow Cleary, to whom they administered the medicine with their own hands, and to whose children they brought their mother’s orders to attend the house, that they might be relieved with that comfortable food which their destitute circumstances so much required.

On their return home, the relation of the incident which we have just narrated very much amused the family, with the exception of M’Carthy, who expressed himself not quite at ease after having heard English’s threats. “There is an extraordinary mystery about that man,” he observed; “no one knows or can tell who he is; you can call him a fool, too, but take my word that there never hung mystery about a fool yet; I fear he will be found to be something much worse than a fool.”

“Nonsense,” replied the proctor. “The fellow is only ridiculous and contemptible; he and his clipped English are not worth thinking of—let him go to the deuce.”

M’Carthy still shook his head, as if of opinion that they underrated the Buck’s power of injuring them, but the truth was that neither Purcel nor his sons were at all capable of apprehending either fear or danger; they, therefore, very naturally looked upon the denunciations of English with a recklessness that was little less than foolhardy.

During the last few years they had been accustomed to receive threats and written notices of vengeance, which had all ended in nothing, and, in consequence of this impunity, they had become so completely inured to them as to treat them only with laughter and scorn.

It has been already intimated to the reader that M’Carthy was residing, during a short visit to the country, at the house of O’Driscol, the newly-made magistrate. It was pretty late that evening when he took leave of the Purcels, but as the distance was not far he felt no anxiety at all upon the subject of his journey. The night, however, was so pitchy dark, that even although well acquainted as he was with the road, he found some difficulty in avoiding the drains and ditches that enclosed it. At length he had arrived within a couple of hundred yards of O’Driscol’s house, when as he was proceeding along suddenly found himself come unexpectedly against some individual, who was coming from an opposite direction.

“Hillo! who is here?” said the voice, in a kind of whisper.

“A friend,” replied M’Carthy; “who are you?”

“What’s your name?” inquired the strange voice, “and be quick.”

“My name is M’Carthy,” replied our friend; “why do you ask?”

“Come this way,” said the stranger; “you are Francis M’Carthy, I think?”

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“Yes, that is my name—what is yours?”

“That doesn’t matther,” replied the voice, “stand aside here, and be quiet as you value your life.”

M’Carthy thought at the moment that he heard the noise of many feet, as it were in the distance.

“You will not be safe,” said the voice, “if you refuse to take my advice;” and as he spoke he partly forced M’Carthy over to the side of the road where they both stood invisible from the darkness of the night, as well as from the shelter of a large whitethorn branch, which would, even in daylight, almost have concealed them from view. In a few minutes, a large body of people passed them with that tread which always characterizes the motions of undisciplined men. There was scarcely a word among them, but M’Carthy felt that, knowing them as he did to be peasants, there was something dreadful in the silence which they maintained so strictly. He could not avoid associating their movements and designs with some act of violence and bloodshed, that was about to add horror to the impenetrable gloom of night, whose darkness, perhaps, they were about to light up with the roof-tree of some unsuspecting household, ignorant of the fiery fate that was then so near them.

Several hundreds must have passed, and when the last sounds of their tread had died away, M’Carthy and his companion left their hiding-place, when the latter addressed him as follows:—

“Now, Mr. M’Carthy, I wish you to understand that you are wid a friend—mark my words—avoid the man they call Buck English, for of all men livin’ he hates you the most; and listen, whenever you come to this country don’t stop in procthor Purcel’s, otherwise you may draw down ruin and destruction upon him and his; and, if I’m not mistaken, you’re the last man livin’ who would wish to do that.”

“By the way,” asked M’Carthy, “who is Buck English?”

“I don’t know,” replied the stranger, “nor do I know any one that does.”

“And may I not ask who you are yourself?”

“No—for I’ve good raisons for not telling you. Good-night, and mark my words—avoid that man, for I know he would give a good deal to sit over your coffin—and you in it.”

We shall now allow M’Carthy to proceed to his friend’s house, which he reached without any further adventure, and ask the reader to accompany the stranger, who in a few minutes overtook the body we have described, to which he belonged. They proceeded in the same way, still maintaining a silence that was fearful and ominous, for about a mile and a half. Whilst proceeding, they met several persons on the road, every one of

whom they stopped and interrogated as to his name and residence, after which they allowed them to pass on.

“Why do they! stop and examine the people they meet?” whispered one of them a young lad about nineteen—to him who had just warned McCarthy.

“Why,” said the other, “is it possible you don’t know that? It’s aisy seen you’re but young in the business yet.”

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“This is my first night to be out,” replied the youth.

“Well, then,” rejoined our friend, “it’s in the expectation of meetin’ an enemy, especially some one that’s *marked*.”

“An’ what would they do if they did?”

“*Do*? said the other; “*do for him!*. If they met sich a one, they’d take care his supper wouldn’t cost him much.”

“Blood alive!” exclaimed the young fellow. “I’m afeard this is a bad business.”

“Faith, an’ if it is, it’s only beginnin’,” said the other, “but whether good or bad the counthry requires it, an’ the Millstone must be got rid of.”

“What’s the Millstone?”

“The Protestant church. The man that won’t join us to put it down, must be looked upon and treated as an enemy to his country—that is, if he is a Catholic.”

“I have no objection to that,” replied the youth, “but I don’t like to see lives taken or blood shed; murdher’s awful.”

“You must set it down, then,” replied the other, “that both will happen, ay, an’ that you must yourself shed blood and take life when it come your turn. Howanever, that will soon come aisy to you; a little practice, and two or three opportunities of seeing the thing done, an’ you’ll begin to take delight in it.”

“And do you now?” asked the unsophisticated boy, with a quivering of the voice which proceeded from a shudder.

“Why, no,” replied the other, still in a whisper, for in this tone the dialogue was necessarily continued; “not yet, at any rate; but if it came my turn to take a life I should either do it, or lose my own some fine night.”

“Upon my conscience,” whispered the lad, “I can’t help thinkin’ that it’s a bad business, and won’t end well.”

“Ay, but the general opinion is, that if we get the Millstone from about our necks, a few lives taken on their side, and a few boys hanged on ours, won’t make much difference one way or other, and then everything will end well. That’s the way of it.”

This muffled dialogue, if we may use the expression, was now interrupted by a change in their route. At a Rath, which here capped an eminence of the road, a narrow bridle-way diverged to the right, and after a gradual ascent for about a mile and a half, was

lost upon a rough upland, that might be almost termed a moor. Here they halted for a few minutes, in deliberation as to whether they should then proceed across the moor, or wait until the moon should rise and enable them to see their way.

It was shortly resolved upon to advance, in order that they might lose as little time as possible, in consequence of having, as it appeared, two or three little affairs to execute in the course of the night. They immediately struck across the rough ground which lay before them, and as they did so, the conversation began to be indulged in more freely, in consequence of their remoteness from any human dwelling or the chances of being overheard. The whole body now fell into groups, each headed by a certain individual who acted as leader, but so varied were the topics of discourse, some using Irish, others the English language, that it was rather difficult to catch the general purport of what they said.

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At length when a distance of about two miles had been traversed, they came out upon one of those small green campaigns, or sloping meadows, that are occasionally to be found embosomed in the mountains, and upon which the eye rests with an agreeable sense of relief, on turning to them from the dark and monotonous hue of the gloomy wastes around them.

They had not been many minutes here when the moon rose, and after a little time her light would have enabled a casual or accidental spectator to witness a fearful and startling scene. About six hundred men were there assembled; every man having his face blackened, and all with shirts over their outward and usual garments. As soon as the moon, after having gained a greater elevation in the sky, began to diffuse a clearer lustre on the earth, we may justly say that it would be difficult to witness so strange and appalling a spectacle. The white appearance of their persons, caused by the shirts which they wore in the manner we have stated, for this peculiar occasion, when contrasted with their blackened visages, gave them more the character of demons than of men, with whom indeed their strange costume and disfigured faces seemed to imitate the possession of very little in common, with the exception of shape alone. The light was not sufficiently strong to give them distinctness, and as a natural consequence, there was upon them a dim gleamy look—a spectral character that was frightful, and filled the mind with an impression that the meeting must have been one of supernatural beings, if not an assemblage of actual devils, in visible shape, coming to perpetrate on earth some deed of darkness and of horror.

Among the whole six hundred there might have been about one hundred muskets. Pistols, blunderbusses, and other arms there were in considerable numbers, but these were not available for a portion, at least, of the purposes which had brought them together.

After some preliminary preparation a light was struck, a candle lit, around which a certain number stood, so as to expose it to as little chance of observation as possible. A man then above the middle size, compact and big-boned, took the candle in one hand, and brought it towards a long roll which he held in the other. He wore a white hat with a low crown, had large black whiskers which came to his chin, and ran besides round his neck underneath. The appearance of this man, and of those who surrounded the dim light which he held was, when taking their black unnatural faces into consideration, certainly calculated to excite no other sensations than those of terror mingled with disgust.

“Now,” said he, in a strong rich brogue, “let every man fall into rank according as his name is called out; and along with his name he must also repate his number whatever it may be, up until we come to a hundred, for I believe we have no more muskets. Where is Sargin Lynch?”

“Here I am,” replied that individual, who enjoyed a sergeant’s pension, having fought through the peninsular campaign.

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“Take the lists then and proceed,” said the leader; “we have little time to lose.”

Lynch then called over a list until he had reached a hundred; every man, as he answered to his name, also repeated his number; as for instance,

“Tom Halloran.”

“Here—one!”

“Peter Rafferty!”

“Here—two!” and so on, until the requisite number was completed, and every man as he responded fell also into rank.

Having thus got them into line, he gave them a rather hasty drill; and this being over, hundred after hundred went through the same process of roll-call and manoeuvre, until the task of the night was completed, so-far, at least, as that particular duty was concerned. Other duties, however, in more complete keeping with their wild and demon-like appearance, were still to be performed. Short rolls were called, by which selections for the assemblage of such as had been previously marked down for the robbery of arms, were made with considerable promptitude. And, indeed, most of those to whom, such outrageous and criminal attacks wera assigned, seemed to feel flattered by being appointed to the performance of them.

At length, when these matters were, arranged, and completed, the whole body was ordered to fall into rank, and the large-man, who acted as leader, walked for a times up and down in front of them, after which, as nearly opposite their centre as possible, he deliberately knelt down, and held his two open palms across each other for some seconds, or perhaps for half a minute.

A low fearful murmur, which no language could describe, and no imagination conceive —without having heard it, ran along the whole line. Whether it proceeded from compassion or exultation, or a blending of both mingled with horror and aversion, or a diabolical, satisfaction, it is difficult or rather absolutely impossible to say. The probability is, however, that it was made up of all these feelings, and that it was their unnatural union, expressed under such wild and peculiar circumstances, that gave it the impressive and dreadful effect wo have described.

“What does he mane?” said some of the youthful and inexperienced portion of them, in the accustomed whisper.

“There’s a death to take place to-night,” replied an older member; “there’s either a man or family doomed, God knows which!” He then arose, and going along the front: rank, selected by name twenty-four individuals, who were made to stand in order; to one of these he whispered the name and residence of the victim; this one immediately

whispered the secret to the person next him, who communicated it in his turn, and thus it went round until the last had received it. This being accomplished, he stood apart from the appointed murderers, and made them all, one after another, whisper to him the name and residence as before.

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“Now,” said the leader, “it’s my duty to tell you that there’s a man to be done for tonight; and you must all know his crime. He was warned by us no less than four times not to pay tithe, and not only that, but he refused to be sworn out to do so, and wounded one of the boys that wor sent by me one night to swear him. He has set us at defiance by publicly payin’ his tithes to a man that we’ll take care of some o’ these nights. He’s now doomed, an’ was tried on the last night of our meetin’. This night he dies. Them that has his life in their hands knows who he is an’ where they’ll find him. Once and for all then this night he dies. Now, boys, such of you as have nothing to do go home, and such of you as have your work before you do it like men, and don’t draw down destruction on yourselves by neglectin’ it. You know your fate if you flinch.—I have done.”

Those who were not on duty, to use a military phrase, returned across the moors by the way they came, and consequently reached the bridle road we have spoken of, together. Such, however, as were set apart for the outrages and crimes of the night, remained behind, in order that the peculiar destination of their atrocities might be known only to the individuals who were appointed to perpetrate them.

On their return, our unknown friend, who had rendered such an essential service to M’Carthy, thus addressed his companion—that is to say, the man who happened to be next him,—

“Well, neighbor, what do you think of this night’s work?”

“Why, that everything’s right, of coorse,” replied the other; “any man that strives to keep the Millstone about our necks desarves his fate; at the same time,” he added, dropping his voice still lower, “I’d as soon not be the man to do the deed, neighbor.”

“Well, I can’t say,” returned our friend, “but I’m a trifle of your way of thinkin’.”

“There’s one thing troubles me,” added his companion, an’ it’s this—there was a young lad wid us to-night from my neighborhood, he was near the last of us as we went along the road on our way to the mountains; I seen him whisperin’ to some one a good deal as we came out—now, I know there’s not on airth a kinder-hearted or more affectionate boy than he is; he hasn’t a heart to hurt a fly, and is loved and respected by every one in the neighborhood. Very well! God of glory! isn’t it too bad, that this one, handsome, lovin’, and affectionate boy, the only child of his father and mother,—*fareer gair* (* Bitter misfortune.)—my friend, whoever you are, isn’t it too bad, that that boy, innocent and harmless as a child, will go home to his lovin’ parents a murdherer this night?”

“What makes you say so?” asked our unknown friend.

“Why,” replied the man, “he stood beside me in the ranks, and has been sent to murdher the man that was doomed.”

To this our friend judiciously avoided making any reply, the fact being that several individuals in high trust among these Whiteboys were occasionally employed to sound suspected persons, in order to test their sincerity. For about half a minute he spoke not; but at length he said, with something like sternness—

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“There’s no use in sich talk as this, my friend; every man that joins us must make up his mind to do his duty to God and his country.”

“It’s a quare way of sarvin’ God to commit midnight murdher on his creatures,” responded the man with energy.

“I don’t know who you are,” replied our friend, “but if you take my advice, you’ll not hould such conversation wid every man you spake to in this body. Wid me you’re safe, but at the same time, I say, don’t draw suspicion on yourself, and it’ll be betther for you.”

“Who is this man?” asked the other, who appeared to have been borne away a good deal by his feelings, “that commands us?”

“Don’t you know Captain Midnight?” replied the other, somewhat evasively.

“Why, of coorse I know the man by that name; but, at the same time, I know nothin’ else about him.”

“Did you never hear?” asked his companion.

“Why, to tell you the truth,” said the other, “I heerd it said that he’s the *Cannie Soogah*, or the Jolly Pedlar that goes about the country.”

“Well,” said the other, lowering his voice a good deal in reply, “if I could trust you, I’d tell you what I think.”

“I’ll give you my name, then,” replied the other, “if you doubt me;” he accordingly whispered it to him, and the conversation proceeded.

“I know your family well,” returned our friend; “but, as I said before, be more on your guard, unless you know well the man you spake to. As for myself, I sometimes think it is the *Cannie Soogah* and sometimes that it is not. Others say it’s Buck English; but the Buck, for raisons that some people suspect, could never be got to join us. He wishes us well, he says, but won’t do anything till there comes an open ’ruction, and then he’ll join us, but not before. It’s hard to say, at any rate, who commands us when we meet this way.”

“Why so?”

“Why the dickens need you ax? Sure it’s not the same man two nights runnin’.”

“But I have been only three or four times out yet,” replied his companion; “and, sure enough, you’re very—right—they hadn’t the same man twiste.”

They had now reached the road under the Fort or Rath we have alluded to, and as there was no further necessity for any combined motion among them, and as every man now was anxious to reach home as soon as possible, their numbers diminished rapidly, until they ultimately dispersed themselves in all directions throughout the country.

CHAPTER IV.—Mirth and Murder—A Tithe-Proctor's Office.

The next morning, when our proctor and his family assembled at breakfast, their usual buoyancy of spirits was considerably checked by a report which had already spread over a great portion of the country, that a very industrious and honest farmer, who lived within about four miles of them, had been murdered in his own house the night before, by a party of fellows disguised with blackened faces, and who wore shirts over their clothes. The barbarous and brutal deed, in consequence of the amiable and excellent character of the man—who had been also remarkable for resolution and courage—had already excited an extraordinary commotion throughout the country.

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“Boys,” said Purcel, “I have been in C------m this morning, and, I’m sorry to say, there’s bad news abroad.”

“How is that, sir?” asked Alick,—“no violence, I hope; although I wouldn’t feel surprised if there were; the country is getting into a bad state: I think myself the people are mad, absolutely mad.”

“You both knew Matthew Murray,” he proceeded, “that lived down at Rathkeerin?”

“Certainly, father,” said John; “what about him?—no harm, I hope?”

“He was murdered in his own house last night,” replied his father; “but it’s some consolation that one of the murdering villains is in custody.”

“That is bad business, certainly,” replied John; “in fact, it’s dreadful.”

“It is dreadful,” said the father; “but the truth is, we must have the country, at least this part of it, proclaimed, and martial law established;—damn the murdering scoundrels, nothing else is fit for them. We must carry arms, boys, in future; and by d—n, the first man I see looking at me suspiciously, especially from behind a hedge, I’ll shoot him. As a tithe-proctor I could do so without much risk.”

“Not, father,” said Alick, “until he should first offer, or make an attempt at violence.”

“I would not, in the present state of the country, wait for it,” replied the determined and now indignant proctor; “if I saw him watch me with arms in his hands, or any dangerous weapon about his person, by d—n I’d put a bullet through him, with no more remorse than I would through a dog, and, if the animal were a good one, I think he would be the greater public loss of the two.”

Just at this moment, the females of the family, who had been giving breakfast to a number of poor destitute creatures, made their appearance.

“Where have you all been?” asked Mrs. Purcel, addressing her husband and sons; “here have we been waiting breakfast for you during the last half-hour, and finding you were none of you within, we went and gave these poor creatures without something to eat.”

“Ay,” responded the angry proctor, “and it’s not unlikely that the son, or husband, or brother of some of them may take a slap at me or at one of our sons, from behind a hedge, before these long nights pass off. D—n me, but it’s throwing pearls before swine, to show them either kindness or charity.”

“Something has angered you, papa,” said Mary; “I hope you have heard nothing unpleasant; I am not very timid, but when a whole country is in such a state of disturbance, one may entertain a reasonable apprehension, certainly.”

“Why, I am angry, Mary,” replied her father; “there’s as decent and quiet, but, at the same time, as spirited a man as there ever was in the barony, murdered this morning—-Mat Murray of Rathkeerin; however, as I said, it’s a great consolation that one of the murderers is in custody.”

“And who is the wretch, papa?” asked Julia.

“One that nobody ever could have suspected for such an act,” replied Purcel—“a son of one of our own tenants—honest Michael Devlin’s son—James.”

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“Utterly impossible, father,” exclaimed Julia, “there must be a mistake; that quiet and dutiful boy—their only son—never could have been concerned in the crime of murder.”

“Well, perhaps not, Judy; but, you silly girl, you talk as if you were in love with him. Why, child, there is such a system abroad, now that a man can scarcely trust his own brother—no, nor does a father know, when he sits down to his breakfast in the morning with his own son, whether, as Scripture says, he is not dipping his hand in the dish with a murderer.”

“Mat,” said his wife, “you ought not to be out late at night, nor the boys either. You know there is a strong feeling against you; and indeed I think you ought not, any of you, ever to go out without, arms about you—at all events, until the country gets quiet.”

“So I was just saying, Nancy,” replied her husband;—“hallo! who’s this coming up to the hall-door?—begad, our old pleasant friend, the *Cannie Soogah*. Upon my troth, I’m glad to see him. Hallo! *Cannie!—Cannie Soogah*, my hearty,—Jolly Pedlar, I say—this way! How are you, man?—have you breakfasted? Of course not. Well, go to the kitchen and, if you don’t show good eating, it won’t be for want of materials.”

“God save you, Misther Purcel,” replied the pedlar, in a rich, round brogue; “God save you, young gintlemen. Oh, thin, Misther Purcel, by my sowl it’s your four quarthers that has a right to be proud of your; family! And the ladies—not forgettin’ the misthress herself—devil the likes of the same two young ladies I see on my whole bait, an’ that’s the country at large, barrin’ the barony of Bedhehusth, where these cruel murdhers is committed; an’ devil a foot I’ll ever set into it till it’s changed for the betther.”

“Well, be off,” said the proctor, “to the kitchen; get your breakfast first, and then we’ll chat to you.”

“I will; but oh, Misther Purcel darlin’, did you hear what happened last night?”

“Is it Murray’s business?”

“What do you call Murray’s business, Misther Purcel? ’Tis Murray’s murdher, you mane?”

“Certainly, I have heard it all this morning in C------m.”

The pedlar only shook his head, looked upwards, and raising his two hands so as to express amazement, exclaimed—“Well, well, what is the world goin’ to! troth, I’ll not ate half my breakwist in regard of it!” So saying he slung his huge pack upon his shoulder as if it had been a mere bag of feathers, and took his way round to the kitchen as he had been desired.

The *Connie Soogah*, for so the people universally termed him, was in person and figure a fine burly specimen of manhood. His hair was black, as were a pair of large whiskers, that covered the greater portion of his face, and nearly met at his chin. His arms and limbs were powerfully made, and what is not always the case in muscular men, they betokened great activity as well as unusual strength. Nobody, for instance, would look without astonishment at the ease with which he swung a pack, that was weighty enough to load an ass, over his shoulder, or the lightness and agility with which he trotted on under it from morning till night, and this during the very severest heat of summer.

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M'Carthy, on reaching O'Driscol's the night before, had come to the conclusion of not making any allusion whatsoever to the incident which had just occurred to him. O'Driscol, who was only a newly-fledged magistrate, would, he knew, have made it the ground-work of a fresh communication to government, or to his friend the Castle, as he called it, especially as he had many other circumstances of less importance since his elevation to the magistracy. One indeed would imagine that the peace and welfare of that portion of the country had been altogether left to his sole and individual management, and that nothing at all of any consequence could get on properly in it without his co-operation or interference in some way. For this reason, as well as for others, M'Carthy prudently hesitated either to arouse his loyalty or disturb the tranquility of his family, and after joining him in a tumbler of punch, or what O'Driscol termed his nightcap, he retired to bed, where, however, he could not for a considerable time prevent himself from ruminating, with a good deal of seriousness, upon the extraordinary interview he had had with the friendly stranger.

After breakfast the next morning he resolved, however, to communicate to his friends, the Purcels, who were at all events no alarmists, and would not be apt to make him, whether he would or not, the instrument of a selfish communication with the government, a kind of honor for which the quiet and unassuming student had no relish whatsoever. He sauntered towards the proctor's, at whose house he arrived a few minutes before the return from the kitchen of our friend the Connie Soogah, who had been treated there with an excellent and abundant breakfast, to which, in spite of the murder of Murray, he did ample justice.

"Now, Mr. Purcel," he exclaimed, tossing down his pack as if it had been a schoolboy's satchel, "by the lomenty-tarry you have made a new man of me! Whoo!" he proceeded, cutting a caper more than a yard high, "show me the man now, that would dar to say bow to your—beg pardon, ladies, I must be jinteel for your sakes—that would dar, I say, to look crucked at you or one a' your family, and maybe the Cannie Soogah wouldn't rise the lap of his liver. Come, young ladies, shall I make my display? I know you'll buy lot o' things and plenty besides; I can praise my goods, thank God, for you see, Miss Mary, when the world comes to an end it'll be found that the man who couldn't say three words for himself, and one for his friend, must be sent down stairs to keep the fire in. Miss Julia, I have a shawl here that 'ud make you look worse than you do."

"Worse, Cannie!" replied Julia, "do you call that a recommendation?"

"Certainly, Miss Julia, you look so well that nothing on airth could make you look batther, and by way of variety, I've gone to the Well o' the world's end to get something to make you look worse. God knows whether I've succeeded or not, but at all events, we'll thry."

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So saying, he produced a very handsome shawl, together with a rather large assortment of jewelry and other matters connected with the female toilet, of considerable taste and expense.

“Here,” he added, “are some cotton and silk stockins’—but upon my profits, it’s not to every foot an’ leg I’d produce them. I’m a great coortier, ladies, you must know, and am in love wid every purty girl I meet—but sure that’s only natural; however, as I was sayin’, it’s not to a clype or a pair of smooth-in’ irons I’ll produce such stockins’ as these! No, no, but a purty foot an’ leg is always sure to get the worth o’ their money from the Cannie Soogah!”

“Well done, Cannie!” said the proctor, “dix me, but you’re a pleasant fellow—come girls, you must buy something—handsel him. You got no handsel to-day, Cannie?” he added, winking at the pedlar to say no.

“Barrin’ the first foundation in the kitchen within,” he replied; “for you must know that’s what I call my breakfast, handsel of any kind didn’t cross my palm this day.”

“In that case, the girls must certainly buy something,” added Purcel.

“But we’ve no money, papa.”

“But,” replied the pedlar, “you have what’s betther—good credit with the Cannie Soogah—och, upon my profits I’d rather have one sweet coaxin’ smile from that purty little mouth of yours, Miss Julia, than money in hand any day! Ah! Misther Purcel, darlin’, isn’t it a poor thing not to have an estate of ten thousand a year?” and here he looked wistfully at the smiling Julia, and shrugged his shoulders like a man who knew he was never likely to gain his wishes.

“I would buy something,” said Mary, “but, like Julia, I am penniless.”

“Never say so, Miss Mary, to me; only name what you’d like—lave the price to my honesty, and the payment to my patience, and upon my profits you won’t complain, I’ll go bail.”

“Yes,” observed Julia, “or what if papa would treat us to something? Come, papa, for the sake of old times; let us see whether you have forgotten any of your former, craft.”

“Good, Judy! ha! ha! ha!—well done! but Cannie, have you nothing for the gentlemen?”

Now, we must pause for a little to state, that the moment M’Carthy, who was now present, heard the jolly pedlar’s voice, he started, and felt considerably surprise. The tones of it were neither familiar to him nor yet were they strange. That he had heard them somewhere, and on some occasion, he could almost have sworn. Occasionally a turn of the man’s voice would strike him as not being new to him, but again, for the next

minute or two, it was such as he could not remember to have ever heard. This we say by way of parenthesis.

“For the gentlemen! Lord help you, Mr. Purcel, I never think of them when the ladies is before me—who would! However, I’m well prepared even for them. Here is a case o’ razors that ’ud cut half an inch before the edge; now, if you find me another pair that’ll do the seem—hem! the same—I’ll buy the Bank of Ireland and give it to you for a new-year’s-gift.”

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“Don’t you know this gentleman?” asked the proctor, pointing to M’Carthy.

“Let me see,” said he—“we’ll now—eh, no—I think not, he is neither so well made, nor by any manes so well lookin’ as the other;” and the pedlar, as he spoke, fixed his eyes, but without seeming to gaze, upon Julia, who, on hearing a comparison evidently so disadvantageous to M’Carthy, blushed deeply, and passed to another part of the room, in order to conceal what she felt must have been visible, and might have excited observation.

“No,” proceeded the pedlar; “I thought at first he was one of the left-legge’d M’Squiggins’s, as they call them, from Fumblestown—but he is not, I know, for the raisons I said. They’re a very good plain family, the M’Squiggins’s, only that nobody’s likely to fall in love wid them—upon my profits, I’m half inclined to think he’s one of them still—eh, let me see again—would you turn round a little, if you plaise, sir, till I thry if the cast’s in your eye. Upon my faith, there it is sure enough! How are you, Misther M’Squiggins? I’m happy to see you well, sir. How is your sisther, Miss Pugshey, an’ all the family, sir?—all well, I hope, sir?”

“All well,” replied M’Carthy, laughing as loud as any of the rest, every one of whom actually in convulsions—for they knew, with the exception of Julia, who was deceived at first by the pedlar’s apparent gravity, that he was only bantering her lover.

The proctor, who, although a man that loved money as his God—with his whole heart, soul, and strength—was yet exceedingly anxious to stand well with the world, and on this account never suffered a mere trifle to stand between him and the means of acquiring a good name, and having himself been considered a man of even of a benevolent spirit. He consequently made some purchase from the pedlar, with whom he held a very amusing and comic discussion, as touching the prices of many articles in that worthy’s; pack. Nay, he went so far as to give them a good-humored exhibition of the secrets and peculiarities known only to the initiated, and bought some small matters in the slang terms with which none but the trade are acquainted.

“Come, boys,” said he, “I have set you a good example; won’t you buy something from the jolly pedlar?”

John and Alick bought some trifling things, and M’Carthy purchased a pair of bracelets for the girls, which closed the sales for that morning.

“Well, now,” said the pedlar, whilst folding up again the goods which he had displayed for sale, “upon my profits, Misther Purcel, it’s a perfect delight to me to call here, an’ that whether I dale or not—although I’m sure to do so always when I come. Well, you have all dealt wid me now for payment, and here goes to give you something for nothing—an, in truth, it’s a commodity that, although always chape, is seldom taken. ’Tis called good advice. The ladies—God bless them, don’t stand in need of it, for sure the darlins’

never did anything from Eve downwards, that 'ud require it. Here it is then, Misther Purcel, let you and your sons do what the ould song says—'be good boys and *take care of yourselves. Thighin thu?* (*Do you understand.) An' this gintleman, if I knew his name, maybe I'd say something to him too."*

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“This is Mr. M’Carthy, Cannie.”

“Ay, M’Carthy—troth ’tis a good ould name. Well, Mr. M’Carthy, all I have to say to you! is, that *if you happen to meet a man that gives you good advice, TAKE IT*. An’ now God be Wid you all, an’ spare you to one another!”

So saying, he slung his huge pack over his shoulders almost without an effort, and commencing a merry old Irish song he proceeded lightly and cheerfully on his journey.

“Well, boys,” said the proctor, “now that we’ve had a good hearty laugh with the *Cannie Soogah*, let us proceed to business. I see by your red coats and top-boots, that you’re for the hounds to-day, but as I’m in a hurry, I wish before you go, that you’d see those sneaking devils that are hanging about the place. Hourigan is there again with fresh falsehoods—don’t be misled by him—the ill-looking scoundrel is right well able to pay—-and dix me if I’ll spare him. Tell him he needn’t expect any further forbearance—a rascal that’s putting money in the saving’s bank to be pleadin’ poverty! It’s too bad. But the truth is, boys, there’s no one behind in their tithes now entitled to forbearance, and for the same reason they must pay or take the consequences; we’ll see whether they or the law will prove the strongest, and that very soon. Good-bye, boys; good-bye, M’Carthy—and I say, Jack and Alick, be on your sharps and don’t let them lads do you—d’ye mind now?—keen’s the word.”

He then got on his comfortable jaunting-car, and drove off to wait, according to appointment, upon the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot, D.D.

“Mogue Moylan,” said John, “will you go out and tell them fellows that I and Alick will be in the office presently—and do you hear? tell them to look like men, and not so much like murderers that came to take our lives. Say we’ll be in the office presently, and that we hope it’s not excuses they’re fetching us.”

“I will, Misther John; but, troth, it’s the worst word in their cheek they’d give me, if I deliver the last part of your message. ’Tis my head in my fist I’d get, maybe; however, Misther John, between you an’ me, they’re an ill-looking set, one an’ all o’ them, an’ could pay their tides, every tail o’ them, if they wished.”

“I know that very well,” replied the young fellow, “but my father’s not the man to be trifled with. We’ll soon see whether they or the law’s the strongest; that’s all.”

Moylan went over to where the defaulters were standing, and putting up his hand, he stroked down his cheek with great gravity. “Are yez in a hurry, good people?” said he.

“Some of us is,” replied a voice.

“Ay, all of us,” replied others; “and we’re here now for an hour and a half, and no sign of seein’ us.”

“Yez are in a hurry, then?”

“To be sure we are.”

“Well, to them that’s in a hurry I’ve a word to say.”

“What is it, Mogue?”

“Why, it is this, take your time—ever an’ always, when you happen to be in a hurry—-take your time.”

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“Maybe, Mogue,” they replied, “if you were widout your breakfast, as we are, you wouldn’t say so.”

“Why, did’nt yez get your breakfasts yet?”

“Devil a morsel.”

“Well, to them that didn’t get their breakfasts I have another word to say.”

“What is it, Mogue?”

“Why, have patience—ever and always when you’re hungry, have patience, and you’ll find it a great relief; it’ll fill you and keep you in good condition—that I mayn’t sin but it will! But, sure, I’ve got news for yez, boys,” he added; “Masther John bid me tell you that, after about a month or so it’ll be contrary to law to get hungry: there’s an act o’ parliament goin’ to be made against it, you see; so that any villain disloyal enough to get hungry, if it’s proved against him, will be liable to transportation. That I mayn’t sin but it’ll be a great comfort for the country—I mane, to have hunger made contrary to act o’ parliament.”

Mogue Moylan was, indeed, a fellow of a very original and peculiar character. Grave, sly, and hypocritical, yet apparently quiet and not susceptible of strong or vehement emotions, he was, nevertheless, more suggestive of evil designs and their fulfilment than any man, perhaps, in his position of life that ever existed. Though utterly without spirit, or the slightest conception of what personal courage meant, the reader not be surprised that he was also vindictive, and consequently treacherous and implacable. He could project crime and outrage with a felecity of diabolical invention that was almost incredible. He was, besides, close and cautious, unless when he thought that he could risk a falsehood with safety; and, in the opinion of some few who knew him, not merely dishonest, but an actual thief. His manner, too, was full of plausible assumption of great conscientiousness and simplicity. He seemed always calm and cool, was considered rather of a religious turn, and always expressed a strong horror against cursing or swearing in any shape. Indeed he had a pat anecdote, which he occasionally told, of a swoon or faint into which he usually fell, when a youth of about nineteen, in consequence of having been forced to take a book oath, for the first time, another act against which he entertained a peculiar antipathy. Now, all this was indeed very singular and peculiar; but he accounted for it by the scrupulous love of truth with which not only he himself, but his whole family, many of whom he said had given their lives for their country, were affected. The only foible that could be brought to the charge of honest Mogue, was a singular admiration for his own visage, which he never omitted to survey with remarkable complacency several times a day in a broken piece of looking, glass, which he kept for that especial purpose. This, and its not unnatural consequences a belief that almost ever female who spoke to him with civility was

smitten by his face and figure, constituted the only two weaknesses in a character otherwise so

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spotless and perfect as that of Mogue Moylan. Mogue was also a good deal subject to the influence of the pathetic, especially when he alluded to the misfortune, glory be to God, which had befallen the family, in the person of a lone line of ancestors, and especially in that of big poor, simple father, whose word, as every one knew, was as good as his oath; and, indeed, very few doubted that remarkable fact, but who, notwithstanding had been transported during the space of seven years for suspicion of perjury; "for didn't the judge tell him, when he passed sentence upon him, that if he had been found guilty all out, or of anything beyant suspicion of it, he would be transported for life; 'an' instead of that,' said the judge, 'bekaise I persave,' says he, 'that you're an honest man, an' has been sworn against wrongfully in this business, and bekaise I see clearly that you love the truth, the sentence of the coort is,' says he, sheddin' tears, 'that you're to be transported only for seven years, an' you lave the coort an' the counthry,' says he, 'widout at stain upon your character—it's only the law that's against you—so, God be wid you,' the judge went on, wipin' his eyes, 'and grant you a safe and pleasant voyage acrass,' says he, an' he cried for some minutes like a child. That an' the unjust hangin' of my poor, simple ould grandfather for horse-stearin'—that is, for suspicion of horse-stealin'—is the only two misfortunes, thank God, that has been in our family of late days."

So much for the character of worthy Mogue, whom we must now permit to resume the delivery of his message.

The last words were uttered with so peculiar and significant a gravity, not without a good deal of dry sarcastic humor, that the men could not avoid laughing heartily.

"But," he proceeded, "I have better news still for yez. Sure Masther John desired me to let you all know that his father won't ax a penny o' tithe from one o' yez: all you have to do is to call at the office there in a few minutes, and you'll get aich o' you a receipt in full; (* By this he means a horse-whipping.) that is, if you don't keep civil tongues in your heads."

One of Mogue's qualities was the power of gravely narrating a fact with such peculiar significance, that the very reverse of it was conveyed to the hearer; for the fellow was a perfect master of irony.

"Ah! well done Mogue; many a day o' reckoning *he* has had wid *us*, but maybe *our* day o' reckonin' wid *him* will come sooner than he expects, or wishes."

"Don't be thinkin' ill," said Mogue, "but keep yourselves always free from evil. What does Scripthur say? 'One good turn desarves another,' says Scripthur. Boys, always keep Scripthur before you, and you'll do right. 'One good turn deserves another,' says

Scripthur! and you know yourselves, I hope, that many a good turn you received at his hands. That I may be happy, but it's good advice I'm givin' you!"

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“Divil a betther, Mogue,” replied Hourigan, with a significant scowl, and “it’s we ourselves that’ll be sure to take it some fine night.”

“Night or day,” replied Mogue, “it’s always right to be doin’ good, whether we sarve our country or religion. God prosper yez, at all events, and grant you success in your endeavors, an’ that’s the worst I wish you! There now, Masther John’s in the office, ready an’ willin’ to give sich o’ yez a resate in full as will—desarve it.”

The situation in which the parties stood, during this dialogue, was at the rear of the premises into which the proctor’s office opened, and where the country people were always desired to wait. They stood at the end of the stable, adjoining a wall almost eight feet high, on the other side of which was the pig-sty. Here, whilst the conversation just detailed went forward, stood a pretty, plump-looking, country-girl, one of the female servants of the proctor’s establishment, named Letty Lenehan. She had come to feed the pigs, just in time to catch the greater portion of their conversation; and, as she possessed a tolerably clear insight into Mogue’s character, she was by no means ignorant of certain illusions made in it, although she unquestionably did not comprehend its full drift. We have said that this girl understood his character very well, and scarcely any one had a better right or greater opportunities of doing so. Mogue, in fact, was in love with her, or at least, pretended to be so; but, whether he was or not, one thing we write as certain, that he most implicitly believed her to be so with himself. Letty was a well-tempered, faithful girl, honest and conscientious, but not without a considerable relish for humor, and with more than ordinary talents for carrying on either a practical joke or any other piece of harmless humbug, a faculty in which she was ably supported by a fellow-servant of a very different description from Mogue, named Jerry Joyce. Joyce, in fact, was not merely a strong contrast to Mogue, but his very reverse in almost every point of his character. He was open and artless in the opinion of many, almost to folly; but, under this apparent thoughtlessness, there existed a fund of good sense, excellent feeling, and quickness of penetration, for which the world gave him no credit, or at least but very little.

Jerry and Letty, therefore, between whom a real affection subsisted, were in the habit of amusing themselves, whenever they could do so without discovery, at Mogue’s expense. Such, then, was the relative position of these parties at the present stage of our narrative.

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When John Purcel was seen in the office, the tithe defaulters, for such they were, went to the outside of the window, where they all stood until it became the turn of each to go in. Although they went there to plead their inability to pay, yet, in fact, there were a great proportion of them who exhibited, neither by their manner nor appearance, any symptom whatever of poverty. On the countenances of most of them might be read, not only a stern, gloomy, and resolute expression, but one of dissatisfaction and bitter resentment. As they turned their eyes upon young Purcel, and looked around at the unequivocal marks of great wealth, if not luxury itself, that were conspicuous in every direction, there was a significance in the smiles and glances which passed between them, that gave very appropriate foretaste of the convulsions which ere long took place in the country. John Purcel himself had remarked these appearances on almost every recent occasion, and it was the striking, or rather startling, aspect of these men, that caused him to allude to it just before sending Moylan to them.

It is not our intention to detail, at full length, the angry altercations which took place between them, as each went in, from time to time, to apologize for not paying up his tithes. Every possible excuse was offered; but so well and thoroughly were Purcel and his sons acquainted with the circumstances, of, we may say, almost every family, not merely in the parish, but in the barony itself, that it proved a matter of the greatest difficulty to mislead or impose on any of them. Nay, so anxious did the shrewd tithe-proctor feel upon this subject, that he actually got himself proposed and elected a governor of the Savings' Bank, which had been for some time past established in C------m. By this means, he was enabled to know that many of those who came to him with poverty on their lips, were actually lodging money in these economical institutions.

"Well, Carey," said he, to a comfortable-looking man that entered, "I hope you have no further apology to offer for your dishonesty?"

"Sorra thing, Mr. John, but that I'm not able to pay. I expect the landlord to come down upon me some o' these days—and what to do, or on what hand to turn, I'm sure I don't know on airth."

"You don't say so now, Carey?"

"Troth I do, Misther John; and I hope you'll spare me for a little—I mane till the hard times that's in it mends somehow."

"Well, Carey, all I can say is, that, if you don't know on what hand to turn, I can tell you."

"Thank you, Misther John; troth an' I do want to know that."

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“Listen, then; before you come here to me with a barefaced and dishonest lie in your mouth, you ought to have gone to the C------m Savings’ Bank, and drawn from the sum of two hundred and seventy-three pounds, which you have lying there, the slight sum of seven pounds twelve and nine-pence which you owe us. Now, Carey, I tell you that you are nothing but an impudent, scheming, dishonest scoundrel; and I say, once for all, that we will see whether you, and every knavish rascal like you, or the law of the land, is the stronger. Mark me now, you impudent knave, we shall never ask you again. The next time you see us will be at the head of a body of police, or a party of the king’s troops; for I swear that, as sure as, the sun shines, so certainly will we take the tithe due out of your marrow, if we can get it nowhere else.”

“Maybe, then,” said Carey, “you will find that we’ll laugh at the law, the polis, the king’s troops, and Misther John Purcel into the bargain; and I now tell you to your teeth, that if one sixpence of tithe would save the sowls of every one belongin’ to you, I won’t pay it —so do your worst, and I defy you.”

“Begone, you scoundrel. You are, I perceive, as rank a rebel as ever missed the rope; but you won’t miss it. Go home now; for, as I said this moment, we will take the tithe out of your marrow, if you had thousands of your cut-throat and cowardly White-boys at your back. Don’t think this villainy will pass with us; we know how to handle you, and will too; begone, you dishonest ruffian, I have no more time to lose with you.”

In this manner almost every interview terminated. Purcel was a warm and impetuous young fellow, who certainly detested everything in the shape of dishonesty or deceit and here he had too many instances of both to be able to keep his temper, especially when he felt that he and his family were the sufferers. Other cases, however, were certainly very dissimilar to this; we allude especially to those of real distress, where the means of meeting the demand were not to be had. With such individuals the proctor’s sons were disposed to be lenient, which is certainly more than could be said if he himself had to deal with them.

“Jemmy Mulligan,” he said, to a poor-looking man, “go home to your family. We don’t intend to take harsh measures with you, Jemmy; and you needn’t come here again till we send for you.”

“God bless you, sir; troth I don’t know why the people say that you’re all hard and unfeelin’—I can say for myself that I never found you so. Good morning, sir, and thank you, Misther John; and God forgive them that blackens you as they do!”

“Yes, Jemmy, I know they hate us, because we compel them to act honestly; but they will soon find that honesty, after all, is the cheapest course,—for we shall take d—d good care to make them pay through the nose for their knavery. We know they have a gang of firebrand agitators and hungry lawyers at their back; but we shall make them feel that the law is stronger than any treasonable combination that can be got up against it.”

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A third man came in. “Well, Tom, you’re not coming to plead poverty, I hope?”

The man looked around him with peculiar intelligence. “Are we safe?” he asked; “and may I spake widout danger?”

“You may, Duggan.”

“Well, then, I came to say that I’ll call over to-morrow evenin’ and pay it, but I daren’t now.”

“Why so, Tom?”

“Bekaise the most of us all have the tithe in our pockets, but as a proof that we did not pay it, we will, every man of us, be obliged to show it before we go home. I might pay it now, Mr. Purcel; but then, if I did, it’ very likely I’d be a corpse before this day week. Sich is the state that things ha’ come to; and how it’ll end, God only knows. At any rate, I’ll slip over afther dusk to-morrow evenin’ and pay; but as you hope for mercy, and don’t wish to see me taken from my wife and childre’, don’t breathe a syllable of it to man or mortual.”

“I shall not, indeed, Tom,” replied Purcel, “but I really did not think that matters were altogether so bad as you describe them. The people are infatuated, and will only draw the vengeance of the law upon their heads. They will suffer, as they always do by their own misconduct and madness.”

Duggan had scarcely withdrawn, when our old friend, Darby Hourigan, thrust in his hateful and murderous-looking countenance. “God save you, Misther John.”

“God save you kindly, Misther Hourigan.”

“Isn’t it glorious weather for the saison, sir?”

“I have seen better and I have seen worse, Mr. Hourigan; but Darby, passing the weather by, which neither you nor I can mend, allow me to say that I hope you are not coming here for the twentieth time to palm us off about the tithe.”

“Troth, then, and, Mr. John; I can’t afford to pay tide—I’m a poor man, sir; and, as it happens that I never trouble the parson in religious matthers, I don’t see what right the parson has to trouble me for my money.”

“Ah! you have got the cant, I see. You have been tutored.”

“I have got the truth, sir.”

“Ay, but have you got the tithe, sir? for I do assure you, Mr. Hourigan, that it is not your logic, but your money I want.”

“Begad, sir, and I’m afeard you’ll be forced to put up wid my logic this time, too. You can’t take more from the cat than her skin, you know.”

There was an atrocious and sneering spirit, not only in this ruffian’s manner, but in the tones of his voice, that was calculated to overcome human patience.

“Darby, we have let you run a long time, but I now tell you, there’s an end of our forbearance so far as you are concerned. If you were not able to pay I could feel for you, put we know, and all the world knows, that you are one of the most comfortable and independent men in the parish. Darby, you in short are a d—d rogue, and what is worse, a treacherous and mischief-makin scoundrel. I am aware of the language you use against our whole family, whom you blacken whenever you have an opportunity of doing so. You are not only dishonest but ungrateful, sirrah.”

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“No man has a betther right to be a judge, and a good judge of dishonesty, than your father’s son,” replied Hourigan. “Why didn’t you call me an oppressor of the poor, and a blood-sucker?—why didn’t you say I was a hard-hearted beggarly upstart, that rose from maneness and cheatery, and am now tyrannizin’ over hundreds that’s a thousand times betther than myself? Why don’t you say that I’d sell my church and my religion to their worst enemies, and that for the sake of filthy lucre and blackguard upstart pride? I now come to tell you what we all think of you in this country, and what I believe some of us has tould you already—that you may go to hell for your tithe, and make the divil your paymaster, what he’ll be yet. We will pay you none, and we set you and your upstart ould rogue of a father, with the law, the polis, and the army, all at defiance. I don’t choose to say more, but I could if I liked.”

Purcell’s hunting-whip accidentally lay on the table at which he sat, but he did not take it up immediately after Hourigan had concluded. He quickly rose, however, and having closed the door and locked it, he let down the windows, and deliberately drew the blinds.

“Now, you scoundrel,” he replied, taking up the whip, and commencing to flog Hourigan with all his strength, which was very great, “I will give you, by way of foretaste, a specimen of what a ruffian like you deserves when he is insolent.”

With such singular energy, good will, and admirable effect did he lace Mr. Hourigan, that the latter worthy, after cutting some very antic capers, and exhibiting in a good many other respects several proofs of his agility that could scarcely be expected from his heavy and ungainly figure, was at last fairly obliged to sing out,—“Oh, Misther John, Misther John! you will—Misther John, darlin’, what do you mane, you murdh—oh, oh, d—n your soul—dear, what do you mane, Mr. John, dear? I say, what are you at? What do you baste me this way for—oh, may the divil—the Lord bless you, an’ don’t—here I am—here, Misther John, I ax your pardon—hell pursue—Misther John, darlin’, I go down on my knees to you, an’ axes your pardon—here now you see, I’m down.—Och murdher, am I to have the very sowl welted out o’ me this way?”

Mr. John, having now satisfied himself, and left very visible marks of his attachment and good will to Hourigan, upon that individual’s face and person, desired him to get up.

“Now, my good fellow,” he exclaimed, “I trust I have taught you a lesson that you won’t forget.”

“No, Misther John,” he replied, rising and rubbing himself in different parts of the body, as if to mitigate the pain which he felt; “no, I won’t forget it—I won’t by it’s a lesson I’ll remember, and so will you.”

“What do you mean, you cowardly villain?” asked Purcel, once more raising his whip. “You are threatening, are you.”

“No, Misther John, not a bit o’ that—divil a threat—me! I wouldn’t threaten you if there wasn’t niver another man in Europe. Let me out, if you plaise—let me out, and may the div—the Lord lov you!”

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“Now,” said the other, raising the blinds and afterwards opening the door, “you may go about your business, and mark me, Mr Hourigan—”

“I do, sir,” replied the other, bolting out “oh, God knows I do—you have marked me, Misther Purcel, and I will mark you, sir—for—” he added muttering in a low voice to those who stood about him—“one good turn desarves another, anyhow.”

We shall not now dwell upon the comments which young Purcel’s violence drew from the defaulters on their way home. Our reader, however, may easily imagine them, and form for themselves a presentiment of the length to which “the tithe insurrection,” as they termed it, was likely to proceed throughout the country at large, with the exception only of the northern provinces.

CHAPTER V.—A Hang-Choice Shot—The “Garrison” on Short Commons.

When our merry friend the pedlar left the proctor’s parlor, he proceeded at a brisk pace in the direction of the highway, which, however, was not less than three-quarters of a mile from Longshot Lodge, which was the name Purcel had given to his residence. He had only got clear of the offices, however, and was passing the garden wall, which ran between him and the proctor’s whole premises, when he was arrested by Mogue Moylan.

“Ah! merry Mogue,” exclaimed the pedlar, ironically, “I was missin’ you. Where were you, my cherub?”

“I was in the barn ‘ithin,” replied Mogue, “just offerin’ up a little pathernavy for the protection o’ this house and place, and of the daicent, kind-hearted peeople that’s in it.”

“An’, as a joint prayer, they say, is worth ten single ones, I suppose,” returned the pedlar,—laying his fingers on his lips and winking—“you had—ahem—you understand?”

“No, thin,” replied Mogue, brightening up with excessive vanity, “may I be happy if I do!”

“Why, our fair friend, Letty Lenehan—begad, Mogue, she’s a purty girl that—says she to herself,” proceeded the pedlar; “for I don’t think she knew or thought I heard her—’If I thought he would like these rib-bons, I’d buy them for myself.’ ‘Who do you mane, acushla?’ says I, whisperin’ to her. ‘Who,’ says she, ’but—but Mogue himself—only honor bright, Mr. Magrath’ says she, ‘sure you wouldn’t betray me?’ ‘Honor bright again,’ says I, ‘I’m not the stuff a traitor’s made of;’ and so you see we both laughed heartily, bekaise we understood one another. Mogue,” proceeded the other, “will you answer me the truth in one thing?”

“If I can I will, Misther Magrath.

“I know ye will, bekaise you can,” replied, the pedlar; “how do you come round the girls at all? how do you make them fond o’ you? I want you to tell me that, if it’s not a family saicret.”

Mogue gravely drew his fingers and thumb down his thin yellow jaws, until they met under his chin, and replied—

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“It can’t be tould, Misther Magrath; some men the women’s naturally fond of, and some men they can’t bear—throth it’s like a freemason’s saicret, if you wor a man that the women wor naturally fond of you’d know it yoarself, but not bein’ that, Mr. Magrath, you could not understand it. It’s born wid one, an’ troth, a troublesome gift it is—for it is a gift—at least, I find it so. There’s no keep in’ the crathurs oft o’ you.”

“Begad, you must be a happy man, Mogue. I wish I was like you—but whisper, man alive, why don’t you look higher.

“How is that?” asked the other, now apparently awakened to a new interest.

“Mogue,” said the pedlar, with something like solemnity of manner, “you and I are both embarked in the same ship, you know—we know how things are to go. I’m now provin’ to you that I’m your friend. Listen, you passed through the back-yard to-day while I was in the parlor wid the family sellin’ my goods as well as I could. Well, Miss Julia had a beautiful shawl about her purty shoulders, and as she seen you passin, she started, kept her eyes fixed upon you till you disappeared, and then, afther thinkin ’or some time, she sighed deeply. Whisper, the thing flashed upon me—that’s that, thought I, at any rate—and devil a doubt of it, you’re safe there, or my name’s not Andy Magrath, better known as the Cannie Soogah-Hurra, Mogue, more power!”

A richer comic study than Mogue’s face ould not possibly be depicted. His thin craggy jaws—for cheeks he had none—were winkled and puckered into such a multiplicity of villanous folds and crevices, as could scarcely be paralleled on a human countenance; and what added to the ludicrous impression made, was the fact that he endeavored to look—and, in fact, did so successfully—more like a man who felt that a secret long known to himself had been discovered, than a person to whom the intelligence had come for the first time.

“An’ Misther Magrath,” he replied, once more repeating the survey of his puckered laws; “is it by way of information that you tould me that? That I mayn’t sin, but you should be ever and always employed in carryin’ coals to, Newcastle. Troth, since you have broached\the thing, I’ve known it this good while, and no one could tell you more about it, if I liked. Honor bright, however, as poor Letty said, troth, I pity that girl—but what can I do? no—no—honor bright, for ever!”

“Well, anyhow, now that we’ve thrown light upon what I noticed a while ago, let us talk about other matters. The house is still well armed and guarded, you say?”

“That I may die in grace, but it ’ud take me half an hour to reckon all the guns, pistols, and blunderbushes they have freshly loaded in the house every night.”

“Well, couldn’t you assist us, you in the house?”

“No—for I’m not in the house; they wouldn’t allow any servant to sleep in the house for fear o’ traichery, and they say so. If they’d let me sleep in the house, it ’ud be another thing; I might wet the powdher, and make their fire-arms useless; but sure they have lots of swords and bagnets, and daggers, and other instruments o’ that kind that ’ud skiver one like a rabbit.”

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“Well, but you know all the outs and ins of the house, the rooms and passages, and everything that way so thoroughly, that one could depend upon your account of them.”

“Depend upon them—ay, as well as you might upon the Gospel itself;—she was fond of M’Carthy, they say, and they think she is still; but, *be dhu husth*, (* Hold your tongue.) there’s one that knows betther. You don’t like M’Carthy?”

“To be sure I do, as the devil does holy wather.”

“Well,” proceeded Mogue, “I’ve a thing in my head about him—but sure he’s in the black list as it is.”

“Well, what is it you have in your head about him?”

Mogue shook it, but added, “Never mind, I’ll think it over again, and when I’m made up on it, maybe I’ll tell you. Don’t we meet on this day week?”

“Sartainly, will you come?”

“I intend it, for the truth is, Misther Magrath, that the Millstone must be broke; that I may die in pace, but it must, an’ any one that stands in the way of it must suffer. May I be happy, but they must.”

The pedlar looked cautiously about him, and seeing that the coast was clear and no person visible, he thrust a letter into his hand, adding, “you may lave it in some place where the ould chap, or either of the sons, will be sure to find it. Maybe it’ll tache them a little more civility to their neighbors.”

Mogue looked at the document, and placing it securely in his pocket, asked, “Is it a notice?”

The other nodded in the affirmative, and added, with a knowing wink, “There’s a coffin and a cross-bones in it, and the name is signed wid real blood, Mogue; and that’s the way to go about breakin’ the Millstone, my man.”

“That I may never do an ill turn, but it is. Well, God bless you, Misther Magrath, an’ whisper now, don’t forget an odd patther-anavy goin’ to bed, in hopes that God will prosper our honest endayvours. That was a hard thing upon young Devlin in Murray’s murdher. I’m not sure whether you do, but I know that that act was put upon him through ill-will; and now he’ll hang for it. But sure it’s one comfort that he’ll die a martyr, glory be to God!”

The pedlar, having assented to this, got on his pack, and leaving Mogue to meditate on the new discovery which he had made respecting Julia Purcel, he proceeded on towards the highway to which we have alluded.

Purcel himself, in the course of a few miles' drive, reached the parsonage, in which the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot ought to have lived, but in which, for several years past, he had not resided; if we except about a fortnight twice a year, when he came to sweep off as weighty a load of tithes as he could contrive to squeeze out of the people through worthy Mat Purcel, his proctor.

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For a year or two previous to this visit, there is no doubt but the aspect of ecclesiastical affairs was gradually getting worse. Turbot began to feel that there was something wrong, although he could not exactly say what it was. Purcel, however, was by no means reluctant to disclose to him the exceedingly desperate state to which not only had matters been driving, but at which they had actually arrived. This, in truth, was our worthy proctor's version of ecclesiastical affairs, for at least two years before the present period of our narrative. But, like every man who tampers with, simple truth, he began to perceive, almost when it was too late, that his policy in antedating the tithe difficulties was likely very soon to embarrass himself; and to deprive the outrages resulting from the frightful opposition that was organized against tithes of all claim to novelty. He had, in fact, so strongly exaggerated the state of the country, and surcharged his pictures of anti-tithe violence so much beyond all truth and reality, that when the very worst and most daring organization did occur, he could do nothing more than go over the same ground again. The consequence was, that worthy Turbot, so long habituated to these overdrawn narratives, began to look upon them as the friends of the boy who shouted out "wolf!" did upon the veracity of his alarms. He set down his intrepid and courageous proctor as nothing else than a cowardly poltroon, whose terrors exaggerated everything, and whose exaggerated accounts of fraud, threats, and violence had existed principally in his own imagination. Such were the circumstances under which Purcel and Dr. Turbot now met.

The worthy rector of Ballysoho was a middle-sized man, with coal-black hair, brilliant, twinkling eyes of the same color, and as pretty a double chin as ever graced the successor of an apostle. Turbot was by no means an offensive person; on the contrary, he must of necessity have been very free from evil or iniquity of any kind, inasmuch as he never had time to commit sin. He was most enthusiastically addicted to hunting and shooting, and felt such a keen and indomitable relish for the good things of this world, especially for the luxuries of the table, that what between looking after his cuisine, attending his dogs, and enjoying his field sports, he scarcely ever might be said to have a single day that he could call his own. And yet, unreasonable people expected that a man, whose daily occupations were of such importance to—himself, should very coolly forego his own beloved enjoyments in order to attend to the comforts of the poor, with whom he had scarcely anything in common. Many other matters of a similar stamp were expected from him, but only by those who had no opportunity of knowing the multiplicity of his engagements. Such persons were unreasonable enough to think that he ought to have occasionally appropriated some portion of his income to the relief of poverty and destitution, but as he said himself, he could not afford it. How could any man afford it who in general lived up to, and sometimes beyond, his income, and who was driven to such pinches as not unfrequently to incur the imputation of severity and oppression itself, by the steps he was forced to take or sanction for the recovery of his tithes.

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In person he was, as we have said, about or somewhat under the middle size. In his gait he was very ungainly. When walking, he drove forward as if his head was butting or boring its way through a palpable atmosphere, keeping his person, from the waist up, so far in advance that the *a posteriori* portion seemed as if it had been detached from the other, and was engaged in a ceaseless but ineffectual struggle to regain its position; or, in shorter and more intelligible words, the latter end of him seemed to be perpetually in pursuit of his head and shoulders, without ever being able to overtake them. Whilst engaged in maintaining this compound motion, his elbows and arms swung from right to left, and vice versa, very like the movements of a weaver throwing the shuttle from side to side. Turbot had one acknowledged virtue in a pre-eminent degree, we mean hospitality. It is true he gave admirable dinners, but it would be a fact worth boasting of, to find any man at his table who was not able to give, and who did give, better dinners than himself. The doctor's face, however, in spite of his slinging and ungainly person, was upon the whole rather good. His double chin, and the full, rosy expression of his lips and mouth, betokened, at the very least, the force of luxurious habits, and, as a hedge school-master of our acquaintance used to say, the smallest taste in life of voluptuousity; whilst from his black, twinkling eyes, that seemed always as if they were about to herald a jest, broke forth, especially when he conversed with the softer sex, something which might be considered as holding a position between a laugh and a leer. Such was the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot, to whom we shall presently take the liberty of introducing the reader.

The parsonage, to which our friend Purcel is now making his approach, was an excellent and comfortable building. It stood on a very pretty eminence, and consequently commanded a beautiful prospect both in front and rear; for the fact was, that in consequence of the beauty of the scenery for miles about it, some incumbent of good taste had given it a second hall door, thus enabling the inhabitants to partake of a double enjoyment, by an equal facility of contemplating the exquisite scenery of the country both in front and rear. A beautiful garden lay facing the south, and a little below, in the same direction, stood a venerable old rookery, whilst through the rich, undulating fields flowed, in graceful windings, a beautiful river, on whose green and fertile banks sheep and black cattle were always to be seen, sometimes feeding or chewing the cud in that indolent repose which gives to the landscape, in the golden light of a summer's evening, such a poetical and pastoral effect.

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Purcel, on coming in sight of the parsonage, instead of keeping his horse to the rapid pace at which he had driven him along until then, now drew him up, and advanced at a rate which seemed to indicate anything but that of a man whose spirits were cheerful or free from care. On reaching the front entrance he discounted very slowly, and with a solemn and melancholy air, walked deliberately, step by step, till he stood at the hall door, where he gave a knock so spiritless, depressed and disconsolate, that it immediately communicated itself, as was intended, to the usually joyful and rosy countenance of the rector, who surveyed, his agent as if he expected to hear that he either had lost, or was about to lose, half his family or the whole of his wealth.

“How do you do, Purcel?—eh, what’s this? Is there anything wrong? You look very much dejected—what’s the matter? Sit down.”

“Thank you, sir; but I really do not think I am well—at least my spirits are a great deal depressed; but indeed, Dr. Turbot, a man must be more or less than a man to be able to keep up his spirits in such times.”

“Oh! ho, my worthy proctor, is that all? Thank you for nothing, Purcel. I understand you; but you ought to know I am not to be caught now by your ’calamities’.”

“My calamities! I declare to goodness, Dr. Turbot, I could rest contented if they were nobody’s calamities but my own; unfortunately, however, you are as deep in them as I am, and in a short time, God knows, we will be a miserable pair, I fear.”

“Not at all, Purcel—this is only the old story. Raw-heads and bloody-bones coming to destroy the tithes, and eat up the parsons. Let me see—it is now three years since you commenced these ‘lamentations.’”

“Three years ago; why we had peace and quietness then compared to what we have at present,” replied Purcel.

“And what have we now, pray?”

“Why, sir, the combinations against tithes is quite general over the whole country.”

“Well; so was it then upon your own showing. Go on.”

“As I said, sir, it was nothing at that time. There is little now but threatening notices that breathe of blood and murder.”

“Very good; so was it then upon your own showing. Go on.”

“But of late, sir, lives have been taken. Clergymen have been threatened and fired at.”

“Very good; so was it then upon you! own showing. Go on, I say.”

“Fired at I say, and shot, sir. The whole White boy system has turned itself into a great tithe conspiracy. The farmers, the landholders of all descriptions, the cottiers, the daily laborers, and the very domestic servants, have all joined this conspiracy, and sworn neither to pay tithes themselves nor to allow others to pay them. They compare the established church to a garrison; and although the law prevents them from openly destroying it by force, they swear that they’ll starve it out.”

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“Eh!” said Turbot, starting, “what’s that you say? Starve us out! What an infamous and unconstitutional project! What a diabolical procedure! But I forgot—bravo, Purcel! This was all the case before upon your own showing.”

“Well, sir,” returned Purcel, “there was at least this difference, that I was able to get something out of them then, but devil a copper can I get out o’ them now. I think you’ll admit, sir, that this fact gives some weight to my argument.”

“You don’t mean to say, Purcel,” replied the other, from whose chin the rosy tint gradually paled away until it assumed that peculiar hue which is found inside of a marine shell, that is to say, white with a dream of red barely and questionably visible; “you don’t mean to say, my good friend Purcel, that you have no money for me on this occasion?”

“By no means, sir,” replied the proctor. “Money I have got for you, no doubt—money I have got certainly.”

The double chin once more assumed its natural hue of celestial rosy red.”

“Upon my honor, Purcel,” he replied, “I have not temper for this; it seems to me that you take particular delight in wantonly tampering with my feelings. I am really quite tired of it. Why harass and annoy me with your alarms? Conspiracy, blood, and massacre are the feeblest terms in your vocabulary. It is absolutely ridiculous, sir, and I beg you will put an end to it.”

“I would be very glad to do so, sir,” replied Purcel; “and still more satisfied if I had never had anything to do with the temporalities of your church.”

“I don’t see why, above all men living, you should say so, Purcel; you have feathered your nest tolerably well by the temporalities of our church.”

“If I have, sir,” replied the proctor, “it has been at the expense of my popularity and good name. I and my family are looked upon as a part and parcel of your system, and, I may add, as the worst and most odious part of it. I and they are looked upon as the bitterest enemies of the people; and because we endeavor to get out of them the means of enabling you to maintain your rank in the world, we are obliged to hear ourselves branded every day in the week as villains, oppressors, and blood-suckers. This, however, we could bear; but to know that we are marked down for violence, brutality, and, if possible, assassination, is a penalty for which nothing in your establishment could compensate us. I and my sons have received several notices of violence in every shape, and we are obliged to sleep with our house half filled with arms and ammunition, in dread of an attack every night in the year.”

“Well, well,” replied Turbot, “this, after all, is but the old story; the matter is only an ebullition, and will pass away. I know you are constitutionally timid. I know you are; and have in fact a great deal of the natural coward in your disposition; and I say natural, because a man is no more to be blamed for being born a coward than he is for being born with a bad complexion or an objectionable set of features. You magnify the dangers about you, and, in fact, become a self-tormentor. As for my part, I am glad you have got money, for I do assure you, I never stood so much in need of it in my life.”

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“The very papers, sir,” continued Purcel, who could not prevent himself from proceeding, “might enable you to see the state of the country.”

“Oh, d—n the papers,” said the parson, “I am sick of them. Our side is perpetually exaggerating matters—just as you are; and as for the other side, your papist rags I never, of course, see or wish to see. I want six hundred now, or indeed eight if you can, and I had some notion of taking a day or two’s shooting. How is the game on the glebe? Has it been well preserved, do you know?”

“I am not aware,” said the proctor, “that any one has shot over the glebe lands this season; but if you take my advice, sir, you will expose yourself as little as you can in the neighborhood. There are not two individuals in the parish so unpopular as Dr. Turbot and your humble servant.”

“In that case, then,” replied the other, “the less delay I make here the better—you can let me have six hundred, I hope?”

“I certainly told you, sir,” replied Purcel, with something of a determined and desperate coolness about him, “that I had money for you, and so I have.”

“Thank you, Purcel; I must say you certainly have, on all occasions, exerted yourself faithfully and honestly in support of my interests.”

“Money, sir,” pursued the other, without appearing to look to the right or to the left, “I have for you. Would you venture to guess to what amount?”

“Well, under the circumstances you speak of, less, I dare say, than I expect.”

“I have been able to get, within the last six months, exactly fifty-nine pounds thirteen and sevenpence!”

If the ebb which we have described before of the blood from the doctor’s double chin was a gradual one, we can assure the reader that, in this case, it was rapid in proportion to the terror and dismay conveyed by this authentic, but astounding piece of intelligence. The whole face became pale, his eyes at once lost their lustre, and were, as he fixed them in astonishment upon the proctor, completely without speculation; his voice became tremulous, and, as he pulled out his handkerchief to wipe away the unexpected perspiration which the proctor’s words had brought out upon his forehead, his hands trembled as if he had been suddenly seized with palsy. In truth, Purcel, who had a kind of good-natured regard for the little man, felt a sensation of compassion for him, on witnessing the extraordinary distress under which he labored.

“I am sorry for this,” said he, “for I really know not what is to be done, and, what is equally distressing, our prospects are not at all likely to improve.”

“You don’t mean to say, Purcel, that circumstances are as bad as you report them—as bad—as desperate, I should say—and as ruinous?”

“I fear,” said Purcel, “they go beyond the gloomiest and most desponding views you could take of them. The conspiracy, for such we must term it, is, in point of fact, deepening down to the very foundations, if I may use the expression, of society. Every day it is becoming more dangerous and alarming; but how it is to be checked or mitigated, or how we are to stand out of its way and avoid its consequences, heaven only knows, for I don’t.”

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“But, Purcel, my dear friend, what am I and my domestic establishment to do? Good God! there is nothing but ruin before us! You know I always lived up to my income—-indeed, at best, it was too limited for the demands of my family, and our habits of life. And now, to have the very prop—the only one on which I leant—suddenly snapt from under me—it is frightful. But you are to blame, Purcel; you are much to blame. Why did you not apprise me of this ruinous state of things before it came thus on me unawares? It was unfeeling and heartless in you not to have prepared me for it.”

The proctor actually imagined, and not without reason, that the worthy doctor was beginning to get beside himself, as it is termed, on hearing such a charge as this brought against him; and he was about to express his astonishment at it, when Mr. Temple, his curate, who resided in the parsonage, made his appearance, and joined them at Dr. Turbot’s request. “Temple,” said he, as the latter portion of his body began to pursue the other through the room, “are you aware of the frightful condition to which the country has come?”

“Who can be ignorant of it?” replied Temple; “how can any man live in the country, and not know it?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Turbot, tartly, “I have lived in the country, and, until a few minutes ago, I was ignorant of the extent to which it has come.”

“Well, sir,” said Temple, “that is odd enough; for, to my own knowledge, your information has been both regular and authentic upon this subject at all events. Our friend Purcel, here, has not left you in ignorance of it.”

“Yes,” said Turbot, “but he had the country as bad three years ago as it is now. Was this fair? Why, I took it for granted that all his alarms and terrors were the mere play and subterfuge of the proctor upon the parson, and, consequently, thought little of it; but here I am stranded at once, wrecked, and left on my bottom. How will I meet my tradesmen? how will I continue my establishment? and, what is worse, how can I break it up? You know, Temple, I cannot, unfortunately, live without luxuries. They are essential to my health, and if suddenly deprived of them, as I am likely to be, I cannot answer to society for the consequences.”

“Sir,” said Temple, “it is quite obvious that a period of severe trial and chastening is at hand, or I should rather say, has already arrived. Many of our calling, I am grieved I to know, are even now severely suffering, and suffering, I must add, with unexampled patience and fortitude under great and trying privations. Yet I trust that the health of the general body will be improved by it, and purged of the grossness and worldly feeling which have hitherto, I fear, too much characterized it. Many, I know, may think we are merely in the hands of man, but for my part, I think, and earnestly hope, that we are in those of God himself, and that He chasteneth no only because He loveth.”

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“This is most distressing to hear, my dear Temple,” replied his rector; “but I trust I am as willing and as well prepared, from religious feeling, to suffer as another—that is, provided always I am not deprived of those comforts and little luxuries to which I have all my life been accustomed.”

“I am very much afraid,” observed Purcel, “that the clergy of the established church will have a very fine opportunity to show the world how well and patiently they can suffer.”

“I have already said, Purcel,” said the doctor, “that I am as willing to suffer as another. I know I am naturally of a patient and rather an humble disposition; let these trials come then, and I am prepared for them, provided only that I am not deprived of my little luxuries, for these are essential to my health itself, otherwise I could bear even this loss. I intended, Temple, to have had a day or two’s shooting on the glebe lands, but Purcel, here, tells me that I am very unpopular, and would not, he says, recommend me to expose myself much, or if possible at all, in the neighborhood.

“And upon my word and credit I spoke nothing,” replied the other, “but what I know to be truth. There is not a feather of game on the glebe lands that would be shot down with half the pleasure that the parson himself would. I beg, then, Dr. Turbot, that you won’t think of it. I’ll get my sons to go over the property, and if there’s any game on it we shall have it sent to you.”

“How does it stand for game, Temple, do you know?”

“I really cannot say,” replied the good man. “The killing of game is a pursuit I have never relished, and with which I am utterly unacquainted. I fear, however, that the principal game in the country will soon be the parson and the proctor.”

“It’s a delightful pursuit,” replied the Rev. Doctor, who did not at all relish the last piece of information, and only replied to the first, “and equally conducive to health and morals. What, for instance, can be more delicious than a plump partridge or grouse, stewed in cinnamon and claret? and yet, to think that a man must be deprived of—well,” said he, interrupting himself, “it is a heavy, and awful dispensation—and one that I ought to have been made acquainted with—that is, to its full and fearful extent—before it came on me thus unawares. Purcel here scarcely did his duty by me in this.”

“I fear, sir,” replied Temple, “that it was not Purcel who neglected his duty, but you who have been incredulous. I think he has certainly not omitted to sound the alarm sufficiently loud during the approach of this great ordeal to which we are exposed.”

“And in addition to everything else, I am in arrears to you, Temple,” he added; “and now I have no means of paying you.”

Temple was silent, for at that moment the necessities of his family pressed with peculiar severity upon himself—and he was not exactly prepared for such an intimation. The portion of salary then coming to him was, in truth, his sole dependence at that peculiar crisis, and this failing him, he knew not on what hand or in what direction to turn.

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After musing for some time, he at length replied, “If you have it not, Dr. Turbot, or cannot procure it, of course it is idle for me to expect it—although I will not deny, that in the present circumstances of my family, it would have come to us with very peculiar and seasonable relief.”

“But I have not a pound,” replied the doctor; “so far from that, I am pretty deeply in debt—for I need hardly say, that for years I have been balancing my affairs—paying off debts to-day, and contracting other to-morrow—always dipped, but and rather deeply, too, as I said.”

He again got to his legs, when the pursuit of the latter part of his person after the rest once more took place, and in this odd way he traversed the room in a state of extreme tribulation.

“What is to be done?” he asked—“surely the government cannot abandon us?—cannot allow us to perish utterly, which we must do, if left to the mercy of our enemies? No, certainly it cannot desert us in such a strait as this, unless it wishes to surrender the established church to the dark plots and designing ambition of popery. No, no—it cannot—it must not—it dares not. Some vigorous measure for our relief must be taken, and that speedily;—let us not be too much dejected, then—our sufferings will be short—and as for myself, I am willing to make any reasonable sacrifice, provided I am not called upon—at these years—fifty-eight—to give up my usual little luxuries. Purcel, I want you to take a turn in the garden. Temple, excuse me—will you?—and say to Mrs. Temple to make no preparations, as I don’t intend to stop—I shall return to Dublin in an hour at farthest; and don’t be cast down, Temple; matters will soon brighten.”

“It is not at all necessary, sir,” replied Temple, “that you should adjorn to the garden to speak with Mr. Purcel. I was on my way to the library when I met you, and I am going there now.”

“It is not so much,” he replied, “that I have anything very particular to say to Purcel, as that I feel a walk in the fresh air will relieve me. Good-bye, then, for a little; I shall see you before I go.”

“Now, Purcel,” said he, when they had reached the garden, “this, after all, is only a false alarm, or even if it be not, we know that the government could by no means afford to abandon the established church in Ireland, because that would be, in other words, to reject the aid of, and sever themselves from all connection with, the whole Protestant party; and you, as a man of sense, Purcel, need not be told that it is only by the existence of a Protestant party in this country that they are enabled to hold it in union with England at all.”

“But what has that to do with our present distresses?” said the proctor, who, as he probably began to anticipate the doctor’s ultimate object in this conversation, very

shrewdly associated himself rather in an official spirit with the embarrassments of his friend, and the church in general.

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“It has considerably,” replied Dr. Turbot; “for instance, there will be no risk whatsoever, in lending to many of the embarrassed clergy sums of money upon their! personal security, until this pressure passes away, and their prosperity once more returns.”

“Oh, ho, doctor,” thought his sharp and wily companion, “I believe I have you now, Well, Dr. Turbot,” he replied, “I think, the case, even as you put it, will be attended with difficulties. What, for instance, is personal security from a poor or a ruined man? very little, or rather nothing. Still it is possible that many, relying upon the proverbial honor and integrity of the Irish Protestant clergy, may actually lend money upon this security. But then,” he added, with a smile, “those who will, must belong to a peculiar and privileged class.”

“Why,” asked Turbot, “to what class do you allude?”

“To one with which,” said the proctor, “I unfortunately have no connection—I mean the class that can afford to lend it.”

“Purcel,” said Dr. Turbot, “I am sorry to hear this ungenerous observation from you; I did not expect it.”

“Why do you call it ungenerous, sir?” asked Purcel.

“Because,” replied Turbot, “it is obvious that it was made in anticipation of a favor which I was about to ask of you.”

“If I can grant you any favor,” replied the proctor, “I shall be most happy to do so;—if you will only let me know what it is.”

“You must be particularly dull not to perceive it,” replied the parson, “aware, as you are, of the unexpected state of my circumstances. In short, I want you to assist me with a few hundreds.”

The proctor, after a pause, replied, “You place me in circumstances of great difficulty, sir; I am indeed anxious to oblige you, but I know not whether I can do so with honor, without violating my good faith to another party.”

“I don’t understand you,” said Turbot.

“Then I shall explain it,” replied Purcel; “the sum I can command is one of four hundred, which is at this moment virtually lent upon excellent security, at an interest of eight per cent. The loan is certainly not legally completed, but morally and in point of honor it is. Now, if I lend this money to you, sir, I must break my word and verbal agreement to the party in question.”

“Very well, sir,” replied the rector, who, notwithstanding the love he bore his “little luxuries,” was scrupulously honorable in all money transactions, “don’t attempt to break word, or to violate good faith with any man; and least of all, on my account. I presume I shall be able to raise the money somewhere else.”

Purcel, who had uniformly found the doctor a sharp, but correct man in matters,of business, and who knew besides the severe pressure under which he labored at the moment, was not exactly prepared to hear from him the expression of a principle so high-minded. He paused again for some time, during which he reasoned with himself somewhat to the following effect:—“I did not expect this from the worthy doctor, but I did, that he would at once have advised me to break the agreement I mentioned and lend himself the money. I cannot think there will be much risk in lending such a man a few hundreds, especially as no such agreement as I allude to exists.” He then replied as follows:—

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“Doctor,” he proceeded, “I have been thinking over this matter; I know you want the money, and I am sorry for it. That I have myself been a gainer by my connection with you, I will not attempt to deny, and I do not think that I should be grateful or a sincere friend to you, if I saw you now in such grievous and unexpected embarrassments without making an effort to assist you. You shall have the four hundred, if you consent to the same rate of interest I was about to receive for it from the other party.”

“Then you will break faith with him,” replied the doctor. “I thank you, Purcel, but I will not have it.”

“I break no faith with him,” replied the proctor; “he was bound to have let me know, on yesterday, whether he would require the money or not, for the matter was conditional; but as I have not yet heard from him, I hold myself at liberty to act as I wish. The fault is his own.”

“And on these conditions, so you are; I well, thank you again, Purcel, I accept this money on your terms, eight per cent. Nay, you oblige me very much; indeed you do.”

“Well, then, that matter is settled,” said the proctor, “do not speak of it,” he proceeded, in reply to the doctor’s last observation; “I should indeed be unworthy either of your good opinion or my own, if I held aloof from you just now. I will have a bond prepared in a day or two, but in the meantime, if you will call at my house, you may have the money home with you.”

The doctor once more thanked Mm, and they were in the act of returning to the house, when the noise of a pistol was heard, and at the same moment a bullet whistled light between them, and so close to each that it was utterly impossible to say at which of the two individuals the murderous aim had been taken. The garden, a large one and highly walled in, was entered by two gates, one of which led into the back yard, the other into a corner of the lawn that was concealed from the house by a clump of trees. The latter gate, which was not so large as the other, had in it a small iron grating a little above the centre, through which any one could command a view of the greater portion of the garden. It was through this gate they had entered, and as no apprehension of any attempt of assassination had existed in the mind of either, they left the key in the outside, not having deemed it at all necessary to secure the door, by locking it within.

The proctor, to whose cowardice the worthy clergyman had not long before paid so sincere, but by no means so flattering a tribute, did not wait to make even a single observation, but ran with all his speed towards the gate, which, to his surprise and mortification, he found locked on the outside. Apprehensive, however, of a second attack, he beckoned to his companion to hasten towards the other gate, which was not visible from that through which the shot had been fired, and in the meantime, he himself ran also towards it, in order to try whether it might not be possible to get

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some view or trace of the assassin. He had a case of pistols in his hand, for we ought to have told the reader that neither he nor his sons ever traveled unarmed, and on reaching the back-yard, he was obliged to make a considerable circuit ere he arrived at the spot from which the shot had been fired. Here, however, he found no mark or vestige of a human being, but saw at a glance that the assassin, in order, to secure time for escape, had locked the door, and either taken the key with him or thrown it where it could not be found. It was in vain that he ran in all directions, searched every place likely to conceal the villain; not a clump of trees or ornamental shrubs remained unexamined. The search, however, was fruitless. No individual was seen, nor any clue gained on which even a conjecture could be founded. The only individual visible was our friend the *Cannie Soogah*, whose loud and mellow song was the first thing that drew their attention to him, as he came up a back avenue that led by a private and winding walk round to the kitchen-door. Purcel, on seeing him, signed hastily with his hand that he should approach, which the other, observing the unusual agitation betrayed by his gesture, immediately did at a pace considerably quickened.

“Here, Cannie,” he shouted out to him, ere he had time to approach, “here has been an attempt at murder by some cold-blooded and cowardly assassin, who has, I fear, escaped us!”

“Murdher!” exclaimed the pedlar, “the Lord save and guard us!—for there’s nothin’ but murdher in my ears! go where I will of late, it’s nothin’ but bloodshed;—sure I cannot sing my harmless bit of a song along the road, but I’m stopped wid an account of some piece o’ murdher or batthery, or God knows what. An’ who was near gettin’ it now, Misther Purcel? Not yourself, I pray Jasus this day!”

“I really cannot say, Cannie; Dr. Turbot and I were walking in the garden, when some damnable villain discharged a pistol from the gate here, and the bullet of it whistled right between us both.”

“Whistled, did it!—hell resave it for one bullet, it was fond of mirth it was; and you can’t say which o’ you it was whistling for?”

“No, how could I?—it was equally near us both.”

“Bad cess for ever saize him for a murdherin’ villain, whoever he was. You have no notion, Masther Purcel, darlin’, where he went to?”

“Not the slightest, Cannie; the villain wouldn’t have got off so easily, only that he had the diabolical cunning to lock the gate outside and conceal the key: so that whilst I was coming round to the place, he escaped. Did you meet or see nobody yourself?”

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The peddler shut his right hand, slapped it quickly into the palm of his left. "By the Lomenty tarry," he exclaimed, "I seen the villain! By the high horicks, I seen the very man, if I have an eye in my head! A big, able-bodied villain, wid a pair of thumpin' black whiskers that you might steal my own out of—and I don't think I can complain myself. He was comin' up the road from the Carr, and he was turnin' over towards the bridge there below, so that I only got a short glimpse of him; and faix, sure enough, as he passed the bridge, I seen him throw something over the wall of it into the river, which I'd lay my head against the three kingdoms was the kay o' the gate."

The proctor paused a little, and then observed, "Ay, faith! I'm sure you're right, Cannie; I've heard of that villain, and know him from your description. He is the cowardly ruffian who's said to be at the head or bottom of these secret combinations that are disgracing and destroying the country. Yes, I've heard of him."

"And what did you hear, Misther Purcel?" asked the pedlar, with undisguised curiosity—.

"No matter now, Cannie; I haven't time to bestow upon the murdering ruffian: I have my eye on him, however, and so have others. Indeed, I'm rather inclined to think the hemp has already grown that will hang him. What dress had he on?"

"Why, sir, he had on a whitish frieze coat, wid big brown buttons; but there could be no mistakin' the size of his murderin' red whiskers."

"Red whiskers!—why, you said a moment ago that they were black."

"Black! hut tut, no, Misther Purcel, I couldn't say that; devil such a pair of red thumpers ever I seen, barin' upon Rousin' Redhead that was sent across—for—for—buildin' churches—ha! ha! ha!"

"Why, I'd take my oath you said black," rejoined the proctor—"that is, if I have ears to my head."

"Troth, an' you have Misther Purcel, as brave a pair as a man could boast of; but the truth is, you wor so much feflustered wid alarm, and got altogether so much through other, that you didn't know what I said."

"I did perfectly: you said distinctly that he had black whiskers."

"Red, by the hokey, over the world; however, to avoid an argument, even if I did, in mistake, say black, the whiskers were red in the mane time; an', as I sed, barrin' Rousin' Redhead's, that was thransported, a never laid my eyes on so red, nor so big I pair."

"He can't be the fellow I suspect, then—for his, by all accounts, are unusually large and black."

“As to that, I can’t say, sir: but you wouldn’t have me give a wrong description of any villain that ’ud make an attempt upon your life. Are you sure, though, it wasn’t his reverend honor that the pistol was aimed at?”

“I am not; as I told you, it is impossible to settle that point. There is neither of us very popular, certainly.”

“Bekaise, afther all, there is a difference; and it doesn’t folly that, although I’d purshue the villain for life and death, that ’ud attempt to murdher you, that I’d distress myself to secure an honest man that might free us an’ the country from the like o’ him;” and he pointed over his left shoulder with his inverted thumb.

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“Cannie,” said the proctor, somewhat sternly, “I’ve never heard you give expression to such sentiments before, and I hope I shall never again. No honest man would excuse or tamper with murder or murderers. No more of this, Cannie, or you will lose my good opinion, although perhaps you would think that no great loss.”

“Throth, I know I was wrong to spake as I did, sir, bad cess to me, but I was, an’ as for your good opinion, Misther Purcel, and the good of all your family too, devil a man livin’ ’ud go further to gain it, and to keep it when he had it than I would; now, bad cess to the one.”

Whilst this dialogue was proceeding between the pedlar and the proctor. Dr. Turbot, in a state of indescribable alarm, was relating the attempted assassination to his curate inside. The amazement of the latter gentleman, who was perfectly aware of the turbulent state of the country, by no means kept pace with the alarm of his rector. He requested of the latter, that should he see Mrs. Temple, he would make no allusions to the circumstance, especially as she was at the period in question not far from her confinement, and it was impossible to say what unpleasant or dangerous effects an abrupt mention of so dreadful a circumstance might have upon her.

In a few minutes Purcel and his patron were on their way to Longshot Lodge, the residence of the proctor. At the solicitation of the parson, however, they avoided the direct line of road, and reached home by one that was much more circuitous, and as the latter thought also more safe. Here, after Waiting for the arrival of the mail coach, which he resolved to meet on its way to the metropolis, he partook of a lunch, which, even to his voluptuous palate, was one that he could not but admit to be excellent. He received four hundred pounds from the proctor, for which he merely gave him a note of hand, and in a short time was on his way to the metropolis.

CHAPTER VI.—Unexpected Generosity—A False Alarm.

At this period, notwithstanding the circumstances which we have just related—and they were severe enough—the distress of the Protestant clergy of Ireland was just only beginning to set in. It had not, as yet, however, assumed anything like that formidable shape in which it subsequently appeared. To any scourge so dreadful, no class in the educated and higher ranks of society had been, within the records of historical recollection, ever before subjected. Still, like a malignant malady, even its first symptoms were severe, and indicative of the sufferings by which, with such dreadful certainty, they were followed.

On that day, and at the very moment when the mysterious attempt at assassination,which we have recorded, was made, Dr. Turbot’s worthy curate, on returning home from the neighboring village of Lisnagola, was, notwithstanding great

reluctance on his part, forced into the following conversation with his lovely but dejected wife:

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“Charles,” said she, fixing her large, tearful eyes upon him, with a look in which love, anxiety, and sorrow were all blended, “I fear you have not been successful in the village. Has Moloney refused us?”

“Only conditionally, my dear Maria—that is, until our account is paid up—but for the present, and perhaps for a little longer, we must deny ourselves these ‘little luxuries,’” and he accompanied the words with a melancholy smile. “Tea and sugar and white bread are now beyond our reach, and we must be content with a simpler fare.”

Mrs. Temple, on looking at their children, could scarcely refrain from tears; but she knew her husband’s patience and resignation, and felt that it was her duty to submit with humility to the dispensation of God.

“You and I, my dear Charles, could bear up under anything—but these poor things, how will they do?”

“That reflection is only natural, my dear Maria; but it is spoken, dearest, only like a parent, who probably loves too much and with an excess of tenderness. Just reflect, darling, upon the hundreds of thousands of children in our native land, who live healthily and happily without ever having tasted either tea or loaf-bread at all; and think, besides, dearest, that there are, in the higher circles, a great number of persons whose children are absolutely denied these comforts, by advice of their physicians. Our natural wants, my dear Maria, are but simple, and easily satisfied; it is wealth and luxury only that corrupt and vitiate them. In this case, then, dearest, the Christian must speak, and act, and feel as well as the parent. You understand me now, love, and that is sufficient. I have not succeeded in procuring anything for you or them, but you may rest assured that God will not desert us.”

“Yes, dear Charles,” replied his wife, whose black mellow eyes beamed with joy; “all that is true, but you forgot that Dr. Turbot has arrived to receive his tithes, and you will now receive your stipend. That will carry us out of our present difficulty at least.”

“My dear Maria, it is enough to say that Dr. Turbot is in a position immeasurably more distressed and dreadful than ours. Purcel, his proctor, has been able to receive only about fifty pounds out of his usual half-yearly income of eight hundred. From him we are to expect nothing at present. I know not, in fact, how he and his family will bear this dreadful privation; for dreadful it must be to those who have lived in the enjoyment of such luxuries.”

“That is indeed dreadful to such a family, and I pity them from my heart,” replied his wife; “but, dearest,Charles, what are we to do?—except a small crust of bread, there is no food in the house for either them or you.” As she uttered the words their eyes met, and his gentle and soothing Maria, who had been sitting beside him, threw herself upon

his bosom—he clasped his arms around her—pressed her with melancholy affection to his heart, and they both wept together.

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At length he added, “But you think not of yourself, my Maria.”

“I!” she replied; “ah! what am I? Anything, you know, will suffice for me—but you and they, my dearest Charles—and then poor Lilly, the servant; but, dearest,” she exclaimed, with a fresh, and if possible, a more tender embrace, “I am not at all repining—I am happy with you—happy, happy—and never, never, did I regret the loss of my great and powerful friends less than I do at this moment, which enables me to see and appreciate the virtues and affection to which my heart is wedded, and which I long since appreciated.”

Her husband forced a smile, and kissed her with an air of cheerfulness.

“Pardon me,” he said, “dearest Maria, for two or three minutes I wish to go to the library to make a memorandum. I will soon return.”

He then left her, after a tender embrace, and retired, as he said, to the library, where, smote to the heart by his admiration of her affection and greatness of mind, he sat down, and whilst he reflected on the destitution to which he had brought the granddaughter of an earl, he wept bitterly for several minutes. It was from this peculiar state of feeling that he was called upon to hear an account of the attempted assassination, with which the reader is already acquainted.

Our friend, the Cannie Soogah, having taken the town of Lisnagola on his way, in order to effect some sales with one of those general country merchants on a somewhat small scale, that are to be found in almost every country town, happened to be sitting in a small back-parlor, when a certain conversation took place between Mr. Temple and Molony, the proprietor of the establishment to which we have just alluded. He heard the dialogue, we say, and saw that the mild and care-worn curate had been, not rudely certainly, but respectfully, yet firmly, refused further credit. By whatever spirit prompted it is not for us to say; at all events he directed his footsteps to the glebe, and—but it is unnecessary to continue the description, or rather to repeat it. The reader is already aware of what occurred until the departure of Dr. Turbot and the proctor.

Temple, having seen them depart, walked out for a little, in order to compose his mind, and frame, if possible, some project for the relief of his wife and children. In the meantime, our jolly pedlar, having caught a glimpse of Mrs. Temple at the parlor window, presented himself, and begged to know if she were inclined to make any purchases. She nodded him a gentle and ladylike refusal, upon which he changed his ground, and said, “Maybe, ma’am, if you’re not disposed to buy, that you’d have something you’d like to part wid. If you have, ma’am, bad cess to the purtier purchaser you’d meet wid—shawls or trinkets, or anything that way—I mane, ma’am,” he added, “things that arn’t of any use to you—an’ I’m the boy that will shell out the ready money, and over the value.”

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Mrs Temple had known little—indeed nothing—of the habits of such a class as that to which our gay friend belonged; but be this as it may, his last words struck her quickly and forcibly.

“Do you make purchases, then?” she said.

“I do, ma’am, plaise your honor,” replied the pedlar.

“Stop a moment, then,” she replied. “I have some superfluous articles of dress that I may dispose of.”

The whole mother rushed into her heart at the thought; the tender and loving wife forgot everything but the means of obtaining food for her husband and children. She went to her dressing-room, and in a few minutes returned, accompanied by Lilly Stewart, her own servant-maid previous to ker marriage, to whom their recent distresses had been no secret, and who was deeply and deservedly in the confidence of the family.

Whilst she was, absent in her dressing-room the pedlar resumed his song, as was his custom when alone—a circumstance which caused Mrs. Temple to remark, as she and Lilly went down to, the parlor—“Alas! dear Lilly, what a mistaken estimate does one portion of mankind form of another. This poor pedlar now envies us the happiness of rank and wealth which we do not feel, and I—yes, even I—what would I not give to be able to carol so light-hearted a song as that which he is singing! Who is this man, Lilly, do you know him?”

“Why, ma’am, if all they say is true, every one knows him, and nobody knows him. He’s known as the *Cannie Soogah*, or jolly pedlar. They say, that although he prefers this kind of life, he’s very wealthy. One person will tell you that he’s a great rogue, and would cheat Satan himself, and others say he’s generous and charitable. In other respects,” continued. Lilly, blushing, “he’s not very well spoken of, but it may be false. I have always found him myself very civil; and them that spoke harshly of him were people that he kept at a distance.”

The pedlar ceased his song as soon as they made their appearance in the parlor, into which Lilly admitted him for the sake of mutual convenience.

“Here’s a shawl—a beautiful shawl, Mr. —— what’s this your name is?”

“The name that I have for set days and bonfire nights,” he replied, “is one I seldom tell,” and at the same time there was a dry air of surprise about him on hearing her ask the question; “but the name I am generally known by is the *Cannie Soogah*, which manes, ma’am,” he added, addressing himself in a respectful manner to Mrs. Temple, “the jolly merchant or pedlar.”

“Well, Cannie,” said Lilly, pronouncing the word with more familiarity than could have been expected from their apparent unaquaintance with each other, “here’s a beautiful shawl that my mistress made me a present of.”

“No, Lilly,” said her mistress, with severity—for she neither could nor would sanction the falsehood, however delicately and well intended—“no, do not mislead the man, nor state anything but the truth. The shawl is mine, my good man, and I wish to dispose of it.”

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The pedlar looked at it, and replied, in a tone of disappointment, “Yes, ma’am, but I’m afeard it’s beyant my manes; I know the value of it right well, and it’s seldom ever the likes of it was in my pack. What are you axin’, ma’am? it’s as good as new.”

“I think it cost twelve or thirteen guineas, as well as I can remember,” she replied; “but it is not what it cost, but what you are now disposed to give for it, that I am anxious to know.”

“Well, ma’am, you know I must look upon it as—hem—as a second—ha—at all events,” he proceeded, checking himself with more delicacy than could be expected from him—-“you must admit that it isn’t new.”

“Certainly,” said she, “it has been more than eight years in my possession, although, at the same time, I believe I have not worn it more than half a dozen times.”

“Well, ma’am,” replied the pedlar, “I know the value of the shawl something betther even than yourself. If you will take six guineas for it, we will deal; more I cannot afford, for I must at once tell, you the truth, that I may carry it about these twelve months before I find any one that knows its value.”

Mrs. Temple was by no means prepared, any more than her servant, for such a liberal offer; and without any further hesitation she accepted it, and desired Lilly to place the shawl in his hands, and in the meantime, with equal consideration and good feeling, he handed Lilly six guineas, adding, “Give that to your mistress, but in troth, ma’am,” he proceeded, respectfully addressing her; “it is just robbing you I am, but I can only say, that if I dispose of it at its proper-value you’ll hear from me again. Troth, if I wasn’t a great rogue, ma’am, I’d give you more for it; but bad cess to the one o’ me—ever could be honest, even if I wasped for it.”

“I do not think you dishonest, my good, man,” replied Mrs. Temple; “on the contrary, I am not displeased with your, plain blunt manner. Lilly give him some——”

She checked herself at once, and passed, a significant but sorrowful glance at Lilly; as she went up to the drawing-room.

She had no sooner gone, than the peddler, with a shrug of satisfaction, exclaimed, in a subdued but triumphant voice: “Oh! by the hokey I’ve done her, and for that you must suffer, Lilly darlin’. Come now, you jumpin’ jewel you, that was born wid a honey-comb somewhere between, that purty chin and beautiful nose of yours—throth it must have a taste, for who the dickens could, refuse the *Cannie Soogah*, and before Lilly, who, by the way, was nothing, loath, could put herself in an attitude of defense, he had inflicted several smacks upon as pretty a pair of lips as ever were pressed.

“Upon my word; now, Mr. Magrath, you’re very impudent,” she replied, “I wonder you’re not ashamed, you great strong man you, to be kissing girls in this manner, whether they will or not. Look at the state you have my hair in; you’re very rude, Mr. Magrath, and I’m really angry with you; you’ve broken one of my side-combs, too; you’re a great rude man, so you are.”

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“Broke your side-comb, did I? Well, then, you couldn’t be in better hands, darlin’, here’s a pair I make you a present of, and maybe they won’t set you all off to pieces; here, darlin’, wear these for my sake.”

“But are you making me a present of these beauties, Cannie?”

“Troth an’ I am, Lilly darlin’, and wish they were betther for your sake—what’s that I said? a present! oh the sorrow bit, I must have my payment—aisy now, darlin’, my own sweet Lilly; there now, we’re clear.”

“Upon my word, Mr. Magrath, I don’t know what to say to you, but you’re such a great strong fellow, that a poor weak girl like me is but a child in your arms; are these real tortoise-shell though?”

“You may swear it; do you think I’d offer you anything else? But now listen, my darlin’ girl, take this shawl, it’s ’worth five-and-twenty guineas at least, troth, poor thing! it wasn’t since their marriage it was bought; take it, I say, and go up widout sayin’ a word, and lay it just where it was before, and if she seems surprised on findin’ it there, tell her you suppose I forgot it, or if she won’t believe you, and that all fails you, say that the *Cannie Soogah*, although she knows nothing about him, is a man that’s undher great obligations to her family, and that he only tuck that method of payin’ back a debt to her that he honestly owed to them, for, afther all, isn’t she one of them?”

Lilly shook her head, and her eyes filled with tears, at the manly and modest generosity of the pedlar.

“Little you know then, Mr. Magrath, the load you have taken off my dear mistress’s heart, and the delight you have brought upon the whole family.”

“Well, Lilly dear, sure if I did, amn’t I well paid, for it? thanks to your two sweet lips for that. Sure, bad cess to me, but it was on your account I did it.”

A vile grin, or rather an awkward blank smile, forced by an affectation of gallantry, accompanied the lie which he uttered.

“Oh, yes, indeed,” replied Lilly, “on my ’account, don’t think to pass that upon me; however, I can forgive you a great many things in consequence of your behavior—just now.”

“And yet you abused me for it,” he replied, laughing, “but sure I knew that a purty girl always likes to be kissed; bad cess to me, but the same behavior comes naturally to me.”

“Go now,” said Lilly, with a comic and peremptory manner; “go your rounds, I say; you know very well that I mane your behavior about the shawl, and not your great strong impudence.”

The pedlar, after winking and nodding meanings into her words that she had never thought of, slung his pack over his shoulder as usual, and proceeded on his rounds.

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We have always been of opinion that there is scarcely anything more mysterious than the speed with which popular report travels apparently with very inadequate machinery throughout a large district of country. Before the day was more than half-advanced, fame had succeeded in circulating a report that Matthew Purcel and Dr. Turbot had been both shot dead in the garden of the rectory. This report spread rapidly, and it is with equal pain and shame we are obliged to confess that in general it was received with evident and undisguised satisfaction. John and Alick Purcel, on their way home, were accosted at a place called "Murderer's Corner," by two of the men who had attended at their father's office that morning, and informed that he and Dr. Turbot had been murdered in the course of the day, a piece of information which was conveyed by them with a sneer of cowardly triumph that was perfectly diabolical.

"God save ye, gintlemen!" said one of them, with a peculiar emphasis on the last word; "did ye here the news?"

"No, Jemmy, what is it?" asked John.

"Why, that Darby Hourigan is very ill," he replied, with mock gravity.

"No thanks for your information, Jemmy," replied the other; "if you told us something of more interest we might thank you."

"Never mind him, gintlemen," replied his companion, "there's nothing wrong wid Darby Horaigan, barrin' that he occasionally rubs himself where he's not itching, but there's worse news than that before you."

"What is it, then?" asked Alick; "if you know it, let us hear it, and don't stand humming and hawing as if you were afraid to speak."

"Faith, an' it's no wondher I would, sir, when it's to tell you that you'll find your father a murdhered corpse at home before you."

"Great God! what do you mean, sir? asked John.

"Why, gintlemen, it seems that himself an' Parson Turbot wor both shot in the parsonage garden to-day. The parson's takin' his rest in his own house, but your father's body was brought home upon the car. The bullet entered your worthy father's breeches' pocket, cut through a sheaf of notes that he had to pay the parson his tides wid, and from that it went on——"

Human patience could not endure the ill-suppressed and heartless satisfaction with which the fellow was about to enter into the details, and accordingly, ere he had time to proceed further, John Purcel turning a hunting-whip, loaded for self-defense, left him sprawling on the earth.

“Now, you ill-conditioned scoundrel,” he exclaimed, “whether he is murdered or not, take that for your information. Alick, lay on Hacket there, you are the nearest to him,” he added, addressing his brother.

Hacket at once took to his heels, but the other, touching his horse with the spurs, cantered up to him, and brought the double thong of his whip into severe contact with his neck and shoulders. When this was over, the two fiery young men exclaimed:—

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“There, now, are our thanks, not merely for your information, but for the good will with which it was given, and that to the very sons of the man whom, by your own account, you have murdered among you. If his blood however, has been shed, there is not a drop of it for which we will not exact a tenfold retribution.”

They then dashed home, at the highest speed of which their horses were capable, and throwing themselves out of the saddle, rushed to the hall-door, where they knocked eagerly.

“Is my father at home, Letty?”

“Yes, sir, he’s in the parlor.”

“In the parlor,” exclaimed Alick, looking keenly into her face; “what is he doing in the parlor, eh?”

“Why, he’s readin’ a letther, sir.”

“Reading a letter, is he?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Thank God!” exclaimed both the young men, breathing freely; “that will do, Letty—here, Letty, is half-a-crown for you to buy a ribbon.”

“And another from me, Letty, to buy anything you fancy.”

The girl looked at them with surprise, and for a moment or two seemed at a loss how to account for such evident excitement. At length she exclaimed: “By dad, I have it; you won the hunt, gintlemen.”

“Better than that, Letty,” they replied, nodding, and immediately entering the parlor.

“Well, boys,” said the father, “a good day’s sport?”

“Capital, father! are you long home!”

“Since about two o’clock.”

“How did you come?”

“Why, boys, ye must know that either Dr. Turbot or I was fired at to-day. A bullet—a pistol bullet—whistled right between us in the parsonage garden, and the poor frightened doctor refused to come by the usual way, and, in consequence, I was obliged to take the lower road.”

He then entered into a more detailed account of the attempted assassination, and heard from them, in reply, a history of their intelligence and adventure at Murderer's Corner with Hacket and Bryan, for so the fellows were named.

"Well," said the proctor, "thank God, things are not so bad as they report, after all; but, in the meantime, the plot appears to be thickening—here's more comfort," he added, handing him the notice which Mogue told him he had found upon the steps of the hall-doer, where, certainly, he had himself left it. John took the document and read as follows:—

"TO PROCTOR PURCEL AND HIS HORSE-WHIPPIN' SONS.

"This is to give you notice, that nothing can save yez. Look back upon your work an' see what yez desarve from the counthry. You began with a farm of sixty acres, and you took farm afther farm over the heads of the poor an' them that wor strugglin', until you now have six hundre' acres in your clutches. You made use of the strong purse against the wake man; an' if any one ventured to complain, he was sure to come in for a dose of the horsewhip from your tyrannical sons, or a dose of law from yourself. Now all that I've

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mentioned might be overlooked an' forgiven, for the sake of your wife and daughters, but it is for your conduct as a Tithe Proctor that you and your sons must die. Don't think to escape me, for it can't be done. There is not a day in the week, nor an hour in the day, but I have you at my command. Be prepared, then, for your fate is sealed; and no earthly power can save you. There is the sign [three coffins] and the blood that marks my name is from my own veins. You and your sons must die.

"Captain Terror,

"The Millstone-breaker."

"Tut," said Alick, "we have received far worse than this; it has been written by some hedge schoolmaster; as for my part, I despise it."

"Well, boys, at all events," proceeded the proctor, "be a little more sparing with the horse-whip. The scoundrels deserve it to be sure; but at the same time it is not a thing that can be defended."

"Why, it's impossible to keep it from them, father," replied John; "their insolence is actually more than flesh and blood can bear. But had we not better make some inquiries into this precious production?"

"Where is the use of that?" said his father, to whom such communications had lost all their novelty and much of their interest; "however, you may do so; perhaps some accidental clue may be found that would lead us to discover the villain who wrote it."

Mogue was accordingly called in.

"How did this letter come into your hands, Mogue?" asked the proctor.

"It didn't come into them, sir," replied Mogue, with a smile which he intended to pass, for one of simplicity; "it was lyin' I got it, upon the hall-door steps."

"Did you see any strange person about the place, or near the hall-door to-day?" he asked.

"None, sir, sorra a creature—well now, wait—that I may never sup sorrow, but I did—-there was a poor woman, sir, wid a whack of a son along wid her."

"Did you see her near the steps?"

"That I may be happy, sir, if I could take it upon me to say—not wishin' to tell a lie—but she might a' been there, the crathur."

“What kind of a looking woman was she?” asked John.

“A poor woman, sir, as I said.”

“I do not mean that; of course, I know she was; but what dress had she on, and what kind of features or complexion had she? Was she big or little?”

“I’m just thinkin’,” replied Mogue, seemingly attempting to recollect something, “was it to-day or yesterday I seen her.”

“Well, but answer directly,” said Alick, “what was she like?”

“The son of her was a bullet-headed *ownsha*,” replied Mogue, “and herself—well now, that I may never die in sin, if I could say rightly. I was fetehin’ some oats to Gimlet Eye, an’ didn’t take any particular notice. The *ownsha* had black sooty hair, cut short, an’ walked as if his feet were sore—and indeed it strikes me that he had kibes—for these poor people isn’t overly clane, an’ don’t wash their feet goin’ to bed at night, barrin’ at Christmas or Easther, the crathurs. But, sure the Lord look down on them, they have enough to do to live at all!”

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“You couldn’t say what direction she came from?”

“Well, then, no.”

“Nor the direction she went by?”

“Well, no sir, I could not.”

“But are you certain it was to-day, and not yesterday, you saw her?”

“Then that’s what’s puzzlin’ me—eh! let me see—ay—it was to-day—an’ I’ll tell you how I know it. Bekaise it was to-day I brought the oats to Gimlet Eye—you know he was harrowing the black park yestherday and was in care of Paudeen Sthuccaun. But sure, sir, maybe somebody else about the place seen them.”

An investigation was consequently held upon this reasonable suggestion, but we need scarcely assure our readers, without effect; the aforesaid “poor woman” having had existence only in the fertile imagination of stainless and uncorrupted saint Mogue.

The latter had scarcely retired, when a gentle knock came to the door, and Alick, on opening it himself, found their friend and neighbor, Darby Hourigan, standing outside.

“Well, Hourigan, what do you want now? have you repented, and come to the resolution of paying your tithes?”

Darby gave no direct answer, nor indeed any answer at all to these questions, but simply said, “There’s a bit o’ paper, sir, for Misther John.”

“What is this? Oh, oh, a summons!—very well, Mr. Hourigan, my brother will attend to it.”

“This is where John Purcel lives, sir?” proceeded the man, according to some form which he supposed necessary to give effect and reality to the service; “you acknowledge that, sir, do you?”

“Live here!—why, you scoundrel, don’t you know he does? Where else did he ever live?”

“Ay, but you are only answerin’ one question by another,” replied Hourigan; “and I’ll sarve you wid another to-morrow if you don’t speak the truth.”

“John,” shouted his brother, “you’re wanted. Here is your old friend Hourigan, anxious to get another—ha! ha! ha!—he is off like a shot!” he proceeded, addressing his brother, as the latter entered the hall; “but in the meantime,” he added, handing him the summons, “this document is intended for you.”

“Well,” observed John, laughing, “unless our friend O’Driscol is somewhat change”! I need not much fear Mr. Hourigan.”

“He is changed,” observed the proctor; “the fellow is beginning to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. If you wish to secure his favor, however, you ought to try and put him on the trail of a Conspiracy, or anything that will give him a tolerable justification for writing to his Friend the Castle, as he calls it! He is a regular conspiracy hunter, and were it not that he is now awfully afraid of these Whiteboys, and naturally cowardly and easily frightened, I think he would be the plague of government as well as the country.”

It would indeed, be extremely difficult to find a family so resolute and full of natural courage, and consequently so incapable of intimidation, as that of our friend the proctor. And what was equally striking, the female portion of them were as free from the weakness and timidity of their sex, in this respect, as the males.

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CHAPTER VII.—A Shoneen Magistrate Distributing Justice.

On the morning but one afterwards, John Purcel proceeded to the house of his friend and neighbor, Fitzy O'Driscol, as he was usually termed for brevity. O'Driscol was rather a small man—that is to say, he was short but thick, and of full habit. He was naturally well made, and had been considered well-looking, until his complexion became a good deal inflamed from the effects of social indulgence, to which he was rather strongly addicted. His natural manner would have been plausible if he had allowed it to remain natural; but so far from this, he affected an air of pomp and dignity, that savored very strongly of the mock heroic. On the other side, his clothes fitted him very well, and as he had a good leg and a neat small foot, he availed himself of every possible opportunity to show them. He was, like most men of weak minds, exceedingly fond of ornaments, on which account he had his fingers loaded with costly rings, and at least two or three folds of a large gold chain hung about his breast. His morning gown was quite a tasteful, and even an expensive article, and his slippers, heavily embroidered, harmonized admirably with the whole fashionable deshabille in which he often distributed justice. He carried a gold snuff-box of very massive size, which, when dining out, he always produced after dinner for the benefit of the company, although he never took snuff himself. This, in addition to a tolerably stiff and unreclaimable brogue, and a style of pronunciation wofully out of keeping with his elegant undress, constituted him the very beau-ideal of what is usually known as a *shoneen* magistrate.

John, on arriving, found him reading a paper in the breakfast-parlor, and saw Hourigan waiting outside, who, by the way, gave him such a look as a cat might be supposed to bestow upon a mastiff from whom she dreaded an attack—a look which, in Hourigan's case, combined as much ferocious vengeance and sullen hang-dog cowardice as could well be brought together on the same features.

"Well, Jack," said the pompous distributor of justice, addressing young Purcel, "how do you do? Take a seat—by the way, is it true that your father and my excellent friend, Dr. Turbot, were shot at yesterday?"

"True enough," replied John; "the bullet whistled right between them, and so close that each felt the wind of it."

"The country is getting into a frightful state, friend Purcel, eh? Upon my honor now, yes! it is so—it is so."

"Why there is no question of it," replied John; "it is already in a frightful state."

"It is, Mr. Purcel, and in my opinion, the *crame* of the matter will be blood—blood—my dear John—that is what it will come to."

“Certainly you speak, Mr. O’Driscol, like a man that knows the country, and can feel the pulse of the public officially—I mean, of course, as a magistrate—for it is now, and in times of such turbulence, that men—I mean magistrates—of your stamp—will prove themselves serviceable to the government of the country, and to the country itself; intelligent and determined men—I mean magistrates—who know not what fear is, and who will do their duty at the risk of their lives.”

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“True, John, it is such men, or rather magistrates, who can render the most important services to government. The duties of a loyal and attached magistrate are not a mere raycrayation during these times. And yet, John,” he added, sinking his voice into a confidential whisper, “I protest to my honor that the life of a man—I mane, as you say, a magistrate—who resolves firmly to perform his duty, is not extramely safe; why then should a man—I mane a magistrate—unnecessarily expose himself to the fate of Going,* when he might much more safely remain snug and quiet, without putting either himself or his neighbors to inconvanience by an over-strict discharge of his duty?”

[* The name of a magistrate and clergyman, I think, who was assassinated.]

“If everything be true that I have heard,” said John, “the government would scarcely expect to hear such sentiments from the intelligent and determined Mr. O’Driscol.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—well done, John,—I drew you out. Upon my honor, I am glad to find that you are loyal, at all events, and that is a rare virtue among most persons of your creed; —excuse me, but, except in name, I can scarcely consider you as belonging to it.

“Why, sir,” replied John, “I trust I am a firm, but not a bigoted Catholic.”

“Roman Catholic, John, always say, if you plaise; we claim to be the true Catholics you know; and for that raison it is better always to avoid confusion.”

“As to that, we shall not quarrel about it, I trust,” replied Purcel; “but with respect to another point, there is only one opinion, Mr. O’Driscol, and that is, that you are a most resolute and determined man.”

“Magistrate you mane, I think, John; so magistrate, if you plaise—ha! ha!’ ha! By the way will you touch the bell? Thank you.”

“I beg your pardon,” proceeded Purcel, having touched the bell, “I should have said magistrate: because it very often happens that whilst the man is a coward, the magistrate is as brave as the Duke of Wellington.”

“Upon my honor and conscience, there may be some truth in that,” said O’Driscol, nodding, but at the same time not exactly appropriating the category to himself; “but how do you make that appear, John?”

“Why,” replied Purcel, who, between ourselves, was a bit of a wag in his way, “it proceeds from the spirit of his office. Take a magistrate, for instance, as a man—a mere man; place him in the ordinary situations of society; let him ride home at night, for instance, through a disturbed district like this, which, if he is wise, he will avoid doing, or let him be seen in an isolated position even in daylight without protection, and you will find him a coward of the first shaking. On the contrary, place him, as a magistrate, at

the head of a body of police or military, and where will you witness such courage? That, then, is the individual, I say, who being naturally a coward as a man, goes through his duty with courage as a magistrate; I say this is the individual whom the government should reward with especial favor."

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“By the way, will you touch that bell again?—oh, here he comes. Sam,” he said, addressing a servant, “get me up a bottle of soda-wather. Will you have a glass of soda, John? I dipped a little too deep last night.”

“No, sir, thank you,” replied Purcel, “I was moderate last night; and at all events soda is rather cold for such a day as this is.”

“Well, then can’t you stiffen it with a little brandy?”

“No, thank you, I won’t touch anything at present. I almost wish, as I was saying,” he proceeded, “that there was the slightest touch of cowardice in you, naturally; because if it could be proved in connection with your official intrepidity, you would deserve everything that a government could bestow upon you.”

“Faith and honor, that is certainly putting the argument in an extremely new point of view, and I agree with you, John; that is—that—let me see—the more cowardly the man the braver the magistrate. Well, I don’t know that aither.”

“No, no!” replied John, “I don’t mean that.”

“Well, what do you mane? for I thought I undherstood you a while ago, although find that I don’t now.”

“I mean,” proceeded the other, “that when a man who is naturally cowardly—I don’t mean, of course, a poltroon, but timid—proves himself to be firm, resolute, and intrepid in the discharge of his duties as a magistrate, such a man deserves a civic crown.”

“A what?”

“A civic crown. Of course you know what that is.”

“Of coorse I do, John; and upon my honor and conscience there is great truth in what you say. I could name you a magistrate who, I believe, as a magistrate, could not very aisily be bate, and yet who, without being a downright coward, is for all that no hairo to his valley de sham, as they say.”

“My father was talking about you last night, sir, and I think before long he will be able to put you on the scent of as pretty a conspiracy as was ever detected. He had some notion of opening a communication with government himself upon the subject; but I suggested—that is, I took the liberty, sir, if you will excuse me, but if I erred I assure you Mr. O’Driscol, my intentions were good—I say I took the liberty, sir, of suggesting that it would be better to place the matter in your hands, as a person possessing more influence with your friend, the Castle, and more conversant with the management of a matter that is too important to be in any but official hands. I have time at the preset only

to allude to it, for I see Mr. Darby Hourigan there waiting to prosecute, or as he says to take the law of, your humble servant."

"Hang the scoundrel, what a hurry he is in! How did you quarrel with him?"

"Faith, sir, in the first place, he was insolent and offensive beyond all patience."

"Yes, my dear John," observed O'Driscol, with a good deal of solemn pomp, especially as the magistrate was beginning to supersede the man, "all that is very provoking, but at the same time you know the horsewhip is an illaygal instrument."

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“I beg your pardon, sir,” replied Purcel, with a smile, “I believe not.”

“I mane, John,” said the other, “an improper use of it is. You should be more cautious, John, in using it, for the punishment of any animal barring a horse. I have heard, by the way, many complaints against you on that head.”

“Yes, sir, but you are not aware that it is from a principle of humanity I horsewhip the scoundrels.”

“How is that now, John? for upon my honor and conscience I can’t for the life of me persave any great humanity in it.”

“Why, sir,” replied Purcel, who, as the reader must be aware, was humbugging the worthy magistrate all the time, “I appeal to yourself whether it is not better for any one of these rascals to get a horsewhipping from me than a citation to the Bishop’s Court from my father.”

“Ay, but do they never happen to get both, John?” returned the magistrate. “But what has a horsewhipping and a citaytion to the Bishop’s Court to do with aich other?”

“Simply this,” replied the other, “that when my father hears I horsewhip any of them, he takes no further proceedings against them; and whenever I wish, consequently, to keep a fellow out of that troublesome situation, I horsewhip him from pure kindness.”

“So that you look upon that as a good turn to them?”

“Precisely, sir. As I said, I horsewhip them from motives of humanity.”

“Faith and don’t be surprised, John, if they should happen to put a bullet through you from motives of humanity some of these days. However, do you think it is of importance?”

“Is what, sir?”

“The conspiracy. I beg your pardon—come into the office till I see what I can do for you at all events.”

He accordingly preceded Purcel to his office, accompanied by Sam Finigan, a kind of thorough male domestic who acted as his clerk. Here he took his seat with a good deal of ceremony, hemmed several times, and desired Hourigan to be admitted. Just at that moment, and while Hourigan was coming in, a young lad, or tiger, a son of Finigan’s, by the way, who had been in the habit of carrying letters to and from the neighboring post-office, now entered and presented him with one, to the following effect:—

“TO O’DRISKAL, THE SHONEEN MAGISTRIDGE.

“Sur this is to let you no that if you go an givin wan la for the poor and anud’her for the rich you will soon get a bullet through you as Tandrem af Tavnibeg got. If you wish to bay safe thin bay the poor man’s friend—oderways it’ll be worse for you.

“Kaptn Jostige.”

O’Driscol having read this communication, became desperately disturbed for about a couple of minutes, after which, as if struck by some sudden thought, he appeared to recover himself considerably, but by no means fully, as was evident from the agitation of his voice and the involuntary tremor of his hands.

“I hope, sir,” said Purcel, who could not help observing the commotion into which the notice had put him, “that you have received no ill tidings. You seem agitated and alarmed, or rather distressed, if one can judge; I hope there’s nothing wrong.”

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“Why, no,” replied the magistrate, “not exactly wrong; but it is certainly an infamous country to live in. I am an impartial man, Mr. Purcel—I mane, sir, an impartial magistrate; but the fact is, sir, that every man is marked whose life is valuable to the government of his country. I know no man, Mr. Purcel—mark me you, too, Hourigan—I know no man, sir, in my capacity of a magistrate—hem—hem!—only according to the merits—I am as much the poor man’s friend as I am the rich man’s, and of the two more: if I lane at all, which I don’t, it is to the poor man; but as an impartial man—-magistrate I mane—I know naither rich or poor. On the bench, I say, I know naither poverty nor riches, barring, as I said, upon the merits.”

“Beggin’ your pardon, your worship—an’ before you begin—as I was comin’ down here a while agone,” said Hourigan, “I seen a strange and suspicious-lookin’ man inside the hedge at the shrubbery below; he was an ill-faced villain, plaise your reverence, an’ I thought I seen his pockets stickin’ out as if he had pistols in them. I thought it better to tell your worship.”

The worthy magistrate had scarcely recovered from the first fit of agitation when this intelligence threw him into an immediate relapse. Indeed so ludicrous was his distress that he actually wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

“Sam,” said he, after a fit of tremulous coughing, into which he forced himself, in order to conceal the quaver which terror had given to his voice, “Sa—am—hugh! ugh!—go-o—an-n-d—ugh! ugh! ugh!—get a ca-a-se of doub-uble pis-pistols—ugh! ugh!—da—amn this cough—ough—and place—them-em on the table here—we—we—will at least pep-pepper the villain—if—if—he—he should dare to show his face——ace. I trust I—I—-know my duties as—a mag-istrate—my cour—urage and in-trep—id—ity as such—ugh! ijg’h! ugh!—are no saycret now, I think.”

“I don’t believe,” observed Purcel, “that there is one syllable of truth in what he says. I can read the falsehood in his eye. However,” he added, “if you will postpone this matter of Hourigan’s for a few minutes, I shall soon see whether there is any one there or not.”

“Here, then,” said the magistrate, “take these pistols” (pointing to those which Finigan had just laid on the table). Purcel declined them with a nod, taking a good case at the same time out of his own pocket. “No, sir, thank you, I never travel without my two friends here, with either of which I can break a bottle at the distance of thirty yards. You will be good enough to tell that to your friends, Mr. Hourigan, and also to reflect upon it yourself.”

Having examined his friends, as he called them, he started out and proceeded directly towards the shrubbery, where, however, there was no trace whatever of any one. On his way home he met Fergus O’Driscol, who had been out that morning cock-shooting through the grounds, and to whom he mentioned the story told by Hourigan. “Why, the lying scoundrel,” exclaimed Fergus, “I saw him myself speaking to a new laboring lad

whom Mr. Arthur, the steward, sent in there this morning to gather and remove the rotten underwood. He has only vamped up this story to frighten my heroic father, and between you and me it is not difficult to do."

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“I dare say you are right, Fergus, but between you and me again, who is this new-comer you mention? for you may rest assured that if he be very intimate with Darby Hourigan, you had as good keep an eye upon him. Darby is one of the good ones.”

“I don’t even know his name yet,” replied Fergus, “but if we are to judge by appearances, he is somewhat of Darby’s kidney, for a worse-looking young vagabond I have seldom laid my eyes upon. At all events I know Hourigan’s story to be a lie, for as he came up the avenue I was in the shrubbery, looking for a cock I shot, which dropped among the hollies, and there was certainly nobody there but this strange fellow and Hourigan, both of whom chatted to each other for some minutes across the hedge; and, by the way, I now remember that they kept watching about them suspiciously, as if they did not wish to be seen speaking together. The fact, now that you have mentioned the case, is evident; I could not be deceived in this matter.”

“Well then,” said Purcel, “I will tell you how we shall bring that circumstance to a test: get the strange fellow to walk my horse up and down the avenue, so as that he must necessarily come in Hourigan’s way, and if they refuse to speak in my presence you may accompany me down the avenue if you wish—we may take it for granted that there is an understanding between them and on this account we will say nothing on our return, but that we failed to see or trace any one, which will be the truth, you know.”

Whilst this conversation took place between the two young men, our worthy magistrate, now that he had an opportunity of recruiting his courage, withdrew for a moment, accompanied by his servant and clerk, Sam Finigan. “Sam,” said he, in undisguised trepidation, “my life’s not worth a week’s purchase.”

“That was a threatening letter you received, sir?” said Sam, inquiringly.

“The same, Sam. Upon my honor and conscience, they have threatened me with the fate of Tandrem of Tavnibeg, who got five bullets into him, not fifty yards from his own door. Get me the brandy then quick, and another bottle of soda-wather. Good Lord! Sam, see what it is to be an active and determined magistrate.”

“Well,” said Sam, after he had placed the brandy and soda-water before him, “it’s one comfort, plaise your honor, that if they shoot your worship, government will take a glorious revenge upon them. The three kingdoms will hear of it.”

“Ay, but, Sam—good Lord!—here’s God grant us a long life in the manetime! but upon my honor and conscience it’s not revenge upon my own murdherers I want, but to be made a Stipendiary. Revenge! Good Lord! what is revenge to a murdhered man, Sam, maybe with five bullets in him! Now, Sam, this is not want of courage in me—but—but—mere distress of mind on looking at the state of the country. A suspicious-looking villain to be lurking in my own shrubbery, with the very pistols sticking out of his pocket! Good Lord! I believe I’ll take another half-glass, Sam; I think I feel somewhat more

intrepid—more relieved. Yes, pour me out another half-glass, or a whole one, as your hand is in, Sam, and take another for yourself."

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“Thank your worship,” said Sam, who never called him anything else when exercising, or about to exercise his functions as a magistrate, “here’s the same, your worship—God grant us both—your worship at any rate—a long life!”

“And a happy death, Sam; there is no harm to add that to it.”

“And a happy death, your worship!”

“Well, Sam, here’s the same! And now I think in a few minutes my natural courage will return; for indeed I’m too kind-hearted, Sam, and too aisily made feel, as you persave, for the traisonable state of the country, and of the misguided people. However, I only feel these things as a man, Sam, as a kind-hearted man, but not as a fearless and resolute magistrate, Sam: as a magistrate I don’t know what fear is.”

“That’s well known, your worship; when you’re at the head of a body of polis or military, every one knows what you are; isn’t dare-devil Driscol, your worship, the best name they have for you?”

“True enough, Sam; d—n them; a man, especially a magistrate, couldn’t be courageous unknown to them—they’ll be sure to find it out. I’m a good deal relieved, Sam, and—-hem—hem—let us proceed to investigate this important matter of Hourigan’s. These Purcels are—hem—ahem—too much in the habit of violating the law, Sam, and that’s not right—it’s illaygal—it’s illay-gal, Sam, to violate the law; I say so, and I think I can’t allow such breaches of the”—here, however, the thought of the conspiracy occurred, and swayed him in a moment against Hourigan. “To be sure Hourigan’s a scoundrel, and deserves a horsewhipping every day he rises.”

“True enough, sir; and sure if the Purcels break the law, it is only upon the people, and arn’t the people, your worship, as ready to break the law as the Purcels! Sorra warrant, then, I’d grant against Misther John this bout.”

“And what would you do, Sam?”

“I’d bind Hourigan over to keep the pace.”

“I believe you’re right, Sam; he’s a bad bird, Hourigan; so I think the best thing to do is to tie his hands up for him.”

“And if we could tie his tongue up too, your worship, it ought to be done.”

Here, on the other hand, the notice he had just received stuck in his throat, and reduced him to a new perplexity.

“But then, Sam,” he added, “think of the revengeful spirit that is abroad. Good Lord! it is awful! Haven’t I this moment a threatening notice on my table? Well,” he added, “if

ever a man suffered in the cause of government as a public man and an active resolute magistrate, I do; indeed, Sam, if I had known the cares, and troubles, and responsibilities of my official situation, I am not certain whether I would not have preferred a private station; but you see government will find out men of talent and public spirit. If I had less of either, it isn't threatening letters I'd be resaving this day. Come, then, let us go to the discharge of our duty, Sam, fearlessly and impartially, as a man entrusted with great public authority."

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He accordingly proceeded to the office, a good deal recruited in courage by the brandy, but by no means altogether relieved from the apprehensions consequent upon the receipt of the notice and Hourigan's narrative.

Fergus and Purcel, on their way from the shrubbery to the house, fell upon a simpler plan by which to detect Hourigan's falsehood, and ascertain whether there existed any personal acquaintance or understanding of any sort between him and the new-comer.

"Well, John," said O'Driscol, after once more placing himself with his usual pomp in his magisterial chair, "have you been able to find any account or trace of the assassin?"

"None whatever, sir," replied Purcel; "neither tale nor tidings of him could I find."

"When did you see him, Hourigan?" asked Fergus; "was it on your way here?"

"Yes, sir."

"In the avenue?"

"In the avenue, sir, about fifty yards inside the hedge, jist opposite the hollies."

"Why did you not speak to him?"

"Troth, sir, he had too suspicious a look; for how did I know but it's a bullet I'd get into, me, if I was only seen obsarvin' or watchin' him?"

"Then you did not speak to him?" asked Fergus.

"Faith, you may swear that, sir; that is not the time to pick up strange acquaintances."

The two young friends were now satisfied of Hourigan's falsehood, and perhaps of his treachery; and a very slight but significant glance to that effect passed between them.

"Well, well," said the magistrate, "we—I mane myself, at any rate—are well able to protect ourselves. I shall not in future travel unarmed, and he that—hem—ahem—he that will mistake me for a timid man will find out his error maybe when it's too late. Come, Hourigan, what charge is this you have against Mr. Purcel?"

"Plaise your honor, he abused, and assaulted, and bate me until I didn't know for a time whether I was alive or dead."

"How was that, Hourigan, sir?"

"Bekaise, your honor, I had not my tides for him."

“Now that I look at you, you certainly have the marks of violence about you. Well, but did you give no provocation, sir? It’s not likely Mr. Purcel would raise his hand to you if he had not resaved strong provocation at yours.”

“Sorra word, then, your honor, ever I said to him,—barrin’ to tell him that I hoped he’d have compassion on me and my little family, and not drive us to ruin for what I wasn’t able to pay. He then asked me, was that the answer I had for him, and not his money, and he does no more but ups wid his whip and laves me as you see me.”

“Why, now, you d—d scoundrel!” exclaimed John, “how can you—”

“Pardon me, Mr. Purcel,” said the magistrate, interrupting him with what he intended to be dignity, “you forget what is due to the court, sir. There must be no swearing nor abuse here. The court must be respected, Mr. Purcel.”

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These words brought a sneer of secret triumph upon Hourigan's features, that was unquestionably very provoking.

"I beg to apologize to the court," replied Purcel, "if for a moment I have forgotten what is due to it; but, in fact, your worship, there is not one word of truth in what he says. His language was insolent and provoking beyond the limits of human patience. He told me that both my father and myself were dishonest—that we were oppressors of the poor, and blood-suckers; called us hardhearted and beggarly upstarts, and that we would sell our Church and our country for filthy lucre and upstart pride. Instead, your worship, of promising to pay his tithes, he said we might go to hell for them, and make the devil our paymaster, what he'll be yet. And further, he said he'd never pay a farthing of them, and set law, lawyers, police, military, and magistrates all at open defiance. Now I beg to know, your worship, what loyal and peaceably-disposed man, that wishes to see the laws of his country, and those respectable magistrates that administer them, respected—what man, I say, fond of peace and quietness, could bear such language as that? It is not what he said of either myself or my family that I contain of, but of the abuse he heaped upon the law at large, and the independent magistrates of the country. I certainly, in the heat of the moment, so far resented the affront offered to the most respectable magistracy of this fine country as to give him a few slight touches of the whip, more like one in jest, I assure your worship, than like an angry man."

"Hourigan," said O'Driscol, swelling up to a state of the most pompous indignation, "this is infamous conduct which he relates of you, sir. How dare you, sir, or any impudent fellow like you, take the undaicent and unjustifiable liberty of abusing the independent and loyal magistracy of Ireland? It is by fellows like you, sir, that traison and sedition are hatched. Your conduct was gross and monstrous, and if Mr. Purcel had come to me and made affidavit of the language stated, I would have consithered it my duty to commit you. Such language, sirra, was seditious!"

"Yes," replied Hourigan, "and you would be right; but there is not one word of truth in what Mr. Purcel says, your worship; for instead of that, plaise your reverence, when I threatened to come to you to get the law against him—'I'll go to Squire Driscol,' says I, 'and that's the gintleman that will give me justice at any rate.' 'You and Squire Driscol may go be hanged,' says he; 'I don't regard him a traneen; he thinks, since he has been made into a justice of pace, that the ground's not worthy to carry him,' says he. Can you deny that, Mr. John?"

Purcel's limbs began to move, and his very flesh to creep with indignation at the impudent but artful falsehoods of Hourigan, who was likely to succeed in touching the magistrate's weak points with such effect as to gain him over to his side.

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The worthy official shook his head with a kind of very high-minded pride, as much as to say, I am far above the level of such observations.

“Mr. Purcel,” said he—“he—hem—hem—I am sorry to hear that you could give way to such extramely indiscreet and disrespectful language as this.”

“Swear him, sir,” said Purcel, “and let him be put to his oath, for I protest to heaven, Mr. O’Driscol, and as I am, I trust, an honest man, I never once mentioned your name, nor was there the slightest allusion made to it—none, sir, whatever.”

“The truth is, I should think it very, strange, Mr. Purcel, and very odd, and very unfriendly and disenganious in you to spake of any magistrate in such a style as that. However, Sam, take the book and swear Hourigan.”

Sam accordingly took the book, and putting it into Hourigan’s hand, said, “You shall make true answers to such questions as shall be put to you, and swear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God, and one-and-sixpence to me!”

“Never mind the one-and-sixpence at present, Sam,” said his master, “he owes you nothing now. Proceed.”

Hourigan’s thumb had the genuine angle on the back of the book, but it did not escape Sam, who said, “You intend to kiss your thumb, Hourigan, but it’s no go; here, sir, stand there, so that the book won’t be a screen for you; turn round—there now—proceed.”

Hourigan, finding that the evasion in this instance was impracticable, gave it a strong, derisive smack that might be heard outside the room. “I hope,” he added, “you are satisfied now, Mr. Finigan.”

“I see,” replied Sam, “that you’ve kissed the book when you were made to do it; but I see jist as clearly that the sorra much truth are we goin’ to get out of yoU.”

The case then proceeded; but as it would prove, probably, rather tiresome to the generality of our readers, we shall not give it at length. It was quite evident, however, that the plaintiff and defendant both were well acquainted with the vacillating and timid character of the magistrate, who in the case before us was uniformly swayed by the words of the last speaker; and it was equally evident that each speaker so shaped his arguments as that they might the more effectually bear upon O’Driscol’s weak points.

“Hem—hem—this, I persave, turns out to be a very important and difficult case, Mr. Purcel—a very difficult case, Hourigan—a—a—a case indeed that requires great deliberation and coolness. Here is strong provocation on one hand, and prompt punishment on the other. Can you swear, Mr. Purcel, to the accuracy and substance of the language you say Hourigan uttered?”

“Certainly, sir, without hesitation.”

“Because if he does, Hourigan, I shall be obliged, according to Act of Parliament, sir—”

Hourigan interrupted him by a groan, and a rather significant shrug.

“What do you shrug and groan for, sir?” asked the man of law, who felt both acts incompatible with the respect due to the court.

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“Mavrone!” exclaimed Hourigan, “acts of Parliament! oh! thin many a bitther piece of cruelty and injustice has been practised upon us by Act o’ Parliament!”

“Ho, you traisonable villain!” exclaimed the other—“what sedition is this?”

“It is sich Acts o’ Parliament,” said the adroit knave, “that gets good men and good magistrates shot like dogs, an’ that has brought the counthry to the fearful pass it’s in, I wisht myself I was out of it, for the people is beginnin’ to single out sich magistrates as they’ll shoot, as if their lives worn’t worth a rat’s.”

“Ah!—hem—hem—Hourigan, you are a d—d ras—hem simple-hearted fellow, I think, or you wouldn’t spake as you do.

“But an I to get not justice sir, against the man that left me as you see me. Is the poor man, sir, to be horse-whipped and cut up at the will an’ pleasure of the rich, an’not to get either law or justice?”

O’Driscol’s face was now a picture of most ludicrous embarrassment and distress.

“Certainly, Hourigan, I shall—hem—I shall always administer justice impartially—-impartially—no one can question that. Your case,” he added—(for we must say here that Hourigan’s language brought back to his mind all the horrors of Tandrem’s death, as well as that threatened to himself in the recent notice)—“your case, Hourigan is a difficult and peculiar one, poor man!”

“Hourigan, my good fellow,” said Purcel, “take care of what you are about. Don’t be too certain that some of your neighbors won’t find you, before you are much older, in the centre of a deep-laid conspiracy; and perhaps the government of the country may have an opportunity before long to thank and reward those who will have it exposed and broken up. Do you understand me?”

Purcel, while he spoke, kept his eyes fixed very significantly upon the magistrate, to whose imagination a long and interesting correspondence with his friend, the Castle, started immediately forth, appended to which were votes of thanks, flattering testimonies, together with a stipendiary magistracy, with a full retiring pension, and an appointment for his son, in the background.

“He has made use of that language to intimidate your worship,” proceeded Purcel, but I think he ought to know you better.”

“Sir,” said O’Driscol, addressing Hourigan, “what did you mane by talking about shooting magistrates? Do you think, sirrah, to frighten me—Fitzgerald O’Driscol—from discharging my duty?”

“Frighten, you, sir! oh! bedad, your honor, you aren’t the gintleman for that.”

“No, sir, I believe not—I believe not, Hourigan; no, my poor man, I am not indeed. Hourigan, you are not an uncivil person, but why refuse to pay your tithes? You are well able to do it.”

“Why, bekaise I daren’t, sir; if I did—talkin’ about shootin’—it’s a round lump of lead I would find in my stomach instead o’ my poor breakfast, some o’ these days.”

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“I don’t doubt but he is right enough there, your worship,” observed Purcel, “there’s a conspiracy—”

“Yes,” exclaimed the magistrate, “oh! ay!—yes!—hem—a conspiracy! Well—no matter—let it rest for a little. Well—as this case is one of great difficulty, involving several profound points of law, I would recommend you to make it up, and be friends. Hourigan, you will forgive Mr. Purcel, who is hasty but generous. You will forgive him, I say, and he will give you something in the shape of a—salve for your wounds. Come, forgive him, Hourigan, and I will overlook, on my part, the seditious language you used against the Irish magistracy; and, besides, you will make me your friend.”

“Forgive him, sir!” said Hourigan, shrugging himself, and putting up his hand to feel the welts of black and blue which intersected each other upon his countenance and shoulders. “An’ maybe it’s half-a-crown he’ll threwn me.”

“No, no, Hourigan, I’ll guarantee for him that he’ll treat you liberally: one good turn deserves another, you know.”

“Well, then, let him say what he’ll give me.”

“There’s a pound-note for you,” said Purcel, flinging it across the table. “If you take that, you may, but if not, I’ll give no more. Your worship, this, you perceive, is cross-case, and if you receive examination on the one side, you will, of course, upon the other?”

“True,” replied O’Driscol, who had not thought of this, and who seized upon it as a perfect relief to him; “true, Mr. Purcel, it is a cross-case, and so I understand it. Let me recommend you to take the money, Hourigan.”

“Well, then, your honor, I will, on your account, and bekaise, as your worship says, bekaise one good tarn desarues another, an’ ought to get it. I’m satisfied for the present.” And as he spoke, he turned, in a skulking, furtive manner, such a look upon Purcel as we will not attempt to describe.

“Now, Hourigan,” said O’Driscol, “I am glad I have settled this matter in your favor. If I had taken Mr. Purcel’s informations, you would have certainly been transported; but the truth is, and I trust you have seen it this day, and will allow it, that in my magisterial capacity, although just and impartial I hope, yet, still, whenever I can with raison, I am always disposed to lane towards the poor man, and be the poor man’s magistrate—hem—ahem!”

“Yes, plaise your honor,” said Hourigan, rather drily, “but it’s so hard to make the people at large believe the truth, sir. Good-mornin’, your worship, an’ many thanks for the illigant justice you gave me. Good-mornin’ you, too, Misther Purcel; I hope we’ll be betther friends, sir.”

“And I hope you will pay your tithes, and keep a civiler tongue in your head,” replied the latter, as Hourigan left the office.

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Before this weighty matter was determined, Fergus O'Driscol, although satisfied that Hourigan and their new laborer were acquainted, resolved to corroborate his evidence of the fact, if possible, and for this purpose he sent the fellow, as had been agreed on, to walk Purcel's horse up and down the lower part of the avenue, near the entrance gate, which was somewhat secluded and not within view of the house, for the avenue was a winding one. In the meantime he stationed himself in a clump of trees, to which he went by a back walk in the shrubbery that was concealed from that part of the avenue. Here, we say, he stationed himself to watch these worthies, but, unfortunately, at too great a distance to hear their conversation, should they speak and recognize each other. On this subject he was not permitted to remain long in suspense. Hourigan soon made his appearance, and, on approaching the stringer, looked cautiously about him in every direction, whilst the latter, who had been walking Purcel's horse towards the house, suddenly turned back, and kept conversing with Hourigan until they reached the entrance gate, where they stood for about ten minutes in close and evidently confidential dialogue, as was clear from their watching in all directions, to make certain that they were not observed. They then shook hands, cordially, and Hourigan bent his steps towards the town of Lisnagola. Fergus, who had seen all their motions most distinctly, took occasion to pass up the avenue a few minutes afterwards, where he met the stranger still leading Purcel's horse.

"What's your name, my good fellow?" he asked.

"Phil Hart, sir."

"Do you know if the man who summoned Mr. Purcel before my father has gone out?"

"I don't know, plaise your honor."

"Did any person go out within the last few minutes?"

"Yes, sir, there went a man out; maybe it was him."

"You don't know Hourigan's appearance, then?"

"No, sir. Hourigan, was that his name?"

"Yes. Are you a native of this county?"

"Not exactly, sir; but I have friends in it."

"Who are they?"

"The Ahernes, sir, up in the mountains behind Lisnagola beyant."

"And who recommended you to Mr. Arthur?"

“His brother-in-law, sir, one Frank Finnerty, in the mountains above; that is, they’re both marrid upon the two shisthers, plaise your honor.”

“And what caused you to leave your native place?”

“Why, sir, my father houlds a bit o’ land; he owed some tithe, sir, and—”

“Would not pay it; they consequently took proceedings—you resisted the execution of the law, and then you had to run for it.”

“Well, not exactly, sir.”

“How was it, then?”

“Why, sir, we paid the tithes; an’ whin this was discovered, I, at any rate, had to run for it. The people, your honor, found out that it was I that ped them, an’ I was glad, of coorse, to fly for my life. I’d thank you, sir, to keep what I tould you to yourself, for even if it was known in this neighborhood that I ped them, I wouldn’t be safe.”

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“You don’t know Hourigan, then?”

“How could I, sir, and me a sthranger?”

“Faith, and whether you do or not, it seems to me there’s a strong family likeness between you and him.”

“Maybe so,” the fellow replied, with a grin. “I hear my father say that he sartinly was down in this counthry when he was sowin’ his wild oats:” and with this observation he passed on with the horse he was leading.

CHAPTER VIII.—An Unreformed Church

—The Value of Public Opinion—Be not Familiar with the Great

Recent circumstances have, unfortunately, shown us the danger of tampering with, and stimulating, the blind impulses of ignorant prejudice and popular passion beyond that limit where the powers of restraint cease to operate with effect. At the period which our narrative has now reached, and for a considerable time before it, those low rumblings which stunned and frightened the ear of civilized society, like the ominous sounds that precede an earthquake, were now followed by those tremblings and undulations which accompany the shock itself. But before we describe that social condition to which we refer, it is necessary that we should previously raise the vail a little, which time has drawn between us and the condition of the Established Church, not merely at that crisis, but for a long period before it. This we shall do as briefly as possible, because we feel that it is an exceedingly unpleasant task to contemplate a picture which presents to us points of observation that are, from their very nature, painful to look upon—and features so secular and carnal, that scarcely any language could exaggerate, much less distort them.

The Established Church in Ireland, then, in its unpurged and unreformed state, was very little else than a mere political engine for supporting and fostering British interests and English principles in this country; and no one, here had any great chance of preferment in it who did not signalize himself some way in favor of British policy. The Establishment was indeed the only bond that bound the political interests of the two nations together. But if any person will now venture to form an opinion of the Irish Church from her gorgeousness and immense wealth at that period, he will unquestionably find that what ought to have been a spiritual, pure, holy, self-denying, and zealous Church, was neither more nor less than an overgrown, proud, idle, and indolent Establishment, bloated by ease and indulgence, and corrupted almost to the very core by secular and political prostitution. The state of the Establishment was indeed equally anomalous and disgraceful. So jealous was England, and at the same time so rapacious of its wealth, that it was parcelled out to Englishmen without either shame or scruple, whilst Irish piety

and learning, when they did happen to be found, were uniformly overlooked and disregarded. All the ecclesiastical offices

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of dignity and emolument were bestowed upon Englishmen; upon men who lived here with reluctance, and but seldom—who had no sympathy with the country or its inhabitants—nay, who looked upon us, in general, with feeling of hostility and contempt; and who, by example or precept, rendered no earthly equivalent for the enormous sums that were drawn from a poor and struggling people. It is idle to say that these prodigious ecclesiastical revenues were not paid by the people, but by the landlord, who, if the people had not paid them, would have added them to the rent. But even so—the straggling peasant reasoned naturally, for he felt it to be one thing to pay even a high rent to the landlord, whose rights, as such, he acknowledged, but a very different thing to pay forth out of his own pocket a tenth of his produce to the pastor of a hostile creed, which had little sympathy with him, for which he received no spiritual equivalent, and on which, besides, he was taught to look as a gross and ungodly heresy.

But this was not the worst of it. In the discussion of this subject, it is rather hazardous for the champion of our former Establishment to make any allusion to the landlord at all; the fact unfortunately being, that in the management and disposal of land, the landlords, in general, were gifted with a very convenient forgetfulness that such a demand as tithe was to come upon the tenant at all. The land in general was let as if it had been tithe-free, whilst, at the same time, and in precisely the same grasping spirit, it so happened, that wherever it was tithe-free the rents exacted were also enormous, and seen as—-supposing tithe had not an existence—no country ever could suffer to become the basis of valuation, or to settle down into a system. In fact, such was the spirit, and so profligate the condition of the Established Church for a long lapse of time, both before and after the Union, that we may lay it down as a general principle, that everything was rewarded in it but piety and learning.

If there were anything wanting to prove the truth and accuracy of our statements, it would be found in the bitter and relentless spirit with which the Established Church and her pastors were assailed, at the period of which we write. And let it be observed here, that even then, the Church in this country, in spirit, in learning, in zeal, and piety, was an angel of purity compared to what she had been twenty or thirty years before. The course of clerical education had been defined, established, and extended; young profligates could not enter the Church, as in the good old times, without any earthly preparation, either in learning or morals. They were obliged to read, and thoroughly to understand, an extensive and enlightened course of divinity—to attend lectures and entitle themselves, both by attendance and answering, to a certain number of certificates, without which they had no chance for orders. In point of fact, they were forced to become serious;

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and the consequences soon began to appear in the general character of the Church. Much piety, activity, learning, and earnest labor were to be found in it; and indeed, we may venture to say, that, with the exception of her carnal and debasing wealth, she had been purified and reformed to a very considerable extent, even then. Still, however, the bloated mass of mammon hung about her, prostrating her energies, secularizing her spirit, and, we must add, oppressing the people, out of whose pockets it was forced to come. When the calamity, therefore, which the reader may perceive is partly upon and impending over, the Protestant clergy, actually occurred, it did not find them unprepared, nor without the sympathy of many of the very people who were forced by the tyrannical influence of party feeling to oppose them publicly. To their sufferings and unexampled patience, however, we shall be obliged to refer, at a subsequent period of our narrative; and for that reason, we dismiss it for the present.

Such, then, was the state of the Protestant Established Church for a considerable length of time before the tithe agitation, and also immediately preceding it; and we deemed it necessary to make the reader acquainted with both, in order that he may the better understand the nature and spirit of the almost universal assault which was, by at least one party—the Roman Catholic—so furiously made upon it. At the present period of our narrative, then, the population of the country, especially of the South and West, had arrived at that state of agitation, which, whether its object be legitimate or not, is certain, in a short time, to brutalize the public mind and debauch the public morals, by removing all the conscientious impediments which religion places against crime, and consequently all scruple in committing it. Heretofore, those vile societies of a secret nature, that disgrace the country and debase the character of her people, existed frequently under separate denominations, and for distinct objects. Now, however, they all consented to abandon these peculiar purposes, and to coalesce into one great conspiracy against the destruction of the Establishment. We do not mean to assert, however, that this general outcry against the Church, and its accompanying onslaught on her property, originated directly with the people. No such thing; the people, as they always are, and, we fear, ever will be, were mere instruments in the hands of a host of lay and clerical agitators; and no argument was left unattempted or unurged to hound them on to the destruction of the Establishment. From the Corn Exchange down to the meanest and most obscure tribunal of agitation throughout the kingdom, the virtues of passive resistance were inculcated and preached, and the great champion of popular rights told the people publicly and repeatedly that they might not be afraid to follow his advice, for that it mattered little how oppressive or stringent any act of parliament in defence of the Established

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Church might be, he would undertake to drive a coach and six through the very severest of its penalties. Nor were the Catholic priesthood idle during these times of storm and commotion. At the head of them, and foremost in both ability and hatred of tithes, stood the late Dr. Doyle, the celebrated J.K.L. of that day, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; a man to whose great intellectual powers the country at large chiefly owes the settlement of that most difficult and important question. This able prelate assailed the system with a fiery vehemence that absolutely set the country in a blaze, and reduced the wealthy Establishment to a case of the most unprecedented distress. Who can forget that memorable apothegm to the Irish people on the subject? "Let your hatred of tithes," he said, "be as lasting as your sense of justice."

Unfortunately it is an easy task to instruct or tempt the Irish peasant to violate the law, especially when sanctioned, in that violation, by those whose opinion and advice he takes as the standard of his conduct. Be this as it may, the state of the country was now becoming frightful and portentous; and although there had not, as yet, been much blood shed, still there was no person acquainted with the extraordinary pains which were taken to excite the people against the payment of tithe, who was not able to anticipate the terrible outburst and sanguinary slaughters which soon followed.

We have already detailed a midnight meeting of the anti-tithe confederacy; but so confident had the people soon become in the principle of general unanimity against the payment of this impost, that they did not hesitate to traverse the country in open day by thousands; thus setting not only law, but all the powers of the country by which it is usually carried out and supported, at complete defiance.

Threatening letters, and notices of violent death, signed with blood, and containing the form of a coffin, were sent to all such as were in any way obnoxious, or, what was the same thing, who were in any way disposed either to pay tithes or exact them.

In this state matters were, when, one morning about a week after the scene we have just described in O'Driscol's office, a dialogue to the following effect took place in the proctor's immense farm-yard, between our friend Mogue Moylan and his quondam sweetheart, Letty Lenehan. Letty, of late, that is since the morning of the peddler's conversation with Mogue, had observed that some unaccountable change had taken place in his whole manner, not only towards herself, but in his intercourse with the rest of his fellow-servants. He was for instance, much more silent that he had ever been: but although he spoke less, he appeared to think more; yet it might be observed, that whatever the subject of his thoughts was, it evidently had diffused a singular degree of serenity, and a peculiarly striking complacency through his whole manner. With respect to herself he had ascended from the lover into the patron; and although she had been amusing herself at his expense throughout their previous courtship, if it could be termed

such, yet she felt no less puzzled as to the cause of such a change, and quite as anxious to ascertain it.

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On the morning in question, Mogue and Jerry Joyce had been engaged in winnowing a large quantity of wheat in the barn. Jerry, whose manner was ostensibly that of a soft, simple young fellow, and whom but few looked upon as possessed of the ordinary run of common sense, was treated by Mogue, and indeed by most, but not all of his fellow servants, as one would treat a young lad who had not yet arrived at years of discretion, or maturity of judgment.

“Jerry,” said Mogue, “why but you do be cortin’ the girls, man alive? That I may never sin but it’s a great thing to have them fond o’ one.”

“Ay,” replied Jerry, who was perfectly well aware of his foible, “if I had the art of sootherin’ and puttin’ my comedher an thim like some o’ my acquaintances; but, me! is it foolish Jerry Joyce they’d care about? Oh, no! begor that cock wouldn’t fight.”

“Your acquaintances!” exclaimed Mogue, seizing upon the term, in Jerry’s reply, which he knew referred to himself, “and which of your acquaintances, now, does be sootherin’ an’ puttin’ his comedher an’ them, eh, Jerry?”

“Oh! dear me, Mogue,” replied the other, “how droll you are! As if you thought I didn’t mane one Mogue Moylan that they’re tearin’ their caps about every day in the week.”

“Tearin’ their caps! arrah, who is, Jerry?”

“Why, the girls.”

“The girls! Och! man, sure that’s an ould story; but I declare it to you, Jerry, it isn’t my fault; it’s a nateral gift wid me, for I take no pains to make them fond o’ me; that I may never do harm if I do.”

“An’ how does it, happen that they are? Sure there’s Letty, now—poor Letty Lenehan—an’ God help her! sure, for the last week, she appears to me to be breakin’ her heart. She doesn’t say af coorse, that you’re the occasion of it; but doesn’t every one of us know that you are? Have you been could to her, or what?

“Why thin, now, Jerry, I declare it to you that I’m heart sorry for poor Letty; but what can I do? I amn’t my own man, now, do you hear that?”

“Sure you don’t mane to say that you’re married?”

“Not exactly married; but listen hither, Jerry—you don’t know the man you’re spakin’ to—it’s a gift that God gave me—but, you don’t know the man you’re spakin’ to; however as for poor Letty, I’ll provide for her some way—the poor affectionate crature; an’ she’s good-lookin’ too; however, as I said, I’ll do something for her some way,” and here he nodded and winked with most villainous significance.

If Jerry had not fully comprehended the scoundrel's character, it is very probable that this language would have caused him to give the hypocritical villain a sound drubbing; for it must be known to our readers, that Jerry and Letty were faithfully attached to each other—a circumstance which was also known to the whole family, and which nothing could have prevented Mogue from observing but his own blind and egregious vanity.

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“But what do you mane, Mogue, when you say you aren’t your own man!”

“I can’t tell you; but the thruth is, Jerry—poor, good-natured Jerry—that every man ought to look high, especially when he sees the regard that’s for him, and especially, too, when God—blessed be his name—has gifted him as some people is gifted. There’s a man hereabouts that thinks he could put my nose out o’ joint. Oh! it’s a great thing, Jerry, to have nice, ginteel, thin features, that won’t spoil by the weather. Throth, red cheeks or a white skin in a man isn’t becomin’; an’ as for larnin’, Jerry, it may require a long time to take it in, but a very little hole would soon let it all out. May I never do harm but I’m glad that job’s over,” alluding to the employment at which they were engaged. “Oh! then, but that’s a fine cast o’ whate!”

“It is,” replied Jerry; “but in regard to the larnin’ I don’t undherstand you.”

“No matther for that, Jerry, I may be a good friend to you yet; ay, indeed may I—poor good-natured Jerry; an’ when that time comes, if you have any scruple in axin’ Misther Moylan to countenance you and befriend you, why it’ll be your own fault my poor, good-natured Jerry.”

“Many thanks, Misther Moylan,” replied Jerry, assuming a gravity which he could scarcely maintain, “remember that you don’t forget your promise. I’m goin’ over to get the sacks from Misther John; an’ by the way, aren’t you goin’ out to-day to shoot wid Misther M’Carthy?”

“Well, I declare, I believe I am; I know the mountains well, an’ I’m fond of seein’ fun, or of hearin’ of it, any way.”

Jerry then departed, and Mogue, now left to himself, exclaimed in a soliloquy, “Ay, an’ if I don’t see it this night, I’ll hear of it to-morrow, I hope. Mr. M’Carthy, you’re in my way; but as I said to that poor *omadhawn*, although it took many a year to get the larnin’ into that head of yours, one little hole will soon let it out again.” As Mogue uttered the last words, the ear of Letty Lenehan was somewhat nearer him than he imagined. She had come to call them to breakfast, and seeing that the back-door of the barn was open, she approached it, as being nearest to her, and on peeping in, half disposed for a piece of frolic, she heard Mogue utter the soliloquy we have just repeated; but as he stood with his back towards her, he was not at all aware that she was present, or had heard him.

Immediately after breakfast, Mogue and M’Carthy set out for the mountains, the latter furnished with all the necessary equipments for the sport, and the former carrying a game-bag and refreshments; for as M’Carthy knew that it must be the last day he could devote to such amusements, he resolved to have a good day’s sport, if possible.

“Now, Mogue,” said his companion, “you are much better acquainted with these mountains than I am, and with those places where we may be likely to find most game. I, therefore, place myself in your hands for the day.”

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“Well, indeed I ought, sir, to know them,” replied Mogue, “and I believe I do; and talkin’ of that, you have often heard of the great robber and rapparee, Shaun Bernha?”

“I have heard of him, and of his Stables, which lie up somewhere in these mountains.”

“Exactly, sir; an’ it is what I was thinkin’; that we might take a look at them in the coorse of our sport to-day; in regard, especially, that there’s more game about them than in any other part of the mountains.”

“Very well, then, Mogue,” replied his companion, “so be it; you are, as I said, my guide for the day.”

“But do you know, sir, why he was called Shaun Bernha?”

“No, I can’t say I do.”

“It was odd enough, to be sure. Howandever, may I be happy but they say it’s true! You see, sir, he was called Shaun Bernha bekaise he never had a tooth in his head; an’ no more had any of his family; and yet, sir, it’s said, that he could bite a piece out of a plate of sheet iron as aisily as you or I could out a cake of gingerbread.”

“Well, Morgue, all that I can say to that is, that he had devilish hard gums, and stood in no fear of the toothache.”

“Well, then, we’ll sweep around the slebeen hills here, keepin’ Altnaveenan to our right, and Lough Mocall to our left; then, by going right ahead we’ll come to his stables; and indeed they’re well worth seein’.”

“With all my heart, Mague, never say it again.” And they accordingly proceeded at a vigorous pace to the mountains, which were now distant not more than a mile and a half from them.

In the meantime we shall leave them to pursue their game, and beg our readers to accompany us once more to the house of our friend, Fitzy O’Driscol, who, what between the dread of assassination on the one hand, and the delight of having a proper subject to justify him in communicating with the government on the other, passed his time in alterations, now of fear, and again of his peculiar ambition to be recognized as an active and fearless magistrate by the then existing powers, that were, to such as knew the man and understood his character, perfectly ludicrous. On the morning in question, he was, as usual, seated, in his morning-gown and slippers, at the breakfast-table, reading a country paper, in which, by the way, appeared the following paragraph:—

“TURBULENT STATE OR THE COUNTRY.—We regret to say, that the state of the country is every day becoming more and more unsettled. A few days ago, whilst one of our excellent and most resolute magistrates, Fitzgerald O’Driscol, Esq., was engaged in

his office, determining an important case of assault that came before him, and which he did, as he usually does, to the perfect satisfaction of the parties, he received, a threatening notice, couched in most violent language, in fact, breathing of blood and assassination! Why a gentleman of such high magisterial character as Mr. O'Driscol should

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have been selected as an object of popular vengeance, we do not understand. Mr. O'Driscol combines in himself all those qualities that are peculiarly suited to the discharge of his duties in such distracted times as the present. Whilst firm and intrepid, almost to a miracle, he is at the same time easy of access, impartial, and kind to his humble countrymen, to whom he has uniformly proved himself mild and indulgent, so far as justice—which by the way, he always tempers with mercy—will allow him; and in consequence of this, he is uniformly known, and deserves to be known, as the poor man's magistrate. It is true, he is known also to be a man of highly loyal and constitutional principles; a warm friend to order, peace, and a resolute supporter of the laws of the land—qualities which are looked upon as crimes by the resolute and disloyal among our kind-hearted but misguided people. Of one thing, however, he would beg to apprise the mistaken individuals who have ventured to threaten him, and that is, to take care how they attempt to put their foolish threats into execution against so daring and desperate a man as Mr. O'Driscol is when provoked. He goes well armed, is a dead shot, and would feel deeply grieved at having the blood of any of his mistaken countrymen on his hands. This we say from what we know of Mr. O'Driscol, both as a man and as a magistrate. In further connection with the state of the country, we cannot think but that government, if made properly acquainted with it, would place some mild, firm, but fearless and resolute stipendiary magistrate in our neighborhood; we mean, of course, a man who is capable, by the peculiar qualities of his character, to make himself an instrument of great public good, both to the people and the government. Such a man we know; but as we are writing without either his knowledge or consent, we do not feel ourselves called upon to pursue this important subject further. All we can say is, that the violent opposition which is now organized against tithes, and which is already beginning to convulse the country, will, and even now does require, the active courage and decided abilities of such a man."

"Well, now, Catherine," said he, addressing his daughter, who sat near him, "upon my honor and conscience that was a friendly paragraph of my friend Swiggerly—extremely so, indeed. The fact is, a dinner and a good jorum is never thrown away upon honest Swiggerly; for which raison I'll ask him to dine here on Thursday next."

He then handed her the paper, pointing out the paragraph in question, which she read with something of an arch smile, and which, on her brother Fergus (who had been to Lisnagola) joining them, she handed to him.

"Fergus," said she, looking at him with an expression of character still more comic, but yet sufficiently subdued to prevent O'Driscol from observing it, "is not that paragraph very complimentary to papa?"

Fergus, who at once reciprocated the comic glance alluded to, replied rather significantly, "It is certainly very gratifying to him, Catherine."

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“And very creditable to Swiggerly,” added O’Driscol.

“Yes, father,” replied Fergus, “but I think he ought to preserve, if possible, a little more originality. The substance of that paragraph has been regularly in his paper, in one shape or other, three or four times a year during the last couple of years. I ought to except the introduction of the threatening notice, which certainly is a new feature, and the only new one in it.”

“Fergus,” said the father, whilst his round, red, convivial features became more inflamed, “you are super-critical this morning.”

“Not at all, sir; but you will excuse me for saying, that I think a man who is seeking to ingratiate himself with the government, what is more, to receive substantial favors from it, ought not, from principles of self-respect, to suffer these stereotyped paragraphs to appear from time to time. Government is not so blind, sir, but they will at once see through the object of such paragraphs.”

“Staryrayotyped! What the devil, sir, do you mane by staryrayotype? Do you mane to make a staryrayotype of me? That’s dutiful, Mr. Fergus—filial duty, clane and clear—-and no doubt about it. But I tell you, sir, that in spite of your staryrayotypes, it is such articles as the able one of my friend Swiggerly that constitutes the force of public opinion. Government! Why, sir, the government is undher more obligations to me than I am to them. It was my activity and loyalty that was the manes, principally, of returnin’ the son of the gustus ratalorum of the county for the borough of Addleborough. He was their own candidate; and if that wasn’t layin’ them undher an obligation to me, I don’t know what was. You may say what you like, but I repate, it’s a right good, thing to have the force of public opinion in your favor.”

“Yes, of public opinion, I grant you; but surely you cannot pretend, father, that such gross and barefaced flattery as that can be termed public opinion?”

“And why not, sir? Upon my honor and conscience, things is come to a pretty pass when a man—a magistrate—like me, must be lectured by his own son! Isn’t it too bad, Catherine?”

“I am no politician, you know, but I think he doesn’t mean to lecture you, papa; perhaps you ought to say to reason or remonstrate with—”

“Raison! remonstrate! And what right has he aither to raison or remonstrate with a man—or rather a magistrate—such as I am known by the government to be. He calls that paragraph gross and barefaced flattery, and myself a staryrayotype! but I tell him now that it is no flattery, nor anything at all but the downright naked thruth, and no man ought to know that better than I do, for this good raison, that it was myself wrote every line of it, and got Swiggerly only to correct it.”

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A deep and crimson blush overspread his daughter's face on hearing this mean and degrading admission; and Fergus, who was in the act of bringing a bit of ham to his mouth, suddenly laid it down again, then looked first at Catherine, then at his father, several times in succession. The good-humored girl, however, whose merry heart and light spirits always disposed her to look at the pleasant side of everything, suddenly glancing at the red, indignant face with which her father, in the heat of argument, and in order to illustrate the truth of public opinion in this instance, had made the acknowledgment—all at once, and before the rosy blush had departed from her beautiful face, burst out into a ringing and merry laugh, which Fergus felt to be contagious and irresistible. On glancing again at his father, he joined her in the mirth, and both laughed long and heartily.

"And so, father," proceeded Fergus, "you bring us a paragraph written by yourself, to illustrate the value of public opinion; but believe me, my dear father, and I mean it with all respect, these puffs, whether written by one's self or others—these political puffs I say, like literary ones, always do more harm than good to the object they are intended to serve."

"Never you mind that, Fergus, my boy, I know how to play my game, I think; and besides, don't you know, I expect a snug-morsel from government for yourself, my boy; yet you never consider that—not you."

"But, my dear father, I never wish to hear a respectable man like you acknowledge that he is playing a game at all; it reminds me of the cringing, sycophantic, and prostitute crew of political gamblers and manoeuvrers, by whom, not only this government, but every other, is perpetually assailed and infested, and amongst which crew it would grieve me to think that you should be included. As to myself, if I ever get anything from government, it must not come to me through any of those arrangements by which trick and management, not to say dishonesty and conniption, are, to the shame of all parties, so frequently rewarded. With a slight change upon Pope, I say—

"'Grant me honest place, or grant me none.'"

"Pope! What the devil do I care about his opinions? let him preach and stick to his controversy with Father Tom—from whom he hadn't so much to brag of—but as for you, Fergus, you are, to spake plainly, a thorough ass. What d—d stuff you have been letting out of you! Go and find, if you can, some purer world for yourself to live in, for, let me tell you, you are not fit for this. There is no perfection here, Catherine, is there?"

"Oh, yes, Papa! certainly."

"There is—is there? Well, upon my honor and conscience, now, this is the first time I've heard that argument used. Come, then, how do you prove it—eh?"

“There is perfection, papa, occasionally at least, to be found among women, and—you certainly, sir, cannot deny the truth of this—occasionally, too, among magistrates—ha ha! ha!”

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“Ah! Kate, I know you of old! Very good that—extremely good, upon my word However, as I was saying, if you don’t act and think as the world about you acts and thinks, you had as good, as I said, get a betther one if you can. Here, now, I see Mat Purcel coming up the avenue; and as I want to have some private conversation with him, I must be off to my office, where I desire you to send him to me. There’s a time for everything, they say, and a place for everything—I hope, Fergy, you and I will have occasion, before long, to say, a place for some—ha! ha! ha! Well, as I said, there’s a place for everything! and I don’t think it would become me to spake upon official business anywhere but in my own office. We must not only do our business properly, but look like it.”

Purcel found our pompous little man enveloped, as we have already said, in a most fashionable morning-gown and embroidered slippers, and at the same time busily engaged in writing.

“How do you do, Mr. Purcel?” said he; “will you excuse me for about three minutes, till I finish this paragraph, after which I am at your service?”

“Certainly,” said Purcel, “I’m in no hurry, Fitzy, my boy.”

“Here,” continued the other, “amuse yourself with that paper. By the way, there’s a flattering notice there of your humble servant, by our friend Swiggerly, who certainly is a man of sound judgment and ability.”

“I won’t interrupt you now,” replied the proctor; “but I will tell you my opinion of him by and by.”

The magistrate then proceeded to finish his paragraph, as he said, by his important manner of doing which, Purcel, who thoroughly understood him, was much amused. He frequently paused for instance, placed his chin in the end of his half-closed hand, somewhat like an egg in an egg-cup, looked in a meditative mood into Purcel’s face, without appearing to see him at all; then went over to the library, which ought rather to have been pronounced his son’s than his; and after having consulted a book—a Latin Horace, which by the way he opened at the art of poetry, of which volume it is, we presume, unnecessary to say, he did not understand a syllable, he returned to his desk seemingly satisfied, and wrote on until he had concluded the passage he was composing. He read it once in silence, then nodded his head complacently, as if satisfied with what he had Written, after which he rubbed his hands and closing the desk exclaimed, “D—n all governments, Mr. Purcel, and I wish to heaven there never had been a magistrate in Ireland.”

“Why, what kind of doctrine is this, Fitzy,” exclaimed his friend, “especially from such a loyal man and active magistrate as you are.”

“D—n loyalty too, Mr. Purcel, it’s breakin’ my heart and will break it—I think I’ll emigrate to America before they kill me here.”

“Why, to tell you the truth, my dear Fitzy, I was a good deal alarmed when I heard of that ugly notice you got; but it’s not every man would have borne the thing with such courage as you did.”

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“Thank you, Mister Purcel, I feel that as a compliment coming from you; and by the way, I haven’t forgotten to mention you with praise in my correspondence with the Castle. However—ha! ha! ha! you rather misunderstood me—I mane to say that the life is worn out of me, by our present government—Good God! my friend, surely they ought to know that there’s plenty of magistrates in the country besides myself, that could give them the information they want upon the state of the country, and the steps they ought to take to tranquillize it, as well as I could; I can’t, however, get them to think so, and the consequence is that that d—n Castle can’t rub its elbow without consulting, me.”

“Well,” replied Purcel, “you are to blame yourself for it; if you were not so loyal, and zealous, and courageous too, as you are, they would let you alone and leave you to peace and quietness, as they do other people.”

“Upon my honor and conscience, it’s little pace or quietness they leave me, then; but I agree with you, that the whole cause of it is my well-known loyal principle and surprising activity in keeping down disturbance and sedition. Widow Cleary’s affair was an unlucky one for me, and indeed, Mat, it was the activity and resolution that I displayed in making herself and her spawn of ragged brats prisoners at the head of the Possy Comeatus, aided by the military, that first brought me into notice with the Castle.”

The proctor, who feared now that he had mounted his hobby, and that he would inflict on him, as he was in the habit of doing after dinner, a long-winded series of his magisterial exploits, reminded him that he had expressed a wish to see him on very important business.

“I wouldn’t care,” he added, “but the truth is, Fitzy, I am pressed for want of time, as I should have been at the bishop’s court, where I have cited several of these tithe rebels long before this. What is the business, then?”

“It is a matter, my dear Mr. Purcel—”

“Why the devil do you Mr. Purcel me?” asked the proctor, warmly. “It was formerly Mat and Fitzy between us, and I don’t see why it should not be so still.”

“Hem—ahem—why it was, I grant, but then—not that I am at all a proud man, Mr. Purcel—far from it, I trust—but you see—hem—the truth is, that to a man as I am, a magistrate—trusted and—consulted by government, and having, besides, to meet certain low prejudices against me in the country, here, I don’t think—I’m spaking of the magistrate now, Purcel—not of the man—observe that, but the truth is—d—m the word, for I don’t think there’s in the whole catalogue of names, so vulgar a one as Fitzy—and be d—d to it.”

The proctor laughed till the tears came from his eyes, at the dignified distress with which the great little man resented this degrading grievance.

“Ha! ha! ha! and so,” said he, “I’m not to call you Fitzy; well, well, so be it—but I have been so long in the habit of using it in our conversation, that I shall, find it a difficult matter to change the practice. But upon my conscience, Fitzy—I beg pardon, Mr. O’Driscol, I must say—I think it great weakness in your worship, to let such a trifle as that annoy you.”

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“It may be a weakness,” said the other, “but before we go further, I make it a personal request, that you won’t use Fitzy to me, and above all things, in the presence of strangers. I entrate and implore that you won’t.”

“Very well, then—a bargain be it—but I must insist that you never call me Mat, or anything but Mr. Purcel, again.”

“Why, but you know you are not a magistrate, Mat.”

“Never mind, Fitzy—hem—never mind, your worship, call me whatever you like—unless a rogue—ha! ha! ha! well, but to business—what is this you want with me?”

“A business that, if well managed, may be a beneficial one to you and me both.”

“Out with it, though—you know I’m in a hurry.”

“Why now,” proceeded the little man, relapsing unconsciously into a sense of his violated dignity,—“curse me, if I’d for fifty—no, not for a hundred, that the Castle should come to know that I was addressed as Fitzy.”

The proctor’s mirth was again renewed, but after a moment or two, the serious part of the conversation was resumed by the magistrate.

“Your son John, the other morning,” he proceeded, in a low and confidential tone, “hinted to me that you had partly discovered—hem—ahem—a very important circumstance—in short, that you had partly, if not altogether, discovered a—a conspiracy.”

The proctor stared at him with unaffected surprise, which, by the way, did not escape the magistrate’s notice. “A conspiracy!” he added, “and did John tell you this?”

“Why, not exactly,” replied O’Driscol, fearing that the young man, as we have already hinted, had been indiscreet, and consequently wished to keep him as much out of blame as possible; “not exactly, my dear Mat—hem—my dear Mr. Purcel, but you know that I am rather sharp—a penetratin’ fellow in my way, or I would not be of the commission to-day—he seemed merely to drop the expression accidentally only.”

“I pledge my honor to you,” replied the proctor, who at once saw through the hoax that his son had played off upon him, “that the young rascal had no authority from me for mentioning a single syllable about it.”

“Well, but, I trust, my dear Ma—Mr; Purcel, that you are not angry with him, especially for having mentioned it to me at any rate.”

“Why, my dear friend,” said the other, “if the time were come, you are the first man to whom I would disclose the circumstance, but the fact simply is, that it is not ripe yet.”

“Even so; you will have no objection, I trust, to let me know something of the nature of it—even now.”

“It is impossible!” replied the proctor, “quite out of my power; if I breathe a syllable about it, the whole matter must be blown before the proper time, and then—”

“Well, and what then?—proceed.”

“Why, neither you nor I would be one moment safe; and in that case, it is much more prudent that you should not know it—God forbid that I, above all men, should be the person to involve you in risk and danger. Your own ardor and excessive loyalty expose you—to dangers enough, and too many.”

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“You promise, however, when the proper time comes, to make me acquainted with it?”

“Certainly, when the proper time comes; and if the thing ripen at all, you shall hear of it.”

“But listen,” asked O’Driscol, licking his lips as a man would when thinking of a good dinner; “is the matter you allude to a real, actual, bona-fide conspiracy?”

“An actual live conspiracy,” replied the proctor; “and as soon as it has reached maturity, and is full grown, you shall have all the honors of the discovery.”

“That will do, Mat—hem, that will do my dear friend. I shall have the Castle dancing with delight—and whisper—but this is honorable between ourselves—any advantages that may result from this affair, you shall partake of. The Castle and I understand one another, and depend upon it, your name shall be mentioned with all the honor and importance due to it.”

“This, then, was what you wanted with me?”

“It was, and upon my honor and conscience, you and yours, and I and mine, will have cause to rejoice in it. Government, my dear Mat—ahem—is a generous benefactor, and aided by it we shall work wonders. We shall, I trust, all be provided for—your sons and my own fool—M’Carthy, too, we shall not forget.

“All that will be very pleasant, I acknowledge,” replied the proctor, dryly, “and in the meantime good-by, and may God spare both you and me long life and happiness—until then, and as long after it as we may wish for.”

Our friend M’Carthy, who was little aware of the liberal provision which the benevolence of his friend had in contemplation for him, was in the meantime likely to be provided for in a very different manner, and upon principles very much at variance with those of that political gentleman yclept the Castle, an impersonation which it would be exceedingly difficult to define.

CHAPTER IX.—Sport in the Mountains.

In the course of that day Letty Lenehan, who had been musing over Mogue’s soliloquy in the barn, felt that kind of impression which every one has felt more or less under similar circumstances. The fellow’s words left a suspicion upon her mind that there was evil designed against young M’Carthy by this smooth-going and pious hypocrite. How to act she felt somewhat at a loss, but as the day advanced, the singular impression we have mentioned deepened, until she could conceal its existence no longer. After dinner, however, she seized upon an opportunity of consulting her friend and lover, Jerry Joyce, who, by the way, had also been somewhat surprised at an expression which escaped

Mogue in the morning. On comparing notes, both came to the same conclusion, *viz*.,—-that there existed in the bosom of Mogue some latent hard feeling against M'Carthy.

"I am sure there does," said Jerry, "and I think I know why too—Mogue isn't the only person that has a deadly hatred against Mr. M'Carthy; and indeed, Letty, I have raisons to fear that the poor young gintleman, for so he is by family and blood at all events—is in great danger. However, if it will make your mind aisy, I'll see what can be done to get him safe over it this night."

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“This night, Jerry? why what do you mane? what about this night more than any other night?”

“Hut! you foolish girl,” replied Jerry, “sure you ought to know that it’s only a way of spakin’ we have, when we say this night or this day.”

“Ay,” replied Letty, with great shrewdness and in a spirit of keen observation, “if you had spoken that way, you’d have said this day, and not this night, bekaise it’s not night yet.”

Jerry smiled, and resolving to put an end to the conversation, exclaimed, “Troth and I’ll have a kiss from your lips, this day, and, if you vex me much more, another this night too;” and as he spoke, with a face of good-humor and affection, he contrived to suit the action to the word, after which Letty sprang beyond his reach, but pausing a moment ere she disappeared. “Jerry, listen,” she proceeded, “don’t let Mr. M’Carthy come to harm either by night or day, if you can—still an’ all remember that your own life is a dearer one—to—to—yourself, at any rate, than anybody else’s is.”

Jerry nodded, and was about once more to lessen the distance between himself and her, when she immediately took to flight and disappeared, which was precisely what he wanted.

“God protect the young man!” he exclaimed, after she had gone, “for if that sleeveen villain is bent on doin’ him harm, or, as I ought to say, of bringin’ him among them, and especially to him that hates him like hell, this is the very night for it, and he has him on the spot too; well, we’ll see whether they’ll be back in time or not, for as Mr. M’Carthy is to dine here, Mogue at any rate must and ought to be home a little before dusk. I’ll make preparation, however, and what can be done for him, I will do.”

In the meantime we shall follow our two sportsmen into the mountains for a time, in order to render justice to poor innocent Mogue, who little dreamt that a human being had suspected him.

M’Carthy, on entering the mountain, at first expressed a doubt to his companion that the circuit or sweep road by Shaun Bernha’s stables was rather extensive, and would occupy too much time, besides bringing them farther out of their way than it was his (M’Carthy’s) intention to go.

“You know, Mogue,” he observed, “I am to dine with Mr. Purcel to-day, and, if we go so far, I shall never be home in time for dinner.”

[Illustration: PAGE 421— Just trust yourself to me]

“Never mind, sir,” replied his companion, “you don’t know all the short cuts of Sloebeens as well as I do. My life for yours, I’ll take care that you won’t want your dinner or your

supper aither, sir, I'll go bail. Just trust yourself to me, and if I don't bring you to where the grouse, snipes, and hares is in thousands, never put faith in me again."

M'Carthy, who had every confidence in Mogue, and, also, more than usual respect for him, in consequence of his apparent love of truth and religion, accompanied him without the slightest hesitation; feeling satisfied that his intimate acquaintance with the whole wild locality around them, was a proof that he would be able to keep his word.

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The scenery of those mountains, though wild, as we have said, is, nevertheless, remarkable for that poetic spirit of beauty which our learned and accomplished countryman, Dr. Petrie, infused, with such delightful effect, into his landscapes. Even the long stretches of level moor, which lie between the hill ranges, present in summer that air of warm repose which the mind recognizes as constituting a strong element of beauty; but it is at evening, when the crimson sun pours a flood of golden light upon their sides and tops, turning the rich flowery heath with which they are covered into hues of deep purple, that the eye delights to rest upon them. Nor is the wild charm of solitude to be forgotten in alluding to the character of these soft and gracefully undulating mountains. Indeed we scarcely knew anything more replete with those dream-like impressions of picturesque romance which, in a spirit so perfectly solitary, sleep, still and solemn, far from the on-goings of busy life, in the distant recesses of these barren solitudes. Many a time when young have we made our summer journey across the brown hills, which lay between us and the mountains we are describing, for the express purpose of dreaming away whole hours in their contemplation, and steeping our early imagination in the wild and novel beauty which our heart told us the spirit of solitude had impressed upon them.

How far our sportsmen proceeded, or in, what precise direction, we are not in a capacity to inform our readers. That they proceeded much further, however, than M'Carthy had wished or contemplated, will soon become sufficiently evident. What kind of sport they had, or whether successful or otherwise, it is not our present purpose to say. Be the game abundant or scarce, we leave them to pursue it, and request the reader to accompany us in a direction somewhat removed, but not very far different from theirs.

It may be necessary, however, to state here previously, that these mountains are remarkably—indeed proverbially—subject to deep, impervious mists, which wrap them in a darkness far more impenetrable to the eye than the darkest nights, and immeasurably more confounding to the reason, by at once depriving the individual whom they chance to overtake, of all sense of his relative position. At night the moon and stars may be seen, or even a fire or other light at a distance; but here, whilst enveloped in one of those dark and dismal fogs, no earthly object is seen within two yards of you, and every step made is replete with doubt or danger, and frequently with death itself, in the shape of deep shoreless lakes and abrupt precipices. The night had now set in for about two hours, and one of the deep fogs which we have just described began to break into broad gray fragments, which were driven by the wind into the deeper hollows, dissipated almost at once into the thin and invisible air. Sometimes a rush of wind would sweep along like a gigantic arrow, running through the mist, and leaving a rapid track behind it like a pathway. Sometimes again a whirl-blast would sweep round a hill, or rush up from a narrow gorge, carrying round, in wild and fantastic gyrations, large masses of the apparently solid mist, giving thus to the scene such an appearance as would lead the spectator to suppose that some invisible being or beings, of stupendous power, were engaged in these fearful solitudes.

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The night, we have said, had set in, and the mist was clearing, or had altogether cleared away. Up far in these mountains lived a herd, or caretaker and gamekeeper, all in one, named Frank Finnerty. He was a man of bad character—gloomy, sullen, and possessed of very little natural feeling. The situation in which he resided was so remote and solitary, so far from the comforts and conveniences that are derived from human intercourse, that scarcely any other man in the parish could be induced to undertake the duties attached to it, or consent to live in it at all. Finnerty, however, was a dark, unsocial man, who knew that he was not liked in the country, and who, on his part, paid back to society its hatred of him with interest. He had been engaged in many outrages against the law, and had been once sentenced to transportation for manslaughter—a sentence which would have been carried into effect were it not for a point made m his case by the lawyer who defended him—His wife was a kind-hearted, benevolent woman naturally, but she had been for years so completely subdued and disjointed, that she was, at the period we write of, a poor, passive, imbecile creature, indifferent to everything, and with no more will of her own than was necessary to fulfil the duties of mere mechanical existence.

It was now near ten o'clock; Finnerty and she had been sitting at the fire in silence for some time, when at length she spoke.

"Well, I hope there was no one out on the mountains in that mist."

"Why," said he, "what is it to you or me whether there was or not?"

"That's thrue," she replied, "but one wouldn't like any harm to come to a fellow-creature."

"Dear me," he exclaimed, in harsh tones of hatred and irony, "how fond you are of your fellow-cratures to-night! little your fellow-cratures care about you."

"Well, indeed, I suppose that's thrue enough, Frank; what 'ud make them care about me or the likes o' me, and for all that whether they may think o' me now, I remimber the time when they did care about me, and when I was loved and respected by all that knew me."

There was a touching humility, and a feeble but heart-broken effort at self-respect in the poor woman's words and manner that were pitiful and pathetic to the last degree, and which even Finnerty himself was obliged to acknowledge.

"But where's the use of thinking about these things now," he replied; "it isn't what we were then, Vread, but what we are now, that we ought to think of."

“But, sure, Frank,” said the simple-minded creature, “one cannot prevint the memory from, goin’ back to the early times, when we wor happy, and when the world was no trouble to us.”

There was a pause, and after a little she added, “I dunna is the night clearin’?”

Finnerty rose, and proceeding to the door, looked out a moment, then went to the corner of the house to get a better view of the sky, after which he returned.

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“The mist is gone,” he observed, “from the mountains, and I suppose the boys will soon begin to come.”

“Throth, Frank,” she replied, “I hate these nightly meetin’s that you hould here—all this plottin’ and plannin’ isn’t nor can’t be good.”

“You hate them! an’ who the ould diaoul cares whether you do or not? I allow them this house to meet in, bekaise it’s large and far from the polis. A house down in the country, where they might pop in on them, wouldn’t be so safe; here, however, no one would suspect them of meetin’, and from the way the house is situated, no one could come upon us widout bein’ known or seen. You hate! that indeed!”

“An’ what do they meet for, Frank? if it’s a fair question!”

“It’s not a fair question, an’ you have no business to ax; still if you want to know, and if it can make you anything the wiser, you shall hear. It’s to break a Millstone they meet.”

“To brake a millstone, *inngh!* Oh, sorra a word of that I believe. Sure there’s no millstone here?—if you want to break millstones you must go farther up—to Carnmore, where they make them. Sorra millstone’s here, I know.”

“You know—oh, how much you know! I tell you, there’s a great Millstone that covers and grinds the whole kingdom, or at least the greatest parts of it—that’s the Millstone we want to brake, and that we will brake.”

“When did you hear from Mark Ratigan, or see him?”

“Mark Ratigan is snug and comfortable as a laborin’ boy wid Magistrate Driscol that’s in—hem—but listen to me, now if you should meet Mark anywhere down the country, you’re neither to call him Mark nor Ratigan, otherwise you may be the manes of hangin’ the poor boy.”

“Throth, an’ by all accounts, he’ll come to the gallows yet.”

“Well, and many a betther man did. I expect him and Hourigan both here tonight.”

“An’ what name does he go by now?” she asked.

“By the name of Phil Hart; and remember when there’s any stranger present, you’re never to call him anything else—but above all things, and upon the peril of your life, never call him Mark Ratigan.”

“And do you think,” replied his wife, “that I won’t take care not to do it? But, Frank, tell me what was Mogue Moylan doin’ here the night before last?”

“Only to let me know that he and a Misthor M’Carthy—a great friend of his and of two good creatures—Magistrate Driscol and Procthor Purcel—wor to come out shootin’ on the mountains to-day and to ax if I would prevent them.”

“An’ did you give them lave?” she inquired.

A very peculiar expression passed over the dark grim features of her husband. “Did I give them lave?” he replied; “well, indeed, you may take your davy, I did. Why would I refuse a dacent gintleman, and a friend of Mogue Moylan’s lave to shoot? Poor dacent Mogue, too, that loves thruth and religion so well—ha! ha! ha!—whisht!—here’s some one.”

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The words were scarcely uttered, when our friends, M'Carthy and Mogue, made their appearance in the caretaker's house, both evidently in a fatigued state, especially M'Carthy, who had not been so well accustomed to travel over mountain scenery as his companion.

"Well, blessed be God that we have got the roof of a house over us at last!" exclaimed Mogue. "Frank Finnerty, how are you? an' Vread, achora, not forgettin' you—my hand to you both, but we're lost—especially this gentleman, Mr. M'Carthy—a great friend of Mr. O'Driscol's and Procthor Parcel's—but a betther man than either o' them, I hope."

"I am fairly knocked up, I admit," said M'Carthy—"in fact, I am more jaded than I ever was in my life."

"Take a chair, sir," said Finnerty; "you are welcome at all events, and I am glad to see you, or any friend of Mogue's; take this chair, sir—and—here, Mogue, do you take a stool; you must be both in a sad state, sure enough."

"Thank you, Frank," replied Mogue, "oh, then, bad cess to it for a dirty mist—God pardon me for cursin' the poor mist though, for sure it wasn't it's fault, the crathur of a mist we oughn't to curse anything that God has made, but indeed I'm a great sinner that way, God forgive me; howandever as I was sayin', only for it afther all, Mr. Francis, it's atin' your comfortable dinner, or rayther drinkin' your fine wine you'd be now at Mr. Purcel's illigant table, instead of bein' here as you are, however, sure it's good to have a house over our heads any way."

Finnerty and his wife heaped more turf on the fire, and the poor woman, with that kind spirit of hospitality and sympathy for which her countrywomen are so remarkable, told them that they must necessarily be hungry, and said she would lose no time in providing them with refreshment.

"Many thanks," replied M'Carthy, "it is not refreshment, but rest we require; we have had more refreshments of every kind with us than he could use, and it is well we were so provident, otherwise we never would or could have reached even this house alive. Such a day I have never spent—we have done nothing but wade through this d—d mist for the last six or eight hours, without the slightest knowledge of whereabout we were."

"Well, well, Mr. Francis, sure it's one comfort that we're safe at all events," said Mogue; "only I'm frettin' myself about the onaisiness they'll all feel at home, I mane in Mr. Purcel's, about you. Do you know now, that a thought strikes me, sir; I'm fresher than you are a good. deal. Now what if I'd run home and make their minds aisy in the first place, and get Jerry Joyce to bring the car up for you as far as the mountain road? You can rest yourself here in the manetime, and Frank Finnerty will see you safe that far. I'll carry the gun and things with me too—so that you'll have a lighter tramp down the hills."

This arrangement was precisely what M’Carthy could have wished.

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“Thank you, Mogue, for thinking of this—you are a considerate kind fellow, and I cordially admit that I owe my life to you this day. Had you not been with me I must have lost my way and perished in the mountains.”

Mogue and Finnerty exchanged glances, which, however, did not escape the observation of the wife, who thoroughly understood those changes of expression, which reflected her husband’s darker and sterner purposes.

“Why, then, Misther Frank, that I may be happy but I am glad I was with you, so I am, for indeed only for me I don’t think, sure enough, that ever you’d see this house to-night. There’s some spirits left here still, and as I’m for another stretch, I don’t think a glass of it will do me, or for that matther, Frank Finnerty here, any harm. You can see me down the hills a piece, Frank; and you, Mr. Francis, might throw yourself on the bed a while, and get an hour’s sleep or so.”

This too was agreed to—Mogue and Finnerty took each a glass of whiskey, as did Mrs. Finnerty, by permission of her husband, and in a few minutes she and M’Carthy were left by themselves.

After the two worthies had been gone a few minutes, she proceeded to the door, and as the night had now become tolerably light, she looked out, but with a great deal of caution. At first she saw no person, but in walking in the shadow of the house, along! the sidewall to the left, she was able to observe five or six persons coming towards her husband and Moylan in a body; she saw that they stopped and were in close conversation, pointing frequently towards the house as they spoke. She returned to M’Carthy with the same caution, and, approaching him, was about to speak, when dread of her husband supervened for the moment, and she paused like a person in doubt. The peculiar glare and the satanic smile which her husband gave to Mogue, who, by the way, seemed perfectly to understand it, oppressed her with an indistinct sense of approaching evil which she could neither shake off, nor separate from the strange gentleman to whom their glances evidently referred. She remembered also to have heard her husband say upon one occasion when he was drunk, that Mogue Moylan was the deepest villain in the barony—ay, or in the kingdom; and that only for his cowardice he would be a man after his own heart. ’Twas true, she knew that he had contradicted all this afterwards when he got sober, and said it was the liquor that caused him to speak as he did, that Mogue was a good kind-hearted crature, who loved truth, and was one of the most religious boys among them.

This, however, did not satisfy her; the impression of some meditated evil against their temporary guest was too strong to be disregarded, and on recollecting that Mogue had been up with her husband only the evening but one before, as if to prepare him for something unusual, the conviction arose to an alarming height.

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We have said that this woman was a poor passive creature, whose life was a mere round of almost mechanical action. This, to be sure, so far as regarded her own domestic duties, and in general every matter in which her husband's opinions and her own could clash, was perfectly true. She was naturally devoid, however, of neither heart nor intellect, when any of her fellow-creatures happened to come within the range of her husband's enmity or vengeance, as well as upon other occasions too, and it was well known that she had given strong proofs of this. Her life in general appeared to be one long lull, but, notwithstanding its quietude, there was, under circumstances of crime or danger, the brooding storm ready to start up into action.

"Sir," said she, on returning into the house, "I'm a plain and ignorant woman, so that you needn't feel surprised or alarmed at anything I am goin' to say. I hope you will pardon me, sir, when I ax if you seen my husband before, or if you know him either more or less?"

M'Carthy did feel surprised, and replied in the negative to both points of her question—"I do not know your husband," he said, "nor have I to my knowledge ever seen him until to-night; may I beg to inquire why you ask?"

"It's not worth your while," she replied, "it was a mere thought that came into my head: but you and Mogue Moylan never had a dispute, sir?"

"Why, what can put such a notion into your head, my good woman? Certainly not. Mogue and I have been always on the best of terms."

She paused again for some minutes, after which, she said, in a voice not audible.

"There's something in the wind for all that.

"Sir." she proceeded, "you'll think me odd, but will you let me ax if you wor ever threatened or put on your guard, of if you know of any enemy you have that would wish to injure you?"

M'Carthy now started, and, looking at her with a gaze of equal curiosity and astonishment, replied, "Your language, my good woman, is beyond doubt very strange —why do you ask me these questions?"

"Answer me first, if you plaise," she replied.

"I have certainly been put on my guard," he returned, "and informed that I ought to be cautious, for that I had an enemy and that danger was before me."

"When, and in what way did this happen?"

“I shall make no further communication on the subject,” he replied, “until you speak more plainly.”

“Then,” she proceeded, “I’m afeard there’s danger over you this night, if God hasn’t said it.”

“Not, I trust, while I am under the protection of your husband and Mogue Moylan.”

She shook her head. “If you haven’t something better to depend upon, I wouldn’t think myself overly safe; but you didn’t answer the last question I axed you. How wor you warned, and who warned you?”

He then gave her a brief account of the rencounter he had with the Whiteboys, and alluded to the unknown but friendly individual who had put him on his guard.

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“I knew it,” she exclaimed, “I knew it; I couldn’t mistake the look that passed between them. Now, in God’s name,” she said, “if you’re able to drag a limb afther you at all, start out o’ this and save yourself, and, let what will happen, I entreat, for the love of God, that you won’t mention my name.”

This he faithfully promised; “But,” replied he to her warning, “I really am not able to escape, and I cannot think that your husband would injure a man who never offended him.”

“But that’s not the way they do sich things; it’s not the man you offended that will injure you, but some blackguard stranger that he gets to do it for him, and that you’ll know nothing about. In God’s name, I say, be off out o’ this. Even as a stranger you can hardly be safe, and if you wish to know why, whisper,” and she spoke so low as only barely to be heard, “there’s a meeting of Whiteboys to be here to-night; anyhow, you’re the friend of O’Driscol and Procthor Purcel, and that same would be enough to make them give you a knock. Don’t face home,” said she, “or you’ll be likely to meet them, but take the mountains wanst more on your head. Get out upon the road at Altanaveenan and you may be safe. God of Glory!” she exclaimed, “here they are—but watch my face and be guided by me—here, throw yourself into that bed below and pretend to sleep—-I’ll do what woman can, but I’m afeared we lost our chance.”

M’Carthy distinctly heard them laughing as they approached the door, and, in accordance with the advice he had got, he went to the lower part of the house and lay down on the bed, where he closed his eyes and breathed like one asleep. He now began to investigate Mogue’s conduct, in persisting to bring him by so circuitous a sweep such a distance out of his way, and decidedly contrary to his wishes. He hesitated, however, to inculpate Mogue, who certainly could not have anticipated or brought on the fog, which had occasioned them to wander for such a length of time among the mountains. Then, on the other hand, he deprived him of his gun and ammunition, but might not that also have been from motives of kindness?

In the meantime, eight or ten men came into the house each and all with their faces blackened, and some of them as before wearing shirts outside their dress; and this he could see from the position of the bed where he lay. The chat among themselves and with Mrs. Finnerty was not, as is the case in romances, either mysterious or awful. On the contrary, it was light and pleasant, and by no means calculated to heighten McCarthy’s fears; who, to say truth, however, although resolute and full of courage, would as lief been spending the evening with his friend the proctor.

“Well, Vread,” said one of them, “any news in the mountains?”

“News in the mountains!” exclaimed Vread, “well, indeed, that’s good.”

“Any deaths or marriages among the grouse, eh?”

Vread, as we have said, had got a glass of spirits, a circumstance which, to a low heart but a kind one like hers, may probably have accounted for a portion of her energy, as well as of her sympathy with the apprehended danger to M’Carthy.

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“Troth,” she replied, with more vivacity than might have been expected from her, “when you spake to a dacent woman it ought to be with a clane face at any rate.”

“Why, Vread, how can you say it’s dirty,” replied the fellow, “when you know I washed it before I came out?”

“It must be in the divil’s basin, then,” she replied, “for if one can judge by their eyes, you’re more like one of his childre than your honest father’s, whoever he was or is. Troth, I’m afeard it’s a dirty business you’re; all about to-night, if a body is to take you by your looks.”

“Why, then,” observed another, “who ’ud think that poor die-away Vread had so much spunk in her? Vread,” he proceeded, “you must a been a great beauty wanst upon a time; a very purty face you had, they say.”

“Whatever it was,” she replied, “I thank God I was never ashamed to show it like too many of my neighbors.”

“Don’t be too sure that we’re your neighbors, Vread.”

“Troth, I hope not,” she returned; “I don’t think my neighbors ’ud be consarned in sich disgraceful work, as I’m afraid brings yez out. Faugh upon you all! its unmanly.”

Her husband, accompanied by six or eight more, now made his appearance; a circumstance which at once put an end to the part that his wife was disposed to bear in their conversation.

Other chat of various character then took place, in which, however, M’Carthy, who now watched them closely, could observe that they did not all join.

“Whisht,” said one of them, “is there anybody asleep in the house? I think I hear some one snorin!”

“There is,” said Finnerty, “a gentleman that was out shootin’ to-day wid a servant-man of Mr. Parcel’s the procthor—named Mogue Moylan.”

“And a very great scoundrel is Mogue Moylan,” said one of them, with a wink at the rest.

“Well, no,” said Finnerty, “I think not—poor Mogue’s a daecnt, quiet crature, and has a great regard for truth and religion.”

M’Carthy, from his position the bed, had, by means of a fortunate rift in the blankets, a complete view of the whole party, and he could mark with accuracy, in consequence of their black faces, every grin now made distinctly visible by their white teeth.

“Who is the gentleman that snores so beautifully?” asked another of them.

“He is a gentleman named O’Connor,” replied poor Vread, anxious, if possible, even at the risk of much subsequent abuse and ill-treatment, to conceal his name.

“Ay,” said Finnerty, corroborating her; much, indeed, to her astonishment, “he is a Mr. O’Connor, I believe, a very handsome-lookin’, fine young fellow.”

“What the blazes,” said another of them, “keeps him? Surely he ought to be here before now. Had Mr. O’Connor good sport?”

“How could he,” replied Finnerty, “wid the fog that was on the mountains?”

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At this moment an individual made his appearance, whom it was impossible to look upon without being most forcibly struck by his figure. He was a broad-shouldered, muscular, powerful man, with immensely large limbs; his hair was black, and a huge pair of whiskers of the same color stretched across his cheeks, met at his chin, and ran down in an unbroken line round a huge and remarkably well-set neck. The moment he entered, and before he had time to speak, two or three of them instantly placed their fingers significantly upon their lips, as if to indicate silence, apprehensive, as M'Carthy at the time thought, lest his voice might be recognised. Another of them then whispered something to him, and whatever the secret was, it caused him to glance for a moment, and involuntarily, towards the bed. All that he spoke afterwards was uttered in whispers.

CHAPTER X.—The Sport Continued.

Finnerty's house, which had been built for more purposes than were necessary for the accommodation of a caretaker or gamekeeper, was simply a plain apartment, tolerably large, with room enough in it for a couple of beds; to this was added a shooting-lodge for the owner of the mountains, which consisted of three or four bed-rooms opening from a well-sized dining-room, and a kitchen distinct from the apartment which constituted the dwelling of the gamekeeper, being that which Finnerty, as such, then occupied. It was in the dining-room of the shooting-lodge that the Whiteboy meetings were uniformly held, although of late it had been usual for those who attended them to sit in Finnerty's house until the hour had arrived for commencing business, when they adjourned to the other. We should say that the gamekeeper's house, though under the same roof, as it is termed, with the shooting-lodge, was distinct from it in other respects; that is to say, there was no internal communication between them.

"Who was that fellow that we met with you a while ago?" asked one of them a second time, as if having forgotten his name.

"Poor Mogue Moylan," replied Finnerty, "and sadly bate down he was wid this day's Work; I advised him to go to bed as soon as he could, and refresh himself by a good sleep."

"Advise!" said a voice, that almost made M'Carthy start, "it's aisier to give good advice than it is to take it; Mogue's not the only fool in this world that won't take good advice when it's given."

There could be no mistaking his voice. M'Carthy at once recognized that of the unknown friend who had warned him of danger on the night he encountered the Whiteboys, as already described.

“Come,” proceeded he, “it is time we should commence business and settle the affairs of the nation at wanst; throth,” he added, with a laugh, “if I was the same nation, and had a pair of good legs undher me—”

“Of what?” said the person with the black whiskers, who was evidently their leader, “of what?”

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“Of ginerals like Bonnypart and Sarsfield, I’d soon have the country clear and the millstone pavin’ the roads under our feet, as it will be before long, plaise God. Come, then, to business.”

They accordingly proceeded to the adjoining house, with the exception of Finnerty himself, who, whether for the sake of safety, or rather for the purpose of watching M’Carthy, remained at his own fireside. His wife, on seeing this, pretended to be engaged with some domestic matter about the dresser, on which she placed a freshly lit rushlight, and availing herself of her position behind the back of her husband, who sat with his face towards the bed, she slightly raised her hands and eyes, as if to intimate that escape, she feared, was impossible.

It is incredible, the reaction which a new sensation, especially of joy or terror, or, indeed, of any feeling that is strong, superinduces upon the spirit, under circumstances of peculiar danger or interest. M’Carthy’s fatigue, for instance, had now as completely departed from him as if he had not been abroad that day, and in consequence of the significant hint which he had received through the voice of his mysterious friend, he felt that if an opportunity were only offered him he would use the two legs to which his friend had alluded, when checked by the stern voice of their leader, with as much agility as ever they possessed during his life. It was this hint which made him feel certain, for the first time, that he was in imminent danger.

Half an hour had now elasped, and it was evident, from the listening attitudes and frequent stortings of Finnerty, that the debate in the lodge was high and serious. At length, one of the society hurriedly made his appearance, exclaiming; in a kind of condensed and agitated whisper, “Come in and help us—they won’t stand the thing, there’s only three for us.” Finnerty took the candle; and, after signing to the person to go out, brought it close to M’Carthy’s eyes, who opened his mouth and assumed with singular success all the deep insensible relaxation which characterizes heavy sleep. Finnerty even shook him, and said, “Hadn’t you better get up, sir, and come to meet the car?” He addressed a log, however, and after another more careless and evidently satisfied glance, he laid down the candle, and then said to his wife, in a whisper, which, however, M’Carthy could hear; “The moment he wakens let us know.”

Vread, who would not seem to attach any importance to the circumstance, simply nodded, by way of acquiescence, and her husband, went to join those in the lodge.

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In every country whose political, commercial, or social relations, are not properly settled, or in which there exists a struggle between the principles at variance with civil order and those of enlightened progress, there will always be found a considerable portion of the population ripe and ready for violence and crime. This is an undisputable fact, and one the more dangerous too, inasmuch as crime is usually stripped by these misguided wretches of its inherent guilt, and looked upon as a necessary instrument, or, in other words, as a means to work out an end. It is true, the relative portion of the reckless and guilty is, in this country at least, considering its population, exceedingly small, for we all know how miserable the number of those who are at any time necessary to involve the character of a district at large, or inculpate the moral reputation of a whole country. At the same time, we must unquestionably admit, that, if we contrast the population of the country at large, and the frequency of crime in it, joined to its character of cool and deliberate atrocity, with that of the sister countries, we must candidly acknowledge, that the conduct of the people, even taking the proportions I have mentioned into consideration, is not only without parallel in modern times, but that religion is not merely a name, but, in every sense, incapable, whether by its internal spirit or maladministration, of discharging to society those great functional duties which mankind have a right to expect from it. But now to return.

Finnerty had joined the meeting; his wife, approaching M'Carthy, said, in a low whisper —

"They have some argument about you, whatever it is. However, with God's assistance, I'll venthur to do a thing that may be dangerous enough to myself, at any rate; but what do I care about that, if I can save an unoffendin' fellow-creature from harm?—Stay where you are then, till I come in again."

She went out as she spoke, and after an? interval of about six or eight minutes again made her appearance.

"I can't hear them plain enough," she said, on her return, "but whatever it is, I can undherstan' that the most of them all is against it. In God's name, at any rate, stay where you are—they're risin' to go home, and as the night's light they'd be sure to pounce upon you if you attempted to escape. Whatever I can do to save you from harm here I will."

The poor woman's escape from detection, while performing the friendly office of listening, was indeed very narrow. Short and hurried as her last advice to M'Carthy was, the words in which she conveyed it had scarcely been uttered, when her husband, accompanied by three persons, their faces still blackened, made his appearance. They took seats in silence around the fire, and one of them, handing over a bottle of whiskey to Finnerty, merely nodded, as much as to say, pass that about. Finnerty accordingly did so, and each of them drank a glass or two, after which they were silent as before. This silence, to M'Carthy, began to wear a solemn and a fearful aspect, especially as he

knew enough of the habits of the people to be aware, that in drinking whiskey is often resorted to in order to deaden their moral, perceptions, or, in other words, as a stimulant to crime.

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At length, after about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and three of them—that is to say, two of the strangers and Finnerty—had each drank three glasses of spirits, the fourth, who had taken only one glass, beckoned to the other two to follow him.

“I think,” said he, “they are all gone, and the coast is clear.”

In this man’s voice, M’Carthy, to his infinite delight, once more recognized that of his unknown well-wisher. Be this as it may, he and the other two left the house, and, as the reader is no doubt interested in their movements, we shall permit him to follow them to the dining-room of the shooting-lodge, where the meeting had just been held.

“Very well, then,” he proceeded, “it is so best, as none of us can become a traitor against the rest. Shew me your pistols; for, as I’m an ould soger, I’ll regulate them for you better than you’ll be able to do yourselves.”

He accordingly took their pistols, examined them closely, fixed the powder in the pans, adding’ a fresh supply of priming from a little goat’s horn which he carried in his-pocket. He then took out his own, which he simply looked at, and again returned to his pocket.

“Now,” said he, “our best plan is to take him about the small o’ the back, when he’s before us, one only at a time; you,” said he, addressing the tallest, “will fire first; you,”—-to the other—“next if he misses him; and, as I’m the boy that doesn’t miss my mark, I’ll take him down, never fear, if he should escape either of you. Come now, let us go in and get him to his legs, that we may start.”

On making their appearance again, Finnerty approached M’Carthy, and exclaimed as before, but on this occasion with a loud and earnest voice, “Come, sir, get up if you plaise; it’s time for you to meet the car.” To this M’Carthy made no reply.

“Come, sir,” repeated Finnerty, “bounce; hillo, I say, Mr. M’Carthy; up wid you, sir, the car will be waitin’ for you;” and he gave him a slap on the shoulder as he spoke.

“Hallo!” exclaimed the pretended sleeper, “have a care—easy,’ easy—what’s that? who are you?—eh—aw—oh, dear me, where am I?”

“In a friend’s house, sir; get up, you know Mr. Purcel’s car is waitin’ for you at the mountain road below.”

M’Carthy started to his feet, and on looking about him, exclaimed, “How is this, Finnerty? why are the faces of these men blackened?”

“Never you mind that, sir,” replied Finnerty, “they are two or three poor fellows that’s on their keepin’ in regard to havin’ paid their tithes against the will o’ the people; an’ they don’t wish to be known, that’s all.”

“Well,” replied M’Carthy, “that’s their own affair, and neither yours nor mine, Finnerty. Come, then, are you ready? for I am.”

“These boys, Mr. M’Carthy, has promised to take the best care of you while in their company, an’ as they’re goin’ to the mountain road, where your’re to meet the car, they’ll bring you safe, sir.”

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“Most certainly not, Finnerty,” replied the other; “I shall be escorted by no person or persons ashamed to show their faces. If you refuse to come, you break your word with me; but, in any event, I shall not travel with these men. I am too well aware of the disturbed state of the country, and that, being a friend of Mr. Purcel, I may not be popular. I consider myself, however, under your protection and under the protection of your roof, and for this reason I shall hold you accountable for my safety; and, at all events, unless you insist on expelling me, I shall remain where I am until morning.”

“Why, if you insist upon it, I’ll go,” replied Finnerty, and four friends about you will be betther and safer than one; but in troth, to tell you the truth, Mr. M’Carthy, I’m a’most fairly knocked up myself, havin’ been down the counthry and through the hills the greater part of the day. I have a great number of cattle to look afther, an’ am seldom off my foot.”

“Don’t, sir,” said his wife, in tones which were now perfectly intelligible to him, “don’t ax poor Frank to go wid you tonight; you’ll be as well widout him, especially as the night’s so bright and clear; he’s tired indeed, and, be the same token, I don’t like to be here in the clouds of the night, wid nobody wid me but myself.”

“If you’re a gentlemen, sir,” said the friendly voice, “you won’t take this honest man from his wife at such an hour o’ the night. If you take my advice too, I’d recommend you to come along wid ourselves at wanst.”

There was no mistaking the friendly voice embodied in these words, as well as in those of Mrs. Finnerty. M’Carthy accordingly replied:—

“Very, well, Finnerty, I will proceed with these men. I should indeed be sorry to cause you any additional fatigue, or to fetch you from your house at such an hour. I will therefore put myself under the protection and guidance of these worthy fellows, who, I hope, will remember that although a friend to Mr. Purcel personally, yet I am none to any harshness he may have resorted to for the recovery of his tithes.”

“There’s nobody here,” replied the still friendly voice, “inclined to offer you any offense, bekaise you happen to be a friend to Mr. Purcel”—and there was a marked emphasis laid upon the name—“so now,” the voice proceeded, “you may make your mind aisy on that head.”

A singular but significant laugh proceeded, from the other two, which, however, was repressed by a glance from “the friend,” who said, “Come, boys, turn out; now, sir, the sooner we get over this journey the betther.”

“Well, Finnerty,” said M’Carthy, “many thanks for the hospitable shelter of your house, and to you also, Mrs. Finnerty, for your kindness and the trouble I have occasioned you.”

Mrs. Finnerty's voice had now nearly abandoned her; and, as our young sportsman, after having shaken hands with her husband, now paid that compliment to herself, he perceived that the poor creature's hand was literally passive and cold as ice, whilst the words she attempted to utter literally died away unspoken on her lips.

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Having got about a mile from the house, his unknown friend began to become loquacious, and related several anecdotes of successful escape from the meshes and minions of the law, a theme in which his two companions seemed to take singular delight; for they laughed immoderately at every recorded victory in outwitting the legal functionaries aforesaid.

“I was wanst upon a time,” he proceeded, “taken up for a resky; (* a rescue) the case bein’ you see, that we wanted the rent and the landlord wanted patience; so begad, at any rate, we gev the bloody bailiffs a thrifle for themselves, and the consequence was that we brought the cows back to a neighbor’s place that belonged to another property, and the four bailiffs, poor creatures, lay upon the ground lookin’ at us, an’ never said ill we did it, for a raison they had; do you undherstand, boys?”

“Ay, we do undherstand; the bloddy thieves; divil break his neck that invinted rint, anyhow; sure there’s no harm in wishin’ that, the villain.”

“Ay, an’ tides,” (* Tithes) replied the other; “however, we’ll settle that first, and then the rents will soon follow them; an’ sure there’s no harm in that aither.”

“Well an’ good:—no, divil a harm’s in it;—well an’ good: to make a long story short, they grabbed me in a house up in the mountains—not unlike Finnerty’s, I think that’s his name—where I was on my keepin’; so what ‘ud you have of it, but we were comin’ acrass the hills, jist as it might be said we are now—only there’s none of us a prisoner, thank goodness—hem! Well, I said to myself, hit or miss, I’ll thry it; I have a pair o’ legs, an’ it won’t be my fault or I’ll put them to the best use: an’ for that raison it’ll be divil take the hindmost wid us. Now listen, boys; I started off, an’ one fellow that had a pistol let bang at me, but long life to the pistol, divil a one of it would go off; bang again came the other chap’s, but ’twas ditto repaited, and no go any more than the other. Well, do you know now, that the third fellow—for there was only three af them, I must tell you—the third fellow, I’m inclined to think, was a friend at bottom; for the devil a one of him struv to break his heart in overtakin’ me. Well, by that manes, I say, I got off from two of as double-distilled villains as ever wor born to die by suspin-sion.”

This narrative, the spirit of which was so acceptable to his two companions, and, if truth must be told, equally so to the third, was treasured up by M’Carthy, who felt that it ingeniously but cautiously pointed out to him the course he should adopt under his own peculiar circumstances. The consequence was, that on coming within about a couple of furlongs of a dark, narrow, thickly-wooded glen, through which he knew they must pass, he bolted off at the top of his speed, which, although very considerable for a man whose strength had been so completely exhausted by fatigue and the unusual slavery of that day’s wandering through the mountains, was, notwithstanding, such as would never have enabled him to escape from his companions.

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He had not gone a perch when the click of a pistol was heard, but no report; the fact having been, that the pistol missed fire, and did not go off.

“D—n your blood!” exclaimed the “friend” to the other, “fire, and don’t let him escape;” the ruffian did so when click No. 2 was heard, but as before no report.

“Aisy,” said the fellow who had fired first, pulling out a long Spanish dagger; “an inch or two of this is as safe as a bullet, any day; and by japers he won’t escape it.” He sprang after M’Carthy as he spoke, followed by his companion. The third man stepped a pace or two to the right, and levelling a long double-barrelled pistol, deliberately fired, when McCarthy’s first pursuer fell; the second man, however, with that remarkable, quickness of wit which characterizes the Irish, in their outrages as well as in their pastimes, suddenly stooped, and taking the dreadful dagger out of the hands of the wounded man, continued the pursuit bounding after his foe with a spirit of vengeance and ferocity, now raised to the highest pitch. The stranger, seeing that M’Carthy was still in equal danger if not in still greater, for the now infuriated ruffian was gaining upon him, once more levelled his pistol—fired—and, as before, down came the intended assassin. He himself then sprang forward, as if in pursuit of M’Carthy, exclaiming, “Hell and fury, why did yez keep between me and him—I think he’s hit; give me that dagger, and I’ll go bail I’ll make his body soon put six inches of it out of sight,” and having uttered, these words, he rushed forward, as if in pursuit of their victim.

After he had left them, the following brief dialogue took place between these two worthies:—

“Hourigan, blazes to me but I’m shot.”

“Hell’s perdition to the unlucky villain—so am I—where are you shot, Mark?”

“By japers, the blood’s pourin’ out from me in the thigh, an’ I’m afeard I’m done for—-blast his unlucky hand, the villain; I wisht I had my dagger in him. Where are you shot, Darby?”

“Oh, vo—vo—on the right hip—but—oh, sweet Jasus, what will become of us if we’re to die here—may the devil clap his cruibs (* Talons; claws) in the sowl of him that done it!”

“Amin, I pray the blessed Saviour this night! Do you think, Darby, he was a traitor, and done it a purpose?”

“Oh, mavrone, oh!—if I die widout the priest, what ‘ud become o’ me, an’ all the sins I have to answer?”

“I say, was the villain a traitor, do you think?”

“Mavrone, oh!—blessed Lord forgive me—well—I can hardly think so—didn’t he volunteer along wid yourself an’ myself—oh, sweet Jasus! what a life I lead—oh, Mark Ratigan, Mark Ratigan, what will become o’ me!——I swore away the lives of two innocent men—I proved three alibis for three of as black villains as ever stretched a rope or charged a blunderbush! ’Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come’—oh, Lord! forbid that yet a while! could you join in a *Leadhan wurrah?*”

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“Blast you, you thick-headed vagabone! don’t you know it’s wrong to call me Mark Ratigan—isn’t Phil Hart my name now?—no, I tell you, that I can’t join you in a *Leadhan wurrah*—nor I didn’t think you wor such a d—d cowardly hound as you are—can’t you die—if you’re goin’ to die—like a man, an’ not like an ould woman? Be my sowl, Darby, my boy, afther this night I’ll never trust you again. It’s yourself that ’ud turn traitor on your country and her cause, if you got the rope and hangman at your nose.”

“Holy Mary, mother of God! pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, amin! Oh, sweet Jasus! have parsecution on me this night, an’ spare me if it’s your blessed will, till I get time to repint properly anyhow. Mark, darlin’, are you gettin’ waker, for I am?”

“To blazes wid you, and don’t bother me—no, I’m not—I’ve tied my handkerchy about the place I was shot in, an’ stopped the blood—eh—here—well done, Mark—hem—Phil Hart, I mane—bravo—see—that now—instead of bleatin’ like a dyin’ sheep, I’ve stopped the blood, an’ here I am able to stand and walk. Come,” said he, approaching his companion, “where are you shot?—let us see?”

He stooped down, and on examining the Wound by the light of the moon, perceived at once that it was not all imagination and evil conscience. He consequently forced him to his legs, then bound up the wound with the fellow’s handkerchief just as he had done his own, and in a few minutes they were able to resume their journey, slowly, it is true, and on the part of Ratigan, whose wound was the more serious, with a good deal of difficulty and pain, notwithstanding his hardihood.

In the meantime, M’Carthy was soon overtaken by the friendly Whiteboy, whose speed; of foot was indeed extraordinary. On seeing, the dagger in his pursuer’s hand—for such he deemed him to be—he had prepared himself for resistance, the fact being, than in consequence of their blackened faces, and the state of perturbation and excitement in which he felt himself, he was in no condition to recognize any of the party unless by their voices.

“Don’t be alarmed,” exclaimed the stranger, approaching him, “I have saved your life for this night most likely, by takin’ the, life of them that intended to murder you.”

“I certainly feel,” replied M’Carthy, “that I owe my life to you, and I know not what return I can make you for it. But why should I speak so, since I am ignorant of your name, as well as of everything whatsoever concerning you? As to the other two persons, I cannot understand why they should attempt to murder me, as I am not conscious of having given offence to, any person.”

“You have never given offence to them,” replied the stranger; “but unfortunately this, part of the country’s in such a state of feelin’ at the present time, that it’s as aisy to find one man to murdher another as it would be to get a man to shoot a dog. No, sir; you

never offended these men, but they were set on to take your life by a man who hates you.”

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“Well, since you have been on more than one occasion so generous to me, can you not let me know who that person is?”

“No, sir; that man has a hundred—ay, ten hundred eyes through the counthry—in the shape of spies—and five times as many hands any time he may wish for them. You may thank a friend of yours for sendin’ me to save your life this night. Your family have been friends to him and to me too, although you don’t know it. As for me, I go with him heart an’ hand in puttin’ down the tithes, but I’ll always save the life of a friend, if I can; and indeed I have been forced to shoot these two men, in ordher to save yours to-night. I must go now and see what state they’re in—whether alive or dead; but before. I go, listen:—tell the procthor that he has a fearful account to meet, and that soon; let neither him nor his sons be fool-hardy; say to him, that the wisest thing he can do is to remove himself and his family into the town of Lisnagola; or, if he won’t do that, to keep his house half-filled with fire-arms; for I tell you now, the time is not long till he’ll need them all. Tell them not to go out at night at all, or even by day, unless well armed; and do you yourself take the same advice; and now good-night. But, listen again: there, you see, is the spot below there, where the car was to meet you; but there’s no car in it, and even if there was, I wouldn’t recommend you to go on it; and if you’re goin’ to O’Driscol’s don’t go up the avenue, but by the back way, behind the garden, for it’s very likely there’s another man—and a fearful man, on the look-out for you, in case you should be missed by us. Farewell, for the present.”

A few minutes brought this kind-hearted Whiteboy back to the spot where Hourigan and his companion, who was also his cousin, fell. He was a good deal surprised, but still highly gratified, at not finding them where they had fallen, as it was a ’proof to him that his aim at either had not been fatal, as he certainly had no intention of taking their lives, or of rendering them any greater injury than the infliction of such wound as might put an end to their pursuit of M’Carthy. On advancing a little farther, he saw them proceeding, by a different but shorter path towards the inland country; and being now satisfied, from their appearance, that they had not been mortally wounded, he left them to reach home as best they might, and proceeded himself in another direction.

CHAPTER XI.—The Sport Still Continued.

It is necessary to say here, that Moylan had not the slightest intention of sending Mr. Purcel’s car to meet our friend M’Carthy, inasmuch as he never for a moment supposed that this devoted youth was likely to leave the mountains alive. His own egregious vanity, engrafted on a cowardly, jealous, and malignant disposition, prompted him, ever since he had been induced by the pedlar, out of a mere banter, to suppose that he had engaged the affections of Julia

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Purcel, to look upon this young man as a person that ought to be got out of his way. In this manner there was, indeed, a peculiar combination of circumstances against M'Carthy; for it so happened that Moylan, whilst anxious to wreak his own jealousy and hatred upon him, was, at the same time, executing the will of another individual who stood behind the scenes. On every side, then, M'Carthy was surrounded by mortal dangers that were completely veiled in obscurity. During this very night it was resolved to assassinate him, be the consequences what they might; and if he should escape, in the one instance, he was to be sought after in whatever house he took refuge, with the exception only of Purcel's, which his enemies were, for the present, afraid to attack. Every avenue and road leading to it however, was watched, with a hope that if he escaped elsewhere, they might shoot him down from, behind a hedge.

The condition of all secret and illegal societies in Ireland is, indeed, shocking and most detestable, when contemplated from any point of view whatsoever. In every one of them—that is, in every local body or branch of such conspiracy—there is a darker and more secret class, comparatively few in number, who undertake to organize the commission of crimes and outrages; and who, when they are controlled by the peaceably-disposed and enemies to bloodshed, always fall back upon this private and blood-stained clique, who are always willing to execute their sanguinary behests, as it were, *con amore*. In other cases, however, as we have stated before, even the virtuous and reluctant are often compelled, by the dark and stern decrees of these desperate ruffians, to perpetrate crimes from which they revolt. It was, therefore, in pursuance of these abominable principles that the arrangements for M'Carthy's murder were made on the night in question.

Jerry Joyce perceiving, as he had feared, that M'Carthy did not return to dinner, at once came to the determination that he would go to Finnerty's, where, from his connection with Whiteboyism, he knew that a meeting of them was to be held on that night. He accordingly armed himself with a ease of pistols, which he had been allowed to keep for the preservation of his master's family and premises, in case they should be attacked. He had not gone, however, within two miles of the mountains, when he met Mogue on His way home, carrying M'Carthy's, or rather John Purcel's double gun, and other shooting gear.

"Why, Mogue," said he, "how does this come? Where's Mr. M'Carthy from you?"

"Oh! that I may never sin—but sure I know I will—for I'm a great sinner—God forgive me!—but anyhow, that I may never sin, if I'm worth the washin'! Oh! Jerry, darlin', sick a killin' day as we had I never passed, an' I'm well accustomed to the mountains. Sure, now, Jerry, if you have one spunk of common charity in your composition, you'll take me up on your back and carry me home, otherwise I'll lie down on the road, and either die at wanst or sleep it out till mornin'."

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“But that’s not tellin’ me where you left Mr. M’Carthy,” replied Jerry, whose apprehensions were not at all lessened by this indirect and circuitous answer. “Where is he, and what has become of him?”

“Of all the mists that ever riz out o’ the airth, or fell from the blessed heavens above as—glory be to the name of God! we had it on the mountains this whole day. Why, now, Jerry, a happy death to me, but you might cut it with a knife, at the very least, an’ how we got through it, I’m sure, barrin’ the Providence of God, I dunna. But indeed we’re far from bein’ worthy of the care He takes of us.”

While speaking, he had, as an illustration of his fatigue, taken his seat upon the grassy ditch, which bounded in the road, and altogether enacted the part of a man completely broken down by over-exertion.

“But, Mogue, my pious creature, you’re not tellin’ us where you left—”

“Why, then, salvation to you, for one Jerry, do you think it’s ait him I did? Sound asleep in Frank Finnerty’s I left him, where he’ll be well taken care of. Oh! thin, if ever a poor inoffensive young gintleman—for sure he’s that by birth, as we say, at all events, as well as by larnin’—was brought to death’s door with this day’s work, he was. I thought to flatther him home if he could come, but it was no go. An’ thin, agin, I thought it was a sin to ax’ him; an’ so for a afraid they’d be alarmed at home, I was on my way to make all your minds aisy. An’ whisper hether, Jerry—not that I look upon Frank Finnerty an the man he ought to be, for we all know the narrow escape he had for the murder of Tom Whisky’s son—still an’ all, he’s safe wid Finnerty, bekaise he knows that we know where he is, and that if anything happened him we’d hould him accountable.”

“Well,” replied Jerry, affecting a satisfaction which, however, he did not feel, “I’m glad he’s safe; for, as you say, Mogue, although Frank Finnerty is pretty well known, still what could tempt him to harm Mr. M’Carthy?”

“I know that,” said Mogue; “still an’ all, the nerra foot I’d brought him to his house, only we stumbled on it out o’ the mist, by mere accident, an’ by coorse it was the next to us. Goodness’ sake, Jerry, carry these things home for me, will you? I’m not able to mark the ground—do, avick, an’ I’ll offer up a pathran avy for you before I lay down my head this night, tired as I am.”

“Well, begad, it’s myself that would, Mogue, but you see, as I’m out for a while, an’ so near my poor mother’s, throth I’ll slip over and see how she is, the crature; only for that, Mogue, I’d lighten you of the shootin’ things wid a heart an’ a half.”

“But sure you can see your poor mother, the crature, any other evenin’? Do come back, Jerry, an’ I’ll do twiste as much for you agin. Oh! oh! milia murther! I’m not able to get on my legs. Give me your hand, Jerry—oh! oh!—well, well—what’s this at all? Jerry,

achora, don’t desart me now, ’an me in the state you see. I’ll never get home by myself —that’s what I won’t—mavrone, oh! what’s this?—I’m fairly kilt.”

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“Well, but the thruth is, Mogue,” replied his companion, “that I got a message from my mother, sayin’ that she’s not well, and wishes most partiklarly to see me about my sisther Shibby’s marriage. Now, Mogue, you’re a pious and religious boy, an’ would be the last to encourage me to neglect a parent’s wishes: ay, or that would allow me to do so, even if I intended it; throth I know it’s a scoulden’ you’d give me if I did.”

Mogue’s flank was completely turned; he was, in fact, most adroitly taken upon his own principle; his egregious vanity was ticked by this compliment to his piety; and, as he was at no time a person of firm character, he gave way.

Thought Jerry to himself, as he left this plausible hypocrite, to proceed home under his affected fatigue, “I know there’s mischief on foot to-night, for if there wasn’t I an’ others ’ud be summoned to this meetin’; there will be nobody there, I suppose, but the black squad or the bloodmen. It’ll go hard wid me, at any rate, but I’ll send one there that’ll bring Mr. M’Carthy from among them without suspicion; an’ so here goes to lose no time about it.”

He then plunged into the most solitary and remote fields, and pursued his way, anxious, if possible, to meet no one, much less any of those who belonged, as he said, “to the black squad.”

Of late, the state of public feeling upon the subject of tithes had become so violent and agitated, that Mr. Purcel’s immediate friends found it almost a matter involving their personal safety to dine with him. At all events, such of them as accepted his hospitality took care to leave his house very early, and to keep themselves well armed besides. On the evening in question, no one had been invited but M’Carthy and Fergus O’Driscol. The heroic magistrate, however, ever since the receipt of the threatening letter, would not suffer his son (who certainly participated in none of his father’s cowardice), to dine abroad at all, lest his absence and well-known intrepidity might induce the Whiteboys, or other enemies of law, to attack the house when its principal defence was from home. The evening, therefore, hung heavy on their heads at Longshot Lodge, which was the name of Purcel’s residence, especially upon that of the fair Julia, who felt not merely disappointed, but unusually depressed’ by the unaccountable absence of her lover, knowing as she did, the turbulence which prevailed in the country. She scarcely ate any dinner, and in the course of a short time retired to her own room, which commanded a view of the way by which he should approach the house, where she watched, casement up, until she heard a foot in the avenue, which, however, her acute ear, well accustomed to McCarthy’s, soon told her was not that of her lover. On looking more closely she perceived, however, that it was Mogue Moylan; and, unable to restrain her impatience, she raised the window still higher, and called down as Mogue passed under it, on his way round to the kitchen, but in a low, earnest voice, with, as Mogue thought, a good deal of confidential in it, “Is that Mogue?”

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“Eh!” he exclaimed, struck almost on the instant into a state of ecstacy; “Is that Miss Julia?”

“Yes, Mogue,” she replied, in the same low voice, “I do not wish to run the risk of speaking to you from this; stay there, and I will go to one of the windows of the front parlor.”

“Well,” thought Mogue, “it is come to this at last? oh, thin, but I was a blackguard haythen an’ nothing else ever to think of you, Letty Lenehan, or any low-born miscreant like you. The devil blow her aist, waist, north, and south, the flipen’ blazes, and to think o’ the freedoms she used to take wid me, as if she was my aquils; but sure, dam her cribs! whatever I intended to do, it wasn’t to marry her, an’ can I forget, moreover, the day she gave me the bloody nose, when I only went to take a small taste o’ liberty wid the thief.”

In the course of a minute or two, Julia made her appearance at the window, with, in fact, a blushing face, if it could have only been seen with sufficient light. Now that she stood within a couple of yards of Moylan, she felt all the awkwardness and embarrassment of the task she had undertaken, which was to inquire, without seeming to feel any personal interest, as to the cause of her lover’s absence. In addition to the prevailing agitation, and the outrages arising from if, she had heard of so many accidents with sportsmen, so many guns had burst, so many explosions had taken place, and so many lives had been lost, that her warm fancy pictured his death in almost every variety of way in which a gun could occasion it. Owing to all this, she experienced a proportionable share of confusion and diffidence in managing her inquiries with proper address, and without betraying any suspicion of her motives.

“Mogue,” said she, “I—hem—hem—I hope you don’t feel fatigued after your sport’?”

“Ah, then, there it comes,” thought Mogue; “how the crature feels for me! an’ even if I did, Miss Julia, sure one kind word when I come home is fit to cure it.”

“And you are sure to get that, Mogue,” replied Julia, who took it for granted that he referred to Letty Lenehan, “but whisper,” she proceeded, still speaking in a low voice, from an apprehension of being heard making the proposed inquiries by any of her family, “are you alone?”

“I am, indeed, Miss Julia,” he replied in a tone of such coaxing and significant confidence, as would have been irresistibly laughable had she understood why he used it, “I am alone, Miss Julia, and you needn’t be either ashamed or daunted in sayin’ whatever you like to me—maybe I could guess what you’re goin’ to say, but I declare to you, and that my bed may be in heaven, but, say what you will, you’ll find me—honor bright—do you understand that, Miss Julia?”

“Well, I think I do, Mogue, and if I didn’t think so, I wouldn’t have watched your return to-night as I did, or been here to speak to you on the subject you say you—know.”

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“An’ sure, Miss Julia, you might a known, for some time past that I knew it; didn’t I look like one that was up to it? An’ listen hether, Miss Julia, my family was all honor bright; we wor great people in our day; sure we owned a big sweep of country long ago an’ wor great sogers. We fought against the Sassenaghs, the dirty English bodaghs, an’ because there was a lot of us ever an’ always hanged from time to time, that’s the raison why we have sich a hatred to the English law still, one an’ all of us. Sure my grandfather, glory be to God, was hanged for killin’ a Sassenagh gauger, and my own father, Miss Julia, did his endeavors to be as great as the best of them, knowin’ no other way for to vex and revinge himself upon the dirty Sassenaghs of the country; for sure, you know yourself, it’s full o’ them’—ay, about us in all directions. Be borried a horse in a private way from one o’ them, but then he escaped from that; he next had a ’bout at what they call’d perjury, although it was well known to us all that it was only his thumb he kissed, and, any how, the thing was done upon a Protestant Bible; but, at all events, he went an’ honest and honorably, as far as gettin’ himself transported for parjury. I hope you understhand, Miss Julia, that I’m accountin’ for any disparagin’ observations you might a’ heard against us, an’ showin’ you why we acted as we did.”

“But, Mogue,” said she, smiling at this most incomprehensible piece of family history, “I hope you don’t intend to imitate the example or to share the fate of so many of your family!”

“You really hope so; now do you really hope so, Miss Julia?”

“Unquestionably; for granting you marry, as, I dare say you intend, would it not be a melancholy prospect for your wife to—”

“Why, then I do intend it; are you not satisfied, Miss Julia? and what is more, although it’s my intention to violate the law in a private and confidential way, still I have no intention of bein’ either hanged or transported by it; that I may be happy if I have—No, for the sake of that wife, Miss Julia, do you understand, it’s my firm intention to die in my bed if I can; I hope you feel that there’s comfort in that.”

“To whatever woman you make happy Mogue, there will be. Well, but, Mogue, tell me; had you a good day’s sport?”

“Sorra worse then; God pardon me for swearin’,” he replied. “There riz a mist in the mountains that a man could build a house wid, if there was any implements to be found, hard and sharp enough to cut it. All we got was a brace of grouse and a snipe or two.”

“And—hem—well but—hem—why Mogue, you give but a very miserable account of the proceedings of the day. Had you any one with you?—Oh, yes, by the way, did I not see Mr. M’Carthy go out with you this morning?”

“Yes, Miss Julia, you did; he went out wid me, sure enough,” replied Mogue, drily, and with rather a dissatisfied tone.

“He is a—hem, does he shoot well?”

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“He shoots well enough, Miss Julia—when he pulls the trigger the gun goes off; but as for killin’ birds, that my bed may be in heaven but they fly away laughin’ at him.”

“He came with you as far as O’Driscol’s,” she said, at once putting a query in the shape of an assertion, “and I suppose sent some apology to my father and brothers, for not having been here to dinner.”

“Hem! come as far as Mr. O’Driscol’s?” exclaimed Mogue; “troth he’s about the poorest piece o’ goods ever carried a gun—God help the unhappy woman that’ll get him; for sorra thing he is but a mere excuse for a man. I left him lyin’ like a half-hung dog, up in the mountains above.”

Julia started, and almost screamed with terror at this account of her lover. “Gracious heavens, Moylan, what do you mean?” she exclaimed—“up in the mountains!—where and how in the mountains? Is he ill, or does he want aid or assistance?”

“No, Miss Julia; but the truth is, he’s a poor cur of a creature that’s not able to undertake a man’s task at all; he’s lyin’ knocked up in Frank Finnerty’s; moanin’ and groanin’ an’ yowlin’, like a sick hound; I had to carry or drag him over half the mountains; for, from the blessed hour of twelve o’clock this day, he wasn’t able to put a foot undher him, an’ he did nothing but blasphayme’ an’ curse every one he knew; your fathers and brothers, your sisther, and mother, and yourself; he cursed and blasphaymed you all, helther skelther; I could bear all, Miss. Julia till he came to run you down, an’ ’tis well for him that I hadn’t the gun in my hand when he did it, that’s all; or, that I may never do an ill turn but I’d a’ given him a touch o’ the Moylan blood for your sake—an’ now, Miss Julia,” he proceeded, “I hope we understand one another. As for him he’s a pitiful whelp!”

“Are you in jest or earnest?” she inquired, changing her tone.

“That luck may flow on me, but I’m in airnest, Miss Julia—but no matther for that, don’t you let you spirits down, think of our great family; and remimber that them that was wanst great may be great agin. Plaise God we’ll have back the forwhitled estates, when we get the Millstone broke, an’ the Mill that ground us banished from the counthry; however, that will come soon; but in the mane time, Miss Julia, I have a saycret to tell you about him.”

“About Mr. M’Carthy?” she asked, sadly puzzled as to the tendency and object of his conversation, but at the same time somewhat awakened to an indistinct interest, respecting this secret concerning her lover.

“Yes, miss; listen hether, Miss Julia; would you believe it that he, Mr. M’Carthy, is sworn, or any way as good as sworn, to take your father’s life away?”

“No, Mogue,” she replied firmly, but with good humor, “not a syllable.”

“Well then,” he proceeded, “if he did not swear to do it in plain words, he did as good. You won’t braithe a syllable of this, Miss Julia; but listen still—You know the ruction that’s through, the counthry aginst tides?”

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“I do, I am sorry to say.”

“An’ that the whole counthry is sworn Whiteboys, and that all the Whiteboys in sworn, of coorse, to put an end to them. That’s the oath they take now, miss, by all accounts.”

“So they say Mogue.”

“Well, miss, would you believe it, that that fellow, the ungrateful hound that he is, that same Francis M’Carthy, is at the head of them, is one of their great leaders, and is often out at night wid the villains, leadin’ them on to disturbances, and directin’ them how to act; ay, an’ he doesn’t like a bone in Mr. O’Driscol’s body, any more than in your father’s.”

“Ha!—ha!—ha! very good, Mogue, but make it short—ha!—ha!—ha!—and who’s your authority for all this?”

“Himself, miss, for a great part of it; it was this day, he wanted myself to become a White-boy; but I had the grace o’ God about me, I hope, an’ resisted the temptation. ‘Mogue,’ says he, ’you are a good Catholic, an’ ought to join us; we’re sworn to put down the tides altogether, an’ to banish Protestantism out o’ the counthry.’”

“But is not M’Carthy himself a Protestant?” said Julia.

“Not he, miss, he only turned to get a lob o’ money from the Great College in Dublin above; sure they provide for any one that will turn, but he’s a true Catholic at heart; air when the time comes he’ll show it.”

“And you say he joins their meetings at night, Mogue?”

“That I may be blest, but he does, miss; and since you must know the truth, he’s at one o’ them this very night.”

“Then you have told me a falsehood with respect to his fatigue?”

“He put me up to it, miss; and bid me say it; howandever my mind wasn’t aisy undher it; and now you know the truth.”

“And does he blacken his face as well as the other Whiteboys?”

“That hurt or harm may never come near me but he does that same; I have it from them that seen him and knew him, in spite o’ black face an’ all.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—well good-night, Mogue, and many thanks for your most important and truthful secret.”

“Before you go, Miss Julia, one other word; listen, there a man worth a ship load of him, that’s in grate consate wid you—remember the ould families, Miss Julia, an’ them that suffered for—for—their counthry. Now here’ the kind o’ man I’d recommend you for a husband; don’t let a pair o’ red cheeks or black eyes lead you by the nose—an’ what signifies a good figure, when neither the handsomest nor the strongest man can keep off a headache or a fit o’ the blackguard cholic—bad luck to it—when they come on one. No, Miss Julia, always in the man that’s to be your husband, prefer good lastin’ color in the complection, an’ little matther about the color of the eyes if they always smile upon yourself—then agin, never marry a man that swears, Miss Julia, but a man that’s fond of his prayers, and is given to piety—sich men never use any but harmless oaths, sich as may I be blest, salvation to me, and the like—that’s the kind o’ men to make a husband of, and I have sich a man in my eye for you.”

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“Thank you, Mogue,” said Julia, who was too quick-witted to misunderstand him any longer. “Many thanks for your good advice—and whisper, Mogue—who knows but I may follow it? Good-night!”

“Good-night, darlin’,” he whispered in a kind of low triumphant cackle, that caused her to shake her very sides with laughter, after she had closed the window.

Julia Purcel, who could attribute Moylan’s extraordinary conversation to nothing but a more than usual indulgence in liquor, did not for a single moment suffer herself to become influenced by the unaccountable information which she had heard respecting M’Carthy. But even if it had been true, she was so peculiarly circumstanced, that without disclosing the private conversation she had had with Moylan, she could not without pain communicate it to her family. As it was, however, she placed no confidence whatever in any portion of it, and on further reflection, she felt all her apprehensions concerning M’Carthy revived. If she experienced anything in the shape of satisfaction from the dialogue, it arose from the fact that if M’Carthy had suffered injury, Mogue would not have been so much at ease on his return. When his return was made known, however, to the family at large, Mogue repeated his first version, and assured them that he, M’Carthy had laid down in Finnerty’s for an hour or so to recruit his strength. He supposed he would soon be home, he said—or for that matter, maybe as he found himself comfortable, he would stop there for the night. Mogue himself had come home to make their minds easy, and to let them know where he was, and what had kept him away. To a certain extent the family were satisfied, but as M’Carthy had communicated to the male portion of them the friendly warning he had got from the Whiteboy, they said, that although he might have been, safe enough when Mogue left him in the mountains, yet considering the state of the country, and that he unquestionably had enemies, he might not be free from danger on his way home. There was scarcely a night in the week that the country was not traversed by multitudes of those excited and unscrupulous mobs, that struck terror to the hearts of the peaceful, or such as were obnoxious to them. Accordingly, after waiting a couple of hours, Alick Purcel got a double case of pistols, and proposed to go as far as O’Driscol’s, where they took it for granted, as he had not been able to come to dinner, they would find him should he have returned.

“Alick,” said the father, “after all the notices we have got, and considering the feeling that is against us, it is ridiculous to be fool-hardy—don’t go by the road but cross the fields.”

“Such is my intention, sir,” replied Alick; “for although no coward, still I am but flesh and blood, and it is death you know, for mere flesh and blood to stop a bullet. Give me my enemy face to face and I don’t fear him, but when he takes me at night from behind a hedge, courage is of little use, and won’t save my life.”

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On arriving at O'Driscol's, he found that M'Carthy had not come, and after waiting till one o'clock, he prepared to take his departure. At this moment, a female servant tapped at the drawing-room door, and after having been desired to come in, she communicated the following startling particulars:—She had forgotten her washing, she said, and gone out a little time before to bring it in, and in doing so, she spied several men with black faces and white shirts skulking about the house. She was not sure, she said, on having the question put to her, whether she had been seen by them or not.

This communication, which was given with every mark of alarm and terror, completely altered the posture of affairs at the magistrate's. Katherine O'Driscol's face became deadly pale as she turned a glance upon young Purcel, which he well understood. "Alick," said she, "under these circumstances, it would, be absolute madness to attempt going home to-night. It is very likely they have discovered that you are here, and are watching for you."

"But if I do not return home," he replied, "it is equally probable that John and my father, wondering at my delay, may come to look for me, and in that case they might meet these ruffians—or rather might be waylaid by them."

"Purcel, my dear fellow!" said the magistrate, who was now pretty deep in his cups, and consequently somewhat pot-valiant—or at least disposed to show them a touch of his valor—"Alick, my dear fellow, you are courageous enough, I admit, but at the same time, you must put yourself under the guidance of a brave and loyal old magistrate, who is not to be cowed and intimidated by a crew of midnight cut-throats. You'll gee now, Alick, my boy, what a touch of loyal courage can do. Upon my honor, and conscience, I will myself escort you home."

"By no means, sir," replied Purcel, "I could not think of putting you to such a risk, and inconvenience at this late hour."

"But I say by all manes, Alick—and as for inconvanience, it is none at all."

"But Mr. Purcel will expose neither himself nor you, my dear father," said Katherine; "he will be guided by good sense, and remain here to-night."

"Tut! you foolish cowardly girl, go to bed—you play loo very well, and have won seven-and-sixpence from me to-night. That's your province. No, upon my sowl and honor, I'll see him home. What! is it for the intelligent and determined O'Driscol, as your brother John said—and who is well known to be a very divil incarnate when danger's before him—is it for such a man—the terror of evil-doers—to funk from a crew of White-boys! What would my friend the Castle say if it knew it?—divil resave the line ever it would correspond with me again. Get me my pistols, I say—a case for each pocket, and the blunderbush under my arm—then come on, M'Donough, as the play says, and blazes to him who runs last." Here he gave a lurch a little to the one side, after which he placed

himself in something intended for a military attitude, and drawing his hand down his whiskers, he inflated himself as if about to give the word of command, “Soldiers, steady,”—here he gave another lurch—“recover omes (arms)—charge bayonets—-present—halt—to the right about—double quick—:bravo—you see what I could do, if placed in a military position.”

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“We do, sir,” said Fergus, laughing; “not a doubt of it.” The latter then whispered something to Purcel, who smiled, and immediately turning to the doughty magistrate, said:—

“Well, sir, since you insist upon protecting me home—”

“Good—that’s the word, Alick—steady boys—shoulder omes.”

“I will feel very happy, sir, in your escort.”

“Yes, Alick—yes—exactly so—but then we are time enough, man—the night’s but young yet—we must have another tumbler before we go—if it is only to put terror into these villains.”

“I am exceedingly sorry that it is out of my power to wait, sir. My father and John may possibly come over here, and if they do it is difficult to say what these blood-thirsty villains, who care so little about human life—especially, sir, when that life belongs to either a tithe-proctor or a magistrate, may do. You will oblige me very much, sir, by coming with me now. I wish to heavens I had your courage, Mr. O’Driscol, and that I-was such a wicked and desperate dare-devil as you are.”

“Good, Alick, upon my honor and conscience, you’ve hit me off there—hallo—what is this?—put these pistols and that blunder-bush aside, and be d—d to you, we don’t want them yet awhile;” this was addressed to the servant who had brought them at Fergus’s suggestion. “I am a hospitable man, Alick—a convivial man—and I tell you that I don’t wish a guest to leave my house with dry lips—and what is more, I won’t allow it—sit down then, and take your punch, or if you’re afraid of these fellows why didn’t you say so?”

“I am then, sir,” replied Alick, who thought that by admitting the fact, he might the sooner bring matters between himself and the magistrate to a crisis.

“What!” exclaimed the latter, “you admit your cowardice, do you?—Well, upon my honor and reputaytion, Alick, I’m extremely surprised at you—a young fellow like you—and a coward! Now I’ll tell you what, Alick, I hate a coward—I despise a coward, and d—n me if any man who is mane enough to acknowledge himself to be one, shall have the benefit of my escort this night. Then stay where you are, sir, and take your punch—but you are not entitled to any protection; no, confound me if you are! A nice office for a man of my mettle to escort a coward!—no, no—take your punch, I say—you are safe under this roof, but as touching my protection, no fellow of your kidney shall resave it from me, unless in honest open daylight with a body of police or military at my elbow; and, besides, you have declined my hospitality, Mr. Purcel, and with the man—but man you are not—who declines my hospitality, I will keep no terms. Here’s the ‘Castle!’ long life to it, and may it never have occasion to read me a lecture for protecting a coward!

Steady, men—shoulder oines!—ah, I'm a pearl before swine here:—upon my honor and conscience, I'm nothing else—hurra!"

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Whilst this manifestation of courage and loyalty was proceeding, his daughter had sent a little girl by a lonely and circuitous way across the fields to Longshot Lodge, with a message to the effect that they had prevailed upon Alick to stop for the night, and that he would also breakfast there the next morning. The little girl's absence was very brief, and on her return, Alick had no hesitation in remaining. The heroic magistrate, having taken another tumbler, began to get drowsy, and with some assistance, was prevailed on to go to bed, where he almost immediately fell asleep. The two young men then got together all the arms and ammunition in the house, which, having made ready for an attack, they went also to bed, taking only their coats off, where for the present we leave them—but not asleep—and return to M'Carthy, for whose absence, no doubt, the reader is anxious that we should account.

CHAPTER XII.—Out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire.

M'Carthy on that night had not gone far, after having separated from the friendly Whiteboy, when he was met by a powerfully-formed man, who, he thought, bore a considerable resemblance in shape and size to the fellow who had been invested with authority not long before in Finnerty's. On seeing that it was M'Carthy, the stranger, whose face was blackened, and who also wore the white shirt outside, approached him coolly but determinedly, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, said—: "Your name is Francis M'Carthy'?" and as he spoke, M'Carthy could perceive the ends of a case of pistols projecting from his breast within the shirt, which was open at the neck.

"As I have never knowingly done anything that should occasion me to deny my name, I acknowledge it—you know me, of course."

"I know you well. I meek it a point to know everyone who is worth knowing. In the meantime, M'Carthy, you'll come along with me, if you pleese."

"It is not at all clear that I will," replied M'Carthy; "you are a perfect stranger to me—at least your disguise makes you so. You are out on illegal business, as is evident from that disguise, and you are armed with a case of pistols. Now, under these circumstances, happen what may, until I know more about you, and who you are, I will not walk one inch in your society, except as a free agent."

"Hear me," replied the other; "you were singled out for murdher this night, and you only escaped by a miracle—by the assistance of a man who is a warm friend to you, and who got information of the danger you wor in from another friend who suspected that you were in that danger. Two pistols wor loaded to settle you, as they say. Well, the person that saved your life damped the powder in these pistols—both wor snapped at you, and they didn't go off—am I right?"

"You are right for so far, certainly."

“Well, then, the other two who followed you—one of them with a long, sharp dagger—-were shot down—d—n your friend that didn’t send the bullets through their brains instead of their hams and limbs; however, they fell and you escaped—am I right?”

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“Perfectly correct,” replied M’Carthy; “and you must have had your information only from the person who befriended me.”

“Well, then, have you-any objection to come with me now?”

“Every objection; I wish to go either to Mr. O’Driscol’s or Mr. Purcel’s.”

“Listen. I say if you attempt this night to go to either one house or the other, you will never carry your life to them. If I was your enemy, and wished to put a bullet into you, what is there to prevent me now, I ask you?”

“All, my good friend,” replied M’Carthy, “that argument won’t pass with me. Many. a man there is—and I dare say you know it well—who feels a strong scruple against committing murder with his own hands, who, notwithstanding, will not scruple to employ others to commit it for him.”

“Do you refuse to come with me, then? because if you do to-morrow mornin’ will rise upon your corpse. Even I couldn’t save you if you were known. There’s a desperate and a dreadful game goin’ to be played soon, and as you stand in the way of a man that possesses great power, and has a perticular end in view—the consequence is that you are doomed. Even if you do come with me, I must blacken your face, in ordher to prevint you from being known.”

“Will you answer me one question candidly,” said M’Carthy—“if it’s a fair one? Did I see you to-night before?”

“Ask me no question,” replied the man; “for I won’t answer any I don’t like, and that happens to be one o’ them. Whether you saw me this night before, or whether you didn’t, there is no occasion for me to say so, and I won’t say it.”

“I think I know him now,” said M’Carthy; “and if I judge correctly, he is anything but a safe guide.”

“Come,” said the huge Whiteboy, “make up your mind; I won’t weet another minute.”

M’Carthy paused and deliberately reconsidered as coolly as possible all the circumstances of the night. It was obvious that this man must have had his information with respect to the recent events from his friendly preserver—a man who would not be likely to betray him into danger after having actually saved his life, by running the risk of committing two murders. On the other band it was almost clear, from the manner in which the person before him pronounced certain words, as well as from his figure, that he was the celebrated and mysterious Buck English of whose means of living every one was ignorant, and who, as he himself had heard, expressed a strong dislike to him.

“Before I make up my mind,” said M’Carthy, “may I ask another question?”

“Fifty if you like, but I won’t promise to answer any one o’ them.”

“Was I brought to Finnerty’s house with an evil purpose?”

“No: the poor, pious fool that brought you—there—but I’m wrong in sayin’ so—for it was the mist that done it. No, the poor fool that came there with you is a crature that nobody would trust. He thinks you’re lyin’ sound asleep in Finnerty’s this minute. He’s fit for nothing but prayin’ and thinking the girls in love with him.”

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“Well,” replied M’Carthy, “at all events you are a brother Irishman, and I will put confidence in you; come, I am ready to accompany you.”

“In that case, then, you must suffer me to blacken your face, and for fear your shoot-in’ jacket might betray you, I’ll put this shirt over it.”

He then pulled out an old piece of crumpled paper that contained a mixture of lampblack and grease, with which he besmeared his whole face, from his neck to the roots of his hair, after which he stripped the shirt he wore outside his clothes, and in about two or three minutes completely metamorphosed our friend M’Carthy into a thorough-looking Whiteboy.

“Come along now,” said he, “and folly me; but even as it is, and in spite of your disguise, we must take the lonesomest way to the only place I think you’ll be safe in.”

“I am altogether in your hands,” replied M’Carthy, “and shall act as you wish.”

They then proceeded across the country for about two miles, keeping up towards the mountainous district, after which they made a turn and entered a deep valley, in whose lowest extremity stood a long, low house.

“Now,” said the stranger, “before we go in here, remember what I’m goin’ to say to’ you. If any one—I mean a Whiteboy,”—here M’Carthy started, struck by the peculiarity of the pronunciation—a circumstance which by no means strengthened his sense, of security —“if any of them should come across you and ask you for the pass, here it is. *What’s the hour?* Answer—*Very near the right one. Isn’t it come yet?* Answer—*The hour is come, but not the man. When will he come?* Answer—*He is within sight*.” He repeated these words three or four times, after which he and M’Carthy entered the house.

“God save all here!” said the guide.

“God save you kindly, boys.”

“Mrs. Cassidy,” he continued, “here’s poor fellow on his keepin’ for tithe business and although you don’t know me, I know you well enough to be sartin that you’ll give this daicent boy a toss in a bed till daybreak—an’ a mouthful to ate if he should want it.”

“Troth an’ I will, sir; isn’t one o’ my poor boys in Lisnagola goal for the same tithes—bad luck to them—that is for batin’ one of the vagabonds that came to collect them. Troth he’ll have the best bed in my house.”

“And listen, Mrs. Cassidy; if any of us should happen to come here to-night—although I don’t think it’s likely they will, still it’s hard to say, for the country’s alive with with them—-if any of them should come here, don’t let them know that this poor boy is in the house —do you mind?”

“Ah, then, it would be a bad day or night either I wouldn’t.”

“Will you have anything to ate or dhrink,” asked the guide of M’Carthy..

“Nothing,” replied the other; “I only wish to get to bed.”

“Come, then,” said the colossal Whiteboy, “I’ll show you where you’re to lie.”

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They accordingly left the kitchen, passed through a tolerably large room, with two or three tables and several chairs in it, and entered another, which was also of a good size. Here there was a bed, and in this M'Carthy was to rest—if rest he could under a series of circumstances so extraordinary and exciting.

"Now," said his guide, for such we must call him—"observe this," and he brought him to a low window which opened at the back of the house, "press that spot where you see the frame is sunk a little—you can feel it, too, aisily enough in the dark—very well, press that with your thumb and the windy will open by being pushed outwards. If you feel or find that there's any danger you can slip out of it; however, don't be alarmed bekase you may hear voices. There's only one set that you may be afraid of—they're on the look-out for yourself—but I don't think it's likely they'll come here. If they do, however, and that you hear them talkin' about you, there's your way to get off. Come, now, I must try you again before I go. What's the hour?"

"Very near the right one."

"Isn't it come yet?"

"The hour is come but not the man."

"When will he come?"

"He is within sight."

"Now, good-bye, you may take a good sleep but don't strip; lie just as you are—that's twiste your life has been saved this night. In the mane time, you must give me back that overall shirt—your danger I hope is past, but I may want it to-night yet; and stay, I was near spoilin' all—I forgot to give you the right grip—here it is—if any of them shakes hands wid you, mark this—he presses the point of his thumb on the first joint of your fore-finger, and you press yours upon the middle joint of his little finger, this way—you won't forget that now?"

"Certainly not," replied M'Carthy, "I will remember it accurately."

"Very well," he proceeded, "take my advice, get to Dublin without delay—if you remain here you're a dead man; you may never see me again, so God bless you." and with these words he left him.

It is difficult to describe M'Carthy's state of mind on finding himself alone. The events of the night, fearful as they were, joined to his singular and to him unaccountable escape—his present state of uncertainty and the contingent danger that awaited him—the fact that parties were in search of him for the purpose of taking away his life, whilst he himself remained utterly unconscious of the cause which occasioned such, a bitter and unrelenting enmity against him—all these reflections, coming together upon a mind

already distracted and stupefied by want of rest, and excessive weariness—succeeded in inducing first a wild sense of confusion—then forgetfulness of his position, and ultimately sound and dreamless sleep. How long that sleep had continued he could not even guess, but be that as it may, on awaking, he heard, medley of several voices in the next room, all engaged in an earnest conversation,

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as was evident, not merely from the disjointed manner of their pronunciation but a strong smell of liquor which assailed his nose. His first impulse was to arise and escape by the window, but on reflection, as he saw by the light of their candle that the door between the two apartments was open, he deemed it safer to keep quiet for a little, with a hope that they might soon take their departure. He felt anxious, besides, to ascertain whether the party in question consisted of those whom the strange guide had mentioned as being his enemies. In the meantime, the following agreeable dialogue greeted his ears and banished for the moment every other thought and consideration.

"It was altogether a bad business this night. He was as well set as man could be, but hell pursue the pistols, they both missed fire; and thim that did go off hit the wrong men. The same two—we can't names boys, won't be the betther of it for some time. We met them, you see, in the mountains, where we wor goin' on a little business. Here's that we may never ait worse mait than mutton!"

"More power, Dick—Dick, (hiccup) you're a trojan, an' so was your father and mother afore you; here's your to—toast, Dick, that we may ever an' always ait no worse mait than—praties an' point, hurra!—that's the chat, ha!—ha!—ha!—ah, begad it's we that's the well-fed boys—ay, but sure our friends the poor parsons has been always starvin' in the counthry."

"Always starvin' the counthry!" exclaimed another, playing upon the word, "be my sowl you're right there, Ned. Well sure they're gettin' a touch of it now themselves; by japers, some o' them knows what it is to have the back and belly brought together, or to go hungry to bed, as the sayin' is; but go on, Dick, an' tell us how it was."

"Why, you see, we went back when we heard that the house was to be attacked, and only he escaped the way he did, it wouldn't be attacked; howaniver, you know it's wid O'Driscol—a short cooser to him, too, and he'll get it—it's wid O'Driscol he stops. So off we went, and waited in Barney Broghan's still-house, where we had a trifle to dhrink."

"Divil resave the bet—bettherer spirits ever came from—a still—il eye, nor dar-lent Bar—ar—ney Brogh—aghan makes—whisht!—more power!—won't the counthry soon—be our—our—own—whips!"

"Ned, hould your tongue, an' let him go 'an; well, Dick."

"Afther waitin' in the still-house till what we thought was the proper time, we went to O'Driscol's, and first struv to get in quietly, but you see we had no friends in the camp, for the men-servants all sleep in the outhouses, barrin' the butler; an' he's not the thing for Ireland. Well and good, although among ourselves, it was anything but well and

good this night; however, we demanded admittance, an' jist as if they had been on the watch for us—a windy was raised, and a voice called out to us to know what we wanted.

"'Neither to hurt or harm any one in the house,' we said, 'or belongin' to it; but there is a stranger in it that we must have out.'

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"'Ay,' said another voice, that several of us knew to be Mr. Alick Purcel's; 'here I am—-you scoundrels, but that's your share of me. If you don't begone instantly,' says he, swearin' an oath, 'we'll shoot you like dogs where you stand.'

"'We know you, Mr. Purcel,' says we, 'but it isn't you we want to-night—your turn's to come yet; time about is fair play. It's M'Carthy we want.'

"'You must want him, then,' says young O'Driscol, 'for he's not here; and even if he was, you should fight for him before you'd get him—but what might your business be wid him?' he asked. 'Why,' says we, 'there's a man among us that has an account to settle wid him.'

"'Ah, you cowardly scoundrels,' says he, 'that's a disgrace to the counthry, and to the very name of Irishman; it's no wondher for strangers to talk of you as they do—no wondher for your friends to have a shamed face for your disgraceful crimes. You would now take an inoffensive gintleman—one that never harmed a man of you, nor any one else—you'd take him out, bekaise some blackhearted cowardly villain among you has a pick (pique) against him, and some of you for half-a-crown or a bellyful of whisky would murdher him in could blood. Begone, or by the livin' Farmer, I'll scatter the contents of this blunderbush among you.' He that wishes to have M'Carthy done for was wid us himself, and tould us in Irish to fire at the windy, which we did, and on the instant slop came a shower of bullets among us. A boy from the Esker got one of them through the brain, and fell stone dead; two others—we can't mention names—was wounded, and it was well we got them off safe. So there's our night's work for us. Howaniver, the day's comin' when we'll pay them for all."

"I think, boys," said a person, whose voice was evidently that of a man advanced in years, "I think you ought to give this procthor Purcel a cardin'. He lifts the tithes of four parishes, and so far he's a scourge over four parishes; himself and his blasted citations to the bishop's court and his blasted decrees—hell purshue him, as it will. Ah, the Carders wor fine fellows, so were the Sextons."

"Bravo, Billy Bradly, conshumin' to me but I'm—I'm main proud, and that we met you com—omin' from the wake to-night; I am, upon my sow—owl."

"I believe, Billy," said another voice, "you had your own fun wid procthors in your day."

"Before the union—hell bellows it for a union——but it has been a black sight to the counthry! Amin this night—before the union, it's we that did handle the procthors in style; it isn't a cowardly threatenin' notice we'd send them, and end there. No—but I'll tell you what we done one night, in them days. There was a man, a procthor, an' he was a Catholic too, for I needn't tell you, boys, that there never was a Protestant procthor half as hard and cruel as one of our own ralligion, an' thas well known. Well, there was this procthor

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I'm tellin' of, his name was Callaghan; he was a dark-haired I'll-lookin' fellow, with a squint and a stutther; but for all that, he had a daicent, quiet, well-behaved family that offended nobody—not like our proud horsewhippin' neighbors; an', indeed, his daughters did not mount their side-saddles like some of the same neighbors, but sure we all know the ould proverb, set a beggar on horseback, and we needn't tell you where he'll ride to. Well, I'm forgettin' my story in the mane time. At that time, a party of about sixty of us made up our minds to pay Callaghan a nightly visit. The man, you see, made no distinction betune the rich and poor, or rather he made every distinction, for he was all bows and scrapes to the rich, and all whip and fagot to the poor. Ah, he was a sore blisther to that part of the counthry he lived in, and many a widow's an' orphan's curse he had. At any rate, to make a long story short, we went a set of us, a few nights afore we called upon him—that is, in a friendly way, for we had no intention of takin' his life, but merely to tickle him into good humor a bit, and to make him have a little feelin' for the poor, that he many a time tickled an' got tickled by the sogar's bagnet to some purpose; we went, I say, to a lonely place, and we dug sich a grave as we thought might fit him, and havin' buttoned and lined it well with thorns, we then left it covered over with scraws for fraid anybody might find it out. So far so good. At last the appointed night came, and we called upon him.

"'Is Mr. Callaghan in?' said one of us, knockin' at the door.

"'What's your business wid him?' said a servant girl, as she opened the door.

"'Tis to pay some tithe I want,' says the man; and no sooner was the word out of his mouth than in we boulted betther than a score of us; for the rest all stayed about the place to act accordin' to circumstances.

"'How do you do, Misther Callaghan?' says our captain, 'I hope you're well, sir,' says he, 'and in good health.'"

"'I can't say I am, sir," said Callaghan, 'I haven't been to say at all well for the last few days, wid a pain down my back.'

"'Ah, indeed no wondher, Mr. Callaghan,' says the other; 'that's the curse of the widows and orphans, and the poor in general, that you have oppressed in ordher to keep up a fat an' greedy establishment,' says he, 'but in the mane time, keep a good heart—we're friends of yours, and wishes you well; and if the curses have come down hot and heavy on your back, we'll take them off it,' says he, 'so aisily and purtily, that if you'll only shut your eyes, you'll think yourself in another world—I mane of coorse the world you'll go to,' says he;—'we have got a few nice and aisy machines here, for ticklin' sich procthors, in ordher to laugh them into health again, and we'll now set you to rights' at wanst. Comes, boys,' says he, turnin' to us, 'tie every sowl in the house, barrin' the poor

sick procthor that we all feel for, bekaise you see, Misther Callaghan, in ordher to do the thing complate, we intind to have your own family spectawthers of the cure.'

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"'No,' said one of them, a determined man he was, 'that wasn't in our agreement, nor it isn't in our hearts, to trate the innocent like the guilty.'"

"'It must be done,' said the captain.

"'No,' said the other back to him, 'the first man that mislists a hair of one of his family's heads, I'll put the contents of this through him—if this onmanly act had been mentioned before, you'd a' had few here tonight along wid you.'

"Well, sure enough, the most of us was wid the last speaker, so, instead of cardin' the sick procthor before his own family, we tied and gagged him so as that he neither spoke nor budged, and afther clappin' a guard upon the family for an hour or two, we put him on horseback and brought him up to where the grave was made. We then stripped him, and layin' him across a ditch, we got the implements, of the feadhers as we call them, to tickle him. Well, now, could you guess, boys, what these feadhers was? I'll go bail you couldn't, so I may as well tell you at wanst; divil resave the thing else, but half-a-dozen of the biggest tom-cats we could get, and this is the way we used them. Two or three of us pitched our hands well and the tails of the cats into the bargain, we then, as I said, laid the naked procthor across a ditch, and began to draw the tom-cats down the flesh of his back. God! how the unfortunate divil quivered and writhed and turned—until the poor wake crature, that at first had hardly the strength of a child, got, by the torture he suffered, the strength of three men; for indeed, afther he broke the cords that tied him, three, nor three more the back o' that, wasn't sufficient to hould him. He got the gag out of his mouth, too, and then, I declare to my Saviour his scrames was so awful that we got frightened, for we couldn't but think that the voice was unnatural, an sich as no man ever heard. We set to, however, and gagged and tied him agin, and then we carded him—first down, then up, then across by one side, and after that across by the other. * Well, when this was done, we tuk him as aisily an' as purtily as we could.

"D—n your soul, you ould ras—rascal," said the person they called Ned, "you wor—wor 'all a parcel o' bloody, d—n, hell—fi—fire cowardly villains, to—to—thrat—ate any fellow crature—crature in sich a way. Why didn't you shoo—shoo—oot him at wanst, an' not put—ut him through hell's tor—tortures like that, you bloody-minded ould dog!"

To tell the truth, many of them were shocked at the old carder's narrative, but he only, grinned at them, and replied—

"Ay, shoot—you may talk about shootin,' Ned, avick, but for all that life's sweet."

"Get on—out, you ould sinner o' perdition—to blazes wid you; life's sweet you ould 'shandina—what a purty—urty way you tuk of sweetenin' it for him. I tell—ell you, Bil—-lilly Bradly, that you'll never die on your bed for that night's wo—ork."

"And even if I don't, Ned, you won't have my account to answer for."

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“An’ mighty glad I am of it: my own—own’s bad enough, God knows, an’ for the mat—-matther o’ that—here’s God pardon us all, barrin’ that ould cardin’ sinner—amin, acheerna villish, this night! Boys, I’ll sing-yes a song.”

“Aisy, Ned,” said one or two of them, “bad as it was, let us hear Billy Bradly’s story out.”

“Well,” proceeded Billy, “when the ticklin’ was over, we took the scraws off of the grave, lined wid thorns as it was, and laid the procthor, naked and bleedin’—scarified into gris-kins—”

“Let me at—at him, the ould cardin’ mur—urdherer; plain murdher’s daicency compared to that. Don’t hould me, Dick; if I was sworn ten times over, I’ll bate the divil’s taptoo on his ould carkage.”

“Be aisy, Ned—be aisy now, don’t disturb the company—sure you wouldn’t rise your hand to an ould man like Billy Bradly. Be quiet.”

—“Scarified into griskins as he was,” proceeded Bradly looking at Ned with a grin of contempt—“ay, indeed, snug and cosily we laid him in his bed of feadhers, and covered him wid thin scraws for fear he’d catch could—he! he! he! That’s the way we treated the procthors in our day. I think I desarve a drink now!”

Drinking was now resumed with more vigor, and the proceedings of the night were once more discussed.

“It was a badly-managed business every way,” said one of them, “especially to let M’Carthy escape; however, we’ll see him ’igain, and if we can jist lay our eyes upon him in some quiet place, it’ll be enough;—what’s to be done wid this body till mornin.’ It can’t be lyin’ upon the chairs here all might.”

M’Carthy, we need scarcely assure our readers, did not suffer all this time to pass without making an effort to escape. This, however, was a matter of dreadful danger, as the circumstances of the case stood. In the first place, as we have already said, the door between the room in which he lay and that in which the Whiteboys sat, was open, and the light of the candles shone so strongly into it, that it was next to an impossibility for him to cross over to the window without being seen; in the second place, the joints of the beds were so loose and rickety that, on the slightest motion of its Occupant, it creaked and shrieked so loud, that any attempt to rise off it must necessarily have discovered him.

“We must do something with the body of this unlucky boy,” continued the speaker; “divil resave you, M’Carthy, it was on your account he came to this fate; blessed man, if we could only catch him!”

“Here, Dick, you and Jemmy there, and Art, come and let us bring him into the bed’ in the next room—it’s a fitter and more properer place for him than lyin’ upon chairs here. God be merciful to you, poor Lanty, it’s little you expected this when you came out to-night! Take up the candles two more of you, and go before us: here—steady now; mother of heaven, how stiff and heavy he has got in so short a time—and his family! what will they say? Hell resave you, M’Carthy, I say agin! I’m but a poor man, and I wouldn’t begrudge a five-pound note to get widin shot of you, wherever you are.”

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It would be idle to attempt anything like a description of M'Carthy's feelings, upon such an occasion as this. It is sufficient to say, that he almost gave himself up for lost, and began to believe, for the first time in his life, that there is such a thing as fate. Here had his life been already saved once to-night, but scarcely had he escaped when he is met by a person evidently disguised, but by whose language he is all but made certain that he is a man full of mystery, and who besides has expressed strong enmity against him. This person, with a case of pistols in his breast, compels him, as it were, to put himself under his protection; and he conducts him into a remote isolated shebeen-house, where, no doubt, there is a meeting of Whiteboys every night in the week. The M'Carthy spirit is, proverbially, brave and intrepid, but we are bound to say, that notwithstanding its hereditary intrepidity, our young friend would have given the wealth of Europe to have found himself at that moment one single mile away from the bed on which he lay. His best policy was now to affect sleep, and he did so with an apparent reality borrowed from desperation.

"Hallo!" exclaimed those who bore the candle, on looking at the bed, "who the devil and Jack Robinson have we got here? Aisy, boys—here's some blessed clip or other fast asleep: lay down poor Lanty on the ground till we see who this. Call Molly Cassidy; here, Molly, who the dickens is this chap asleep?"

Molly immediately made her appearance.

"Troth I dunna who he is," she replied; "he's some poor boy on his keepin', about tithes, tha' *He* brought here to-night."

"That's a cursed lie, Molly; wid' many respects to you, *He* couldn't a' been here to-night."

"Thank you, sir, whoever you are; but I tell you it's no lie; and he was here, and left that boy wid me, desirin' me to let him come to no injury, for that—" and this was an addition of her own, "there was hundreds offered for the takin' of him."

"Why, what did he do, did you hear?"

"He whispered to me," she replied, in a low voice, but loud enough for M'Carthy to hear, "that he shot a tithe-proctor."

"We'll see what he's made of, though," said one of them; "and, at all events, we'd act very shabbily if we didn't give him a share af what's goin'; but aisy, boys," he added, "take care—ay! aisy, I say, safe's the word; who knows but he's a spy in disguise, and, in that case, we'll have a different card to play. Hallo! neighbor," he exclaimed, giving M'Carthy a shove, who started up and looked about him with admirable tact.

"What—what—eh—what's this? who are you all? what are you about?" he asked, and as he spoke, he sprung to his feet. "What's this?" he exclaimed again. "Sweet Jasus! is

this Fagan the tithe-proctor that I shot? eh—or are you—stay—no—ah, no—not the polis. Oh, Lord, but I'm relieved; I thought you were polis, but I see by your faces that I'm safe, at last—I hope so."

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“Ay, to be sure, you’re safe—safe—as—as the bank (hiccup). You’re a gintlemen, si—r you’re a Con Roe—the ace o’ hearts you are. Ay, you shot—like a ma—an, and didn’t card—ard him wid tomcats, and then put the poo—oo—oor (hiccup) devil into a grave lined wid thorns; ah, you cowardly ould villain! the devil, in the shape of a to—to—tom-cat will card you in hell yet; an’ moreover, you’ll ne—never—ever die in your bed, you hard-hearted ould scut o’ blazes; an’ that you may not, I pray Ja—sa—sus this night—-an’ God forgive us all—amin, acheema!”

“Hould your drunken tongue, Ned,” said he who seemed to assume authority over them; “we want to put this poor boy, who died of liquor to-night, into the bed, and I suppose you’ll have no objection.”

“None at all at all,” replied M’Carthy, assuming the brogue, at which, fortunately for himself, he was an adept; “it’s a good man’s case, boys; blood an’ turf, give him a warm birth of it—he’ll find it snug and comfortable.”

They then placed the corpse on the bed but changing their mind, they raised him for a moment, putting him under the bedclothes, pinned a stocking, about his head to give him a domestic look; after which they returned to the tap-room of the shebeen-house, for such in fact it was. The latter change in the position of the corpse was made from an apprehension lest the police might come in search of the body, and with the hope that he might pass for a person asleep.

“You’ll drink something wid us,” said the principal among them; “but, before you do, I suppose you are as you ought to be.”

M’Carthy, who really was in a frightful state of thirst, determined at once to put on the reckless manner of a wild and impetuous Irishman, who set all law and established institutions at defiance.

“You suppose I am as I ought to be,” he exclaimed, with a look of contempt; “why, thin, I suppose so too: in the mane time, an’ before you bother me wid more gosther, I’d thank you to give me a drink o’ whisky and wather—for, to tell you the truth, blast me but I think there’s a confligration on a small scale goin’ an inwardly; hurry, boys, or I’ll split. Ah, boys, if you but knew what I wint through the last three days an’ three nights.”

“And what did you go through it all for?” asked the principal of them, with something of distrust in his manner.

“What did I go through it fwhor? fwhy, thin, fwhor the sake o’ the trewth—I’m a Gaaulway man, boys, and it isn’t in Can-naught you’ll fwhind the man that’s afeard to do fwhat’s right: here’s aaul your healths, and that everything may soon be as it ought to be.”

“Well,” said the other, “you are a Can-naught man sartainly, that’s clear from your tongue; but I want to axe you a question.’

“Fwhy nat? it’s but fair,—it’s but fair, I say,—take that wit j’ou, an’ I’m the boy that will answer it, if I can, bekaise you know, or maybe you don’t—but it’s a proverb we have in Cannaught wit us—that a fool may ax a question that a wise man couldn’t answer: well, what is it?”

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“Who brought you here to-night?”

“Who brought me here to-night? fwhy, thin, I’ll tell you as much of it as I like—*He* did.”

“Be japers it’s a lie, beggin’ your pardon, my worthy Cannaught man. *He* couldn’t be here to-night. I know where he was the greater part of the night, and the thing’s impossible. I don’t know you, but we must know you—ay, and we will know you.”

“Trath an’ I must know you, thin, and that very soon,” replied M’Carthy.

“Come into the next room, then,” said the other.

“Anywhere you like,” he replied, “I’m wit you; but I’m not the boy to be humbugged, or to bear your thricks upon thravellers.”

“Now,” said the other, when they had got into the room where the corpse lay, “shake hands.”

They accordingly shook hands, and M’Carthy gave him the genuine grip, as he had been taught it by the Whiteboy.

“Right,” said the man, “for so far; now, what’s the hour?”

“Very near the right one.”

“Isn’t it come yet?”

“The hour is come, but not the man.”

“When will he come?”

“He is within sight.”

“It’s all right; come in and take another dhrink,” said the man; “but still, who brought you here? for I know *He* couldn’t.”

M’Carthy replied, winking towards the kitchen, “Troth she’ll tell you that story; give me another drink o’ fwhiskey and water. Oh, I’m hardly able to sit up, I’m getthi’ so drowsy. A wink o’ sleep, I may say, didn’t crass my eye these three nights; an’ I’d wish to stretch myself beside the poor boy widin. I’m an my keepin’, boys, and fwhin you know that the law was at my heels fwhor the last foive weeks, you’ll allow I want rest: throth I must throw myself somewhere.”

“Go in, then, poor fellow, and lie down,” said the same individual, who acted as spokesman; “we know how you must feel, wid the hell-hounds of the law affcher you:

here, Jack, hould the candle for him, and help him to move over poor Lanty to make room for him; and Mrs. Cassidy," he called m a louder voice, "bring us another bottle."

"Faith, to tell you the truth," replied Jack, "I'd rather not; I don't like to go near a dead body."

"Here," said the person called Dick, "give me the candle: poor fellow! it is rest you want, and God forbid we wouldn't do everything in our power for you."

They then entered the apartment, and M'Carthy was about to lay himself beside the corpse, when his companion tapped him significantly on the shoulder, and, his finger on his lips pointed to the window and immediately whispered in his ear: "I will leave the windy so that it will open at wanst: three of us knows you, Mr. M'Carthy I will sing a song when I go in again, which they will chorus; fly then, for it's hard to say what might happen: the day is now breakin' and you might be known—in that case I needn't tell you what your fate would be."

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He then returned to his companion having carefully closed the door after him so as to prevent, as much as possible the motions of M'Carthy from being seen or heard. On rejoining them he observed "well, if ever a poor boy was fairly broken down, and he is —throth he was no sooner, on the bed than he was off; an' among ourselves, the sleep must be heavy on him when he could close his eyes an' a dead man in the bed wid him."

CHAPTER XIII.—Strange Faces—Dare-Devil O'Driscol Aroused

We have already stated that the proctors daughters had relieved their mother from the duty which, that kind-hearted woman had been in the habit of imposing on herself we mean that of attending and relieving the sick and indigent in her immediate neighborhood. On the morning in question Juli Purcel, who, together with her sister, for some time past been attending the bed of an interesting young female, to one of her father's workmen, had got up at an early hour to visit her—scarcely with a hope, it is true, that she would find the poor invalid alive. Much to her satisfaction, however, she found her better, and with some dawning prospects of ultimate recovery. She left with her mother the means of procuring such comforts as she considered might be suitable to her in the alternative of her convalescence, and had got more than home when she felt startled for a by the appearance of a person who seemed to have been engaged in some of these nightly outrages that were then so numerous in the country. The person in question had just leaped from an open breach in the hedge which bounded the right-hand side of the road exactly opposite where she was passing. The stranger's appearance was certainly calculated to excite terror, especially in a female; for although he did not wear the shirt over his clothes, his face was so deeply blackened that a single shade of his complexion could not be recognized. We need not again assure our readers that Julia Purcel possessed the characteristic firmness and courage of her family, but notwithstanding this she felt somewhat alarmed at the appearance of a lawless Whiteboy, who was at that moment most probably on his return from the perpetration of some midnight atrocity. This alarm was increased on seeing that the person in question approached her, as if with some deliberate intent.

[Illustration: PAGE 445— Alarmed at the appearance of a lawless Whiteboy]

"Stand back, sir," she exclaimed. "What can you mean by approaching me? Keep your distance."

"Why, good God! my dear Julia, what means this? Do you not know me?"

"Know you! No, sir," she replied, "how could I know such a person?"

She had unconsciously paused a moment when the Whiteboy, as she believed him to be, first made his appearance, but now she pursued her way home, the latter, however, accompanying her.

“Why, my dear Julia, I am thunderstruck! What can I have done thus to incur your displeasure?”

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“You are rude and impertinent, sir, to address me with such unjustifiable familiarity. It is evident you know me, but I am yet to learn how I could have formed an acquaintance with a person whose blackened face indicates the nature of his last night’s occupation.”

The person she addressed suddenly put up his hand, and then looking at his fingers, immediately disclosed a set of exceedingly white and well-formed teeth, which disclosure was made by a grin that almost immediately quavered off into a loud and hearty laugh.

“Ah!” he exclaimed, on recovering his gravity, “it is no wonder, my dear Julia, that you should not know me. Since I went out to shoot with Mogue Moylan, yesterday morning, I have gone through many strange adventures.”

“What!” she exclaimed, with evident symptoms of alarm and vexation, “Frank M’Carthy!” and, as she spoke, the remarkable conversation which she had had with Mogue Moylan, and the information he had given her with respect to M’Carthy’s connection with the Whiteboys, instantly flashed upon her, accompanied now by a strong conviction of its truth.

“Explain yourself, Mr. M’Carthy,” she exclaimed, in a tone of voice which indicated anything but satisfaction. “How am I to account for this unbecoming disguise, so much at variance with your habits of life and education?—perhaps I should not say your habits of life—but certainly with your education. Have you, too, been tempted to join this ferocious conspiracy which is even now convulsing the country?”

“No wonder you should ask, my dear Julia,” he replied; “but really the incidents, which have caused me to appear as you see me, are so strange, and yet so much in keeping with the spirit of the times, that I must defer, until a more convenient opportunity a full account of them.”

“Do so, sir,” she replied quickly; “allow yourself full time to give the best possible explanation of your conduct. I probably have put the question too abruptly; but, in the meantime, you will have the goodness, either to go on before me, or to fall back, as I presume, you will grant that it is neither delicate nor becoming for me, who wear no disguise and am known, to be seen at such an hour holding conversation with a Whiteboy.”

The impropriety of the thing struck him at once, and he replied, “You are right, Julia; but I perceive that something has given you offence; if it be my appearance, I tell you that I can afford you a satisfactory explanation. Proceed now—I shall remain here for a time; —whether with black face or white, I should not wish it to be supposed that we held a clandestine meeting at this hour.”

She then bowed to him with more formality than she had probably ever used, and proceeded home at a quicker pace.

She had just turned an angle of the road, and got consequently out of sight, when he heard a strong, but sweet and mellow voice singing the fine old Irish song of the Cannie Soogah, or Jolly Pedlar; and, on looking behind him, he perceived that worthy person approaching him at a tolerably rapid pace. The pedlar had no sooner glanced at M'Carthy than he grasped his tremendous cudgel with greater firmness, and putting his hand into his breast, he pulled out a pistol, and with these preparations approached our friend, still continuing his song, with the same careless glee, and an utter absence of all fear.

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"'I' m the rantin' cannie soogah'—

"God save you, neighbor! you forgot to wash your face this mornin'."

"That's its natural color," replied M'Carthy, willing, now that he was out of all danger, to have a banter with his well-known friend the pedlar.

"If you take my advice then," said the pedlar, "you'll paint it white—it's a safer color in daylight at any rate. I'm thinkin' now, that if you met a party of peelers on pathrole, they might give you a resate for turnin' the same color red and white; however, *glunthoma*, (* Hear me) if you have any design upon the Cannie Soogah, I can only tell you that I never carry money about me, and even if I did, I have a couple o' friends here that 'ud standby me; ay, in throth, three o' them, for I have brother to this fellow (showing the pistol) asleep in my breast here, and he doesn't like to be wakened, you persave; so whoever you are, jog on and wash your face, as I said, and that's a friend's advice' to you."

"Why, Cannie Soogah, is it possible you don't know me?"

"Throth I've been just thinkin' that I heard the voice before, but when or where is more than I can tell."

"Not know your friend Francis M'Carthy?"

"Eh, Mr. Francis M'Carthy! and, Lord o' life, Mr. M'Carthy, how do you come to have a black face? Surely you wouldn't belong to this business—black business I may call it—-that's goin'?"

"Well, I should hope not, Cannie; but, for all that, you see me with a black face—ha!—-ha!—ha!"

"I do indeed, Mr. Frank, and, between you and me, I'm sorry to see it."

"You will not be sorry to hear, however, that my black face saved my life last night."

"Arra thin, how was that, sir, if it's a fair question?"

M'Carthy then gave him a brief, and by no means a detailed account of the danger he had passed.

"Well," said the other, "everything's clear enough when it's known; but, as it's clear that you have enemies in the neighborhood, I think the wisest thing you could do would be to lave it at wanst."

“Such, in fact, is my determination,” replied M’Carthy; “no man, I believe, who is marked ought to remain in the country; that is, when he has no local duties that demand his presence in it, as I have not.”

“You are right, sir; start this very day if you’re wise, and don’t give your enemies—since it appears that you have enemies—an opportunity of doin’ you an injury; if they missed you twice, it’s not likely they will a third time; but tell me, Mr. M’Carthy—hem—have you no suspicion as to who they are?”

“Not exactly; indeed I cannot say I have; the whole matter is shrouded in the deepest mystery. I am not conscious of having offended or injured any one, nor can I guess why my life should be sought after; but sought after unquestionably it is, and that with an implacable resentment that is utterly unaccountable.”

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“Well, then, Mr. Frank, listen:—I met about a dozen men—strangers they wor to me, although their faces weren’t blackened—not more than twenty minutes ago; and one, o’ them said to me, ‘Cannie, every one knows’ you, and you know every one—do you know me?’”

“‘No,’ says I; ‘you have the advantage of me.’

“‘Do you know any one here?’ says he again.

“‘Well, I can’t say I do,’ says I; ’you don’t belong to this part of the country.’

“‘If we did, Cannie,’ said the spokesman, ’it isn’t face to face, in the open day, we’d spake to you.’

“‘An’ what is it you have to say to me?’ I axed; for, to tell you the truth, I was beginnin’ to get unaisy someway.

“’Nothing to you; but we’ve been tould that you’re well acquainted wid Procthor Purcel, and that you know a young man, by name M’Carthy, that stops for the present wid Mr. Magistrate O’Driscol.’

“‘I do,’ says myself; ’I’ll not deny but I know them all well—I mane in the way o’ business—for I call there often to sell my goods.’

“‘Well,’ said the spokesman, ‘will you give that letther,’ handin’ me this, ‘to Mr. M’Carthy?’” and as the pedlar spoke he placed the note in M’Carthy’s hands. “‘Do so,’ says the fellow, ’as soon as you can—if possible, widout an hour’s delay. It consarns himself and it consarns me—can I depend on you to do this?’ I said I would: and now there’s the letther——my message is delivered.”

M’Carthy read as follows:—“Francis M’Carthy, as you regard the life of the man that saved yours last night, you won’t breathe a syllable about seein’ a young man’s corpse last night in the shebeen-house, nor about anything that happened to you in it, till you hear further from me. If you’re grateful, and a gintleman, you won’t; but if you’re a traitor, you will. Your friend, as you act in this.”

“Now, Mr. Frank,” said the, pedlar, “as you know the danger that’s about you, I say that unless you get out o’ the counthry at wanst, you’ll only have a hand in your own death if anything happens. You’re, goin’ now, I suppose, to Mr. Purcel’s; if you are—if it wouldn’t be troublesome—jist say that the Cannie Soogah will call there in the coorse o’ the mornin’ for breakfast.”

He then turned off by a different road; and M’Carthy proceeded at, a very slow pace towards the proctor’s, which lay in a right line between the house to which the White-boy had brought him and O’Driscol’s. As he reached the back yard, by which he

intended to enter, anxious to get himself washed before any of them should see him—-he was met by Mogue, who after a glance or two recognized him at once by his shooting-dress.

“Why thin, good fortune to me, Misther Frank, is this you?”

“It is, Mogue; but I have no time to speak to you now. Only get me soap and a towel till I wash my face at the pump here. These are strange times, Mogue, and that was a very suspicious place of refuge to which you brought me; however, it will go hard or we shall make Mr. Frank Finnerty speak out, and to some purpose too. Get me soap and towel quick——I do not wish to be seen with this diabolical-looking face upon me.”

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“That I may be blest, sir, but the same face surprises me. Wisha, then, Mr. Frank, might one ax—”

“No,” replied M’Carthy, “do as I have desired you—some other time you may hear it, but not now.”

At this moment, Mogue, who was very circumspect in all his looks as well as in all his motions, saw by a side glance that Julia, on coming down the stairs, saw M’Carthy—a circumstance which delighted his very heart, inasmuch as he resolved to so manage it, that it might be made to confirm the hint he had already thrown out against M’Carthy—if that could be called a hint which was a broad and undisguised assertion. He accordingly watched until an opportunity presented itself of addressing her apart from listeners; and in the course of the morning, as she went to look after some favorite flowers in the garden, he met her at the gate.

“Miss Julia,” said he, “I wish to spake one word to you, i’ you plaise, miss.”

“Well, Mogue, what is it?”

“You know what I tould you about poor Misther Frank last night; and what I want to say, miss, is, that you aren’t to put any trust in it; truth, I believe I had a sup in—don’t be guided by it—it was only jokin’ about him I was—that I may never do an ill turn but it was—now.”

“You need make no apology about it, Mogue,” she replied; “I am not at all interested in the matter; but I now know that you told me truth; and as a friend and well-wisher of Mr. M’Carthy’s, in common with all my family, I am sorry to find it so.”

“Oh, well now, miss, what will I do at all? wisha, but that’s the way wid me ever and always; when the little sup is in—and indeed it wasn’t much I tuck—the truth always come out—if it was the killin’ of a man, my heart always gets the betther of ma then.”

“I saw him, Mogue, with his face blackened.”

“Wisha, wisha, but I was a haythen to mention it at all. The truth is, I like Mr. Frank—but then again, I don’t like anything like desate, or that carries two faces—only as you did see him, Miss Julia, if you’re loyal to me and won’t turn traitor on me—you’ve but to wait for a little, I’ll be able to tell you more about the same foolish—I’d rather say foolish for the sake of settin’ a Christian pat-thern, than wicked or traicherous—och, ay—for sure we all have our failins—howandiver as I was sayin’, I’ll soon be able, I think, to tell you more about him—things that will surprise you, miss, ay, and make the blood in your veins run cowld. Only I say, if you wish to hear this, and to have it as clearly proved to you as what I tould you last night, you musn’t betray me.”

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This was spoken in such an earnest, and at the same time in so simple and candid a manner, that it was actually impossible to suspect for a moment that there was falsehood or treachery intended. Nay,—his pretended effort to undeceive her as to M'Carthy's connection with the Whiteboys, was such a natural step after the drink which she supposed he had taken on the preceding night, and when cool reflection had returned to him, that she felt an indescribable curiosity—one attended with pain and terror—to hear the full extent of her lover's perfidy. Beyond all doubt, Moylan's treacherous adroitness, and the simplicity and piety under which he contrived to veil his treachery and revenge, were perfect in their way. As it was, he succeeded in banishing peace, and trust, and cheerfulness, from the heart of generous and affectionate Julia Purcel.

M'Carthy found the young men up, and after simply stating that the previous night was one of danger and adventure, he said that he wished to go to bed for a while, and that he would describe these adventures at more length after he had refreshed himself by some sleep. This, indeed, they perceived to be absolutely necessary, from his exhausted and pallid look. He accordingly went to rest—and, sooth to say, the sense of security, joined to his complete exhaustion, and the comforts of a warm good bed, gave him such a perception of luxury as he had never conceived before. In a few minutes he fell into a dreamless and unbroken trance.

Breakfast was postponed an hour on his account; for as he had extorted a promise from John Purcel, that he should either call him or have him called when the time for that meal arrived, they did not wish to disturb him so soon. In the meantime, there was many a conjecture as to the cause of his absence, and as the fact of his black face could not be concealed, there was consequently many an opinion given as to the circumstances which occasioned that unexpected phenomenon. Julia did not at all appear, but pleaded indisposition, and Alick had not yet returned-from O'Driscol's, so there was only the proctor, his son John, his wife, and Mary, to discuss the matter. At length, about half-past ten M'Carthy made his appearance, and after the usual civilities of the morning, he gave them a pretty clear, but not a very detailed account of the dangers he had undergone. After a good deal of consideration, he resolved, in accordance with the wish of his unknown friend, to suppress all mention of the attack upon O'Driscol's house, and of the young man who had been shot whilst it was going on.

Breakfast had not been concluded, when the *Cannie Soogah*, who had already got his hansel, as he called his breakfast, in the kitchen, made his appearance at the parlor window, which was immediately thrown up.

"God save all here," he exclaimed, "long life and good health to every one of you! Here I am, the rantin' Cannie Soogah, as large as life; and upon my profits maybe a little larger if the truth was known."

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“Cannie,” said the proctor, “dix me, but I’m glad to see you—and how are you, man?—-and do you carry your bones safe—or your head upon your shoulders at all, durin’ these wild times?”

“Troth, and you may well say they’re wild times, Mr. Purcel, and it’ll be wisdom in every one to keep themselves as safe as possible till they mend. Is it thruth, sir, that you’re makin’ preparations to collect your tides wid the help o’ the sogers and polis?”

“Perfectly thrue, Cannie; we’ll let the rascals that are misleading the people, as well as the people themselves, know whether they or the law are the strongest. They cannot blame us for the consequence, for we’re forced to it.”

“There will be bad work, thin, I’m afeard, sir; and bloody work, I dread.”

“That’s not our fault, Cannie, but the fault of those who will wilfully violate the law. However, let that pass, what’s the news in the world?”

“I suppose you hard, sir, that the house of your friend and neighbor, that man that hears nothin’—” here there was the slightest perceptible grin upon the pedlar’s face—“was attacked last night?”

“You don’t mean O’Driscol’s?”

“Upon my profits, I do—an’ nobody else’s.

“Hillo! do you hear this, girls? O’Driscol’s house was attacked last night!”

“Heavenly father! I hope Alick is safe,” exclaimed Mrs. Purcel, getting pale.

“Well, Cannie,” inquired the proctor, quite coolly, and as if it was a matter of mere business, “what was the consequence? I hope nobody was hurt?”

“Why, that his son Fergus, sir—that fine young man that everybody was fond of—”

“Good God!” exclaimed the proctor, now really shocked at what he supposed the pedlar was about to say; “what is it you are goin’ to tell us? I hope in God—”

“What is this!” exclaimed John; “heavens, Mary, you have spilled all the tea!”

“Mary, my child,” exclaimed the mother, running to her; “what ails you?—in God’s name, what is the matter?”

“A sudden faintness,” replied the girl, recovering herself as if by an effort; “but it is over, and I—I am better.”

“His son Fergus, sir—I hope Miss Mary is betther, sir—that his son Fergus and his father, by all accounts, gave them a warmer reception than they expected.”

“But was none of O’Driscol’s family hurt nor anybody else?” asked Purcel.

“No, sir, it seems not—and indeed I’m main glad of it.”

“D—n you, Cannie,” exclaimed the other, between jest and earnest, “why did you give me such a start? You told the affair as if Fergus had been shot—however, I’m glad that all’s safe in O’Driscol’s;—but about the night-boys? Were there any lives lost among them?”

“It’s thought not, sir,” replied the pedlar. “They left the marks o’ blood behind them, but the general opinion is, that there was no life lost; I hope there wasn’t—for, indeed, I have such a hatred against the shed-din’ of blood, that I don’t wish even to hear of it.”

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“What was their object, have you learned, in attacking O’Driscol’s place?”

“Well, then, I didn’t hear; but anyhow, they say that a new workin’ boy of O’Driscol’s, that dogged them up beyant Darby Hourigan’s, was wounded by them, along with Darby himself, in regard, of his having joined the young fellow in dodgin’ afther them.”

“Are they seriously hurt?” asked John.

“Throth that’s more than I can say, but I hope they’re not, poor fellows; at any rate, I’m sure Mr. O’Driscol will have them well taken care of till they’re recovered.”

“Certainly,” observed the proctor, “if he thinks it his duty he will: my friend O’Driscol will do what he conceives to be right.”

The pedlar nodded significantly, and honored the observation with, a broad grin. “Well, sir,” said he, changing the conversation, “he may do for that as he likes, but I must look to number one. Come, ladies—and, by the way, where’s my favorite, Miss Julia—from you?”

“She’s not quite well this morning, Cannie,” said her mother; “she has a slight headache, I believe.”

“Well, Miss Mary, then? Any purchases to-day, Miss Mary?”

“Not to-day, Cannie—the next time, perhaps.”

“Cannie,” said Purcel, “you praised your razors very highly at your last visit;—have you a good case this morning?”

“Haven’t I, sir? Wait till you see them.”

He then produced a case, which the proctor purchased, and thus closed his sales for that day.

The pedlar, however, notwithstanding that his commercial transactions had been concluded, seemed somehow in no hurry. On the contrary, he took up his pack and exclaimed, “I must go back to the kitchen, till I see what can be done there in the way of business; hearin’ that you were finishin’ breakfast, I hurried up here to sell my goods and have my chat.”

“Very well, Cannie,” said the proctor, “try the folks below, and success to you!”

The pedlar once more sought the kitchen, where he lingered in fact more like a man who seemed fatigued than otherwise, inasmuch as his eyes occasionally closed, and his head nodded, in spite of him. He kept, however, constantly watching and peeping

into the yard and lawn from time to time, as if he expected to see somebody. At length he got tip and was about to go, when he said to Letty Lenehan:—“Ah, thin, Letty, afore I go I’d give a trifle that Miss Julia ’ud see a bracelet I got since I was here last; divil sich a beauty ever was seen.”

“Very well, Cannie, I’ll tell her if you wish.”

“Then, Letty, may it rain honeycombs an you, an’ do. I’ll go round to the hall-door, ‘say, and she can look at them there; an’ see, Letty, say the sorra foot I’ll go from the place till she sees it: that it’ll be worth her while; and that if she knew how I got it, she’d fly—if she had wings—to get a glimpse of it.”

He had not been more than a minute or two at the hall-door when Julia, struck by the earnestness of the man’s language, which lost nothing in the transmission, made her appearance.

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“Well now, Cannie,” said she, “what wonderful matter is this you have got to show me?”

“Here it is, Miss Julia,” said he, in his usual jocular and somewhat loud voice, “here it is, I’ll have it in a minute—listed, Miss Julia,” he added, in a solemn and impressive undertone: “what I’m goin’ to say is more to you than aither life or death. Don’t go out by yourself—don’t go at all out early in the morning or late in the evenin’.”

“Why so, Cannie?” she asked.

“Why, miss, it came to me by accident only; but the truth is there’s a plot laid, it seems, to carry you off to the mountains.”

“By whom, Cannie?”

“That’s the very thing, miss, that I don’t know; but a strange man met me on my way here this mornin’ and tould me that he was a friend to your father—who was wanst a friend to him—and that, if I’d see you, to put you on your guard against goin’ either to the poor or sick at the hours I spoke of; and he bid me say, too, that there’s bad work and thraichery about you—and by no manner o’ means to go any distance from your father’s house—ay, thraichery, an from them you’d never think o’ suspectin’ for it. Now, miss, keep this counsel to yourself, and don’t say it was I that tould you, but as you love a fair name and an unblemished character, act upon it. Dang me,” he added, “but I had like to forget—if any message—I was bid to tell you—should come from Widow Lynch’s, sayin’ that her daughter’s dyin’ and wishes to see you, and that it’s afther dusk it’ll come—if it does come—well, if any sich message is sent to you, don’t go—nor don’t go for any message, no matther what it is—hem—ahem—oh! here I have it at last miss,” he exclaimed in his natural voice, “isn’t that a beauty?”

Julia got as pale as death for a moment, and then her brow became crimson with indignation. In fact, she saw not his bracelet—nor heard what he said in praise of it; but after a little time she said, “Thank you, Cannie, most seriously do I thank you—and you may rest assured I shall faithfully follow your advice.”

“Do so, miss,” he replied, “so God bless you and take care of you! and that’s the worst the rantin Cannie Soogah wishes you.”

Alick Purcel almost immediately joined the family in the parlor, to whom he related a full and somewhat ludicrous account of the seige of O’Driscol Castle, as he called it—or Nassau Lodge. As our readers, however, are already aware of the principal particulars of that attack, we shall only briefly recapitulate what they already know, and confine ourselves to merely one portion of it, in which portion our doughty and heroic friend, the magistrate, was most peculiarly concerned.

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“Having tested the martial magistrate’s courage,” he proceeded, “by a hint from Fergus, who was as much amused by it as I was, and finding that it was of the oozing or Bob Acres quality, we resolved, on hearing that the house was surrounded, to examine, and prime and load all the fire-arms in the house, as the case demanded. Some had been already loaded, but at all events we looked to them, and such as were uncharged we loaded on the spot, and then threw ourselves on the bed without undressing, in order that we might be ready for a surprise. Fergus and I, after having lain awake for a considerable time, taking it for granted that they had given up all intention of attacking the house, at length fell into a kind of wakeful doze from which we were at once aroused by a loud knocking at the hall-door. We quietly opened the drawing-room windows, and in a firm tone demanded what they wanted, and the answer was, that a friend of M’Carthy’s wished very much to settle an account with him. We replied he was not in the house, and that even if he were, they should fight for him before they got him. We also told them our opinion of their conduct, and said, that if they did not leave the place, we would scatter the contents of a blunderbuss among them. I should state that they knew my voice, and said that they didn’t want me then, but that my turn would come soon. When we had done speaking, a strong mellow voice, which I’ll swear was not strange to me, said something to them in Irish, and the next moment the windows were shivered with bullets. Fortunately, we kept ourselves out of their range; but at all events, we had light enough to see them put their fire-arms to their shoulders, and time enough to stand aside. We returned the fire instantly, but whether with any fatal effect or not we could not say. When the smoke cleared away they had disappeared, but early this morning traces of blood were found on the spot. A servant of O’Driscol’s, named Phil Hart, says they received no injury, for that he followed them at a distance up as far as Darby Hourigan’s, near whose door they fired a couple of shots. Darby, it appears, joined Hart, having been aroused by the report of fire-arms; and both, on being discovered on their track, were fired at and wounded. Hart says it is his blood that is on the lawn, and perhaps it may be so, but I rather think the fellows did not escape scot-free at any rate.”

“But where,” asked John, “was the magistrate all this time?”

“That’s precisely what I am coming to,” replied Alick; “the fact was that the martial magistrate, who, I believe in my soul, lay shivering with terror on his bed the whole previous part of the night, on hearing our dialogue with the Whiteboys, and the report of the fire-arms, altogether disappeared, and it was not until two or three searches had been made for him, that he was discovered squatted three double in the coalhole. On hearing and recognizing our voices, he started up, and commenced searching

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round him in the aforesaid coal-hole. ’Come, sir!’ he exclaimed, in a voice of most ludicrous swagger, ’come, you scoundrel! I’ll unkennel you—whoever may be afraid of you, I’m not—my name’s O’Driscol, sirra—Fitzgerald O’Driscol, commonly called for brevity’s sake, Fitzy O’Driscol—a name, sir, that ought to strike terror into you—and if it didn’t, it isn’t here I’d be hunting you—out with you now—surrendher, I say, or if you don’t upon my honor and conscience you’re a dead man.’ ‘What’s the matter, sir?’ I asked—’in Heaven’s name, who have you there?’ ‘Who is in the coalhole, father?’ asked Fergus, with a face whose gravity showed wonderful strength of muscle. ‘Yes, gentlemen,’ replied the magistrate ’heroes that you are—riflemen from a window—upon my honor and conscience, I think courage is like the philosopher’s stone—here have I, while you were popping like schoolboys out of the window, pursued their leader single-handed into the coal-hole, for I’m sure he’s in it, or if not, he must have escaped some other way—d—n the villain, I hope he hasn’t escaped, at all events—here, lights, I say, and guard all the passes—d—n it, let us do our business with proper discipline and skill—fall back, Fergus—and you, John, advance—steady now—charge the coal-hole, boys, and I’ll lead you on to the danger.’ Of course he was half drunk, but at the same time he managed to conceal his cowardice with considerable adroitness. I need not say that upon examining the coal-hole, and every other possible place of concealment there was no desperate leader found, nor any proof obtained that an entrance had been effected at all. ‘Well, come,’ exclaimed O’Driscol, ’although the villain has escaped, we managed the thing well—all of us—he must have given me the slip from the kitchen and leaped out of a window. You acted well, boys; and as I like true courage and resolution—ay, an’ if you like, downright desperation—being a bit of a dare-devil myself—I say I will give you a glass of brandy-and-water each, and the intrepid old veteran will take one himself. Ah! wait till my friend the Castle hears of this exploit—upon my sowl and honor, it will be a feather in my cap.’ Fergus whispered to me, ‘It ought to be a white one, then.’ We accordingly adjourned in the dining-room, where after having finished a tumbler of brandy-and-water each, we at length went to bed, and thus closed the seige of O’Driscol Castle.”

Julia on hearing of this attack and its object, felt her mind involved in doubt and embarrassment. She could not reconcile the desire of the Whiteboys to injure M’Carthy, with the fact of his having, by his own admission, spent the night among them. Or what if the attack was a mere excuse to prevent any suspicion of his connection with them at all? She knew not, and until she had arrived at some definite view of the matter, she resolved to keep as much aloof from M’Carthy as she could possiby do without exciting observation. In the course of the morning, however, they met accidentally, and the short dialogue which took place between her and him did not at all help to allay the suspicions with which her mind was burdened and oppressed.

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“My dear Julia,” said he, “I see that you are offended with me, but indeed you need not; I can give you a full and satisfactory explanation of my black face, if that be the cause of offence.”

“Some other time, Mr. M’Carthy, I may hear your explanation; but not just now.”

“I cannot bear your displeasure,” he added; “and you know it.”

“I wish you had felt as anxious not to deserve it.”

“I am unconscious of having deserved it—but hear me, dearest Julia------”

“Well, sir, I do.”

“Do you not go to see Widow Lynch’s poor sick daughter this evening?”

“No, sir.”

“No, sir, and well, sir—good heavens! what means this all?—I am anxious, I say, to give you a full explanation, and if you would only pay a visit this evening to the widow’s, I could meet you and explain everything.”

The Cannie Soogah’s warning here pressed upon her mind with peculiar force.

“But,” she replied, “I shall not go this evening.”

“Well, will you say what evening you intend to go?”

“No, sir,” she replied; “I don’t intend to go in future, either morning or evening. Good-bye, Mr. M’Carthy, some time must elapse before I can listen to your explanation.”

“Is this generous, Julia?”

“I believe it is just, Frank. Ask your own conscience, whether you are entitled to any confidence from me—good-bye.”

And with these words, she tripped up to the drawing-room, where she joined her mother and sister.

M’Carthy, after having settled down from the tumult occasioned by these cowardly and murderous attempts upon his life, could not help indulging in the deepest indignation against the vile and unmanly systems of secret confederation in crime, by which the

country was infested and disgraced; its industry marred, its morality debauched, and its love of truth changed into the practice of dissimulation, falsehood, and treachery. He accordingly determined, as far as in him lay, to penetrate the mystery, and ascertain the danger by which he was surrounded, and if possible, to punish his unmanly and ferocious enemies. He consequently lodged informations against Frank Finnerty, for whose apprehension a warrant was issued; but thanks to the kind services of his friend Mogue Moylan, Finnerty was duly forewarned, and when our friend, the heroic O'Driscol, armed to the teeth, and accompanied by as many police as would have captured a whole village, arrived at and surrounded his house, he found that the bird had flown, and left nothing but empty walls behind him.

CHAPTER XIV.—State of the Country

—O'Driscol rivals Falstaff—Who Buck English was supposed to be.

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M'Carthy, on finding that he had failed, in consequence of the disappearance of Finnerty, in developing the system which nurtured such cowardly and inhuman principles, now found it necessary, independent of all threats uttered against him, to return to college in order to prosecute his studies, and maintain the high position which he had there obtained by honors already won, and the general brilliancy of his answering. A kind of love-quarrel had taken place between himself and Julia Purcel, which, as is frequently the case, prevented him on the one side from giving, and her on the other, from receiving an explanation. The consequence was that they separated, each laboring under that yearning of the heart towards the other, which combines the most delicious sensations connected with the passion—tenderness disguised under an impression of offence, hope, uncertainty, and that awful anger that is never to forgive or change, but which, in the meantime, is furtively seeking for an opportunity to be reconciled, and vent its rage in kisses and in tears.

In the meantime, the state of the country was fast becoming such as had seldom, or perhaps never been recollected by living man. The confederation, conspiracy, opposition, rebellion, or what you will, had risen to a gigantic height. In point of fact, it ought rather to have been termed an unarmed insurrection. Passive resistance was the order and the practice of the day. The people were instructed by the agitators, or rather by the great agitator himself, to oppose the laws without violating them; a piece of advice which involved an impossibility in the first place, but which was as false in itself, as replete with dishonesty and imposture, as it was deceitful and treacherous to the poor people who were foolish and credulous enough to be influenced by it. We are not now assailing the Whigs for the reforms which they effected in the Irish establishment, because we most cordially approve of them. Nay, more, we are unquestionably of opinion that that reform was not only the boldest, the most brilliant, but the most just and necessary act of policy, which they ever offered as a boon to this country. But what we do blame them for is, that they should have suffered themselves to be kept in such gross ignorance of the state of the Irish church, as to allow its shocking and monstrous corruptions to remain uncorrected so long; that they should have allowed themselves to be baffled and imposed upon, and misled by the hypocritical howlings and fictitious alarms of the old Tory party, who, whenever they felt the slightest dread that the Irish Establishment would slip through their fingers, filled heaven and earth with prophetic denunciations against England, not forbearing to threaten the very throne itself with a general alienation of Protestant attachment and allegiance, if any of its worst and rottenest corruptions should be touched. No; the Whigs should have known the state and condition of

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the Irish church from clear and correct sources, and not have subjected the country to the pernicious and degrading consequences of a turbulent agitation. What is just in itself ought to be conceded to reason and utility, and not withheld until violence and outrage seem to extort it; for this only holds out a bounty to future agitation. Be this as it may, the whole country, at the period of which we write, was in a state of general commotion and tumult altogether unparalleled. Law was completely paralyzed, set at defiance, and laughed at. Large bodies, consisting of many thousands, traversed different parts of the country in open day, swearing every one they met to resist the payment of tithes in every way and in every sense. Many gentlemen, who had either paid it or been suspected to do so, or who had been otherwise obnoxious as landlords, or for strong party feeling, were visited by these licentious multitudes with an intention of being put to death, whilst the houses of several wealthy farmers, who had unfortunately paid the hated impost, were wrecked in the face of day. Nor was this all: men were openly and publicly marked for destruction, and negotiations for their murder entered into in fairs, and markets, and houses of entertainment, without either fear or disguise. In such a state of things, it is unnecessary to say that many lives were taken, and that great outrages were from time to time committed. Two or three clergymen were murdered, several tithe-proctors or collectors of tithe were beaten nearly to death; and to such a pitch did the opposition rise, that at length it became impossible to find any one hardy and intrepid, or, in other words, mad enough, to collect tithe, unless under the protection either of the military or police. Our friends, Proctor Purcel and his sons, were now obliged, not merely to travel armed, but frequently under the escort of police. Their principal dread, however, was from an attack upon their premises at night; and, as fearful threats were held out that such an attack would be made, Purcel, who, as the reader knows, was a man of great wealth, engaged men to build a strong and high wall about his house and out-offices, which could now be got at only through a gate of immense strength, covered with thick sheet-iron, and bound together by bars of the same metal, in such a way that even the influence of fire could not destroy it, or enable an enemy to enter.

With such a condition of society before us, it is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that the privations of the Protestant clergy were not only great, but dreadful and without precedent. It was not merely that their style of living was lowered or changed for the worse, but that they suffered distress of the severest description—want, destitution, and hunger, in their worst forms. First came inconvenience from a delay in the receipt of their incomes; then the necessity of asking for a longer term of credit; after this the melancholy certainty that tithes would

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not be paid; again followed the pressure from creditors for payment, with its distracting and harassing importunities; then the civil but firm refusal to supply the necessaries of life on further credit; then again the application to friends, until either the inclination or ability failed, and benevolence itself was exhausted. After this came the disposal of books, furniture, and apparel; and, when these failed, the secret grapple with destitution, the broken spirit, the want of food—famine, hunger, disease, and, in some cases, death itself. These great sufferings of a class who, at all events, were educated gentlemen, did not occur without exciting, on their behalf, deep and general sympathy from all classes. In their prosperity, the clergy, as a body, raised and spent their income in the country. They had been kind and charitable to the poor, and their wives and daughters had often been ministering angels to those who were neglected by the landlords or gentry of the neighborhood, their natural protectors. It is true, an insurrection exhibiting the manifestation of a general and hostile principle against the source of their support, had spread over the country; but, notwithstanding its force and violence, the good that they had done was not forgotten to them in the hour of their trials and their sorrows. Many a man, for instance, whose voice was loud in the party procession, and from whose lips the shout of “down with the blood-stained tithe!” issued with equal fervor and sincerity, was often known to steal, at the risk of his very life, in the dead hour of night, to the house of, the starving parson and his worn family, and with blackened face, that he might not by any possibility be known, pay the very tithes for whose abolition he was willing to peril his life. Nay, what is more, the priest himself—-the actual living idolatrous priest, the benighted minister of the Scarlet Lady, has often been known to bring, upon his own broad and sturdy shoulders, that relief in substantial food which has saved the lives of more than one of those ungodly parsons, who had fattened upon a heretic church, and were the corrupted supporters of the mammon of unrighteousness. Here, in fact, was the popish, bigoted priest—the believer in transubstantiation, the denouncer of political enemies, the advocate of exclusive salvation, the fosterer of pious frauds, the “surpliced ruffian,” as he has been called, and heaven knows what besides, stealing out at night, loaded like a mule, with provisions for the heretical parson and his family—for the Bible-man, the convent-hunter, the seeker after filthy lucre, and the black slug who devoured one-tenth of the husbandman’s labors. Such, in fact, was the case in numberless instances, where the very priest himself durst not with safety render open assistance to his ecclesiastical enemy, the parson.

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In this combination against tithe, it is to be observed, that, as in all other agitations, whether the object be good or otherwise, those who took a principal part among the people in the rural districts were seldom any other than the worst and most unprincipled spirits—reckless ruffians and desperate vagabonds, without any sense of either religious or moral obligation to restrain them from the commission of outrage. It is those men, unfortunately, who, possessed of strong and licentious energies, and always the most active and contaminating in every agitation that takes place among us, and who, influenced by neither shame nor fear, and regardless of consequences, impress their disgraceful character upon the country at large, and occasion the great body of society to suffer the reproach of that crime and violence which, after all, only comparatively a few commit.

Our friend the proctor, we have already stated, had collected the tithes of three or four parishes; and it is unnecessary, therefore, to say, that the hostility against him was spread over a wide and populous district. This was by no means the case with O'Driscol, who was much more the object of amusement to the people than of enmity. The mask of bluster, and the cowardly visage it covered, were equally well known in the neighborhood; and as the Irish possess a quick and almost instinctive perception of character, especially among their superiors, we need scarcely say that they played off, on more than one occasion, many ludicrous pranks at his expense. He was certainly a man of great importance, at least in his own opinion, or if he did understand himself, he wished, at all events, to be considered so in the eyes of others. He possessed, however, much more cunning than any one would feel inclined to attribute to him, and powers of flattery that were rarely ever equalled. He was, in fact, one of the few men who could administer that nauseating dose, without permitting the person who received it to become sensible that he did so. He had scraped together some wealth by the good oldsystem of jobbing—had got himself placed upon the Grand Panel of the county,' and ultimately, by some corrupt influence at an election, contrived to have the merit of returning the government candidate, a service which procured him a magistracy. O'Driscol was very fond of magnifying trifles, and bestowing, a character of importance upon matters that were of the utmost insignificance. For instance, if a poor decrepit devil, starving in a hut, and surrounded by destitution and beggary, were to be arrested for some petty misdemeanor, he would mount his horse with vast pomp, and proceed at the head of twelve or eighteen armed policemen to make his caption. But, on the contrary, whenever any desperate and intrepid character was to be apprehended—-some of those fellows like the notorious Ryan (Puck), who always carried a case of pistols or a blunderbuss about them, or perhaps both——our valiant magistrate was either out of the way or had a visit from the gout—a complaint which he was very fond of parading, because it is one of aristocratic pretensions, but one, of which, we are honestly bound to say, he had never experienced a single twitch.

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We have already stated that he had received a threatening notice, and attempted to describe the state of conflicting emotions into which it threw him. We forgot to state, however, that he had before received several other anonymous communications of a somewhat more friendly stamp; the difference between them being the simple fact, that the one in question was read, and the others of his own composition.

The latter were indeed all remarkable for containing one characteristic feature, which consisted in a solemn but friendly warning that if he (the magistrate) were caught at a particular place, upon a particular day, it might be attended with dangerous consequences to himself. Our magistrate, however, was not a man to be frightened by such communications; no,—He was well known in the neighborhood, and he would let the cowardly scoundrels feel what a determined man could be. He thought his daredevil character had been sufficiently known; but since it seemed that it was not, he would teach them a lesson of intrepidity—the scoundrels. His practice was, on such occasions, to get a case of pistols, mount his horse, and, in defiance to all entreaty to the contrary, proceed to the place of danger, which he rode past, and examined with an air of pompous heroism that was ludicrous in the extreme.

One morning, about this time, he sat at breakfast, reading the Potwollopers' Gazette, or the No-Popery Advocate, when, as usual, he laid it down, and pushing it over to Fergus, he resumed his toast and butter.

"Well, now," said he, upon my honor and conscience, it is extraordinary how these matters creep into the papers. At all events, Fergus, my friend the Castle will persaive what kind of stuff it's best supporters consist of."

"Very appropriate, sir," replied Fergus—"stuff is an excellent word."

"And why is it an excellent word, Fergy?"

"It is so significant, sir, as an illustration?"

"Well, I dare say it is," returned the father; "don't we say of a game man, such a fellow has good stuff in him? but, setting that aside, do look at the paragraph about that attack! My friend Swiggerly has done me full justice. Upon my word, it is extramely gratifying, and especially in such critical times as these, read it for Kate there, will you?"

"What is it, papa?"

"An account, my dear, of the attack made upon us, and of—but Fergus will read it out for you."

Fergus accordingly read as follows:—

EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE AND INTREPIDITY—SEVERAL HUNDRED WHITEBOYS MOST SPIRITLY REPULSED—FITZGERALD O'DRISCOL, ESQ. J. P.

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“On the night of the 24th ultimo, the house of this most active and resolute magistrate was attacked by a numerous band of ruffianly Whiteboys, amounting to several hundreds—who, in defiance of his well-known resolution, and forgetting the state of admirable preparation and defence in which he always maintains his dwelling-house, surrounded it with the intention, evidently, of visiting upon him the consequences of his extraordinary efforts at preserving the peace of the country, and bringing offenders to justice. The exact particulars of this fearful conflict have not reached us, but we may, without offence, we trust, to the modesty of Mr. O’Driscol, venture to give a general outline of the circumstances, as far as we have heard them. About two o’clock, on the morning alluded to, and while the whole family were asleep, an attempt was made to break open the hall-door. This, however, having been heavily chained, barred, and bolted, and the keys removed to Mr. O’Driscol’s sleeping-room, resisted all attempts of the Whiteboys to enter—a circumstance which filled them with fury and indignation. In a moment the family were alarmed, and up. On that night it so happened that Mr. Alick Purcel, a friend and neighbor of Mr. O’Driscol’s, happened to be staying with them, and almost immediately Mr. O’Driscol, placing the two young men in something like a steady military position, led them on personally, in the most intrepid manner, to a position behind the shutters. From this place the fire of the enemy was returned for a considerable time with equal bravery, and, it is presumed, effect, as the grounds about the hall-door were found the next morning to be stained with blood in several places. Tho heroism of the night, however, is yet to be related. Mr. O’Driscol, who was certainly supported by his son and Mr. Purcel in a most able and effective manner, hearing a low, cautious noise in the back part of the house, went to reconnoitre, just in time to grapple with the leader of these villains—a most desperate and ferocious character-cruel, fearless, and of immense personal strength. He must have got in by some unaccountable means not yet discovered, with the hope, of course, of admitting his accomplices from without. A terrific struggle now ensued, which terminated by the fellow, on finding, we presume, the mettle of the person opposed to him, flying down stairs towards the kitchen, and from thence, as Mr. O’Driscol thought, to the coal-hole, whether he fearlessly pursued him, but in vain. On examining the coal-hole, which Mr. O’Driscol did personally in the dark—we really shudder at that gentleman’s absence of all fear—the ferocious Whiteboy could not be found in it. The presumption is that he gave Mr. O’Driscol the slip during pursuit, doubled back, and escaped from the lobby window, which, on examination, was found open. On this almost unprecedented act of bravery it is useless to indulge in comment, especially as we are restrained by regard for Mr. O’Driscol’s personal feelings and well-known modesty on this peculiar subject. His worthy son, we are aware, inherits his father’s courage.”

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“The devil I do!” exclaimed Fergus; “ha! ha! ha! Faith, I’m braver than I had given myself credit for.”

“And we are glad to hear that the present government, sensible of their obligations to Fitzgerald O’Driscol, Esq., are about to confer the office of Stipendiary Magistrate upon his son. We are, indeed, glad to hear this; the office cannot possibly be better bestowed; and thus, so far as relates to his father, at least, may valuable public services in critical times be ever appropriately rewarded!”

“Well, Fergy, what do you think of our friend Swiggerly now?”

“In God’s name, sir, what does all this rigmarole, in which there is scarcely a word of truth, mean?”

“Mane! why it manes, sir, that I am anxious to get you a Stipendiary Magistracy.”

“A Stipendiary Magistracy, father, if you wish and if you can; but not by such means as this—it is shameful, father, indeed it is.”

“I tell you, Fergus, that unless a man plays a game in this world, he has little business in it. Manes! Why, what objections can you have to the manes? A bit of a harmless paragraph that contains very little more than the truth. I tell you that I threw it out as a hint to my friend the Castle, and I hope it will act on it, that’s all.”

“Well, well,” exclaimed the son, laughing, “take care you don’t overdo the business; for my own part, I wish to obtain a magistracy only by honorable means;—that is, since you have put the matter into my head, for until last week I never once thought of it.”

“Neither did I until a couple of weeks ago; and between you and me, Fergus, the country’s in a devil of a state—a very trying one for Stipendiaries,” replied his father; “but it struck me that I am myself rather advanced in years for such an appointment, and, in the meantime, that something of the kind might be in your way, and it is for this rason that I am feeling the pulse of my friend the Castle.”

“But I am too young, sir, for such an appointment.”

“Not at all, you blockhead; although you get a magistracy in the paragraph, you don’t imagine, I expect, you should get one directly. No, no; there are gradations in all things. For instance, now,—first a Chief Constableship of Police; next, a County Inspectorship; and thirdly, a Stipendiary Magistracy. It is aisy to run you through the two first in ordher to plant you in the third—eh? As for me I’m snug enough, unless they should make me a commissioner, of excise or something of that sort, that would not call me out upon active duty but, at all events, there’s nothing like having one’s eye to business, and being on the lookout for an opportunity.”

“You know, father,” observed Fergus, “I don’t now nor ever did approve of the system, or principle you pursue in these matters, and as I will not join you in them, I can only say if I do receive a government appointment, I shall not owe it to anything personally unbecoming myself.”

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“Ah, you’re young and green yet, Fergus, but time and expariance will, open your eyes to your own interests, and you’ll live to acknowledge the folly of having scruples with the world—ay will you.”

“It may be so, sir; but I thank God the time you speak of has not come yet.”

“Well,” continued his father, “now that we have talked over that matter, read this;",and, as he spoke, he handed Fergus a notice, evidently a friendly one, to the following; effect—

“Hunda.

“Mr. O’Driscol.—It’s said that ye’re to goto Lisnagola on Shoosda next. Now I tel ye there’s a set upon yer life—don’t go on that day, or it’ll bee worser for ye—any way don’t pass Philpot’s corner betuxt 2 and fore o’cluck.

“A FRIEND THAT YEW WANST SAVED.”

“What do you think of that, Fergus?”

“Why, sir, it’s a proof that you have friends among these turbulent people. I hope you don’t intend going to Lisnagola on that day; by the way it must mean this day, for this is Tuesday, and the note or notice, or whatever you call it, is dated on Sunday, I perceive. I trust you don’t intend to to-day, sir, and expose yourself.

“I shall certainly go, sir,” replied his father, rising up quite indignantly. “What do you think I am? Do you think, sir, that I—Fitzgerald O’Driscol, am the man to be intimidated by blood-thirsty dogs like these? No, sir. I shall, at the proper time, arm myself, mount my good horse and ride, calm as a milestone, past the very spot. D—n the rascals! do they think to terrify me?”

“If the author of that letter does,” replied Fergus, “he is most certainly mistaken;” and as he said so he looked significantly at his sister, who smiled as one would who thoroughly understood the matter.

Just at that moment, Alick Purcel was seen approaching the hall-door, and in a few minutes he joined them.

“Well, Alick,” said the magistrate, “all well at Longshot Lodge—all safe and sound for so far?”

“All well, sir, thank you, and safe and sound for so far.”

“Do you know what I think, Alick?”

“No, sir.”

“Upon my honor and conscience I am of opinion, that it’s something in your favor to live so near to me. I act as a kind of protection for you, Alick. I am morally convinced, ay, and have good raison to know it from more than one quarther, that your father’s house would have been attacked long since, if it were not for the near neighborhood of dare-devil O’Driscol. And yet these fellows like courage, Alick; for instance, read that warning. There you see is a plot laid for my life; but I’ll show the villains that they have the wrong sow by the ear. I have showed them as much before, and will show them as much again.”

He then handed the note, with an air of triumph, to Alick, who read it over and assumed a look of great terror.

“Of course you will be guided by this, Mr. O’Driscol.”

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“Of course I will not, Mr. Purcel; not a bit of it. I will ride—armed, of course—past Philpot’s corner this very day, at half-past three o’clock; that is all I say.”

“Well all I can say,” returned Alick, “is that you are a fearfully-determined man, sir.”

“I grant that, Alick, I know I am; but then it is in my nature. I was born with it—I was born with it. Any news?”

“Why not much, sir. That scoundrel, Buck English, has written to my father, notwithstanding all that happened, to know if he will consent to let Julia marry him. He says in his letter that, although he may be put off with a refusal now, he will take good care that he shan’t be unsuccessful the next time he asks her.”

“Does nobody, or can nobody find out how that scoundrel—” here the valorous magistrate’s voice sank as if instinctively, and he gave a cautious glance about him at the same time, but seeing none but themselves, present he resumed his courage—-“how that, rascal finds manes to cut the figure he-does?”

“I believe not,” replied the other; “but for my part, I am often disposed to look upon the man as mad; yet still the puzzle is to think how he lives in such buck style—the vagabond. He certainly is involved in some-mystery, for every one you meet or talk to is afraid of him.”

“No, not every one, Alick; come, come, my boy, every general rule has an exception; whisper—I could name you one who is not afraid of him”—and this he said in a jocular tone—“I only wish,” he added, raising his voice with more confidence, “that I could get my thumb upon him, I would—”

He was here interrupted by a loud but mellow voice, which rang cheerfully with the following words:—

“I’m the rantin’ Cannie Soogah.”

“Ha! the Jolly Pedlar! Throw open the window, Fergus, till we have a chat with him. Well, my rantin’ Cannie Soogah, how are you?”

“Faith, your honor, I’m jist betwixt and between, as they say—naither betther nor worse, but mixed middlin’, like the praties in harvest. However, it’s good to be any way at all in these times; so thank God my head’s on my body still.”

“Cannie,” said Fergus, “we were just-talking of Buck English. Mr. Purcel here-says that there’s some mystery about him; for nobody knows how he lives, and every one almost is afraid of him. My Father, however, denies that every one is afraid of him.”

“Buck English!” exclaimed the pedlar. “Mr. O’Driscol, darlin’, what did your honor say about him?”

“Why, I—I—a-hem—I wished to have the pleasure, Cannie, of—of—shaking hands, with the honest fellow; was not that it, Alick?”

“Hands, or thumbs, or something that way,” replied Alick; “threatening him, as it were.”

“Shaking hands, upon honor, Alick—thumb to thumb, you know.”

“Well, Mr. O’Driscol, you’re well known! to have more o’ the divil than the man in you—-beggin’ your pardon, sir, for the freedoms, I’m takin’—but it’s all for your own good I’m doin’ it. Have you e’re a mouse-hole about your place, sir?”

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“A-hem! Why, Cannie,” asked O’Driscol, with an expression of strong alarm in his face —“why do you ask so—so—singular a question as that?”

“Bekaise, sir, sooner than you should breathe—mind, breathe’s the word—one syllable against Buck English, I’d recommend you to go into the mouse-hole I spoke of, and never show your face out of it agin. I—an’ everybody knows me, an’ likes me, too, I hope—I meek—hem! throth I do make it a point never to name him at all, barrin’ when I can’t help it. Nobody knows anything about him, they say. By all accounts, he never sleeps a week, or at any rate more than a week, in the same place; an’ whatever dress he has on comin’ to any particular part of the counthry, he never changes; but they say that if you find him in any other part of the counthry, he has a different dress on him: he has a dress, they say, for every part.”

“He has honored my father,” said Alick, “by sending him a written proposal for my sister Julia—ha! ha! ha!”

“Well, now, did he, Mr. Alick?”

“Yes; and he says that he may be refused now, but won’t the next time he asks her.”

“Well, then, Mr. Alick, I’ll tell you what I’d advise you to do: go home, and tell your father to send for him, if he knows where to find him, and let him not lose a day in marryin’ her to him; for if everything is thrue that’s said of him, he was never known to break a promise, whether it was for good or ill.”

“Ha! ha! ha! thank you, Cannie,—excellent!” replied Alick.

“Who can he be, Cannie?” asked Miss O’Driscol, “this person of such wonderful mystery? I have never seen him, but I wish I could.”

“Ay, have you, often—I’ll engage, Miss.”

“And so do I,” added her father; “I wish to see him also, and to have everything mysterious cleared up.”

“Well,” continued the pedlar, “I know nothing myself about him, only as I hear; but if all’s thrue that’s said, he could give your father, and you, Mr. Alick, lave to walk through the whole counthry in the hour of noonday or midnight, widout a finger ever bein’ raised against one o’ you; and as for you, Mr. O’Driscol, he could have the house pulled about your ears in an hour’s time, if he wished—ay, and he would, too, if he heard that you spoke a harsh word of him.”

“As for me, Cannie,” replied the magistrate, “I trust I’m a Christian man, and not in the habit of abusing the absent. Indeed, I don’t see what right any one has to make

impertinent inquiries into the life or way of living of any respectable person—I do not see it, Cannie; and, I assure you, I always set my face against such prying inquiries."

"I know, myself," continued the pedlar, "that there's a great many things said about him, an' people wishes to know who he is. Now I was tould a thing wanst by a sartain parson—I won't say who, but I believe it's not a thousand miles from the truth I'm spakin' about who he is."

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“And who is he?” asked Fergus; “out with it Cannie.”

“Well, then,” he proceeded, in a cautious and confidential whisper, “it’s said by them that ought to know, that he’s an illaygal brother to the Great Counsellor. There now, you have it.”

“Is it to Counsellor O’Connell?”

“Ay, to Counsellor O’Connell—divil a one else. He’s as like him as two pays, barrin’ the color o’ the hair. Sure the Counsellor puts every one down that crosses him, and so does Buck English. Miss Katherine, darlin,’ won’t you buy something? Here’s the best of everything; don’t be afeard of high prices. My maxim always is—to buy dear and sell chape, for the sake o’ the fair sect. Come, gintlemen, Cannie Soogah’s pack is a faist for the leedies—hem—I mane a feest for the ladies—hillo—ha! ha! ha! there’s a touch of Buck English himself for you. Well, of coorse, what’s a faist for the ladies must surely be a thrate to the gintlemen.”

Alick here availed himself of M’Carthy’s experience, and presented Miss O’Driscol with a beautiful bracelet; O’Driscol and Fergus purchased some pocket-handkerchiefs and other matters, and our Jolly Pedlar went on his way rejoicing.

Fergus O’Driscol who was a shrewd and keen observer, could perceive, during the foregoing interview, that there was on the pedlar’s countenance an expression of grave, hard, solemn irony, which it was difficult to notice, or having noticed it, to penetrate, or in any way analyse or understand. To him it was a complete enigma, the solution of which seized very strongly on his imagination, and set all his powers of reasoning and investigation to work. All admitted there was a mystery about Buck English; but Fergus felt a strong impression that there was one equally impenetrable about the pedlar himself. Having little else, however, than a passing thought, a fancy, on which to ground this surmise, he prudently concealed it, from an apprehension of being mistaken, and, consequently, of subjecting himself to ridicule.

Fergus now brought Alick out to the garden, where they seemed to enjoy a very merry dialogue if several fits of hearty laughter may be said to constitute mirth; after this Alick went home; not, however, we should say until he first contrived to enjoy a short *tete-a-tete* with Miss O’Driscol.

When the hour for the departure of the magistrate to test the resolution of the “men in buckram,” who had resolved upon his assassination, had arrived, he most magnanimously got a double case of pistols, and in spite of all remonstrance from both son and daughter, he mounted his horse—Duke Schomberg—and in a most pompous and heroic spirit rode forth to quell the latent foe.

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We have already stated that O'Driscol's real character was thoroughly known by the country-folks around him, as the character of every such person usually is. Whilst he proceeds, then, upon his daring and heroic enterprise, we beg leave to state very briefly, that Fergus and Alick Purcel, having laid their heads together, procured, each, two of their father's laborers, whom they furnished material wherewith to blacken their faces; not omitting four large cabbage-stalks, with the heads attached, and kept under the right arm of each. These had been trimmed and blackened also, in order to have more the appearance of fire-arms. Thus armed, and with appropriate instructions, they planted themselves inside the hedges which inclosed the narrow turn of the road at Philpot's cornet, and awaited their "unsuspecting victim," as the phrase unhappily, and with too much truth, goes.

O'Driscol, on approaching the fatal spot, regretted that there were no eyes upon this extraordinary manifestation of courage. He stretched up his neck and looked about him in all directions, with a hope that some one might observe the firmness and utter absence of all fear with which he came up to the place where the assassins were to lie in wait for him. He had now come within ten or twelve yards of it when, such was the force of his own cowardly imagination, that it had worked him up from a fictitious into a real terror; and on approaching the spot, he could not prevent himself from coughing pretty loudly, in order to ascertain that there really was no such thing as ah assassin behind the hedges. He coughed, we say, with a double case of pistols in his hand, when, heaven and earth! was the cough responded to—and in a jarring style—from behind the hedge to the right? He paused, pulled up his horse, and coughed again, when it also was responded to from that on the left; and at the same time four faces, dreadfully blackened, peeped, two on each side of him, and levelling their black and dreadful-looking blunderbusses—for they could be nothing else—were about to rid the world of a loyal magistrate, and deprive the Castle of its best friend and correspondent, when the latter gentleman, wheeling Duke Schomberg round, put him to most inglorious flight, and scampered off at the top of his speed.

The jest was admirably managed; and nothing could exceed the unction with which he related his encounter with the villains. In fact, upon Falstaff's principle, he had discharged his pistols on the way home, as a proof of the desperate contest he had had with the blood-thirsty scoundrels. Like all his other exploits, however, it was added to the catalogue of his daring conflicts with the Whiteboys, and, ere the lapse of twenty-four hours, was in possession of "his friend the Castle."

CHARTER XV.—Scene in a Parsonage—An Anti-Tithe Ringleader.

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Hitherto we have described the tithe-agitation as one which was externally general as well as deep-rooted; and so far we were perfectly correct. Our readers, however, are not to understand by this that there did not exist among the people—ay, and the priesthood too—a strong under-current of sympathy for the sufferings of the protestant clergy. The latter had indeed been now reduced to such privation as it is pitiable even to look back upon. One-half the glebe-houses presented such symptoms of cold nakedness and destitution, such a wrecked and gutted appearance, as could scarcely be conceived at present. Hundreds of their occupants had been obliged to part by degrees with all that was valuable or could be turned into money. The elegant and accomplished young female, hitherto accustomed to all the comforts and luxuries of life, was now to be taught a lesson of suffering and endurance as severe as it was unexpected. Many—many such lessons were taught, and we may add—well and nobly, and with true Christian fortitude, were they borne. We have already said that Purcel had the collection of tithe for four Parishes, and now that the distress among the clergy and their families had assumed such a dreadful and appalling aspect, he had an opportunity of ascertaining the extraordinary respect and affection for them which existed after all in the minds of the people. His own house and premises were now so strongly secured, and his apprehension of nocturnal attacks so strongly justified by the threats he had already received, and the disorganized state of the country around him, that he was forced to decline receiving the tithe at unseasonable hours; it being impossible for him to know whether the offer of payment might not have been a plan of the people to get into his dwelling, and wreak their vengeance upon him and his sons. Under these circumstances, his advice to them, communicated with due regard to his own safety, was to pay the money directly to the clergyman himself, or at least to some of his family; and this, indeed, when they lived near the clergyman, they always preferred doing. To be sure, the step was a hazardous one, but, as they say, where there is a will there is a way; and so it was in many instances on this occasion. The dead hour of the night was necessarily selected for the performance of this kind office, and in this way many an unexpected act of relief was experienced by the starving and destitute clergy, at the hands of the very persons who were sworn to abolish tithes, and to refuse paying them in any shape.

Sometimes, to be sure, when Purcel or his sons happened to be abroad on business, attended as they now generally were by policemen for their protection, a countryman, for instance, would hastily approach him or them, as the case might be, and thrusting a sum of money rolled up in paper, into his hand, exclaim, “It’s the thrifle o’ the last gale o’ rint, sir, that I was short in—you’ll find a bit o’ murnmyrandim in the paper, that’ll show you it’s all right.” This, uttered with a dry, significant expression of countenance, was a sufficient indication of the object intended. On examining the paper, it was generally found to contain some such direction as the following—

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“MR. PURCEL, SIR—The enclosed is for the Rev. Misther Harvey. For God’s sake, give it to him as soon as you can; as I undherstand himself and family is starvin’ outright—I daren’t give it to him myself, or be seen goin’ near his house. Sure when we think of the good he done, himself an’ his family, whin they had the manes, it’s enough to make one pity them, especially when we know what they’re sufferin’ so quietly, an’ without makin’ any hubbub about it; but sure, God help us, there’s humbug enough in the counthry. Don’t lose time, i’ you plase, Mr. Purcel, as I’m tould that they’re brought to the dry praitie at last, God help them.”

It was in the early part of the day of O’Driscol’s last triumph on Duke Schomberg, that John Purcel went to discharge to a clergyman in the next parish, a commission of a similar nature to that just recited. He drove there on a car, accompanied by three policemen, avoiding, as well as he could, all narrow and dangerous passes, and determined to return, if at all practicable, by a different road, for such of late was the practice of the family, when out on business. An it is, however, we shall leave him on his way and take the liberty of requesting our readers to anticipate his arrival, for the purpose of getting a glimpse at the condition of those to whom he was carrying some slight means of mere temporary relief.

The clergyman, whose desolate habitation he was about to visit, had passed about sixty winters, fifteen of which he had spent in that house, and thirty in the parish. That is to say, he had been fifteen years curate, and fifteen rector, without ever having been absent more than a month or six weeks at a time; and even these absences occurred but rarely. We remember him well, and with affection, as who of his survivors that ever knew him does not? He was tall, that is, somewhat above the middle height, and until pressed down by the general affliction which fell upon his class and his family, he had been quite erect in his person. He was now bent, however, as by a load of years, and on his pale face lay the obvious traces of sorrow and suffering. But this was not all; whilst Destitution of the severest kind had impressed on that venerable countenance the melancholy exponent of her presence, Religion had also blended with it that beautiful manifestation of her unshaken trust in God; of patience, meekness, and a disposition to receive at his hands the severest dispensations of life, with a spirit of cheerful humility and resignation. Take a cursory glance at his face, and there, no doubt, you saw at once that sorrow and suffering lay. Look, however, a little longer; observe the benign serenity of that clear and cloudless eye; mark the patient sweetness of that firm and well-formed mouth, and the character of heroic tranquility that pervades his whole person, and sanctifies his sorrows, until they fill the heart of the spectator with reverence and sympathy, and his mind with a sense of the dignity, not to say sublimity, which religion can bestow upon human suffering, in which it may almost be said that the creature gains a loving triumph over the Creator himself.

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Every one knows that, in general, the clergy of Ireland, as a class, lived from hand to mouth, and that the men who suffered most during the period of which we write were those whose livings were of moderate income. The favored individuals, who enjoyed the rich and larger incumbencies, the calamity did not reach, or if it did, only in a slighter degree, and with but comparatively little effect. The cessation, therefore, of only one year's income to those who had no other source of support on which to depend, was dreadful. In many instances, however, their tithes had been refused for two, and, in some localities, for nearly three years, although the opposition to the payment had not for such a length of time assumed the fierce and implacable spirit which had characterized it during the last twelve months. These observations will now enable our readers to understand more clearly the picture with which we are about to present them.

On entering the house of this truly pious and patient pastor, the first thing that struck you was the sense of vacancy and desolation united. In other words, you perceived at a glance that everything of any value was gone. You saw scarcely any furniture—no clock, no piano, no carpeting, no mahogany chairs or tables, or at least none that were not of absolute necessity. Feather beds had gone, curtains had gone; and all those several smaller elegancies which it is difficult, and would be tedious, to enumerate here. Seated at a breakfast-table, in an uncarpeted parlor, was the clergyman himself, surrounded by his interesting but afflicted family. His hair, which, until within the last twelve months, had been an iron gray, was now nearly white, and his chin was sunk in a manner that had not, until recently, been usual with him. Servants, male and female, had been dismissed, and those whose soft, fair hands had been accustomed only to the piano, the drawing-pencil, or the embroidery-frame, were now engaged in the coarsest and commonest occupations of domestic life. Nor were they, too, without their honorable sacrifices of personal vanity and social pride, to the calamity that was upon them. Silks and satins, laces and gauzes, trinkets, unnecessary bonnets and veils, were all cheerfully parted with; and it was on such occasions that our friend the *Cannie Soogah* became absolutely a kind of public benefactor. He acted not only in the character of a pedlar, but in that of a broker; and so generally known were his discretion and integrity throughout the country, that such matters were disposed of to him at a far less amount of shame and suffering than they could have been in any other way.

The family in question consisted of the father, his wife, four daughters, and three sons; the eldest daughter had been, for some months, discharging the duty of governess in a family of rank; the eldest son had just got an appointment as usher in a school near the metropolis; two circumstances which filled the hearts of this affectionate family with a satisfaction that was proportionately heightened by their sufferings.

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About this period they expected a letter from their daughter; and on the morning in question their father had dispatched one of his boys to the post-office, with a hope of receiving it. The male portion of the family were the younger, with the exception of the eldest son, who was their third child. Their position was as follows: the old man sat at the end of a plain table, with his bible open before him—for they had just concluded prayer: his wife, a younger-looking woman, and faded more by affliction than by age, sat beside him, holding on her breast their third daughter—she who had been once the star of their hearth, and who reclined there in mute sorrow, her pale cheek and wasted hands giving those fatal indications of consumption in its last stage, which so severely tries the heart of parent or relative to witness. The other two girls sat opposite, one of them in tears, turning her heart-broken look now upon the countenance of her father and again upon that of her gentle, but almost dying sister, whilst her companion endeavored to soothe her little brother, who was crying for food; for the simple fact was, that they had not yet breakfasted, nor were the means of providing a breakfast under their roof. Their sole hope for that, as well as for more enlarged relief, depended upon the letter which they expected from their eldest daughter.

It is scarcely necessary to say that they all looked pale, sickly, and emaciated with suffering, and want of' the comfortable necessaries of life. Their dress was decent, of course, but such as they never expected to have been forced to wear so long. The crying boy was barefooted, and the young creature who endeavored to console him had thin and worn slippers on her tender feet, and her snowy skin was in more than one place visible through the rents of her frock. The old man looked at them, from time to time; and there might have been observed, notwithstanding the sweetness and placidity of his smile, a secret expression of inward agony—the physical and natural feelings of the parent and the man mingling, or rather struggling, with the great principle of dependence on God, without which he must at once have sunk down prostrate and hopeless.

“When,” said the boy, “will Edward come from the post-office? Is there nothing at all in the house, mamma, that I could eat?”

“Hush! Frank,” said his sister; “where’s your generosity and your patience? Did we not all promise to think of papa and mamma before ourselves—yes, and of our poor Maria, too, who is so ill?”

“That is true,” replied the boy, “but when I promised that, I wasn’t so hungry as I am now. But, still, if I had anything to eat, I would give the best part of it to papa or mamma, or Maria, if she could eat it—that is, after I had taken one mouthful for myself. Oh will Ned never come from the post-office?”

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“Mamma,” said the sick girl, looking up into her mother’s eyes, “I am sustained by one hope, and that is, that I will soon cease to be a burthen upon dear papa—my heartbroken papa and you. I am anxious to pass away to that blessed place where all tears shall be wiped from my eyes;” and as she spoke she raised herself a little, and quietly wiped one or two from them; and, she proceeded, “where the weary will be at rest. Alas! how little did we expect or imagine this great weight of suffering!”

“My darling child,” said her mother, kissing her pale cheek, and pressing her more tenderly to her bosom, “you have ever been more solicitous for the comfort and well-being of others than you have been for your own; yet, well and dearly as we love you, how can we grudge you to God? It was He who gave you to us—it is He who is taking you from us; and what can we say, but blessed be His name?”

“My children,” said the old man, “what would life be if there were nothing to awaken us to a sense of our responsibilities to our Creator? If it presented to us nothing but one unshaken path of pleasure and ease—one equal round of careless enjoyment and indolent apathy? Alas! my darlings, do not we, who are aged and have experience, know that it is those who are not taken by calamity and suffering who gradually fall into that hardness of heart, which prevents the spirit from feeling one of the most wholesome of truths—that indifference is danger, and that a neglect of the things which belong to a better life, and which serve to prepare us for it, is the great omission of those who are not called upon to suffer. You know, my children, that whom God loveth He chasteneth, and it is true. To those whom He graciously visits with affliction, it may be said that He communicates, from time to time, a new revelation of Himself; for it is by such severe but wholesome manifestations that He speaks to and arouses the forgetful or the alienated heart. Our calamity, however, and sufferings, possess more dignity, and are associated with a greater work than that involved in the isolated sorrows of a single family. God is chastising a cold, corrupt, and negligent church, through the turbulence and outrage of the people. What has our church in this country been, within the memory of man, but a mere secular establishment, like the law or the army, into which men enter not from a lofty and pure sense of the greatness of their mission, but as a convenient means of securing an easy and indolent profession? I know not what our church might have been if left to herself; but this I do know, that for many a long year the unblushing iniquity of British policy has served only to corrupt and degrade her, and to make what ought to be the speaking oracle of God’s truth, the consolation of the penitent sinner, the sure guide to the ignorant or the doubtful—yes, to make that Church, which ought to be a source of purity, of blessing, and of edification, to all—a system of corrupt

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rewards for political prostitution, parcelled out to meet the sordid spirit of family alliances and ungodly bargains; or, in other words, to turn her into a mass of bribes—a base appendage to the authority of the British minister, who used her as the successful medium of at once enslaving and demoralizing the country, instead of elevating and civilizing it. It is for this great neglect of national duty, and for permitting ourselves to be imbued with the carnal and secular spirit, which has led us so far from practical truth and piety, that the church is now suffering. We have betrayed our trust, and been treacherous both to God and man. For my own part, my children, I am glad that I and mine have been counted worthy to suffer in this cause. We are now passing through the furnace, but we shall come out purified. Our grossness shall be purged away, and the proud spirit of mammon burned out of us. But you know that God, my dear ones, can accomplish a double purpose by the same means. Our church shalt be exalted and purified, and her ministers prepared for a higher and holier mission than that in which they have hitherto been engaged. She shall awaken to a sense of her great responsibility; a new spirit shall be created within her; a living energy shall characterize those who have slumbered under the unholy shadows which she has cast around her, and those who think that they are smiting her unto death shall find that they have been made only the instruments in God's hands for the purification of her body and the regeneration of her spirit. Charles," he added, turning to the boy, who still wept, although as furtively as he could, "bear up, my child: Ned, you may rest assured, will make as little delay as possible, and I hope he will bring us relief."

"Mamma," said the invalid, looking up tenderly into her face, "will you—oh! no, not you, mamma—Emily will—a mouthful of drink, Emily dear, and let it be pure water, Emily; I think it agrees with me best."

"Alas, my darling!" exclaimed her mother, wiping away a few quiet tears, "I have nothing else to give you."

"Well, mamma, but you know I like it very much."

"Precious child," replied her mother, again tenderly pressing her to her bosom; "we all know your goodness, and the reluctance with which you ask anything that you fear might occasion us trouble. Dearest life, it will be the memory of these glimpses of angelic goodness that will wring our hearts when you are——" She paused, for the words had been uttered unconsciously.

"Yes," said her father, "they will console us, my child, and make your memory smell sweet, and blossom from the very dust. You have probably heard of the beautiful sentiment so exquisitely delineated by the great painter—'I too have been in Arcadia,'—and will it not be something to us to be able to say,—'We too have an angel in paradise!'"

Her sister brought her a cup of cold water, with which, after thanking her with a sweet smile, she merely wet her lips. “Alas! I am very troublesome to you all, but I shall not long—”

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“Darling sister,” said Emily, tenderly kissing her, “do not speak so; you are too good, and ever were so. Ah! Maria,” she exclaimed, gushing into tears, “is it come to this at last!”

The sick girl placed her hand affectionately upon her cheek, and said—“Dear, dear sister, how I love you! Oh! how I love you all! and papa, my dear papa, how I pity you in your sorrow!”

“Thanks, my darling, I know that your heart is pervaded and sustained by all tenderness and affection; and indeed it is a consolation that since calamity has come upon us, it has fallen upon a family of love—of love to which it only gives greater strength and tenderness. This is a great blessing, my children, and we ought to feel deeply thankful for it. But, at the same time, it matters not what we suffer, we must allow nothing in this world of trial to shake our trust in God. Here, however, is our poor little messenger. Well Edward, any letter?”

“Oh, yes, papa; there is one from Matilda. I know her writing.”

He then handed the letter to his father, and immediately going over to his sick sister, he placed a slice of bread and butter in her hand, adding, “The head-constable of police gave it to me; I would have refused it though—but for Maria.”

“Did you eat none of it yourself, Edward?” asked Maria.

“No,” he replied, “I thought mamma might make you up some light nice thing out of it.”

“But I cannot eat it, my dear Ned; divide it as you wish, but thank you, darling, from my heart, for thinking of me.”

He then would have shared it as equally as he could among them, but to himself and his brother it was left; the others, from a feeling which may easily be understood, declined to partake of it.

We do not, of course, give this as a general picture of the distress which was felt; but we do give it as a picture which was by no means rare among the established clergy at the period of which we write. We know, from the best authority, that the privations of the time were frequently so severe as to find many families without food to eat.

Their daughter’s letter was touching and simple, but unfortunately it contained, not the remittance they expected; a circumstance which, in their condition, was such a disappointment as cannot well be described. She stated that, in consequence of the absence from home, for some days, of the family with whom she lived, it was out of her power to send them the full amount of her first quarter’s salary as she had intended, or any money at all, as they knew she had none except her salary to send. She wrote, however, lest they might think or suppose for a moment that she had forgotten them. She sent her warmest love and affection to them all, especially to Maria, whom she

hoped her letter would find better. Here she mentioned them all by name, and concluded by saying, that the moment the family returned home, she would remit to her dear papa the amount of her whole quarter's salary.

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The youngsters all burst into tears, the fact being that they had not tasted food for more than eighteen hours. The mother, worn and pale with anxiety and distress, turned sorrowfully to her husband and said: "Charles, what is to be done? must our children die? must they perish with famine?"

"Send Charles over to M'Mahon's," replied her husband; "he is poor, it is true, but he is our next neighbor, and from him, if he will oblige us, relief will come soonest. Charles, go, my child, and ask Con M'Mahon if he will be good enough to send me a stone or two of potatoes for a few days; and I will feel obliged—your brother, poor child, is fatigued by his journey to the post-office, and from other causes—or being the elder I would make him go—if M'Mahon obliges me, tell him that I will thank him to send them, as I have no messenger to fetch them. I have always found poor M'Mahon respectful and neighborly, and I am certain he will not refuse us."

We shall not detail the distressing and melancholy conversation, in which they were engaged until the child's return. It is enough to say that, although he met with no refusal, the expected relief was not sent. "Well, my child," inquired his anxious father, "what reply did he give?"

"He said, papa," returned the child, "that he would give you a whole sack of potatoes with pleasure, but that, to send them in the open day, would be more than his life is worth—he dare not do it."

The old man looked up, then clasping his hands together, and glancing at his unhappy family, a few bitter tears rolled down his cheeks.

"But," added the boy, "he said he would bring over as many as he could carry, about twelve o'clock to-night."

"Well," continued his father, "that is civil; and I believe, as to the danger, he is right. But, in the meantime, what is to be done? I fear all the available sources of relief have been already exhausted, with the exception of heaven alone—in which, my children, we must not permit anything to shake our trust. I am feeble, but yet I must go forth and try to secure some food for you, my poor famishing family: hold up, then, my dear children, even for a little, for certain I am that God will provide for us still."

He was, accordingly, upon the point of going out, when John Purcel entered; and as the object of his visit is already known to the reader, we shall leave to his imagination the sense of the relief which it afforded.

This now is not an overdrawn picture of particular cases—and they were numerous—-which occurred during the period of what was termed the Tithe rebellion.

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The circumstance of the message to M'Mahon's, however, was the cause of a scene which we could not possiby omit, in a work treating of this peculiar and most distressing crisis. As the boy Charles was on his way to M'Mahon's—and this he mentioned to the family afterwards—he was met, he said, by a gentleman dressed in rusty black, mounted upon a strong, coarse horse; and who, after looking at him with a good deal of surprise, said—"What is your name, my fine fellow?" and on hearing it he asked him where he was going. The child, who had been trained to nothing but truth; mentioned at once the object of his message; upon which the gentleman in question, after having heard it, thrust his hands into his smallclothes pocket, and then drew them out with an air of impatience, exclaiming—"Bad luck to it for poverty—it's the curse o' the counthry." Now this worthy priest, for such he was, had not been many weeks in the parish at the period of his meeting with the little boy; and it so happened, that his residence was within about a quarter of a mile of the glebe house. He was, besides, one of the few who had given, upon more than one occasion, rather unequivocal manifestations of violent opposition to the whole system of tithes. As a matter of course, he was the last individual from whom anything like sympathy for those who suffered in such a cause might be expected. Much of the same character was M'Mahon, to whom the distressed parson had applied for the humble loan of food. He assailed, in fact, the whole Establishment, and took both an active and conspicuous part in the excitement which then agitated the country. He joined the crowds, vociferated and shouted among them at the top of his lungs, and took the liberty of laying down the law on the subject, as he termed it: that is to say, of swearing that one stick or stone of their dirty Establishment should not be left upon another, but that the whole bobbery of it must be sent to blazes—where it would all go yet, plaise God. Of course his neighbor, the parson, was by no means cognizant of this violence on the part of M'Mahon, or he would never have thought of applying to him, even under the severest pressure of absolute destitution.

Having premised thus much concerning these two individuals, we request our readers to accompany us to the house of the Rev. Anthony Casey, and to suppose that it is a little after the hour of eleven o'clock at night. The worthy gentleman and his curate had just seated themselves in his snug, but humble little parlor, where a pleasant turf fire was beginning to get somewhat dim, when the following dialogue occurred between them:

"Pettier," said Father Anthony to his curate, who had just returned from a sick call, "you found the night bitther, I think?"

"It is very cold, indeed, sir."

"You have had a long ride of it upon that mountain road, without even a bush to shelther you."

"It is not less than fourteen miles I think," replied the curate, "and a cold, desolate road as I ever travelled."

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“You have read your office?”

“I have, sir.”

“You have discharged your duty to that poor, sick widow?”

“I hope so, sir.”

“And you have ridden under a severe night, along a naked road, a distance of fourteen miles?”

“I have, sir.”

“And you feel your mind aisy, and your conscience at rest?”

“I can say so with truth, thank God,” replied the curate.

“Well, then, in that case,” proceeded the kind-hearted priest, “I think you had better take a tumbler of punch: it will comfort you, and make you sleep like a top.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied the curate, “I am much obliged to you; but I don’t require it, I have no particular wish for it.”

“But I tell you, man alive, that it will do you good; and lest you might feel solitary, I think I will take one with you, merely to keep you in countenance;—here Katty!”

Katty, a complacent, kind-looking woman, somewhat past the middle period of life, then made her appearance. “Well, your reverence?”

“Get hot water and tumblers—Father Pettier is starved after his long ride such a night, and must have a tumbler of punch to warm him, poor fellow, and I am going to keep him in countenance; and see, Katty, bring the poteen that’s in Ould Broadbottom, at the right-hand side o’ the cubbard. Stir the fire a little, Pettier, and throw on a sod or two—-it’s getting dull.”

This was complied with; and Father Peter observed, after he had trimmed the grate a little:—

“The country, sir, is in a frightful state. This tithe rebellion is quite general. On my way out to Drumfurrar and home again, I met large crowds on the roads, cold as the night is; and on speaking to, and remonstrating with them, upon meeting and being abroad at such hours, they desired me to mind my own business, and allow them to mind theirs. The country is literally alive with them night and day.”

“Very well,” replied Father Anthony, “let them work out their own purposes, provided they keep within the limits of the law. You know the Established Church is nothing else than an English garrison to support and keep alive British interests in this country; but the people are going the right way to work; for I tell you, Pettier, that, by strictly observing the doctrine of passive resistance, they will starve the same garrison clane and clear out o’ the country. And won’t that be a great day for Ireland, Pettier?”

“Yes, sir, no doubt of it; but in the meantime the unfortunate parsons are suffering dreadfully: many of them are starving literally, and it is those who have not hoarded up the mammon of unrighteousness, but have been charitable and benevolent to the poor, who are now suffering most.”

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“Ay, faith, that’s not a bad thought, Pettier; but I tell you the mammon of unrighteousness is by no means a bad thing. We may say as we will, we priests and parsons, but I say to you, what is a man worth in this world without money? Not a thraneen. A complete nonenity, and sorras thing else. And whisper, Pettier; what is the starving of the parsons to us? They had the fat an’ marrow of the land long, enough, and I think it’s full time that we should come in for a lick at last. Think of you or I living to see ourselves rolling about in a rich carriage, with a lump of a mithre, like a pair of ass’s ears stuck together, painted on the outride of it, and we waiting, and drinkn’ of the best. Arra, salvation to me, but the prospect’s a born beauty, so it is, and will be rayalized yet, plaise God.”

“Too much wealth, sir, is an enemy to religion.”

“Well, Pettier, that may be so occasionally; but here’s your health, and in the meantime, I didn’t care that some of us had a little more of it. I would have given a pound-note today to have had five shillings about me; and sorra testher I had in my company.”

“You must have been pretty closely pressed for cash, when you would have given such a premium.”

“Troth, then, I was; and when the poor boy mentioned whose son he was, and when I saw his little delicate feet without shoes, and heard his story—mammon of unrighteousness! devil a thing in life aiquil to it. It enables a man to do the practical good, and not satisfy himself or escape with empty words.”

“They say our neighbor here, Mr. Goodison, is very ill off.”

“Well, I dare say he’s not on the top of the wheel; however, as I said, what’s their starvation to us? If it was laid upon them for their sins, do you think it would be right in us to intherfare and set ourselves against Providence?—blessed be His name.”

“Well, I must confess,” replied his amiable curate, “that I was not prepared for such an argument as that from you. You know we ought to love our enemies.”

“Very well,” replied Father Anthony; “I have no objection to love our enemies, provided they feed themselves. But surely to love and feed them is rather too much of a good thing.”

During this brief dialogue they had mixed each his tumbler of punch, and after a pause of some minutes, during which the hardhearted parish priest sighed deeply as he looked into the fire, he exclaimed—

“You know, Pettier, that I am opposed to a Protestant Established Church in this country; and you know, besides, that I have gone farther in this tithe affair than most of my brethren, and on that account I hope you are not surprised at my opinions. Starve them

out's my maxim. But still, aftcher all, salvation to me, but it's a trying case to be without food, and above all, to see your own children—"

"My own children," exclaimed the curate, with a smile.

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“Ay, Pether,” proceeded this benevolent hypocrite, forgetting everything but the image that was before him—“Ay, in troth, your own children—your own children, poor things, without a morsel to put into their mouths; and your wife, Pether, that you love betther than—than—aye, than a station dinner, a thousand times—sittin’ with a pale face and a breaking, or, maybe, a broken heart, looking on at their privations and their miserable destitution, without being able to render them the laist assistance. Bad luck to it, for a mammon of unrighteousness, it’s never in the way when it’s wanted.”

After he had concluded, he took out a red cotton pocket-handkerchief, spotted at equal distances with white dice, and wiped away the tears that had gushed to his eyes whilst he spoke.

“Pettier,” said he, immediately, “finish your tumbler and go to bed; you know we must be off to-morrow to station before six o’clock, and after your bitther ride to-night you want rest, poor fellow.”

When about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and he had seen Peter to bed, he went to the kitchen, and asked Katty, his housekeeper, who always attended upon him and his curate, if she had done what he desired her.

“It’s done, your reverence,” she replied, “but you’ll never be able to carry it.”

“That’s not your affair, Katty—do you hear now?”

“I do, your reverence.”

“Very well, then, I tell you that’s none of your affair,—the sorra bit. I hope you did’nt let Barney go to bed?”

“Of coorse not, sir, when you bid me keep him up.”

“Very well, then; and if either he or you brittle a syllable of this to Father Pether, I’ll read you both oat—do you hear that now? Bring Barney here, then.”

Barney accordingly made his appearance.

“Now mark me,” continued the priest, “if either of you ever brathes a syllable of this, salvation to me, but I’ll read you both out from the althar. Here now help me on with this sack; it’s for a distressed person in the neighborhood that wants it badly, as you may judge, or I wouldn’t be trudging off with it at this hour of the night. Katty, you go to bed, and let Barney stay up till I come back—did you mind my words, I repate—read you both out, if ever a syllable comes to Father Pother’s ears, or anybody’s else’s but our own.”

The servant man accordingly assisted him to raise upon his stout and honest shoulders a short heavy bag of oatmeal, into which he had thrust a large flitch of newly-hung bacon; and thus loaded, the violent anti-tithe priest bent his way, nearly at the hour of twelve o'clock, to the residence of the Rev. Mr. Goodison, his neighbor.

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It is necessary to state here, that the glebe-house of that gentleman was situated within about two hundred yards of two crossroads, one of which went by the gate of entrance to it. After a severe trudge, during a night that began now to brighten as the moon rose, Father Anthony found himself approaching the cross-roads in question, and for a moment imagined that he saw his own shadow before him, an impression which soon changed on observing that the shadow, or whatever it was, although loaded much as he himself was, that is to say, with a sack on his shoulders, evidently approached him—a circumstance which he knew to be an impossibility, and that it must, consequently, be a distinct individual. Having satisfied himself of this, he got under the shade of a hedge, a movement in which he was instantly imitated by the stranger. Each stood concealed for some time, with a, hope that the other might advance and turn probably out of his way; but neither seemed disposed to move. At length, Father Anthony gave a kind of inquisitive, dry cough, by way of experiment, which was instantly responded to by another cough equally dry and mysterious. These were repeated two or three times without success, when at last Father Anthony advanced a little under shadow of the hedge, and found as before that the strange individual did the same; and thus, in fact, they kept gradually, coughing at each other and approaching until they fairly met face to face, each with a sack upon his shoulders.

“Con M’Mahon!” exclaimed the priest, “why, what on earth brought you out at this hour of the night, and—aisy, what is this you’re’ carrying?”

“Faix, your reverence,” replied the other, “I might as well ask yourself the same two questions.”

“I know you might,” said Father Anthony; “but in the manetime you had better not.”

The priest spoke like one whose wind had not been improved by the burthen he carried; and M’Mahon, anxious if possible to get rid of him, determined to enter into some conversation that might tire out his strength. He consequently selected the topic of the day as being best calculated for that purpose.

“Isn’t these blessed times that’s coming, plaise your reverence,” said M’Mahon, “when we’ll be done wid these tithes, and have the millstone taken from our necks altogether?”

This was spoken in a most wheedling and insinuating tone replete with the the confidence of one who knew that the stronger he spoke the more satisfaction he would give his auditor, and the more readily he would avert any suspicion as to his object and appearance at such an hour.

“Yes,” returned the priest, giving his burthen an uneasy twitch, “we have had too weighty a load upon our shoulders this many a day, and the devil’s own predicament it is to be overburthened with anything—we all know that.”

“Sorra doubt of it,” replied the other, easing himself as well as he could by a corresponding hitch; “but it’s one comfort to myself anyhow, that I done my duty against the same tithes—an’ bad luck to them!”

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“If you did your duty, you weren’t without a good example, at all events,” replied the priest; “I taught you how to hate the accursed impost—but at the same time, you know I always told you to make a distinction between the tithes and the—hem—”

“An’ what, your reverence?”

“Hem—why you know, Con, that we’re commanded to love our enemies, and it was upon this ground that I always taught you to make a distinction, as I say, between the tithes and the parsons themselves. And by the way, now, I don’t know but it would be our duty,” he proceeded, “to render the same parsons, now that they’re suffering, as much good for evil as possible. It would be punishing the thieves by heaping, as the Scripture says, coals of fire upon their heads.”

“And do you think, your reverence,” replied the other, who was too quick of apprehension not to suspect what the priest was driving at, “do you think that I have been so long listening to your advice, not to know that such a coorse was my duty?”

“That’s the way,” continued the priest, “to punish them like a Christian.”

“Ay, to punish them, your reverence, as you say—an’ in troth, I’m the man myself that ’ud go any length to do it.”

“But where are you bound to now, Con, and what—ahem—what is that you are carrying?” asked the priest.

“Why then, it’s the butt-end of a sack o’ pittities,” replied Con, giving an answer only to the easiest side of the query.

“Well, but who are you bringing them?” he asked again, “because, thank God, there’s not much poverty in this neighborhood at present.”

“Well, then, God forgive me!” replied the other, concealing his benevolence by a grin, which he could not prevent at his own ingenuity, but which he endeavored to conceal as well as he could; “God forgive me! but hearin’ that Goodison the parson here, and his family were in great distress, I thought I might as well have my revenge aginst him, by fetchin’ him a load o’ praties, which is all I can spare the poor ould—hem—the heretical ould creature—and so, says I to myself, it’s a good opportunity of heapin’ the coals upon him that you spoke about, sir. And upon my conscience, as far as a good weighty butt o’ praties goes, I’ll punish him this very night.”

The priest gave a short hiccup or two, as if laboring under some momentary affection of the throat, which soon extended to the eyes, for with some difficulty he put up his naked hand and wiped away a kind of moisture, that in ordinary cases would have very much resembled tears.

“Ah, I see, Con!” he said, after clearing his throat a little, “you had a grudge against him like myself, and you determined to—ay—just so—you see, Con, here’s the way of it; he didn’t visit me yet since I came to the parish—do you understand?—and I tell you, flesh or blood couldn’t overlook such a slight; so I’m glad, at all events, that you had the spirit to follow my advice—for

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the truth is, I'm goin' to have my revenge as well as yourself; but when one does take his revenge, Con, it's always best to take it like a Christian. So now that we understand, one another, let us go up to the glebe—otherwise I'll drop.—However, salvation to me!" he exclaimed with a smile, "if we'll bear their burthens much longer! I have a butt of meal here, I saw his son to-day, too, without a stitch to his foot, poor boy."

"And so did I," replied M'Mahon; "he sent one o' them over to me for the loan of a lock o' praties."

"Oh, God help them!" exclaimed the priest. "Come, Con, let us hurry—but why didn't you send them then?"

"Why, sir—why, bekaise I daren't send them in open daylight."

"True enough," said the other; "and it was stupid of me to ask. I myself would have sent what I'm carrying to him by Barney Brennan, but that I feared it would take wind, in which case the people might withdraw their confidence from me, from an apprehension that I wanted to curry favor with the parson of the parish, which I assure you, Condy, I do not. But listen to me, now; you're never to brathe a syllable of this adventure."

"Ill give you my oath of it, sir, if you wish, takin' it for granted, at the same time, that I'm safe with you."

"Never fear that; I'm not the man to play the traitor on any poor fellow that I might catch at any illegal work of the kind."

Both were now within a few perches of the hall-door, when the priest, who was scarcely able to speak from fatigue, said with some difficulty:—

"Con, as we have met, I think you must take the responsibility of this night's adventure on yourself. Here, now," said he, depositing his burden against the door as he spoke, "I think the best thing to do, in order to spare their feelings—for I need not tell you, that they are, by all accounts, a delicately-minded and highly-educated family—and it will be well to tax them as little as possible; I say then,—let us place, these sacks against the hall-door, and as soon as it is opened, they will tumble in heels foremost upon them, and then you can cut. So now I leave you to manage it, only, on any earthly account, don't name me to a living soul in the business. Good night, now, and God bless you—-as He will," he added, retreating from the hall-door—"as He will, you kind-hearted, good-natured ringleader you."

The matter, however, did not end here, for, as Burns says, "the best-laid schemes of mice and men may gang agree." The aid received by the venerable Mr. Goodigon and his family had escaped through the children, in the early part of the next day, and had

spread through the neighborhood; and sooth to say, there was scarcely a voice among them louder in condemnation of the fact than that of Con M'Mahon, who said it was a bad way to banish tithes by assistin' the parsons. So far as he was concerned, however, the secret did not at all transpire. His reverence,

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however, was by no means so fortunate. The next morning, he and his curate were under the necessity of holding a station in a distant part of the parish. Father Anthony, however, feeling himself fatigued by his burthen of the preceding night, sent the curate on before him, with an assurance that he would follow him in an hour or two. He accordingly did so, but, with his usual inattention to dress, was seen the next morning, about ten o'clock, riding along the public road—which was a great thoroughfare—-towards the locality of the station with the history of the previous night's transaction written as clearly oh his back as if it had been labelled there in large and legible print. The truth is, the humane and charitable priest had neglected to get his coat brushed—-an operation which it never underwent unless on a Sunday morning—and the consequence was, that whilst the front part of his dress was tolerably black, the back part of it would have done credit to the coat of a miller. The sagacity of the people was not for a moment at fault. Both circumstances were immediately connected; his reverence's secret took wind, and before the expiration of forty-eight hours was known to the whole parish.

CHAPTER XVI.—Massacre of Carrickshock

—Mogue Moglan's Anxiety for the Safety of the Purcels—Tithe Distraint—Good News for Mr. Temple.

Matters had now arrived at such a crisis, that either the law must be vindicated, or tithes should be considered as put down by violence on the one hand, and passive resistance on the other; for, as the question stood, it had to grapple with both. The clergymen of the establishment, cramped by poverty, and harassed by delay, were not now in a condition to recover their incomes by the tedious and expensive processes that were hitherto resorted to. Some point, however, was made, or some antiquated statute was ferreted out, owing to the black-letter craft of certain astute lawyers, by which the parson or proctor, we believe, as the case might have been, instead of being forced to incur enormous expense for the recovery of any individual responsibility, was enabled, through what was termed a "Writ of Rebellion," to join the greater part of a parish, if not the whole of it, in the same legal process, by inserting their names in the writ. At first, however, and in the early stage of the proceedings, the resistance was by no means passive. Experience, however, soon taught the people that the law and the executive, when opposed, were anything but playthings, and the loss of several lives on the part of those who attempted, by force, to obstruct the execution of the former, led to the expediency of adopting the passive plan. A widow's son had been shot in a tithe-levy; and on the other side, a clergyman named Ryder had fallen a victim to the outrage of the people—as, we believe, had other reverend gentlemen also, together with a tithe-proctor, who was shot in his own field

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in open day, his son, a boy of fifteen or sixteen, having also a narrow escape. Purcel's position was now one of extreme danger and difficulty. The combination against tithes had been carried to such a height, that not only were the people sworn to pay no tithes, but all the proctor's laborers were forced, besides, to quit his employment. No man could work for him, unless at the certain risk of his life. By the mere influence of money, and the offer of triple wages, he succeeded in procuring a number of workmen from a neighboring county; but no sooner were they seen in his employment, than an immense crowd collected from all parts of the country, and after treating them with great violence, swore, every man of them, never to work for Purcel, or any other tithe-proctor whatever. This treatment exasperated the Purcels exceedingly; indeed, so much so, that they expressed to the people a wish that their house should be attacked, in order that they might thereby have an opportunity of shooting the assailants like dogs. In this way the feeling ran on between them day by day, until the acrimony and thirst for vengeance, on each side, had reached its utmost height. In the meantime, a tithe auction was to take place at a distance of some three or four miles from the Proctor's. On the morning when it was to take place, Mogue Moylan told Alick Purcel that he wished to speak to him. This scoundrel's plausibility was such, that he had continued to act the spy and traitor in the family, without exciting suspicion in the mind of any one, with the exception only of Jerry Joyce, who being himself involved in Whiteboyism, was placed in a position of great difficulty and danger. To have discovered Mogue's treachery, would not only criminate himself, by the necessity of admitting his connection with this illegal combination, which was a felony at the time, but it would also have probably occasioned the loss of his life, by betraying the designs of his confederacy, and thus proving himself, as it would have been termed, a traitor to the people, and to the cause of his country. Such, in truth, are the multifarious evils that result from illegal conspiracies among our impulsive and unreasoning countryman.

"It's a word or two I'd wish to spake to you, Mr. Alick."

"Well, Mogue, what's the matter? Are you still determined to be hard-hearted to poor Letty Lenehan?"

"That I may never sup sorrow, Mr. Alick, if I can help the foolish creature! I do all I can to let her see that we are not aiquils; but the thoughtless girl won't be convinced. I belong to a family, sir, that always suffered for our counthry. Widin the last six hundre' years, I have it from sound authority, that there never was a ruction on Irish ground that wasn't the manes of havin' some o' them hanged or transported, glory be to God! An' you know, Mr. Alick, that's a proud boast, an' what every one couldn't say."

"All I can say then, Mogue, is, that if you look upon that as an honor, I have no objection that the fate should follow the family, and, I suppose, neither have you."

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“Well, indeed now, and that I may never die in sin, but I think it an honor to oppose these Sassanagh laws; an’, for that matther, to die opposin’ them; however, as to myself, Mr. Alick, I am by nature of a peaceable, quiet turn, and not likely—”

“To grace a gibbet, Mogue: well, I believe not; but what is this you wish to say to me?”

“One or two things then, sir. First, I hear that Mr. M’Carthy is comin’ down to stay wid the family here, bekaise they say it’s going to be attacked.”

“Well, is it not both a friendly and a manly offer for him to make?”

“Granted, Mr. Alick; but instead of help-in’ you all to keep the danger off, he’ll only be the manes of bringin’ it on; for as soon as it becomes known that he’s here, there will be ten enemies then for one there is now against you. I happened to overhear a discoorse at the chapel on Sunday last; and it’s from that I’m givin’ you my advice.”

“I don’t care a d—n,” said the impetuous young man, “about their discourses at chapel. They go there more for the purpose of plotting murders, and entering into illegal combinations, than for that of praying sincerely or worshipping God! No; we despise and defy them.”

“Well, then, Mr.—”

“Silence, Mogue; not another word on that subject. I am obliged to you, in the meantime, for you kindness, and the interest you feel for us.”

“That my bed may be made in heaven, thin, but I do feel all you say; and why shouldn’t I? But I said I had a thing or two to mention, an’ although it goes against my heart to say it, still I like your family too well, not to throw you out a hint upon it. ‘Tis regardin’ Jerry Joyce, ay—an’ Mr. M’Carthy too, sir.”

“Jerry Joyce and M’Carthy; well, what about them? Jerry’s a rollicking shallow fool, but honest, I think.”

“Well, Mr. Alick, this is to be buried between you and me. I say, don’t trust him; an’ as for M’Carthy, it doesn’t become the likes o’ me to disparage him; but if there’s not a traitor to this family in his coat, I’m not here. It’s purty well known that he’s a Whiteboy; he was a caravat it seems, two years agone, and was wid ould *Paudeen Gar* when Hanly was hanged for—”

“And who was Paudeen Gar?” asked the other, interrupting him.

“He was the head o’ the Shanavests, and it so happened, that one Hanly, who was head of the Moyle Bangers, as they wor called, was hanged only for burnin’ the house of a man that tuck a farm over another man’s head. Now the Shanavests and the Moyle

Rangers, you see, bein' bitther enemies, the Shanavests prosecuted Hanly for the burning, and on the day of his execution, Paudeen Gar stayed under the gallows, and said he wouldn't lave the place till he'd see the *caravat* (* Carvat; fact—such is their origin) put about Hanly's neck; an' from that out the Moyle Bangers was never called anything but Caravats."

"But what does Shanavest mean?"

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“It manes an ould waistcoat; that is, it’s the Irish for an ould waistcoat, and Paudeen Gar’s men were called Shanavests, bekaise when they went out to swear the people against tithes and priests’ dues, they put ould waistcoats about them for fraid o’ bein’ known.”

“And you tell me that McCarthy’s a White-boy?”

“Wasn’t he a night wid them? and didn’t he come home in the mornin’ wid his face blackened?”

“Well, but he accounted very satisfactorily for that.”

“I’m a friend to your family, Mr. Alick; and what I tell you is thrue; an’ by the same token, Miss Julia isn’t safe in the one house wid him.”

“Come, come, Mogue, don’t attempt’ to make any illusion of that kind. You are an honest but over-anxious fool, and like many a one in this world, would make mountains out of mole-hills.”

“Well, sir,” replied Mogue, somewhat downcast, “when the time comes I’ll let you know why I say so. Don’t trust either o’ them, I say, for the present, at any rate; for I hope soon to know more about them.”

“Well, then, Mogue,” said Alick, laughing, “I’ll keep my eye on them.”

“Do so, sir; an’ as I’m spakin’ to you as a friend that you may trust, I tell you, Mr. Alick, that although I’m quiet, as I said a while agone, still as there’s likely to be danger to your family, I’d wish to help you to meet it, and to do whatever little I could in your defence—I would, indeed; but you know, Mr. Alick, I can’t do that so long as I’m kept sleepin’ in the out-houses. If I was allowed any kind of a shake-down in the house, I could do a good deal in the way of assistance. I could help you to load your fire-arms, or I could take charge of the ladies, and many other thing that I couldn’t do out o’ the house, so that was all I had to say to you, Mr. Alick.”

“Thank you, Mogue; I really feel obliged to you; and I shall think over what you have said to me. If we admit any stranger to sleep in the house, with the exception of Mr. M’Carthy, you shall be the man; I will promise you that much, conditionally.”

“And not a word of what I hinted about Jerry?”

“You need not be at all uneasy on that score; as I said, I shall keep my eye on him. We must now go to prepare for this auction, which, of course, so far as we are concerned, will be both an unpleasant and unprofitable affair. Go, then, and get the horses. We have also some processes to serve, and it will be necessary that we should see the

bailiffs, to give them proper instructions, and directions to the houses on which they are to serve them."

"Is Mr. O'Driscol goin' wid you, sir?"

"No, Mogue," replied Alick, laughing, "ever since the country has risen, as he calls it, Mr. O'Driscol. has lost his health. Indeed, ever since the day he was attacked at Philpot's Corner, by the four black faces, a fact which he has dignified with the name of insurrection, he has taken no active part in public life. He does nothing now but correspond with his friend the Castle, as he says."

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The morning on which this conversation took place was a dull, gloomy one, about the middle of December. It did not rain, but the weather had been dark and desolate in character for above a week before; in fact, of that cheerless description which represses animal spirits, and superinduces upon the mind impressions that are dreary and disheartening.

A chief constable of police, accompanied by a body of forty men well armed, started from near the proctor's house, in order to execute a decree of the Court of Chancery, or rather to protect those who were about to do so, by first holding an auction, and serving a process from the same court afterwards, in another place. For the first mile or so there was not much notice taken of them; a few boys only, and some women, kept hooting and screaming at their heels as they went along. Within about two miles or so of the place of their destination, men began to appear upon the hills in increasing groups, and horns were soon sounding in every direction. This, however, was not all; on reaching a chapel, the bell began to ring, and, in a short time, as they advanced, the bells of the whole country around them were pealing rapidly and with violence. The crowds now began to coalesce, and to gather about them in such a manner that they, kept them completely hemmed in; and in this manner they proceeded, until they arrived at the premises on which the auction was to be held. The peasantry were formidably armed with every sort of weapon that the moment could supply; for, on such occasions as this, the people never used fire-arms. These, carried in the open day, might enable the police to know the persons of those who illegally possessed them, and, consequently, get such individuals into trouble. Their arms, on this occasion, consisted of pitchforks, spades, shovels, scythes, bill-hooks, and heavy sticks, whilst it was observed that several of those who carried these weapons in one hand, carried a round, destructive stone about two or three pounds' weight, in the other. A powerful man, who wore a sash across his shoulders, and a military cap that was peaked so as to conceal his face, appeared as leader, and seemed completely to direct and regulate their motions. The state of tumult throughout and over the face of the country was indeed frightful, and it is very likely that a chief constable and only forty police felt the danger of their position and the utter inadequacy of their numbers, either to carry the decrees of the law into execution, or to defend themselves, with anything like success, against the burning ferocity of the armed multitudes by whom they were surrounded.

At length the auction commenced, and the first article put up for competition was a fine heifer, but not an individual present would open his lips to bid for her; and, on a little further examination, it was ascertained that all the cattle had been branded with the word tithe, in large and legible characters. The family on whom the execution was about being levied, walked, about at their ease, and rather seemed to enjoy the matter, as a triumph over law, than as a circumstance that was calculated to depress or annoy them. They offered no obstruction; neither did they, on the other hand, afford the slightest possible facility to the officers of the law. They were strictly and to the letter passive.

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The heifer alluded to having been put aside for want of a bidder, a fine cow was put up, and all the usual cajoling and seductive provocations to competition and purchase were held out, but in vain. Every nourish of the bailiff, who acted as auctioneer, was lost, as it were, on empty space, and might as well have been uttered in a desert. Butter-casks, kitchen' vessels, and everything on which the impress could be affixed, was marked with the hated brand of "tithe." No one, however, would bid; and when the bailiffs, on seeing that none present was either willing or courageous enough to do so, began to bid themselves, the silence of the people still remained unbroken. They then put up some furniture, all of which was branded "tithe;" but, on purchasing it for another market, they found that it was impossible to remove it, as neither horse nor cart, nor any available vehicle for that purpose, could be had at any cost. So far, therefore, the law and all its authority, supported besides by a large body of constabulary, were completely defeated, and it was obvious that, unless those on whom the perilous duty of executing it fell, came provided with the means of removing the property, that is to say, with horses, carts, and a body of military besides, every such auction must terminate in failure.

The shortness of the day, and the distance they had to go, when taken in connection with the ferocious state of the people, prevented the bailiffs and their protectors from serving the process, to which we have alluded, on another party. It was therefore determined on to abandon the property for the present, and execute the service on the following day.

The next morning opened with the same dull, dark, and desolute appearance, as did the preceding. On this occasion, there was no auction to hold and but one process to serve, only a single bailiff was necessary. No diminution, however, was made in the number-of police who attended; and, indeed, the party selected for the service of this day ought rather to have been increased, inasmuch as the bailiff in question had rendered himself so justly obnoxious to the people, that it was fatuity itself to suppose that, smarting as they were under the scoundrel's wanton and obscene insults, it was possible they would suffer him to escape. The party had, consequently, no sooner set out, than the horns once more began to blow, the bells to ring, and the whole country around to stir into tumult and action. The same arms as we haye already mentioned were in requisition, with some old pike-handles, and an occasional rusty pike or two that may have seen service in '98.

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On the previous day the people had resolved to maintain an armed neutrality, and to observe, unless attacked, the spirit of passive resistance in its strictest sense. Now, however, the man who, confiding in and abusing the protection and authority of the Court of Chancery, had so grossly insulted them by language that was both indecent and unchristian; who had not only attacked their want of morals, but ridiculed their religion;—this person, we say, was within their grasp, and let what might be the result, they were determined, to a man, "*to have the process-server or blood*" for such was the expression. The people now shouted, and had evidently made up their minds, not only to secure the process-server, but to attack the police themselves, at any risk. Such was the apprehension of this, that their officer deemed it necessary to halt his party, and order them to prime and load, which they did. Whilst they halted, so did the assailants; but, upon resuming their march to the house of the tithe-defaulter, the crowds, who were every moment increasing in number and in fury, resumed their march also, gradually closing upon and coming nearly into contact with them. Indeed, they were now so close, that the object of all this preparation, and concert, and motion, could be distinctly ascertained from their language and demeanor. Ever and anon there arose from them, extending far and wide over the country, one general cry and exclamation, accompanied by menacing gestures and blazing eyes:—

"The process-server or Blood!—Butler or blood!"

This unfortunate individual, having put a copy of the process under the door, took his place in the centre of the police, who turned to the left of the house for the purpose of retreating; and it is to be deplored that the retreat in question was not conducted with more discipline and judgment.

On this occasion, as well as on that of the preceding day, the same person who acted as the popular leader was present, dressed as before, in a sash, and peaked cap that concealed the greater portion of his countenance, which was, besides, otherwise disguised. On arriving at the defaulter's house, this man took off his sash, lest it might make him a more conspicuous object for the police, in case of a recounter, and put it into his pocket, from which one end of it, however, protruded. Two other leaders held subordinate rank under him, a circumstance which gave to the whole proceedings a character of premeditated concert, and deliberation.

From the house of the defaulter, the police, encircling the process-server, proceeded in a certain direction to a place called Tennison's Gate; but so closely were they now pressed upon by the multitude that they were obliged to keep them off with their bayonets. Their threats, their increasing numbers, and their irrepressible fury, now excited such alarm in the minds of the police, that one of them, calling to his officer, entreated him to take them into the open field, where alone their arms could afford them protection; or if not, he added, that they must fall a sacrifice to the vengeance of their enemies. At that instant, two or three of the leaders of the people were in commotion

with that gentleman, one of them resting his hand upon his horse's neck, and the other so close to him that his words could be distinctly heard.

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“Captain G——s,” said the latter, “don’t be afraid—meek yourself aisy—not a hair of your head, nor any of the police, will be touched; we only want the process-server; let him be given up, and you will be safe.”

“Sooner than give him up to you,” he replied, “we will, every man of us, part with our lives. Sacrifice us you may, but we will never surrender our charge.”

Instead, however, of following the sound advice of one of his own men, the chief constable, credulous to infatuation, allowed the infuriated body, by which he and his men were surrounded, still to press in upon him, without taking those precautions which common sense, coolness, and the insecurity of his position, should have dictated.

By the time they had passed the place called Tennison’s Gate, a large body had collected in their front, blocking up the road they had to pass, and which would have conducted, them in a different direction, but not one so peculiarly perilous. From this they made a turn to the left into a lane that would have led them back again to a little village, through which they had already passed, the bell of which was already sounding their death-knell. The constabulary, by turning into the narrow lane at the left, unconsciously approached the very ambush into which the people, or rather their more disciplined leaders, had intended to decoy them. This lane was enclosed by walls, and on one side the ground was considerably elevated and covered with stones, thus affording to their assailants every possible opportunity of completing their destruction. The unfortunate men were pressed by a crowd on their right, composed of those who occupied the elevation; another crowd pressed upon their rear; whilst a third body obstructed them in front, thus keeping them pent up, and at the mercy of the crowds on every side.

It is quite obvious that the person in command of the constabulary was not only unfit for his duty, but ignorant of anything like military discipline or manoeuvring. He must have completely lost his presence of mind, otherwise his easiness of belief and simplicity are utterly unaccountable. As it was, in two or three minutes after the hollow assurances of good-will uttered by those whom he saw bristling at the same time with vengeance about him, an effort was made by a man to drag the unfortunate process-server out of the lines. He was immediately pulled back by a policeman, but was scarcely restored to his place, When he was struck on the side of the head with a wattle. The blow caused him to stagger, and would have caused him to fall, but that he was seized and kept upon his legs by the policeman. He had not time, however, to recover his steadiness, when he was felled to the ground by a blow from a stone, which sent him to the ground a corpse. A general assault with every description of rude and formidable weapons, now commenced upon the unfortunate constabulary. Their imbecile and uncautious officer fired his pistol and in a moment afterwards was knocked from his horse and instantly put to death. The crowd now rushed on them from all sides, and so sharp, short, and decisive was the massacre, that in about the space of two minutes, twelve men lay butchered on the spot.

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Other scenes of violence and bloodshed there were, but none so frightful as the above. Most persons remember Rathcormac and Newtonbarry, but we do not imagine that a recapitulation of such atrocities can be at all agreeable to the generality of our readers, and for this reason we content ourselves with barely alluding to them, as a corroboration of the disorganized condition of society which then existed, and which we are now attempting to describe.

But perhaps nothing, after all, can test the inextinguishable hatred of tithes which prevailed at that period, more than the startling and almost incredible fact that the government, aided by as sound a lawyer, and as able an attorney-general as ever lived, and a powerful bar besides, were not able, during the following spring and summer assizes, to convict a single individual concerned in this massacre, which is now a portion of our country's history, and still well remembered as that of Carrickshock, in the county of Kilkenny.

This double triumph of the people over the tithe and police, created a strong sensation throughout the kingdom, and even shook the two houses of parliament with dismay.

Indeed, there probably never existed in Ireland, any combination or confederacy of the people so bitter, or with such a deeply-rooted hold upon the popular mind as that against tithes, as it slumbered and revived from time to time. And what is rather singular, too, the frequent agitations arising from it, which in its periodical returns convulsed the country, were almost uniformly, or at least very frequently, productive of a collateral one against priests' dues. Up until the year '31, however, or '32, the agitators against tithes were more for their reduction than their extinction. The reduction of tithes and priests' dues went, as we have said, very frequently together, or rather the one generally produced the other. The Threshers, in their early existence, were as active in their attempts to diminish the income of the priests by intimidation, as they were that of the parson. Their plan was, with white shirts over their clothes, and white handkerchiefs round their hats so as to conceal the features, to pay a nightly visit to some quiet and timid man, whom they swore, on pain of death, to visit the neighboring chapel in order to inform the priest, in the face of his own congregation, that unless he reduced the fees for marriage to half-a-guinea, those of baptism to nineteen-pence half-penny, and celebrate Mass for thirteen pence, he might prepare his coffin. If he got hay and oats for his horse at a station, he was at liberty to take them, but if not, he was to depart quietly, on pain of smarting for it. The unfortunate individuals on whom they imposed this painful and dangerous duty, were much to be pitied whilst this confederacy lasted. To submit to an illegal oath, without reporting the matter to the next magistrate, was a capital felony, as it was voluntarily to execute

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any of their criminal behests. If, then, the unfortunate individual pitched upon for the performance of this extraordinary office refused to discharge it, he was probably shot by the Threshers or Carders, and if he carried their wishes into effect, he was liable to be hanged by the government, so that his option lay between the relative comforts of being hanged or shot—a rather anomalous state of society, by the way.

The vengeance of the people against Purcel and his sons had now risen or was fast rising, to its height. This intrepid man and these resolute young men, aided by the writs of rebellion and the executive authorities, had nerved themselves up to the collection of tithe, through a spirit that was akin to vengeance. In fact, they felt an inhuman delight—at least the father and his eldest son did—in levying the execution of the writs in the most pitiless and oppressive manner. They themselves provided horses and carts, and under protection of the military and police—for both were now necessary—they swept off cattle, crops, and furniture, at a ruinous value to the defaulters. At length they proceeded to the house of a struggling widow, whose only son, exasperated at the ruin which their proceedings had wrought upon his mother, in an unguarded moment, induced a few thoughtless boys like himself to resist the law. It was an act of folly for which his life paid the penalty. He was shot dead on the spot, and his death proved the signal for raising the gloomy curtain that veils the last of the drama in which the tithe-proctor makes his appearance.

Soon after the death of this youth, John Parcel had occasion to go to Dublin, to transact some business with the Rev. Dr. Turbot, and on his way to the metropolis he was obliged to stop for more than an hour at the county town, to await the arrival of the mail-coach. As he lingered about the door of the coach-office, he noticed a crowd of persons corning down the street, bearing something that resembled a human figure on a beir. It was evidently the corpse of some person, but at the same time he felt it could not have been a funeral, inasmuch as he saw that it came from the churchyard instead of going to it. The body was covered with a mort-cloth, so that he could not ascertain whether it was that of a man or a woman. Walking at its head as a chief mourner does at a funeral, was an old man with gray hair, who appeared to have every feature of his venerable countenance impressed with the character of an affliction which no language could express. He neither spoke nor looked to either side of him, but walked onward in a stupor of grief that was evidently too deep for tears—for he shed none, his face was pale even unto ghastliness, whilst at the same time there was a darkness over it, which evidently proceeded from the gloom of a broken down and hopeless heart.

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John Purcel, after making some inquiry as to the cause of this singular procession, was enabled, from several of the by-standers, to ascertain the following affecting and melancholy particulars. The reader cannot forget the conversation between the proctor and his sons, concerning the murder of a certain farmer named Murray, in the early part of this narrative. The poor youth who had been appointed, under the diabolical system of Whiteboyism, to perpetrate that awful crime, was the very young man who, during the journey of the Whiteboys to the mountains, had held a kind of *sotto voce* conversation with the mysterious person who proved himself to be so sincere a friend to Frank M'Carthy. A misunderstanding for several years, or rather a feeling of ill-will, had subsisted between his father and Murray, and as this circumstance was known, the malignant and cowardly miscreants availed themselves of it to give a color of revenge to the murder, in order to screen themselves. At all events, the poor misguided youth, who had been stimulated with liquor, and goaded on to the commission of the crime, from fear of a violent death if he refused it, was tried, found guilty, and executed, leaving his childless father and mother, whose affections were centred in him, in a state of the most indescribable despair and misery. By the intercession and influence of friends, his body was restored to them, and interred in the churchyard, from which the procession just mentioned had issued. The heart, however—or to come nearer the truth—the reason of the mother—that loving mother—could not bear the blow that deprived her of her innocent boy—her pride, her only one. In about a week after his interment she proceeded one morning to his grave, bearing with her the breakfast which the poor youth had been accustomed to take. This, in fact, became her daily habit, and here she usually sat for hours, until in most cases her woe-stricken husband, on missing her, was obliged, by some pardonable fiction, to lure her home under the expectation of seeing him. This continued during spring, summer, autumn, and the greater portion of winter—up in fact until the preceding night. She had, some time during the course of that night, escaped from her poor, husband while he slept, and having entered the grave-yard by stone steps that were in a part of the wall—for a passage went through it—she reached her boy's grave, where it was supposed, after having for some time, probably until lassitude and sorrow, and a frame worn down by her peculiar calamity, had induced sleep—she was found dead in the course of the morning—an afflicting but beautiful instance of that undying love of a mother's heart, which survives the wreck of all the other faculties that compose her being.

Her miserable husband and friends were then bearing her body home, in order that it might be waked decently and with due respect, ere it should mingle with the ashes of him whom she had loved so well. So much for the consequences of being concerned in those secret and criminal confederacies, that commit such fatal ravages, not only in society, but in domestic life, and stand so strongly opposed to the laws of both God and man.

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Purcel, on reaching the metropolis, was a great deal astonished at the change which he observed in Dr. Turbot. That gentleman's double chin had followed the carnal fortunes of the church that supported it. The rosy dewlap, in fact, was no longer visible, if we except a slight pendulous article, which defied the whole nomenclature of colors to classify its tint, and was only visible when his head and neck assumed a peculiar attitude. In fact, the change appeared to Purcel to have been an exceedingly beneficial one. The gross carnal character of his whole appearance was gone; his person had become comparatively thin, and had a far and distant, but still an approximating, tendency to something of the apostolic. He was now leading by compulsion, a reasonable and natural life, and one not so much at variance with the simple principles of his religion, whatever it might be with those of the then establishment. His horses and carriages and powdered servants were all gone too, so was the rich air of wealth and costly luxury which formerly breathed throughout his fine mansion, in one of the most fashionable streets of the metropolis. His eye, no longer loaded by the bloodshot symptoms of an over-fed and plethoric constitution, was now clear and intellectual, and there appeared to be an unencumbered activity about his jaws that argued a vigor and quickness of execution in matters of a sumptuary character, which, when gross and unwieldy from luxury, they never could reach. He was by no means in his usual spirits, it is true, but then he was in much better health, and a vague report of something in the shape of a loan to the clergy, to the tune of a million, gave him a considerable degree of cheerfulness.

John Purcel, having dispatched his business with him as quickly as he could, called upon M'Carthy in college. This gentleman having, in fact, heard such an account of the threats and determinations of vengeance with which the Purcel family were threatened, had felt deep anxiety as to their fate. He had written more than once to them on the subject, entreating that, as their wealth had rendered them independent, they would remove either to Lisnagola or Dublin. This, however, was a determination to which they had come recently themselves, and one portion of John's business to the metropolis was connected with it.

On the day previous to Purcel's visit to M'Carthy, that young man had received the following short and somewhat mysterious communication from the country:—

"Mr. M'Carthy.—Sir—If you wish to save some of Mr. Purcel's family—save them all you cannot—and if you have courage, and isn't afraid to risk your life, you will come down to Longshot Lodge and wait there till you here more from 'One that has proved himself your Friend'."

This determined M'Carthy; and when John Purcel asked him to spend the Christmas with them, he felt gratified at the alacrity with which the other embraced his offer. The next morning they started for Longshot Lodge, and in due time were cordially greeted by the proctor and his family.

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The day before Christmas—universally known as Christmas Eve—at length arrived. On that morning, our friend Mr. Temple and his family were seated at breakfast with easy and cheerful hearts, when the following conversation took place; and we introduce it for the purpose of gratifying our readers, who, we are certain, will rejoice in hearing the circumstances that form its subject matter.

“Charles, my dear, I always knew that my dear grandpapa was a kind and forgiving man; and, to tell the truth, I felt a conviction that such sincerity of heart, and such unexampled purity of purpose as yours, would not be permitted long to suffer. Read the letter again my love.”

Her husband, whose mild features were absolutely radiant with an expression of delight—an expression that was elevated, besides, with a glow of fervent and devotional feeling—now read the letter again, which was to the following effect:—

“My dear Maria,—I do not think that a man of my years—now near seventy-two—who feels how many duties he has neglected in this life, and who, consequently, knows how much he requires to be forgiven, ought any longer to class himself with those who are disposed to withhold their pardon from human error. I wrote some time ago to your father, requesting, nay, commanding him, to suffer himself to be reconciled to you; but his reply was, that, although he was not averse to it in due time, yet he said that for the present he must decline it—not so much, he added, for want of affection for you, as that he might the more strongly manifest a sense of his displeasure at your conduct, in throwing yourself away upon an ‘educated beggar.’”

The hectic of a moment, as Sterne beautifully says, came across his fine and handsome features as he uttered the words; and he added, “He forgets, my love, that my family is not, as your grandpapa says, inferior to his own.”

“Do not dwell on that, dearest Charles,” she added, “but let us hear good old grandpapa out.”

“No, my dear Maria, I differ with your papa; Mr. Temple was not an educated beggar, but an educated and accomplished gentleman, whose family, in point of blood and birth; is equal even to ours. Still, my love, you know that on many accounts, and as persons to whom you were so justly dear, and who felt such a strong interest in your settlement and position in life, we had reason to feel offended at the step you took in marrying him. That, however, is past—and now let it be forgotten. Your papa still loves you tenderly, my Maria; for I could observe that in a passage where he said it was necessary that you should suffer a little longer, there were the marks of tears—and of tears too, that fell thickly. Now, however, for something that will cheer my own favorite. I have succeeded in getting Mr. Temple appointed to the living of Ballynolan, in a safe and quiet part of the country, not many miles from Drumgooran Castle.”

“That you know my dear Charles, is his own family seat.”

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“I know, my love, it is; however, to proceed—from Drumgooran Castle; so that I will once more enjoy the pleasure of having you near me.. The living is worth about five hundred a-year, after paying two curates and all other claims; so that, with frugality and moderation, you may live comfortably at least. Ah! my dear Maria, you knew the avenue to grandpapa’s affections, when you called your eldest son after him. Present him with the enclosed, in my name, and tell Mr. Temple that he shall have a communication from me in a few days—it will be one of business; and I trust soon to have the pleasure of making his acquaintance.

“I am, my dear Maria, your ever affectionate grandfather,

“TAVNIMORE.”

The enclosure alluded to was a bank post-bill for two hundred pounds. It is unnecessary, however, to dwell upon the happiness which this communication conferred upon Mrs. Temple and her affectionate family. She saw her accomplished and amiable husband’s brilliant talents and many rare virtues, about to be rewarded—-she saw poverty, distress, and famine driven from their hearth—she saw her beloved children about to be placed in circumstances not unbecoming their birth; and, having contemplated all this, she wept once more with a sense of happiness, as pure as it was unexpected.

Breakfast was now over—a plain and severely frugal one, by the way, it was—and her husband was about to proceed to Lisnisgola, in order to get the bank post-bill changed, when, from the parlor where they sat, he saw the *Cannie Soogah* approaching the hall-door, the huge pack, as usual, on his shoulder.

“Here, my love, comes that benevolent pedlar,” he exclaimed, “whose conduct, on the occasion you mentioned, was at once so delicate and generous.”

He then stepped to the window, and raised it as our friend approached, who, on seeing him, put his hand to his hat, exclaiming, “Many happy returns of the saison, sir, to you and your family! My Christmas-box on you!”

“I thank you, my friend,” replied Mr. Temple, “and I sincerely wish you the same.”

Mrs. Temple now approached also, bent her head kindly and condescendingly, in token of salutation, with a blush which she could not prevent. The worthy pedlar perfectly understood the blush—a circumstance by which he was a good deal embarrassed himself, and which occasioned him to feel in rather a difficult position. He felt flattered, however, by her condescension; and instead of merely touching his hat to her he pulled it off and stood respectfully uncovered.

“Put on your hat, my friend,” said Temple; “the morning is too cold to stand with a bare head—pray put it on.”

“I know, your honor,” replied the pedlar, “the respect that is due to you both, and especially, sir,” he added, in that tone, and with that peculiar deference, so gratifying to a husband who loves and is proud of his wife—“especially, sir, to her, for I know her family well—as who doesn’t!”

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“By the way,” said Mrs. Temple, “I think you committed a mistake on the occasion of your last call here?”

“A mistake, ma’am!” said he, with well-feigned surprise—“well, indeed, ma’am, it’s not unlikely; for, to tell you the truth, I’ve a vile mimory—sorra thing a’most but I disremimber, in a day or two after it happens.”

“Do you not remember,” she proceeded, with a melancholy smile, “a negotiation we had when you were here last?”

“A what, ma’am?”

“A—a—purchase you made from me,” she added.

“From you!” he exclaimed, with apparent astonishment; “well, then, I can’t say that I have any recollection of it—I remember something—that is, some dalins or other I had wid the maid, but I don’t remember purchasin’ anything from you, ma’am.”

“It was a shawl,” she replied, “which you purchased, if you remember, and paid for, but which you forgot to bring with you.”

“Why, then,” he exclaimed, after rubbing his head with his fore-finger, “bad cess to me if I can remimber it; but the truth is, ma’am, I make so many purchases, and so many sales, that like the priest and them that confess to him, the last thing fairly drives the one that went afore it out o’ my head.”

“You paid six guineas,” continued Mrs. Temple, “for the shawl, but left it behind you.”

“Well, bedad, ma’am,” said the pedlar, smiling, “it’s aisy to see that you’re no rogue, at any rate. In the present case, thin,” he added, “I suppose you wish to give me the shawl?”

“Oh, certainly,” she replied, “if you wish for it; but at the same time I would much rather keep the shawl and return you the money.”

“I’m in no hurry, ma’am for either shawl or money, if it isn’t—hem—if it isn’t just convanient.”

“You are an honest, sterling fellow,” said her husband, “and I assure you that we thoroughly appreciate your delicacy and worth. I know Mrs. Temple would prefer keeping the shawl, and if you will call in the course of the evening, I shall return the money to you. I must first go into Lisnagola to get change for a note.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied the Cannie, “but it is time enough—I am in no hurry at all—not the laist; it will do when I call again.. And now that that’s settled—and many thanks to

you, ma'am," he added, bowing to Mrs. Temple, "for thinkin' of it, I'd be glad to have a word or two wid you, sir, if you plaise."

"Certainly," said Mr. Temple, going to the hall-door, and opening it, "come in a moment; leave your pack in the hall there, and come this way."

He then proceeded to the library, whither the pedlar followed him; and after looking about him with something like caution, he said, "You know Mr. Purcel, the proctor, sir?"

"Of course I do," replied Mr. Temple.

"I'm not askin' it as a question," he proceeded; "but I wish to say, that as you do know him and his sons, it's possible you may save them from destruction. I was tould by a stranger that I never seen before, and that I didn't know from Adam, that his house is to be attacked either this night or to-morrow night."

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“Can you not say which?” asked Mr. Temple.

“No,” replied the Cannie Soogah; “I axed the stranger the same question, and he couldn’t tell me. Now, sir, you know them, and I know how much they respect you; and the thing is this,—I think if you’d see them, and thry to get them to go to Lisnagola, or some safe place, takin’ their lives and money along wid them, you’d save them from murdher; they’d be apt to listen to you; but as for me, or the likes o’ me, they’d laugh at me; indeed, they’re rather wishin’ for an attack, in hopes they might get revenge upon the people, for, to tell you the truth, they’ve been foolish enough to say so; an’ as their words has gone abroad, the people’s determined, it seems, to let them know which o’ them is strongest.”

“Well,” replied the curate, “I am sorry to hear this—it is dreadful. That they are unpopular—nay, detested—I know; as I do, also, that they have latterly gone daring lengths—oppressive and unjustifiable lengths —in collecting tithes. I shall, however, see them, and endeavor to make them take refuge in some place of security.”

“It will be a good act,” said the pedlar, “and if I can do anything, humble as I am, to save them, I’ll do it.”

“I think they ought to get a party of police to protect the house,” observed Mr. Temple.

“I know they ought, sir,” replied the pedlar, “but the truth is, they’re so proud and foolhardy, that the very mention of such a thing throws them into a fury.”

“That is unfortunate,” said the other. “At all events, I shall leave nothing undone within my power to prevail on them to take steps for their security. You may rely on it,” he added, “that whatever I can do for that purpose, I shall do.”

“Well, now,” said the Cannie, “my mind, thank God’s, aisier. I’ll lose no time myself in seein’ what I can do to prevent this business; that is, I mane, their stayin’ in the house,” he added, as if checking or correcting himself.

He then bade Mr. Temple good morning, and hurried away, without waiting to see his fair friend, Lilly, as was his custom to do.

CHAPTER XVII.—Midnight Court of Justice

—Sentence of the Proctor and His Sons.

Breakfast in the proctor’s, on the morning of Christmas Eve, was eaten as if it had been a funeral meal. The proctor himself could not raise his spirits, which were generally high and cheerful. John and Alick were much more serious than usual; and were it not for the presence of M’Carthy, the meal in question would have been a very gloomy one

indeed. Even M'Carthy himself felt the influence of the spirit that prevailed, and found that all his attempts to produce cheerfulness or mirth among them were by no means successful. The two sons, as if acting under the influence of some unaccountable presentiment, engaged themselves in casting bullets for the fire-arms with which the house was furnished,

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whilst M'Carthy spent his time with the ladies, and endeavored to amuse them as well as ha could. About twelve o'clock John rode into the town of Lisnagola to bring home a blunderbuss which he had sent the day before, by Mogue Moylan, for the purpose of having it furnished with a new ramrod. Mogue being engaged in some matters of a pressing nature, John determined to go for it himself, especially as he wanted to lay in a better supply of powder. Of this Mogue knew nothing.

Mr. Temple soon made his appearance, but, as the pedlar feared, the object of his visit was not attended with success. He urged all the arguments in his power upon the proctor and his son Alick, to remove instantly, and at once, to Lisnagola, or some other neighboring town, where, for the present, they might be safe. Instead of listening to the argument of instant removal, they laughed it to scorn. In the course of the following week, they said, it was their intention to remove; but to think of breaking up their family on a Christmas Eve, with a guest in their house too!—the thing was out of the question. A few days made no great difference; and their mind was fixed not to disturb their family or their guest, then.

Soon after Mr. Temple had gone, Julia Purcel met M'Carthy in the hall, and asked him for a moment to the dining-room, in a voice which was tremulous with agitation.

"Alas! Frank," she exclaimed, whilst the tears streamed from her eyes, "I feel a weight like that of death upon my heart. I fear there is some dreadful calamity hanging over this family."

"Why, my dear Julia," he replied, wiping the tears from her eyes, "will you suffer yourself to be overcome by a weakness of mind so unworthy of you? The morning is dark and gloomy, and calculated, apart from such silly anticipations—pardon me, Julia—to fill the mind with low spirits. Cheer up, my dear girl; is not this season, in a peculiar manner, set apart for cheerfulness and enjoyment? Why, then, will you indulge in this weak and foolish melancholy?"

"I would not feel as I do," she replied, "but the truth is—now do not scold me, Frank—in fact I had an omen of calamity last night!"

"An omen! how is that?" he asked. "On bidding my papa and John goodnight, as I was going to bed, about eleven o'clock, I saw them both standing below me at the foot of the stairs, in the hall. I started, and turning again into the drawing-room, where I had just left them, saw that there they certainly stood, without scarcely having had time to change their position."

"A mere physical illusion, my dear Julia; nothing else."

“But is it not said,” she added, “that to see the likeness of an individual late at night is an omen of almost immediate death?”

“It has been said so, I admit, my dear Julia, as have fifty thousand follies equally nonsensical. But to hear you, Julia, talk in this manner! upon my word, I’m surprised at it.”

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“You will not think of leaving us, dear Frank, until we get to a place of safety?”

“Unquestionably not; but you are alarming yourself unnecessarily.”

“Well, perhaps I am,” she said, gaining confidence from his firmness of manner; “but I assure you, Frank, I am not timid, nor a coward. I can load a gun, pistol, or blunderbuss, and what is better still, can discharge them without shrinking; so can my sister; but with respect to anything of a supernatural character—”

“You are a great coward. I perceive that; but, my dear Julia, to pass to a subject of the deepest interest to my happiness:—why is it that there has been an appearance of gloom and distrust about you for such a length of time? I think there should be nothing but the most unbounded confidence between us.”

“Have you been perfectly candid with me, Frank?”

“If you remember, dear Julia, you did not afford me an opportunity. You looked as if you felt offended, and I could perceive that you had withdrawn your confidence.”

“My mind is too much distracted now,” she replied, “to speak on this subject; but, if you wish it, I shall tell you, on Monday next, why I have appeared so.”

“Wish it! alas! my dear Julia, I can only say that my affection for you knows no bounds. Julia, you know I have loved you; and, happen what may, I shall carry that affection for you to my grave. Only say that the affection which you have already confessed for me is not cooled or diminished; only say it, dearest life, and you will relieve my heart of a heavy load.”

She fixed her beautiful dark eyes upon him, as if she were in the act of scrutinizing his very spirit; at length, she seemed to have arrived at a fixed conclusion; two or three tears slowly followed each other down her cheeks, and she replied, “I fear, Frank, I have been led to do you injustice; that is, to doubt your truth or your honor; yes,” she added, in a low confiding voice, “I feel that I love you as I ever did. But I am depressed, and my heart is full of an unaccountable sorrow.”

“My ever—ever dear—dearest Julia!” he exclaimed, as he pressed her to his heart; where she sobbed, and tenderly reacknowledged her love. “On Monday, however,” she observed, after having somewhat composed herself, “I shall tell you, at full length, the circumstances that have disturbed me with respect to you.” Another kiss as they separated, and so it was arranged between them.

When Mogue Moylan heard that John purcel had gone to the gunsmith’s for the blunderbluss, he stealthily sought the barn where he slept, and, putting on a great frieze coat, he went to the haggard; approached the stack, and thrusting his hand up the

thatch, secured a case of pistols that had been left with him and Jerry Joyce for their defence, and fixing them under his coat, deliberately took his departure.

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“I’ll have betther luck,” he said to himself, “to join the boys, and as I have my own party among them that’ll stand to me, we’ll have the best chance. I’m to take charge o’ the girls for him, after the men’s shot; an’ it’ll go hard if I don’t do him out o’ the one he’s set upon. If I sted in the house, as I intended at first, maybe it’s a bullet from the boys I’d get into me. No—no—every way—think of it as I will, it’s my wisest plan to cut; an’ at any rate, he’d find me out now about the blunderbuss. Have her, however, I will, or lose a fall for it.”

This was Mogue’s last appearance but one about the proctor’s establishment.

John Purcel, on inquiring for the blunderbuss at the gunmaker’s heard that Mogue had waited until the ramrod was put in, after which the man said he brought it home; a fact which Purcel never doubted. On the contrary, he felt annoyed at his own stupidity for not having asked Mogue the question before he went; and he consequently blamed himself more than he did Mogue. On his way home, however, he met Mogue; and it is necessary to state that none of the Purcel family returned to their house, for a considerable time past, by the same way, unless indeed very rarely. Mogue had come out upon the road, which he was crossing just as John turned a corner, and came plump upon him.

“What is the reason, Mogue,” he asked, “That you didn’t let me know you had brought home the blunderbuss?”

“That I may be happy, Mr. John, but it was bekaise you didn’t ax me; an’ a beautiful new ramrod it has now, at any rate.”

“Where are you bound for, Mogue?”

“Why, up to Harry Sproule’s for paper and writin’ things for the ladies. Any news in Lisnagola, Mr. John?”

“Nothing that’s good, at any rate,” replied the other; “except that the country, Mogue, must be put under martial law.”

He set spurs to his horse on uttering these words, and immediately rode on.

“Ay,” said Mogue, as he looked bitterly after him, “there you go, you blasted tyrant!

“Martial law! Ah, if I had her from among you, I didn’t care the divil’s blazes had you all, as they will soon; an’ that may be, I pray Jasus this day! Martial law! ah, bad luck to you!”

On reaching home, John Purcel made no immediately inquiry about the blunderbuss, having taken it for granted that all was right, nor was Mogue’s disappearance or treachery at all suspected, until late in ’the course of the night.

Twilight was now setting in, when a strange man called at the proctor's and said he wished to speak with Mr. M'Carthy. M'Carthy came to the hall-door, and looking at him keenly inquired his business.

"I don't know," said the man; "I can only tell you what I was desired to say to you."

"Well, let us hear even that," said the other.

"I was bid to ax you, if you wish to sarve this family."

"I do, most certainly."

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“In that case, then, you’re to follow me,” said the man.

“I have no such intention, I assure you, my good fellow,” replied the other.

“Very well, then, I have done my duty,” said the man, turning to depart.

“But,” said our friend, “will you not let me know who it was that sent you.”

“I tell you,” replied the stranger, “that I don’t know. I was bid to say to you that the hour is come, and the man, and that’s all I know; barrin’ that as I said you wor bid to come wid me, if you wish to sarve thia family. Now I must go.”

“Stop a moment,” said M’Carthy, “till I return into the house, and let them know I’m going out.”

“No,” replied the other; “if you do, you won’t find me here when you come back. This instant, or never.”

“To serve this family, you say?”

“To sarve this family, I was bid to say. I know nothing, an’ can say nothing about it myself.”

“Come, then,” said M’Carthy, resolutely, and thinking of the note he had received in college, “I trust you, or rather I will trust the man that sent you;” and having uttered these words, he departed with the stranger. The scene now changes to a hill, three or four miles distant from the proctor’s house, called Crockaniska, at the foot of which was a small but beautiful lake or tarn, from which a graceful little stream fell down into a green and picturesque valley, that lay to the south below it. The shades of evening were beginning to deepen, but for a considerable time before, the road that went past it was observed to be more than usually-thronged with men, some on foot and others on horseback; all presenting a solemn and determined aspect, as if bent upon some dangerous enterprise that must be accomplished, and all apparently strangers to the inhabitants of the place, and to each other. On the brow of the hill stood a picturesque ruin, and the hill itself was literally covered with men and horses; for it was evident, by the fatigued and travel-stained appearance of both, that they had come from a far distance. After dusk had set in, the crowd assumed an appearance of stern repose, but at the same time, and somewhat contrasting with this dreadful stillness, pale lights might be seen flitting from time to time through the ragged apertures, and vacant windows of the ruin. Inside this dreary old building were those who, from the greater respectability of their dress, appeared to be their leaders; men of trust and authority among them, by whose will and opinions they were to be guided. A table and chairs, provided on this occasion, were placed for the transaction of business, and on these, after some proceedings, conducted with a good deal of form, had been transacted,

twelve comfortably, if not well-dressed looking farmers sat, whilst on another chair, considerably elevated above the rest, a person in the garb at least of a gentleman, seemed to preside over, and regulate the business of the night.

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After a short silence, the judge asked, in an audible voice, if there was any business to be brought before “The Court of Right,” on that occasion. He was immediately answered, in a solemn and almost melancholy tone of voice, that there was a great deal of business before the court, but that only one case, that of Captain Right against Purcel Senior and sons, was for hearing and adjudication on that occasion.

On hearing the name of Purcel, the judge took from his pocket a broad, blood-red ribbon, as did also each of the twelve farmers who constituted the jury, and having tied it about his left arm, in which they imitated him, he composed himself for the resumption of business. The ribbons were a twofold symbol, signifying, in the first place, that the Purcels had shed the blood of the people, and were to be tried for murder; and in the second, that if found guilty, the sentence of Captain Right would exact from them the fearful penalty of blood for blood. A compact, well knit, and intelligent young man, about twenty-six years of age, now rose up, and unrolling a long scroll of paper, read in a low but distinct voice, a long and dark series of charges preferred by the aforesaid Captain Right against the said Matthew Purcel and his sons. That person, on this occasion, was the representative of Captain Right.

The judge then observed, that the charges must be proved to the satisfaction of the jury, and called upon Captain Right’s advocate to substantiate them. It would spin out our description to a fatiguing length, were we to go through all the cases of oppression, fraud, and cruelty, that were brought home to the unfortunate proctor; against whom, if we are to take him as the exponent of his heartless class, every one of them was strictly true.

He was found guilty, for instance, of taking—often beforehand, or in reversion—several small farms over the heads of poor but solvent tenants; turning them adrift on the world, and consolidating their holdings into one large stock farm for grazing; there by adding to the number of the destitute, and diminishing the supply of food for the people.

He was found guilty of paying to his laborers the wretched sum of only eightpence a day; which he paid by the vile truck system—that is to say by forcing them to take potatoes, milk, meal, &c, at nearly twice what the same commodities brought in the open market.

His sons were found guilty of insolence and cruelty, against such poor and distressed persons as had occasion to go to the proctor’s office, for the purpose of asking indulgence, or time to meet their engagements. Their insolence and cruelty consisted in giving abusive language to, and horsewhipping them as if they were not men, or possessed of the same rights, privileges, and feelings, as themselves. These were only a few of the charges, involving petty tyranny, oppression, and rapacity, against Purcel and his sons; but the last, and greatest, and most odious of them all, was the ruin he had brought, upon so many, by his tithe exactions, and the expenses he had heaped on

them by processes of law, in recovering that blood-stained impost, as it was not improperly called.

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Those were all proved by witnesses, and although we must admit, that the great body of the evidence was true, in point of fact, yet there was not a word said, of the insolence, threatening language, falsehood, evasion, and defiance, which Purcel and his sons had in general experienced from the people, before they had been forced to have recourse, in matters of tithe, to such harsh proceedings against them. When the case for Captain Right was about to close, there was a slight stir, and a low indistinct murmur ran through those who thronged the ruin.

“There is another charge still to come,” said the young man who conducted the prosecution; “we pass by the three massacres, and all the blood that was shed in them; and all the sorrow and misery, and affliction that they occasioned—we pass them by, I say, and to show all here present that we are not like Purcel and his sons, resolved to avail ourselves of any advantage against those we prosecute, I will just confine myself to one case of murder, instead of many—because you all know, that if they are found guilty upon one count, it will be sufficient for our purpose. Widow Flanagan, come up and prove your sorrowful case.”

A pale, emaciated woman, whose countenance was the very reflex of affliction and despair, now was assisted to make her way from the further part of the building. She was dressed in the deepest mourning, with the exception of the ribbons, which were, like the rest, a deep blood-red, as an indication that one of her family had been murdered.

“Widow Flanagan,” said the counsel for Captain Right, “will you have the goodness to state your distressing case?”

“Oh, no, no!” she exclaimed; “I’ll not state it—I’m beginnin’ to fear what your intentions is this night; and as for me, I’ll not help you, by act or word, to fulfil that fearful intention. Oh, change it!” she exclaimed; “there has been too much blood shed in the country; too much bad work every way in it. Call upon God to change your hearts, and go home to your families while your hands isn’t yet stained with blood! You all know what the law is when it’s let loose upon you, as it ought be, whenever you commit murther, and take away your fellow-crature’s life. I forgive Purcel and his sons; it was neither him nor them that took my boy’s life, but the sogers—oh, no!” she exclaimed, “I see what you’re bint on, and why you are sittin’ to try the unfortunate Purcels. I read it in your black fearful looks, and dark faces—may God turn your hearts, and forgive you for bringin’ me here this night! Surely you ought to know that one like me, who suffered so much by the spillin’ of blood, wouldn’t wish to see my fellow-cratures sufferin’ as I am? Oh, no! I forgive the Purcels, and why shouldn’t you? an’ the worst prayer I have for them is, that God may forgive them and change their hearts!” Alas! that we should say so, but the truth is, that no charge against Purcel, how bitter and malignant soever it might have been, could have occasioned such a deep-seated and uncontrollable vengeance against the unfortunate family, as the language of this extraordinary and great-minded peasant woman. There was nothing further said at the moment, every attention was

paid to her wishes; in accordance with which a party of men and horses were sent to convey her safely home.

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When she was gone, a neighbor of hers, who was present, came forward, and made an accurate and affecting statement of the circumstances connected with the death, or, as he termed it, and as we fear it was the murder of her son.

“The poor, lovin’ boy’s mother,” he proceeded, “the heart-broken Christian woman, that you all seen and heard this night, was not long after a fit of sickness. She was barely able to move about, but not to work or do anything in the house. When they came out to take away their property, she had two cows, but only one of them gave any milk. They wor axed to take the dry cow and any other part of the property they might think proper, but, ‘for God’s sake!’ said the boy, ’as my poor mother is only risin’ out of her illness, lave us the cow that can give her the drop of milk; the black water will kill her if you don’t.’ But no, this they wouldn’t do; but what did they do? Why, they left the dry cow behind them, and tuck away the one that gave the kindly drop o’ milk to the sick widow and her poor family; they then brought off—ay—swept away—six times the amount of what she owed; which they bought in for a song. It’s well known that of late Purcel and his sons swore that they’d execute every process in the sevairest and most expensive manner upon the people, and as they kept their oath I hope too we’ll keep ours. Well, it was when the poor boy saw the drop o’ milk, as he said, goin’ from his poor mother, that he opposed them. You all know the rest; he was shot stone-dead bekaise he loved that mother. The case is now in your hands, and this is all I have to say, barrin’ to ask you, gintlemen of the jury, to take a look at this, and think of him it belonged to, that’s now laid low in an airly and untimely grave, through Mat Purcel and his sons.”

He then placed a lock of fair and beautiful hair, which had been taken from the youth’s brow, in the hands of the foreman, and resumed his seat.

Oh, human nature! especially Irish human nature, what a mystery art thou!

The foreman, on receiving it, held it in his hands for some time, and so completely was he touched by the beauty of the tress, and the affection of him to whom it had belonged, that the tears gushed from his eyes; and as these men, who were then in the very act of trampling upon the laws of God and men, looked at it, one by one, there was scarcely a dry eye among them. As water, however, is frequently sprinkled over fire, in order to enkindle it into a more scorching heat, so did the tears they shed add fresh strength and fury to the vengeance which smouldered within them.

This closed the case for Captain Right, and the judge asked if there was any one present prepared with a defense for Mat Pur-eel and his sons.

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Our old friend, Darby Hourigan, who dressed himself in rags for the occasion, then came forward; and, after pulling up the waistband of his breeches, and twisting his revolting features into what he designed for, but what no earthly being could suppose, a grin, he spoke as follows:—"My lard, an' gintlemen o' the jury, it 'ud be a hard case if we suffered poor Misther Purcel and his two daicent, ginerous, kind-hearted sons, to be condimed 'idout a word at all in their defense. First, then, is it fair that we should be angry bekaise one of our own race and rallagion should spring up from among ourselves, and take his station over us like the Cromwellian shoneens, that are doin' oppression upon uz and our shildres! An', hadn't he as good a right to get the law at his back as they have? an' to make it bring him through the same hard-hearted coorses that made him rich and keep us poor? What had he done but what others had been doin' for ages, an' wor doin' still? ay, by jabers, an' 'ud continue to do unless the people put a stop to it. Worn't his sons gintlemen no less? Didn't they go out to hunt dressed in top-boots, buck-skin breeches, scarlet coats, and velvet jockey-caps; and didn't his daughters ride about upon blood-horses an' side-saddles? An' why are they called blood-horses do yez know? Ah, by jabers, if yez don't I'll tell you—it's bekaise they wor bought and maintained by the blood of the poor? Ay, they do all this, but if they do, who's to blame them? Poor! ershisin! Arra what was I sayin'? Sure they do it bekaise we all have plenty to ait and dhrink, plenty to wear; good coats to our backs, like this"—-and here he shook the rags he dangled about him in hundreds; "good breeches to—-hem—no matther—good shoes and stockings to our feet; good heads to our hats—hut! I mane good hats to our heads—and fusht-rate linen to our shkins; ay—sich as this," he added again. "Whisht!" he exclaimed, with a laugh like an Eclipse, "bad luck to the fatther of it, but I forgot at home—along wid the other eleven—or stop—here it is to the good still," pointing to his naked skin, "an' be my sowl, boys—my lard an' gintlemen o' the jury, I mane—it's the weavor of this linen that'll stand to us yet.

"Gintlemin, I do maintain that there's a great dale to be said for Mat Purcel. To be sure he skrewed the last fardin' out of uz, but where was there ever a tithe-procthor that didn't do the same thing? An' sure if he tuck as much as he could from huz, an' gev as little as he could to the parson, wasn't it all so much the betther? Wasn't it weakenin' their fat church and fattening our weak on'?—where's the honest Catholic could say a word aginst that? To be sure, we all know that, by his knowledge of farmin', and all the ins and outs of our little tillage, he contrived, one way or other, to take about the fifth of our little produce; but then if he did, didn't he say it was all by way of friendship an' indulgence to us? Sure didn't himself tell us that only he pitied us an' felt for us, he'd a' been ten times harsher than he was, an' so he would, be coorse, an' 'tis thankful we have a right to be, an' not grumblin' at all at all.

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“I hould half a dozen could an’ miserable acres, an’ about three weeks ago, he tuck about one-fourth of the whole produce, owin’ to citations to the bishop’s coorts, an’ a long string o’ costs jined to the tithe itself—bad luck to it!—an’ didn’t he prove to me that he let me off for a song, an’ was the best-hearted procthor that ever strewed a defaulther? Well, an’ isn’t every small farmer, that doesn’t wish to go law, or isn’t able to right himself, as well off as I am—glory be to God! I declare, thin, I don’t see why we should be angry wid so kind an’ merciful a man.

“Thin, again, it made a man religious, an’ was aiquil to goin’ to one’s duty, to go to ax time or indulgence from his sons. It isn’t a clear case that you’d get the indulgence, but it is a clear case that you wor sure to get a horsewhippin’. Now, you know a horse-whippin’ ’ud make a man repint goin’ to him, an’ when a man’s in a repintin’ state, he may as well repint for whatever sins he has committed, while his hand’s in.

“Altogether, thin, my lard an’ gintlemin o’ the jury, I think it’s clear that Purcel an’ his sons is a great benefit to the counthry about us, an’ that they ought to be acquitted, especially as it’s likely that they have more processes to sarve, more auctions to hould an’ may be, more widow’s sons to take on the hands of their poor strugglin’ motherss the crathurs, that’s badly able to support them; and anyhow, nobody can blame a man’ll that opens the gates of heaven for his fellow creature’s sowl, and sends him there.

“I hope, my lard an’ gintlemen, that I has now done my duty in defendin’ the Purcels and that I’ve proved to your satisfaction that they ought to be acquitted.”

This harangue of Hourigan’s was received with singular alternations of fierce rage, and mirth that was still fiercer and more frightful. At the conclusion of it there was a loud stamping of feet, accompanied by an exulting uproar of approbation. Silence, however, being called, the jurors put their heads together across the table, and in less than two minutes their foreman handed up the issue paper to a person who acted as register and secretary to the meeting. On receipt of this, that worthy functionary, in a solemn, deep, and barely audible voice, read a verdict of “guilty,” which was received in solemn silence by the assembly.

The judge then rose, and in a voice that was also solemn but distinct, pronounced the sentence of the court to be—“Death and dark destruction to Matthew Purcel and his sons,” with an order that it should be carried into execution on that very night. The judge then addressed them at some length, pretty closely to the following effect:

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“Now, my friends,” said he, “there is no man in this building who has not before now been engaged in affairs of danger and of death. Every one of you is the leader of a party of determined fellows, who fear nothing. Our business is—to susteen the oppressed, to crush tyrants, and to right those who have been wronged. I am not sorry that the person in command over me is absent to-night, for I look upon the office I hold, and the exploit we are engaged on, as a high honor. If that person, however, is not with us he is engeeged for us, and will send us a strong reinforcement in the course of the night. I don’t expect that the attack on Purcel’s house will deteen us long, and after that we have other visits to meek, and several fields of pasture to dig up. You all know who I mane when I mention the man that has authority over us.”

“We do,” replied the crowd; “three cheers for *him!*” This was accordingly responded to, and the speaker proceeded.

“You are to understand,” said he, “that Purcel and his two sons are this night to die, and their house and pleece to be reduced to ashes. There is one thing, however, that I must strongly impress upon you—remember that you are not to injure any of the faymales of the family in the slightest degree. The second daughter must be taken and brought to a mounted guard that will be ready behind the garden-hedge, to bear her off to the mountains—they know themselves where. I will overteek them, or perhaps be there by the upper road before them. If any of you has a fancy for the other sister, I’m not the man that will stand in your way; but in order to encourage you to do your dooty, I now decleer that it is the man who will best distinguish himself among you that must get her. You all know what you are to do. The old tyrant, root and branches, is to be cut off, and his second daughter secured to me. You have been told the password for the night, and if you find any men among you that knows it not, put him instantly to death as a spy and a traitor. And now, my brave fellows, every man to his post, and I, who am for this night at least’ your commander, will lead you on. Come, then, follow me, and again I say—-’Death and dark destruction to Matthew Purcel and his two sons!’”

In a few minutes the vast multitude was in motion, all dressed in white shirts and disguised by blackened faces. The were certainly a fierce and formidable body, amounting, it is calculated, to not less than five thousand men, collected, as it was well known, from the seven adjoining counties.

The aspect of the sky, on this awful night, was long remembered by the inhabitants of that part of the country. Over towards the west, and away as far as the south, it seemed! to be one long mass of deep, angry-looking fire, that seemed both frightful and portentous, and made the spectator feel as if a general and immediate conflagration of the heavens was about to take place: whilst stretched nearer in point of space to the eye, were visible large bars of cloud that seemed, from their crimson color, to be masses of actual blood. In fact, the whole firmament was full of gloom and terror, and pregnant with such an appalling spirit of coming storm as apparently to threaten the destruction of the elements.

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It was quite evident, from the disturbed and unsettled appearance of the country for miles around, and from the circumstance of such an unusual multitude being on foot in the course of the evening, that some deed of more than ordinary importance or danger was to be done. The Purcel's, ever on the watch, soon learned that they were to be attacked on that very night by those who had threatened them so often, and to whom they themselves had so frequently sent back a stern and fierce defiance. Little had they calculated, however, that the onset would be made by men so well armed and in such prodigious multitudes.

Such was the state of society at that period, that scarcely any one individual could place confidence in another. The Purcels, knowing that they were looked upon by the people in a hostile spirit, and aware of the disguises which those secret confederacies, that are so peculiar to our unfortunate country, often take for treacherous and vindictive purposes, came to the resolution of putting every servant in the house, male and female, from off the premises. This they did on discovering Mogue Moylan's treachery with respect to the fire-arms; for, in point of fact, they knew not on whom to depend. M'Carthy's disappearance was also a mystery which occasioned them considerable anxiety and doubt. That he should have abandoned them in the very moment of danger, was a circumstance quite out of their calculation. On the other hand, it was obvious that he had done so, and that from whatever motive his conduct proceeded, he distinctly separated himself from them, at the very crisis when his presence and assistance might have been of service.

In the meantime they began to make preparations for their defence. Purcel's dwelling-house was a long, two-storied building, deeply thatched. He himself and his eldest son carried up a large supply of arms and ammunition to the top room, where they took their station so as to command the large gate of the recently-built fortress wall, by which the house and adjoining premises were surrounded. Alick, his mother and sisters, remained below, in such a position that they could command the gate also, without exposing themselves to danger. The mother and daughters had been well trained to load and even to discharge fire-arms; and now they were both competent and willing to take an important part in defense of their own lives, as well as those who were so dear to them.

"Well," said John Purcel, when every necessary preparation had been made, "I never could, have dreamt that Frank M'Carthy was either a coward or a traitor."

"I very much fear," replied his brother, "that he is either the one or the other, if not both. If he has got a hint—ha!—do you hear that again?—they are firing still as they come along—if he has got a hint of this attack and abandoned us, I have not words to express my contempt for him. What a bravo lover you have got, Julia!" he exclaimed, turning to his sister, "thus to desert you in the hour of danger."

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Julia made no immediate reply, but, after wiping away some bitter tears, she at length said, “I will not believe it—it cannot be possible: I know it is very strange and unaccountable, and I certainly cannot understand it.”

“Do you imagine it possible that M’Carthy could belong to this confederation of blood?” asked Alick; “I at least have been told so much: however, perhaps time will tell us more about it. For my part—”

He had nearly pronounced the words, when a heavy trampling of feet, joined to a deep murmur of suppressed voices, was heard; a horn was then sounded, and, in about half a minute afterwards, Purcel and his sons were called upon to surrender and admit the assailants. From the moment the first shots were heard, on the part of the approaching enemy, the Purcels concealed all their lights, so that, when the former reached the outer wall, the house seemed wrapped in obscurity—as if the family were buried in sleep.

They now assailed the gate, but soon found that there was little likelihood of forcing an entrance without heavier implements than those they had in their possession. On ascertaining that this was not practicable, they began to fire at the roof of the dwelling-house, and at those of the out-offices, with the hope that some portion of the wadding, when lighted, might ignite them. In this, after repeated attempts and failures, they were ultimately successful. A cow-house that stood detached from the other buildings, and, in point of proximity, nearest the gate, at length caught the flame, and in a few minutes began to burn. This, to be sure, might have been of little consequence to the insurgents, Were it not that the wind, which was gusty and blew sometimes with a good deal of strength, now and then swept the blaze over to the other offices, which were, consequently, soon in flames; and it was now obvious that the dwelling-house, from its position and the direction of the blast, could not possibly escape.

Hitherto, there was no appearance of either light or life in the proctor’s dwelling, and the insurgents were by no means satisfied with the progress they had made. It is true, they felt confident that none of the Purcels had escaped since they approached the house—-a circumstance which was impossible, in consequence of the cordon of the enemy that had been drawn around the outer wall. Another surmise, however, maddened them almost to fury. Could it be possible that the objects of their hatred had abandoned the house in the earlier part of the night, and thus defrauded them of their vengeance? The thought was intolerable; but that was a point which they would now be in a capacity soon to ascertain.

Finding that the gate, as we said, was impregnable, unless with stronger implements, they had sent to a smith’s forge in the neighborhood, from whence they obtained two or three sledge-hammers. By the aid of these they soon shivered the gate to pieces, and, having accomplished this, they—

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Before we proceed further, it is necessary to state, that the light of the burning cow-house fell upon them with the strength and clearness of a summer noon; whilst, on the other hand, the proctor's family, from the position of the house, were in complete obscurity.

The advantage was, consequently, all on one side; the Purcels, when the gate was demolished, saw the crowd clearly and distinctly, but the crowd could not at all see them. Feather-beds and other defenses had been placed at the windows, in such a manner that the firing from the house could be delivered with almost perfect impunity to the inmates, but with dreadful and deadly effect upon the assailants. The latter, having accomplished the destruction of the gate, were in the act of entering, when, all at once, such a well-directed volley was poured among them as caused every man of the front ranks to fall dead. Four blunderbusses had been discharged among them—three by the proctor and his two sons, and one by his eldest daughter Mary. The fatal effect with which this fire was delivered caused a momentary pause, and the aggressive crowd was forced to rush back in a kind of wavy motion, that resembled the undulations of a retreating serpent. An immediate return, however, took place; and, in about half a minute, those in front, however reluctant, were forced forward by the pressure from without. Again did a well-directed fire bring down those who were thrust forward, and the consequence was that a back action took place, which enabled those in front to retire for the present from what they clearly saw was certain death.

So far the proctor's family were triumphant, and would have been so, were it not for the conflagration of the offices, which every moment threatened their own house with destruction. There was not now one among the crowd hardy enough to attempt an entrance by the open gate-which entrance they knew to be only another name for death. Two circumstances, however, were at work against the brave and intrepid proctor and his equally brave and intrepid sons. Crowbars had been procured, and three breaches were being made in those parts of the wall which the windows of the house did not command, and what was still equally, if not more dreadful to the besieged, was the fact of the dwelling-house having taken fire, from the flames that were wafted to it by the conflagration of the adjoining offices. The breaches having been effected, the assailants precipitated themselves into the yard; and now commenced the work of destruction in reality. The latter were shot down in scores; whilst at the same time, the windows of the house from which this destructive fire was kept up so ably, received fifty discharges to one that had been made from them. The house was immediately surrounded, and guards were placed at the doors and lower windows, with strict and fatal orders to allow none of the family to escape, with the exception of the females—one of whom was to be secured, as the reader knows, for a particular purpose, and the rest as chance or passion might direct.

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The Purcels, in the meantime, ably served and assisted by Mrs. Purcel and her daughters, continued to deal death and destruction on the parties outside, without being yet either fatigued or disabled. At length the terrible light of the roof that was burning over them, and the stifling heat which began to oppress them, startled the proctor into a state of feeling so awful, that it obliterated from his awakened conscience all external impressions of the dreadful havoc of human life which was taking place about him. The feeling was deepened by a discovery that the gate had been broken and breaches made in the walls, as well as by the incredible multitude of armed persons about the premises, most of whom were now distinctly visible by the glare of the conflagration.

The life of Matthew Purcel, though unstained by any of those gross crimes which separate man from his fellows, or draw down the punishment of the law upon those who commit them, was, nevertheless, in a singular degree, unfeeling, oppressive, and rapacious. Though plausible and clever in his manner, and anxious to stand well with the world, he was, at the same time, relentless and implacable, a tyrant within the petty sphere of his influence, a despiser of all those principles that were not calculated, no matter how, to elevate and enrich. He ground the poor, and wrung, by the most oppressive extortion, out of their sweat and labor, all and much more than they could afford to give him. With destitution and poverty in their most touching and pitiable shapes, he never had one moment's sympathy, nor did the widow or orphan ever experience a single act of benevolence or mercy at his hands.

There was now a short pause in the work of destruction, but it was evident to him and his family that some new element of action was at work among the multitude, though of its character and object they could form no possible conjecture. The Purcels had now a short space for reflection, and but a short one, for they all felt, by the increasing heat that proceeded from the burning roof, that they could not long abide under it. Alick and the females had joined John and his father in the top room, and the latter now saw clearly that fate, in its most dreadful and appalling shape, was on him and his whole family, for it was clear, as matters stood, that neither he nor his sons, at all events, could escape the vengeance of the infuriated multitude. In this condition, his veins swollen, and the perspiration standing in large beads upon his forehead, he took one fearful and agonizing glance upon his past life, and felt, now that he stood on the verge of eternity, that the retrospect was like a glimpse of hell. The change that came over his features was frightful beyond all belief; his face became nearly black, and his eyes, which grew bloodshot almost in a few minutes, had, notwithstanding, a sharp delirious expression of terror that no language could depict.

"Great God! father," exclaimed his son John, who first noticed, this change in his appearance, "what is the matter with you?"

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“We are lost!” he exclaimed; “oh, my past life! Great Heaven! if I had but one act of kindness to look back upon, I could dare death. Children, the tortures of hell are upon me! Here is death at my throat, but how will I die? Hallo—look!” he exclaimed, “do you see it?—it is all black—black and bloody—black and bloody—that life of mine! Crimes—crimes—crimes against the poor—against the widow and the orphan! Why did I do it? Eh, why did I oppress, and grind, and murder! Ay, murder!—where’s Widow Flanagan’s son?—where’s all the blood I was the means of shedding?—where are the rotten corpses that are now festering in the grave, because I was rapacious and an oppressor? Hallo! I say, don’t curse me—or rather, do curse me—damn me—damn my soul—damn my soul—ha! what am I saying?—who brought me to this? Who? why who but the black and damnable parsons—ay, the parsons and their d—d heretical church! However, I’ll have my revenge, for hell is lined with them—paved with them—circled with them; and there I’ll find them in burning squads to welcome me—ha! ha! ha! Welcome, Proctor! Tithe-Proctor! God’s Perdition! what a name! what a character? Tithe-Proctor!—that is rogue, oppressor, scourge, murderer!—and all for what? For a dead, lazy, gross, overgrown heresy! Ay, lazy parsons that I brought myself to this for, to perdition for! But then I was proud too—oh, it was a great thing to creep up from poverty and cunning to broadcloth and top-boots, to saddle horse, then a jaunting-car, to shake hands with the great parsons, who despised me all the while and made me their tool and scapegoat! Oh, yes, and to have my sons able to hunt in red coats and top-boots, and my daughters to ride on side-saddles—how do you do, gintlemen?—-ladies, your most obedient! but, where are we?—what is this? Is this the light of hell, and these the devils with their black faces? And yet, I did intend to repent and to be merciful to the poor; and now here comes damnation! and why? have I not murdered you all?—where am I?—who am I? I am not Matthew Purcel, the Tithe-Proctor, I hope—make that clear, and I’ll give you—or could it be a dream?—no, no, it is real, a real fact; and the gulf of damnation yawns for me! Ha!—well—come, then, let us die like men; give me the blunderbuss; now, down with the villains—down with the villains!”

His family had been standing between the shelter of two windows, almost transfixed into stone with horror at the blasphemous agonies under which his frantic spirit was raging and writhing. The truth is, that the frightful certainty of death to himself and his family, in such an unprepared state, together with the rapid glance of his ill-spent life, joined to his exertion and the suffocating heat of the room, had, all combined, induced what may be well termed this insane paroxysm of despair and guilt.

On seizing the blunderbuss, he rushed, now distinctly visible in the light, and forgetful that the multitude were on the watch for him, over towards one of the unprotected windows, where he was followed by his son John, for the purpose of being dragged out of danger. He had just discharged the blunderbuss at their leader, who was on the point of making his way to the hall-door, when the ruffian fell stone-dead, and almost simultaneously, he and his son John were literally perforated with a shower of bullets.

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“We must die, also,” exclaimed Alick to his mother and his sisters; “we must die,—but let us die firmly. Any death, however, is better than one of fire; here we cannot stay longer. Stoop now, so that we may pass that part of the wall that is beneath the windows, until we reach the lower floor; if we expose ourselves only for a moment, we must share their fate. Great God! what a fate and what a night!”

By following his advice, they reached the lower floor in safety, and had scarcely done so, when the burning roof crashed in upon the bodies of the proctor and his son, of whose remains nothing but a few cinders were found the next morning. The falling in of the roof was accompanied by a considerable explosion, owing to the powder which they had left behind them, and the noise of which caused the crowd that was now hemming in the house to pause for a moment, but only for a moment; for they knew now by the explosion, that the ammunition of their enemies was gone, and that “the old fox and his cubs,” as they called them, were probably incapable of further resistance; a reflection which, as it stood not in the way of their cowardice, seemed to increase their fury.

“Revenge now, boys,” shouted a hundred voices; “they have shot our leader along with the rest. Come on then, sledge in the doors an’ windies, an’ if we lave a single inch of the villains together, may we be hanged like dogs! Come on, then, they are helpless now; their ammunition’s gone, an’ they can do us no harm. Blood for blood as far as they go; it’s into inches we must hew them—into inches—come on, then!”

A furious assault instantly commenced at the doors and windows. It was, indeed, a frightful thing to see these men, with their white shirts and black visages, fiercely at work; panting and inflamed with ungovernable rage and vengeance, the red turbid blaze of the burning building lighting them into the similitude of incarnate devils, let loose upon some hellish mission of destruction and blood. Their own fury, however, impeded their progress, for as they passed onwards to the door, urged by the worst passions of man, it was found that their violence, thus broken and diminished by the struggle, had prevented them from making anything like a rapid progress in breaking in the powerfully-fortified door. There was consequently another slight pause, during which a circumstance occurred that added a terrible sublimity to the scene.

We have said, that the sky looked angry and portentous, and such was the fact. During the pauses that now occurred, the distant darkness of the surrounding country was momentarily dispelled by a stronger and more terrific fire than that which now shot up its red and waving pyramids from the burning houses before them. All at once the black sky opened, and from the chasm of angry clouds a sheet of red lightning flashed, lighting up the darkness of the country around them in a fearful manner; but above all things, and

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what gave a super-added horror to the scene, was the influence which that light, that seemed to proceed from the vengeance of God, had upon that which proceeded from the vengeance of man. The sheeted volume swept down, and for an instant poured over the blazing roofs, the tottering walls, the bleeding corpses and the black-visaged men who stood in multitudes about the place, panting with the mad intoxication of crime; it poured upon them, we say, a light so strong, penetrating, and intense, that its fearful distinctness was enough to paralyze the heart, and awe those who were present from the prosecution of their vengeance. It was, in fact, as if the Almighty Himself had sent down His avenging angel from the heavens, to pour His light upon them, in order to bear testimony against the dreadful work of blood in which they were engaged. Nor was this all. Ere the pause was broken, a burst of thunder, so deep, so loud, and so terrible, in such an hour, pealed from a point of the sky on their right, taking its course in the direction of the proctor's house, where, in one terrific explosion, it seemed to burst exactly over their heads. Some were awed, but we all know that companionship fortifies the heart in the commission of crime, and in a few minutes the Almighty, His fires of vengeance,—and His midnight thunders, were all alike forgotten.

The assault on the door was now renewed with, if possible, more ferocious violence; and it became evident to the unfortunate and now helpless inmates, that they must soon fall into the hands of those from whom they could expect no mercy. We say they were in a helpless state; and this was occasioned by the explosion, which left them without ammunition, even if they had had their firearms. Such, however, was their hurry in escaping from the falling roof, joined to the shock and stupor caused by the death of John and his father, that they thought not for a moment of anything but mere self-preservation. Owing to these causes they brought no weapons of defence with them; and now, in consequence of the fallen roof and explosion, their fire-arms were beyond their reach, and useless. They stood now ghastly—their features rigid like those of the dead—calm and without a tremor—but with a melancholy fortitude that was as noble as it was rare and unprecedented. At length Mrs. Purcel spoke:—"Alick," said she, "you must save yourself: we may receive some mercy at the hands of these men, but you will not; hide yourself somewhere, and, when they come in, we will say that you perished with your father and brother."

"No, my dear mother," replied her son, "while I have life I will not separate from' you and these dear girls."

"This is madness," observed Julia; "what can you expect? Have we not witnessed bloodshed enough to-night already?—or are you determined that we shall be compelled to witness your murder before our faces? Oh, dear Alick, be advised by my mother; by secreting yourself, you may escape; but if you are found here, you will be instantly shot."

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“Dear Alick,” said Mary, “by the love you bear us, and by the blood of those whom these murdering ruffians have sacrificed, we implore and entreat you to conceal yourself; and, if that fails—then, by the love of God, do as we desire!”

She had scarcely uttered the last words, when a single Whiteboy, with blackened face, made his appearance at the end of the kitchen stairs, and approached them, waving his hands with a mingled expression of distraction and entreaty.

“Dear John,” he exclaimed, “be patient; and Julia, be calm, and hear me. I am,” he added, in a low and guarded whisper, “Frank M’Carthy: as you hope for mercy from God and life from man, listen! The door will be broken in in a few minutes; but if you are guided by me, you may yet be safe. Blacken your face forthwith, Alick; and here is a shirt marked with blood too—a circumstance that will give you more security—which I have brought you.”

“Frank M’Carthy,” exclaimed Julia, “and a Whiteboy! Oh, yes, be advised by him, Alick; as for me, I care not how soon death comes—I have little to live for now!”

“If there was time, dear Julia, for explanation, I could soon satisfy you; but, alas! I fear to ask for your father and John.”

“They are both murdered, sir,” she replied; “they have fallen victims to men who are in the habit of wearing white shirts and black faces—with, I fear, blacker hearts.”

“Great God!” he exclaimed, “is this so? but time now is life: I must bear your suspicions, Julia, until a fitter occasion. You, Alick, as you will not and wish not to leave your mother and sisters unprotected, follow me—follow me, or, as I hope for God’s mercy, you are lost, and your sisters—I dread to think of it.”

“It is enough,” said Alick, struck now with absolute impatience: “I consent, Frank—what do you wish?”

He brought him at once to the kitchen, where he took soot from the chimney, which he moistened with water, and, in a couple of minutes, blackened his face and put the bloody shirt over his dress. The change was so completely and quickly effected, that the females for a moment took it for granted that they were strangers who had forced an entrance by some other way.

“Now,” said M’Carthy, placing a loaded pistol in Alick’s hand, “the pass-word for the night is ’*the Cannie Soogah*’—you won’t forget that?—but, above all things, don’t think of using your pistol, whatever may happen, until you hear me shout, ’*the Cannie Soogah to the rescue!*’ and even then, wait until you see and speak to him—the brave, the noble, the glorious fellow!”

“Good God! and is he here?” asked Alick.

“He’s here—he’s everywhere,” replied the other: “he’s here, at all events, before now, I hope: the manner in which I shall call upon his name is this—first, I shout ‘the Cannie Soogah!’ the very mention of which will be followed by a general cheer; then, when he appears, I shall call out, ‘the Cannie Soogah to the rescue!’ After this you must be guided by me, as I must be by the Cannie Soogah and circumstances. Come, now, it is safer to open the door and admit these ruffians.”

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“And remember,” added Alick, turning with a look of agony to the females, “that the men have all been shot, and are lying in the upper room!”

The ruse of M’Carthy succeeded. The Whiteboys, on being admitted, took it for granted that those who opened the door belonged to themselves and had got in by some other entrance. The house was hastily searched; and the fact of the Purcels having been killed in the upper room, was corroborated by the limbs of John and his father being visible among the burning pile. The state of the house now rendered a hasty retreat out of it necessary. A sudden trembling of the walls and upper joists was felt, the crowd rushed out, and the next moment the whole building was one fallen mass of smoking ruins.

The females now found themselves prisoners; but still their brother and M’Carthy kept near them, and seemed to act as a portion of those to whom their guardianship! had been entrusted. Julia found herself committed, as if by general consent, to the care of one individual, who kept her a little in advance of the accompanying crowd—to! whom, from time to time, he waved his hand without looking behind him to intimate that they should not press close upon them, but afford him an opportunity of holding what he wished to be considered some confidential conversation with her.

“That I may be blest, Miss Julia, but you’re a lucky girl this night—an’ I think I may say that I’m a lucky boy myself. I’m to take care of you, and to bring you to a safe place; which I’ll do, never fear. You know what I told you afore about my family—how we wor ever an’ always doin’ our best against the Sassanach Laws—an ould family it is—an’ sure ould blood is betther than riches any day—an’ it isn’t complexion aither, Miss Julia, that a—this way, darlin’—this way—an’ how long now is it since you fell in consate with me? Well, darlin’ that I may die a happy death in a good ould age, if I can blame you for not spakin’—especially afther havin’ lost your father and two brothers this night. Howandiver, we can have a lob of their wealth, anyhow, yourself and myself—this way, darlin’, there’s a party of friends waitin’ for us—wisha’ thin, but I’m lookin’ forrid to a happy life wid you—but sure you might say a single word to me, darlin’—jist to let me know you hear me.”

Whether Julia heard this one-sided dialogue or not, it is difficult to say. She seemed passive and inattentive, and walked on with an abstracted and mechanical motion. Her brother and lover could only get near her occasionally, having found it necessary to watch her mother and sister also. They could perceive, however, not only that the crowd which followed Mogue appeared to be a good deal in his confidence, and under his sway, but that it increased so rapidly as he went along, that they became alarmed, especially as the Cannie Soogah had not yet made his appearance.

At this moment they were met by a body of men, who on looking at Mogue and Julia, exclaimed, “You are bringing her the wrong way—you are breakin’ your ordhers—you

know that our captain laid it out, that you should bring her in the other direction, and to where the guard is waitin' for her."

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“Ay,” replied Mogue, “but you know our captain had been shot, and is lyin’ stiff inside the gate there behind us.”

“But livin’ or dead,” they replied, “do you observe your duty—it’s a bad an’ dangerous example you’re settin’.”

“But sure if the captain was alive,” said Mogue, “it ’ud be a different thing—that I may be happy, but I’m bringin’ her the right way, and to the right place, too—amn’t I, boys?” he exclaimed, turning to his followers.

“All’s right!” they replied; “to be sure you are—go on, and more powers!”

About a minute or two before this, a mounted Whitefoot had rode up, and having heard the words, he replied to Mogue, in a loud voice, “No, sir! our captain is not shot, but is safe and sound.” And scarcely had the words proceeded from his lips when the very individual, as it seemed, who had led them during the night, galloped up to the place of altercation.

“Who says I am dead,” said he; “I don’t look like a dead man, I think. Meek way there till I speak to this man,” pointing to Mogue. “Why, sir, did you dare to disobey ordhers by taking this lady to the wrong place? Answer me that?”

Mogue, seeing that his support was now powerful, looked at them, and asked aloud—-“Am I bringin’ the lady the wrong way, boys?”

“No,” they replied; “Go on, and more power!”

At this moment M’Carthy shouted out in loud and powerful tones—“The Cannie Soogah!” and the words were no sooner uttered than Mogue started, a rapid stir and murmur pervaded, the multitude, and almost instantly a most hearty and vociferous cheer awakened the echoes that slept among the neighboring hills. The moment this had subsided, the same voice repeated the name with an addition—“The Cannie Soogah to the rescue—here he is!”

Our facetious friend, for it was he, threw up his hand in a peculiar manner, that made the act understood by all present, with the exception of M’Carthy and Alick Purcel.

“Yes, boys,” he exclaimed, “I am here; and I thank you for your kindness. You have had a full revenge to-night on Purcel and his family; but, as I have been a long time in search of a good wife, I suppose you have no objection that I should take charge of the ladies.”

These words were followed by another astounding cheer, and the Cannie, riding over to the spot where Mrs. Purcel and her daughter stood—for she and Mary had now joined

Julia—was about to speak to them, when the report of a pistol was heard, and at the same moment a bullet whizzed past his ear.

“Treachery!” he shouted, “treachery against your commander! Seize upon that person, in the name of Captain Right.”

His words came late; another report followed the first, with an interval of less than a quarter of a minute between them, and instantly our pious friend, who had flattered himself with the prospect of a long and happy life in the possession of Julia Purcel, fell stone-dead to the earth.

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“What!” shouted the Cannie, “is this more treachery? But wait, I’ll soon cure this.”

He put a horn to his lips as he spoke, and having given it a sharp, quick, and hasty blast, he nodded his head, as much as to say, “Wait a moment.”

“The last shot wasn’t threachery anyhow,” exclaimed Jerry Joyce, whose voice Alick immediately recognized; “somebody,” he added, with a significant look, “has ped honest Mogue for his.”

“Is he dead?” asked the Cannie.

“He is dead, captain,” replied several, “and so may every one die that’s a traitor to the Cannie Soogah—our bold Captain Right.’”

A body of about a thousand men now made their appearance, every one of them personally devoted to the Cannie Soogah; and brought there for the humane purpose, if possible, of saving Purcel and his sons that night.

“It was a false alarm, my friends,” said he, as they came up; “there was only one traitor among them, and he has been brought to his account. I didn’t wish for his death, and he might have got some other punishment, but it can’t be helped now; I’m only sorry for the false-hearted vagabond because he wasn’t fit to die.”

He then, after a few words of advice, dismissed them to their respective homes, with the exception of a certain number of faithful followers, whom he retained for the purpose of assisting him to escort Mrs. Purcel and her daughters to the house of our worthy magistrate. Another body he also appointed to the task of carrying the dead and wounded away to some remote place, where they could be interred, or so concealed that their indentification might not involve their surviving relatives.

[Illustration: Destruction of the Castle]

Our narrative, we may say, is closed. The Cannie now having placed Mrs. Purcel and her daughters on horseback, directed his friends to proceed to the residence of the redoubtable Fitzy O’Driscol, who was by no means prepared for seeing such a number of Whiteboys about his house. Alick Purcel and M’Carthy also got horses, and as they went along, M’Carthy received from him a solution to the mysterious occurrences in which he had been involved.

“Mr. Purcel’s family,” said he, but not in hearing of the females, “is the last family that I ought to protect this night. They have shot my twin brother, the man that went by the name of Buck English. He is now gone to his reckonin’ and may God forgive him! He was tried and found guilty of murdher in the county of Cork, and the worst of it was that it was in the act of robbin’ a gentleman’s house that the murdher was committed. While he was in gaol I contrived to get into him, and we managed so well that he escaped,

and I was kept in his place. The next day I tould them the truth, and he was taken again; but it seems that the gintleman that prosecuted, on hearin' that there was another person so like him, felt unaisy in his mind and got him off for the murdher, in dread he might have sworn against the wrong man. He couldn't keep himself quiet though, for, on the very day before his pardon came, he was caught, along wid some others, in the act of breakin' out of the gaol, and for that he got a severe wound and seven years' transportation. All our lives, I and my other brother—"

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“Why, have you another brother, Cannie?” asked M’Carthy.

“Troth, and I have; and you may thank God that I have, or it isn’t here but in heaven, I hope, you’d be this night. Well, as I was sayin’, I an’ my other brother spent our whole life in tryin’ to defate him in his plans and skames—may God forgive him! We often did, but not always; for sometimes he was too many for both of us.”

“But, Cannie, about the night I was in Frank Finnerty’s, who was it that saved my life twice?”

“One of them—he that wounded the fellows—I don’t wish to name—but, indeed I’m crippled here, bekaise you know, gintlemen, that there are laws in the land. A friend to your family met Mogue Moylan, and, suspectin’ what was in the wind, sent that friend to assist you, and it was by volunteerin’ to take your life that he was able to save you. My brother, afther meetin’ him, and hearin’ from him what happened was the man that met you aftherwards, that gave you the passwords, and showed you how to open the windey. There were others there that knew you, for I hope you don’t think that every man goin’ out at night wid a white shirt and a black face on him is a murdherer.”

“God forbid!” said M’Carthy, “I’ve been disguised by both myself, as it happens. It is difficult, however, for any country to be happy, or any people either industrious or moral, when such secret confederacies are made the standard of both law and morality.”

“That’s thruth, Mr. M’Carthy, and no man knows it betther than I do; I and my brother—-not him that’s gone to his account to night, but the other—were forced to join them for our own safety, but, as long as we wor of them, we endeavored to do as much good—-that is, to prevent as much evil—as we could. It was I that sent you, Mr. M’Carthy, the letter to Dublin, and it was I that sent the messenger for you this evenin’; I took it for granted that if you had remained in Mr. Purcel’s you’d been shot, and, besides, I wanted you to watch Mogue Moylan, for I had raison to know that he intended to play a trick on me to night in regard to Miss Julia. I had my doubts all along whether I could come in time to save the whole family and defate my brother, and I could not, for I had an immense number of my own men to get together; however, God’s will be done; I did all that lay in my power.”

On reaching Nassau Lodge, the party anticipated some danger from Fergus O’Driscol’s fire-arms. Alick, however, knocked, and on hearing the window open, exclaimed:—

“Don’t be alarmed, Fergus, we are friends. My mother and sisters are here, and wish to get in. This has been a dreadful night!—a night of bloodshed and murder!”

“My God!” exclaimed Fergus, “what is this you tell me? But why, Alick, are you surrounded by such a number of Whiteboys. I can see distinctly that they are such by the light of the moon.”

“Boys,” said the Cannie Soogah, “disperse now—and thank you; I feel your kindness, and I won’t forget it—you see the people of the house are alarmed—but that’s not the worst of it—what,” he added, with a peculiar smile, “if you bring that terrible dare-divil, O’Driscol, upon you!”

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The crowd immediately dispersed, and in a few minutes the melancholy group were admitted to the welcome shelter of the magistrate's hospitable roof; for such, in fact, it was.

We do not intend to dwell upon this melancholy meeting of the neighboring families, nor upon the heart-rending details which were given of the dreadful circumstances that made that night so hideous. All the O'Driscols were present, and deeply participated in the affliction of the late proctor's family with the exception of the magistrate himself, who, much to their astonishment, was not forthcoming. Every successive moment, however, he was looked for; but as he did not, after an unusual period of expectation, make his appearance, some alarm began to be felt, which gradually increased, especially on the part of his daughter, until she proposed that a search should be made for him. This was accordingly done, when—but let it not reach the ears of his friend the Castle, he was discovered somewhat in the position of Philosopher Square, behind Molly Seagrim's curtain, squatted upon his hunkers, as they say, in the furthest and darkest corner of the coal hole.

In about half an hour after this discovery, a knock came to the door, and it was intimated to Alick Purcel and M'Carthy, that the Cannie Soogah wished to see them for a minute or two,—but that he declined coming in.

"Gentlemen," said he, when they came to the hall-door, "I have made up my mind since I left you awhile ago, and I'm come to bid you both farewell. This at present is not a paceful country to live in, and I'm tired of the work that's goin' on in it. I'm now come to bid you both farewell, and my brother is goin' along wid me. The other will be laid in his grave this night. I wish, Mr. Purcel, I could a' done more for your family; but what's done can't be undone. Farewell, then," said he, and, as he spoke, his voice was filled with deep but manly emotion—"Farewell to you both! When you think of me, let it be kindly, for from this night out you will never see the Cannie Soogah more."

He put his two hands upon his face, gave a sob or two, and immediately departed at a rapid pace, and never was seen in the country afterwards.

It is necessary to say now that Alick Purcel and his beloved Miss O'Driscol were united; —that M'Carthy, in due time, after having been called to the bar, was made happy in the possession of Julia Purcel; and that Jerry Joyce, in imitation of his betters, was blessed by the hand and honest heart of Letty Lenehan.