

The Ned M'Keown Stories eBook

The Ned M'Keown Stories by William Carleton

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INTRODUCTION.

It will naturally be expected, upon a new issue of works which may be said to treat exclusively of a people who form such an important and interesting portion of the empire as the Irish peasantry do, that the author should endeavor to prepare the minds of his readers—especially those of the English and Scotch—for understanding more clearly their general character, habits of thought, and modes of feeling, as they exist and are depicted in the subsequent volume. This is a task which the author undertakes more for the sake of his country than himself; and he rejoices that the demand for the present edition puts it in his power to aid in removing many absurd prejudices which have existed for time immemorial against his countrymen.

It is well known that the character of an Irishman has been hitherto uniformly associated with the idea of something unusually ridiculous, and that scarcely anything in the shape of language was supposed to proceed from his lips, but an absurd congeries of brogue and blunder. The habit of looking upon him in a ludicrous light has been so strongly impressed upon the English mind, that no opportunity has ever been omitted of throwing him into an attitude of gross and overcharged caricature, from which you might as correctly estimate his intellectual strength and moral proportions, as you would the size of a man from his evening shadow. From the immortal bard of Avon down to the writers of the present day, neither play nor farce has ever been presented to Englishmen, in which, when an Irishman is introduced, he is not drawn as a broad, grotesque blunderer, every sentence he speaks involving a bull, and every act the result of headlong folly, or cool but unstudied effrontery. I do not remember an instance in which he acts upon the stage any other part than that of the buffoon of the piece uttering language which, wherever it may have been found, was at all events never heard in Ireland, unless upon the boards of a theatre. As for the Captain O'Cutters, O'Blunders, and Dennis Bulgrudderies, of the English stage, they never had existence except in the imagination of those who were as ignorant of the Irish people as they were of their language and feelings. Even Sheridan himself was forced to pander to this erroneous estimate and distorted conception of our character; for, after all, Sir Lucius O'Trigger was his Irishman but not Ireland's Irishman. I know that several of my readers may remind me of Sir Boyle Roche, whose bulls have become not only notorious, but proverbial. It is well known now, however, and was when he made them, that they were studied bulls, resorted to principally for the purpose of putting the government and opposition sides of the Irish House of Commons into good humor with each other, which they never failed to do—thereby, on more occasions than one, probably, preventing the effusion of blood, and the loss of life, among men who frequently decided even their political differences by the sword or pistol.

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That the Irish either were or are a people remarkable for making bulls or blunders, is an imputation utterly unfounded, and in every sense untrue. The source of this error on the part of our neighbors is, however, readily traced. The language of our people has been for centuries, and is up to the present day, in a transition state. The English tongue is gradually superseding the Irish. In my own native place, for instance, there is not by any means so much Irish spoken now, as there was about twenty or five-and-twenty years ago. This fact, then, will easily account for the ridicule which is, and I fear ever will be, unjustly heaped upon those who are found to use a language which they do not properly understand. In the early periods of communication between the countries, when they stood in a hostile relation to each other, and even long afterwards, it was not surprising that “the wild Irishman” who expressed himself with difficulty, and often impressed the idiom of his own language upon one with which he was not familiar, should incur, in the opinion of those who were strongly prejudiced against him, the character of making the bulls and blunders attributed to him. Such was the fact, and such the origin of this national slander upon his intellect,—a slander which, like every other, originates from the prejudice of those who were unacquainted with the quickness and clearness of thought that in general characterizes the language of our people. At this moment there is no man acquainted with the inhabitants of the two countries, who does not know, that where the English is vernacular in Ireland, it is spoken with far more purity, and grammatical precision than is to be heard beyond the Channel. Those, then, who are in the habit of defending what are termed our bulls, or of apologizing for them, do us injustice; and Miss Edgeworth herself, when writing an essay upon the subject, wrote an essay upon that which does not, and never did exist. These observations, then, easily account for the view of us which has always been taken in the dramatic portion of English literature. There the Irishman was drawn in every instance as the object of ridicule, and consequently of contempt; for it is incontrovertibly true, that the man whom you laugh at you will soon despise.

In every point of view this was wrong, but principally in a political one. At that time England and Englishmen knew very little of Ireland, and, consequently, the principal opportunities afforded them of appreciating our character were found on the stage. Of course, it was very natural that the erroneous estimate of us which they formed there should influence them everywhere else. We cannot sympathize with, and laugh at, the same object at the same time; and if the Irishman found himself undeservedly the object of coarse and unjust ridicule, it was not very unnatural that he should requite it with a prejudice against the principles and feelings of Englishmen, quite as strong as that

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which was entertained against himself. Had this ridicule been confined to the stage, or directed at us in the presence of those who had other and better opportunities of knowing us, it would have been comparatively harmless. But this was not the case. It passed from the stage into the recesses of private life, wrought itself into the feelings until it became a prejudice, and the Irishman was consequently looked upon, and treated, as being made up of absurdity and cunning,—a compound of knave and fool, fit only to be punished for his knavery, or laughed at for his folly. So far, therefore, that portion of English literature which attempted to describe the language and habits of Irishmen, was unconsciously creating an unfriendly feeling between the two countries, a feeling which, I am happy to say, is fast disappearing, and which only requires that we should have a full and fair acquaintance with each other in order to be removed for ever.

At present, indeed, their mutual positions, civil, commercial, and political, are very different from what they were half a century ago, or even at a more recent period. The progress of science, and the astonishing improvements in steam and machinery, have so completely removed the obstructions which impeded their intercourse, that the two nations can now scarcely be considered as divided. As a natural consequence, their knowledge of each other has improved; and, as will always happen with generous people, they begin to see that the one was neither knave or fool, nor the other a churl or a boor. Thus has mutual respect arisen from mutual intercourse, and those who hitherto approached each other with distrust are beginning to perceive, that in spite of political or religious prejudices, no matter how stimulated, the truthful experience of life will in the event create nothing but good-will and confidence between the countries.

Other causes, however, led to this;—causes which in every state of society exercise a quick and powerful influence over the minds of men:—I allude to literature.

When the Irishman was made to stand forth as the butt of ridicule to his neighbors, the first that undertook his vindication was Maria Edgeworth. During her day, the works of no writer made a more forcible impression upon the circles of fashionable life in England, if we except the touching and inimitable *Melodies* of my countryman, Thomas Moore. After a lapse of some years, these two were followed by many others, who stood forth as lofty and powerful exponents of the national heart and intellect. Who can forget the melancholy but indignant reclamations of John Banim,—the dark and touching power of Gerald Griffin,—or the unrivalled wit and irresistible drollery of Samuel Lover? Nor can I omit remarking, that amidst the array of great talents to which I allude, the genius of our female writers bore off, by the free award of public opinion, some of the brightest wreaths of Irish literature. It would be difficult indeed,

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in any country, to name three women who have done more in setting right the character of Ireland and her people, whilst exhibiting at the same time the manifestations of high genius, than Miss Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Mrs. Hall. About the female creations of the last-named lady, especially, there is a touching charm, blending the graceful and the pensive, which reminds us of a very general but peculiar style of Irish beauty, where the lineaments of the face combine at once both the melancholy and the mirthful in such a manner, that their harmony constitutes the unchangeable but ever-varying tenderness of the expression.

That national works like these, at once so healthful and so true, produced by those who knew the country, and exhibiting Irishmen not as the blundering buffoons of the English stage, but as men capable of thinking clearly and feeling deeply—that such works, I say, should enable a generous people, as the English undoubtedly are, to divest themselves of the prejudices which they had so long entertained against us, is both natural and gratifying. Those who achieved this great object, or aided in achieving it, have unquestionably rendered services of a most important nature to both the countries, as well as to literature in general.

Yet, whilst the highly gifted individuals whom I have named succeeded in making their countrymen respected, there was one circumstance which, notwithstanding every exhibition of their genius and love of country, still remained as a reproach against our character as a nation. For nearly a century we were completely at the mercy of our British neighbors, who probably amused themselves at our expense with the greater license, and a more assured sense of impunity, inasmuch as they knew that we were utterly destitute of a national literature. Unfortunately the fact could not be disputed. For the last half century, to come down as far as we can, Ireland, to use a plain metaphor, instead of producing her native intellect for home consumption, was forced to subsist upon the scanty supplies which could be procured from the sister kingdom. This was a reproach which added great strength to the general prejudice against us.

A nation may produce one man or ten men of eminence, but if they cannot succeed in impressing their mind upon the spirit and intellect of their own country, so as to create in her a taste for literature or science, no matter how highly they may be appreciated by strangers, they have not reached the exalted purposes of genius. To make this more plain I shall extend the metaphor a little farther. During some of the years of Irish famine, such were the unhappy circumstances of the country, that she was exporting provisions of every description in most prodigal abundance, which the generosity of England was sending back again for our support. So was it with literature, our men and women of genius uniformly carried their talents to the English market, whilst we labored at home under all the dark privations of a literary famine.

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In truth, until within the last ten or twelve years, an Irish author never thought of publishing in his own country, and the consequence was that our literary men followed the example of our great landlords; they became absentees, and drained the country of its intellectual wealth precisely as the others exhausted it of its rents.

Thus did Ireland stand in the singular anomaly of adding some of her most distinguished names to the literature of Great Britain, whilst she herself remained incapable of presenting anything to the world beyond a school-book or a pamphlet; and even of the latter it is well-known that if the subject of it were considered important, and its author a man of any talent or station in society, it was certain to be published in London.

Precisely in this state was the country when the two first volumes of the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" were given to the public by the house of Messrs. Gurry and Co., of Sackville Street. Before they appeared, their author, in consequence of their originating from an Irish press, entertained no expectation that they would be read, or excite any interest whatever in either England or Scotland. He was not, however, without a strong confidence that notwithstanding the wild and uncleared state of his own country at the time, so far as native literature was concerned, his two little pioneers would work their way with at least moderate success. He felt conscious that everything depicted in them was true, and that by those who were acquainted with the manners, and language, and feelings of the people, they would sooner or later be recognized as faithful delineations of Irish life. In this confidence the event justified him; for not only were his volumes stamped with an immediate popularity at home, where they could be best appreciated, but awarded a very gratifying position in the literature of the day by the unanimous and not less generous verdict of the English and Scotch critics.

Thus it was that the publication of two unpretending volumes, written by a peasant's son, established an important and gratifying fact—that our native country, if without a literature at the time, was at least capable of appreciating, and willing to foster the humble exertions of such as endeavored to create one. Nor was this all; for so far as resident authors were concerned, it was now clearly established that an Irish writer could be successful at home without the necessity of appearing under the name and sanction of the great London or Edinburgh booksellers.

The rapid sale and success of the first series encouraged the author to bring out a second, which he did, but with a different bookseller. The spirit of publishing was now beginning to extend, and the talent of the country to put itself in motion. The popularity of the second effort surpassed that of the first, and the author had the gratification of knowing that the generosity of public feeling and opinion accorded him a still higher position than before, as did the critics of the day, without a dissentient voice. Still, as in the case of his first effort, he saw with honest pride that his own country and his countrymen placed the highest value upon his works, because they best understood them.



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About this time the literary taste of the metropolis began to feel the first symptoms of life. As yet, however, they were very faint. Two or three periodicals were attempted, and though of very considerable merit, and conducted by able men, none of them, I believe, reached a year's growth. The "Dublin Literary Gazette," the "National Magazine," the "Dublin Monthly Magazine," and the "Dublin University Review," all perished in their infancy—not, however, because they were unworthy of success, but because Ireland was not then what she is now fast becoming, a reading, and consequently a thinking, country. To every one of these the author contributed, and he has the satisfaction of being able to say that there has been no publication projected purely for the advancement of literature in his own country, to which he has not given the aid of his pen, such as it was, and this whether he received remuneration or not. Indeed, the consciousness that the success of his works had been the humble means of inciting others to similar exertion in their own country, and of thus giving the first impulse to our literature, is one which has on his part created an enthusiastic interest in it which will only die with him.

Notwithstanding the failure of the periodicals just mentioned, it was clear that the intellect of the country was beginning to feel its strength and put forth its power. A national spirit that rose above the narrow distinctions of creed and party began to form itself, and in the first impulses of its early enthusiasm a periodical was established, which it is only necessary to name—the "Dublin University Magazine"—a work unsurpassed by any magazine of the day; and which, moreover, without ever departing from its principles, has been as a bond of union for literary men of every class, who have from time to time enriched its pages by their contributions. It has been, and is, a neutral spot in a country where party feeling runs so high, on which the Roman Catholic Priest and the Protestant Parson, the Whig, the Tory, and the Radical, divested of their respective prejudices, can meet in an amicable spirit. I mention these things with great satisfaction, for it is surely a gratification to know that literature, in a country which has been so much distracted as Ireland, is progressing in a spirit of noble candor and generosity, which is ere long likely to produce a most salutary effect among the educated classes of all parties, and consequently among those whom they influence. The number, ability, and importance of the works which have issued from the Dublin press within the last eight or ten years, if they could be enumerated here, would exhibit the rapid progress of the national mind, and satisfy the reader that Ireland in a few years will be able to sustain a native literature as lofty and generous, and beneficial to herself, as any other country in the world can boast of.

This hasty sketch of its progress I felt myself called upon to give, in order that our neighbors may know what we have done, and learn to respect us accordingly; and, if the truth must be told, from a principle of honest pride, arising from the position which our country holds, and is likely to hold, as an intellectual nation.

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Having disposed of this topic, I come now to one of not less importance as being connected with the other,—the condition and character of the peasantry of Ireland.

It maybe necessary, however, before entering upon this topic, to give my readers some satisfactory assurance that the subject is one which I ought well to understand, not only from my humble position in early life, and my uninterrupted intercourse with the people as one of themselves, until I had reached the age of twenty-two years, but from the fact of having bestowed upon it my undivided and most earnest attention ever since I left the dark mountains and green vales of my native Tyrone, and began to examine human life and manners as a citizen of the world. As it is admitted, also, that there exists no people whose character is so anomalous as that of the Irish, and consequently so difficult to be understood, especially by strangers, it becomes a still more appropriate duty on my part to give to the public, proofs sufficiently valid, that I come to a subject of such difficulty with unusual advantages on my side, and that, consequently, my exhibitions of Irish peasant life, in its most comprehensive sense, may be relied on as truthful and authentic. For this purpose, it will be necessary that I should give a brief sketch of my own youth, early station in society, and general education, as the son of an honest, humble peasant.

My father, indeed, was a very humble man, but, in consequence of his unaffected piety and stainless integrity of principle, he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, no matter what their rank in life might be. When the state of education in Ireland during his youth and that of my mother is considered, it will not be a matter of surprise that what they did receive was very limited. It would be difficult, however, if not impossible, to find two persons in their lowly station so highly and singularly gifted. My father possessed a memory not merely great or surprising, but absolutely astonishing. He could repeat nearly the whole of the Old and New Testament by heart, and was, besides, a living index to almost every chapter and verse you might wish to find in it. In all other respects, too, his memory was equally amazing. My native place is a spot rife with old legends, tales, traditions, customs, and superstitions; so that in my early youth, even beyond the walls of my own humble roof, they met me in every direction. It was at home, however, and from my father's lips in particular, that they were perpetually sounding in my ears. In fact, his memory was a perfect storehouse, and a rich one, of all that the social antiquary, the man of letters, the poet, or the musician, would consider valuable. As a teller of old tales, legends, and historical anecdotes he was unrivalled, and his stock of them was inexhaustible. He spoke the Irish and English languages with nearly equal fluency. With all kinds of charms, old ranns, or poems, old



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prophecies, religious superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles, and pilgrimages, anecdotes of blessed priests and friars, revelations from ghosts and fairies, was he thoroughly acquainted. And so strongly were all these impressed upon my mind, by frequent repetition on his part, and the indescribable delight they gave me on mine, that I have hardly ever since heard, during a tolerably enlarged intercourse with Irish society, both educated and uneducated, with the antiquary, the scholar, or the humble senachie—any single tradition, usage, or legend, that, as far as I can at present recollect, was perfectly new to me or unheard before, in some similar or cognate dress. This is certainly saying much; but I believe I may assert with confidence that I could produce, in attestation of its truth, the dairies of Petrie, Sir W. Betham, Ferguson, and O'Donovan, the most distinguished antiquaries, both of social usages and otherwise, that ever Ireland produced. What rendered this, besides, of such peculiar advantage to me in after life, as a literary man, was, that I heard them as often in the Irish language as in the English, if not oftener, in circumstance which enabled me in my writings to transfer the genius, the idiomatic peculiarity and conversational spirit of the one language into the other, precisely as the people themselves do in their dialogue, whenever the heart or imagination happens to be moved by the darker or better passions.

Having thus stated faithfully, without adding or diminishing, a portion, and a portion only, of what I owe to one parent, I cannot overlook the debt of gratitude which is due to the memory of the other.

My mother, whose name was Kelly—Mary Kelly—possessed the sweetest and most exquisite of human voices. In her early life, I have often been told by those who had heard her sing, that any previous intimation of her presence at a wake, dance, or other festive occasion, was sure to attract crowds of persons, many from a distance of several miles, in order to hear from her lips the touching old airs of their country. No sooner was it known that she would attend any such meeting, than the fact spread throughout the neighborhood like wild-fire, and the people flocked from all parts to hear her, just as the fashionable world do now, when the name of some eminent songstress is announced in the papers; with this difference, that upon such occasions the voice of the one falls only upon the ear, whilst that of the other sinks deeply into the heart. She was not so well acquainted with the English tongue as my father, although she spoke it with sufficient ease for all the purposes of life; and for this reason, among others, she generally gave the old Irish versions of the songs in question, rather than the English ones. This, however, as I said, was not her sole motive. In the first place, she had several old songs, which at that time,—I believe, too, I may add at this,—had never been translated; and I very much fear that some valuable

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ones, both as to words and airs, have perished with her. Her family were all imbued with a poetical spirit, and some of her immediate ancestors composed in the Irish tongue several fine old songs, in the same manner as Carolan did; that is, some in praise of a patron or a friend, and others to celebrate rustic beauties, that have long since been sleeping in the dust. For this reason she had many old compositions that were almost peculiar to our family, which I am afraid could not now be procured at all, and are consequently lost. I think her uncle, and I believe her grandfather, were the authors of several Irish poems and songs, because I know that some of them she sang, and others she only recited.

Independently of this, she had a prejudice against singing the Irish airs to English words; an old custom of the country was thereby invaded, and an association disturbed which habit had rendered dear to her. I remember on one occasion, when she was asked to sing the English version of that touching melody, "The Red-haired Man's Wife," she replied, "I will sing it for you; but the English words and the air are like a quarrelling man and wife: the Irish melts into the tune, but the English doesn't," an expression scarcely less remarkable for its beauty than its truth. She spoke the words in Irish.

This gift of singing with such sweetness and power the old sacred songs and airs of Ireland, was not the only one for which she was remarkable. Perhaps there never lived a human being capable of giving the Irish cry, or Keene, with such exquisite effect, or of pouring into its wild notes a spirit of such irresistible pathos and sorrow. I have often been present when she has "raised the keene" over the corpse of some relative or neighbor, and my readers may judge of the melancholy charm which accompanied this expression of her sympathy, when I assure them that the general clamor of violent grief was gradually diminished, from admiration, until it became ultimately hushed, and no voice was heard but her own—wailing in sorrowful but solitary beauty. This pause, it is true, was never long, for however great the admiration might be which she excited, the hearts of those who heard her soon melted, and even strangers were often forced to confess her influence by the tears which she caused them to shed for those whose deaths could, otherwise, in no other way have affected them. I am the youngest, I believe, of fourteen children, and of course could never have heard her until age and the struggles of life had robbed her voice of its sweetness. I heard enough, however, from her blessed lips, to set my heart to an almost painful perception of that spirit which steeps these fine old songs in a tenderness which no other music possesses. Many a time, of a winter night, when seated at her spinning-wheel, singing the *Trougha*, or *Shuil agra*, or some other old "song of sorrow," have I, then little more than a child, gone over to



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her, and with a broken voice and eyes charged with tears, whispered, "Mother dear, don't sing that song, it makes me sorrowful;" she then usually stopped, and sung some one which I liked better because it affected me less. At this day I am in possession of Irish airs, which none of our best antiquaries in Irish music have heard, except through me, and of which neither they nor I myself know the names.

Such, gentle reader, were my humble parents, under whose untaught, but natural genius, setting all other advantages aside, it is not to be wondered at that my heart should have been so completely moulded into that spirit and, those feelings which characterize my country and her children.

These, however, were my domestic advantages; but I now come to others, which arose from my position in life as the son of a man who was one of the people. My father, at the farthest point to which my memory goes back, lived in a townland called Prillisk, in the parish of Clogher, and county of Tyrone; and I only remember living there in a cottage. From that the family removed to a place called Tonagh, or, more familiarly, Towney, about an English mile from Prillisk. It was here I first went to school to a Connaught-man named Pat Frayne, who, however, remained there only for a very short period in the neighborhood. Such was the neglected state of education at that time, that for a year or two afterwards there was no school sufficiently near to which I could be sent. At length it was ascertained that a master, another Connaught-man by the way, named O'Beirne, had opened a school—a hedge-school of course—at Pindramore. To this I was sent, along with my brother John, the youngest of the family next to myself. I continued with him for about a year and a half, when who should return to our neighborhood but Pat Frayne, the redoubtable prototype of Mat Kavanagh in "The Hedge School." O'Beirne, it is true, was an excellent specimen of the hedge-schoolmaster, but nothing at all to be compared to Frayne. About the period I write of, there was no other description of school to which any one could be sent, and the consequence was, that rich and poor (I speak of the peasantry), Protestant and Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist, boys and girls, were all congregated under the same roof, to the amount of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty, or two hundred. In this school I remained for about a year or two, when our family removed to a place called Nurchasy, the property of the Rev. Dr. Story, of Corick. Of us, however, he neither could nor did know anything, for we were under-tenants, our immediate landlord being no less a person than Hugh Traynor, then so famous for the distillation, sub rosa, of exquisite mountain dew, and to whom the reader will find allusions made in that capacity more than once in the following volume. Nurchasy was within about half a mile of Findramore, to which school, under O'Beirne, I was again sent. Here I continued, until a classical teacher



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came to a place called Tulnavert, now the property of John Birney, Esq., of Lisburn, to whom I had the pleasure of dedicating the two first volumes of my "Traits and Stories." This tyrannical blockhead, whose name I do not choose to mention, instead of being allowed to teach classics, ought to have been put into a strait-waistcoat or the stocks, and either whipped once in every twenty-four hours, or kept in a madhouse until the day of his death. He had been a student in Maynooth, where he became deranged, and was, of course, sent home to his friends, with whom he recovered sufficiently to become cruel and hypocritical, to an extent which I have never yet seen equalled. Whenever the son of a rich man committed an offence, he would grind his teeth and growl like a tiger, but in no single instance had he the moral courage or sense of justice to correct him. On the contrary, he uniformly "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," until the son of a poor man transgressed, and on his unfortunate body he was sure to wreak signal vengeance for the stupidity or misconduct of the wealthy blockhead. This was his system, and my readers may form some opinion of the low ebb at which knowledge and moral feeling were at the time, when I assure them, that not one of the humbler boys durst make a complaint against the scoundrel at home, unless under the certainty of being well flogged for their pains. A hedge-schoolmaster was then held in such respect and veneration, that no matter how cruel or profligate he might be, his person and character, unless in some extraordinary case of cruelty, resulting in death or mutilation, were looked upon as free from all moral or legal responsibility. This certainly was not the fault of the people, but of those laws, which, by making education a crime, generated ignorance, and then punished it for violating them.

For the present it is enough to say, that a most interesting child, a niece of my own, lost her life by the severity of Pat Frayne, the Connaught-man. In a fit of passion he caught the poor girl by the ear, which he nearly plucked out of her head. The violence of the act broke some of the internal muscles or tendons,—suppuration and subsequently inflammation, first of the adjoining Parts and afterwards of the brain, took place, and the fine intelligent little creature was laid in a premature grave, because the ignorance of the people justified a pedantic hedge-schoolmaster in the exercise of irresponsible cruelty. Frayne was never prosecuted, neither was the classical despot, who by the way sits for the picture of the fellow in whose school, and at whose hands, the Poor Scholar receives the tyrannical and heartless treatment mentioned in that tale. Many a time the cruelty exercised towards that unhappy boy, whose name was Qum, has wrung my heart and brought the involuntary tears to my eyes,—tears which I was forced to conceal, being very well assured from experience, that any sympathy of mine, if noticed,

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would be certain to procure me or any other friend of his, an ample participation in his punishment. He was, in truth, the scape-goat of the school, and it makes my blood boil, even whilst I write, to think how the poor friendless lad, far removed from either father or mother, was kicked, and cuffed, and beaten on the naked head, with a kind of stick between a horse-rod and a cudgel, until his poor face got pale, and he was forced to totter over to a seat in order to prevent himself from fainting or falling in consequence of severe pain.

At length, however, the inhuman villain began to find, when it was too late, that his ferocity, in spite of the terror which it occasioned, was soon likely to empty his school. He now became as fawning and slavish as he had before been insolent and savage; but the wealthy farmers of the neighborhood, having now full cognizance of his conduct, made common cause with the poorer men whose children were so shamefully treated, and the result was, that in about six weeks they forced him to leave that part of the country for want of scholars, having been literally groaned out of it by the curses and indignation of all who knew him.

Here then was I once more at a loss for a school, and I must add, in no disposition at all to renew my acquaintance with literature. Our family had again removed from Nurchasy, to a place up nearer the mountains, called Springtown, on the northern side of the parish. I was now about fourteen, and began to feel a keen relish for all the sports and amusements of the country, into which I entered with a spirit of youth and enthusiasm rarely equalled. For about two years I attended no school, but it was during this period that I received, notwithstanding, the best part of my education. Our farm in Springtown was about sixteen or eighteen acres, and I occasionally assisted the family in working at it, but never regularly, for I was not called upon to do so, nor would I have been permitted even had I wished it. It was about six months after our removal to Springtown, that an incident in my early life occurred which gave rise to one of the most popular tales perhaps, with the exception of "The Miser," that I have written—that is "The Poor Scholar." There being now no classical school within eighteen or twenty miles of Springtown, it was suggested to our family by a nephew of the parish priest, then a young man of six or eight and twenty, that, under the circumstances, it would be a prudent step on their part to prepare an outfit, and send me up to Munster as a poor scholar, to complete my education. Pat Frayne, who by the way had been a poor scholar himself, had advised the same thing before, and as the name does not involve disgrace I felt no reluctance in going, especially as the priest's nephew, who proposed it, had made up his mind on accompanying me for a similar purpose. Indeed, the poor scholars who go to Munster are indebted for nothing but their bed and board,

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which they receive kindly and hospitably from the parents of the scholars. The masters are generally paid their full terms by these pitiable beings, but this rule, like all others, of course, has its exceptions. At all events, my outfit was got ready, and on a beautiful morning in the month of May I separated from my family to go in quest of education. There was no collection, however, in my case, as mentioned in the tale; as my own family supplied the funds supposed to be necessary. I have been present, however, at more than one collection made for similar purposes, and heard a good-natured sermon not very much differing from that given in the story.

The priest's nephew, on the day we were to start, suddenly changed his mind, and I consequently had to undertake the journey alone, which I did with a heavy heart. The farther I got from home, the more my spirits sank, or in the beautiful image of Goldsmith,

“I dragged at each remove a lengthening chain.”

I travelled as far as the town of Granard, and during the journey, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the almost parental tenderness and hospitality which I received on my way could not be adequately described. The reader will find an attempt at it in the story. The parting from home and my adventures on the road are real.

Having reached Granard my courage began to fail, and my family at home, now that I had departed from them, began also to feel something like remorse for having permitted one so young and inexperienced as I then was, to go abroad alone upon the world. My mother's sorrow, especially, was deep, and her cry was, “Oh, why did I let my boy go? maybe I will never see him again!”

At this time, as the reader may be aware from my parental education, there was not a being alive more thoroughly imbued with superstition; and, whether for good or ill, at all events that superstition returned me to my family. On reaching Granard, I felt, of course, fatigued, and soon went to bed, where I slept soundly. It was not, however, a dreamless sleep: I thought I was going along a strange path to some particular place, and that a mad bull met me on the road, and pursued me with such speed and fury that I awoke in a state of singular terror. That was sufficient; my mind had been already wavering, and the dream determined me. The next morning after breakfast I bent my steps homewards, and, as it happened, my return took a weighty load of bitter grief from the heart of my mother and family. The house I stopped at in Granard was a kind of small inn, kept by a man whose name was Peter Grehan. Such were the incidents which gave rise to the tale of “The Poor Scholar.”



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I was now growing up fast, and began to feel a boyish ambition of associating with, those who were older and bigger than myself. Although miserably deficient in education—for I had been well beaten but never taught—yet I was looked upon as a prodigy of knowledge; and I can assure the reader that I took very good care not to dispel that agreeable delusion. Indeed, at this time, I was as great a young literary coxcomb as ever lived, my vanity being high and inflated exactly in proportion to my ignorance, which was also of the purest water. This vanity, however, resulted as much from my position and circumstances as from any strong disposition to be vain on my part. It was generated by the ignorance of the people, and their extreme veneration for any thing in the shape of superior knowledge. In fact, they insisted that I knew every earthly subject, because I had been a couple of years at Latin, and was designed for a priest. It was useless to undeceive men who would not be convinced, so I accordingly gave them, as they say, “the length of their tether;” nay, to such, purpose did I ply them with proofs of it, that my conversation soon became as fine a specimen of pedantic bombast as ever was uttered. Not a word under six feet could come out of my lips, even of English; but as the best English, after all, is but commonplace, I peppered them with vile Latin, and an occasional verse in Greek, from St. John’s Gospel, which I translated for them into a wrong meaning, with an air of lofty superiority that made them turn up their eyes with wonder. I was then, however, but one of a class which still exists, and will continue to do so until a better informed generation shall prevent those who compose it from swaggering about in all the pompous pride of young impostors, who boast of knowing “the seven languages.” The reader will find an illustration of this in the sketch of “Denis O’Shaughnessy going to Maynooth.”

In the meantime, I was unconsciously but rapidly preparing myself for a position in Irish literature, which I little dreamt I should ever occupy. I now mingled in the sports and pastimes of the people, until indulgence in them became the predominant passion of my youth. Throwing the stone, wrestling, leaping, foot-ball, and every other description of athletic exercise filled up the measure of my early happiness. I attended every wake, dance, fair, and merry-making in the neighborhood, and became so celebrated for dancing hornpipes, jigs, and reels, that I was soon without a rival in the parish.

This kind of life, though very delightful to a boy of my years, was not, however, quite satisfactory, as it afforded me no ultimate prospect, and the death of my father had occasioned the circumstances of the family to decline. I heard, about this time, that a distant relative of mine, a highly respectable priest, had opened a classical school near Glasslough, in the county of Monaghan. To him I accordingly went, mentioned our affinity, and had my claims allowed. I attended his school with intermission for about two years, at the expiration of which period I once more returned to our family, who were then very much reduced.



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I was now about nineteen, strong, active, and could leap two-and-twenty feet on a dead level; but though thoroughly acquainted with Irish life among my own class, I was as ignorant of the world as a child. Ever since my boyhood, in consequence of the legends which I had heard from my father, about the far-famed Lough-derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, I felt my imagination fired with a romantic curiosity to perform a station at that celebrated place. I accordingly did so, and the description of that most penal performance, some years afterwards, not only constituted my debut in literature, but was also the means of preventing me from being a pleasant, strong-bodied parish priest at this day; indeed, it was the cause of changing the whole destiny of my subsequent life.

"The Loughderg Pilgrim" is given in the present edition, and may be relied on, not so much as an ordinary narrative, as a perfect transcript of what takes place during the stations which are held there in the summer months.

Having returned from this, I knew not exactly how to dispose of myself. On one thing I was determined—never to enter the Church;—but this resolution I kept faithfully to myself. I had nothing for it now but to forget my sacerdotal prospects, which, as I have said, had already been renounced, or to sink down as many others like me had done, into a mere tiller of the earth,—a character in Ireland far more unpopular than that which the Scotch call "a sticket minister!"

It was about this period, that chance first threw the inimitable Adventures of the renowned Gil Bias across my path. During my whole life I had been an insatiable reader of such sixpenny romances and history-books as the hedge-schools afforded. Many a time have I given up my meals rather than lose one minute from the interest excited by the story I was perusing. Having read *Gil Bias*, however, I felt an irrepressible passion for adventure, which nothing could divert; in fact, I was as much the creature of the impulse it excited, as the ship is of the helmsman, or the steam-engine of the principle that guides it.

Stimulated by this romantic love of adventure, I left my native place, and directed my steps to the parish of Killanny, in the county of Louth, the Catholic clergyman of which was a nephew of our own Parish Priest, brother to him who proposed going to Munster with me, and an old school-fellow of my own, though probably twenty years my senior. This man's residence was within a quarter or half a mile's distance of the celebrated Wild-goose Lodge, in which, some six months before, a whole family, consisting of, I believe, eight persons, men, women, and children, had been, from motives of personal vengeance, consumed to ashes. I stopped with him for a fortnight, and succeeded in procuring a tuition in the house of a wealthy farmer named Piers Murphy, near Corcreagh. This, however, was a tame life, and a hard one, so I resolved once more to give up a miserable salary



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and my board, for the fortunate chances which an ardent temperament and a strong imagination perpetually suggested to me as likely to be evolved out of the vicissitudes of life. Urged on, therefore, by a spirit of romance, I resolved to precipitate myself on the Irish Metropolis, which I accordingly entered with two shillings and ninepence in my pocket; an utter stranger, of course friendless; ignorant of the world, without aim or object, but not without a certain strong feeling of vague and shapeless ambition, for the truth was I had not yet begun to think, and, consequently, looked upon life less as a reality than a vision.

Thus have I, as a faithful, but I fear a dull guide, conducted my reader from the lowly cottage in Prillisk, where I first drew my breath, along those tangled walks and green lanes which are familiar to the foot of the peasant alone, until I enter upon the highways of the world, and strike into one of its greatest and most crowded thoroughfares—the Metropolis. Whether this brief sketch of my early and humble life, my education, my sports, my hopes and struggles, be calculated to excite any particular interest, I know not; I can only assure my reader that the details, so far as they go, are scrupulously correct and authentic, and that they never would have been obtruded upon him, were it not from an anxiety to satisfy him that in undertaking to describe the Irish peasantry as they are, I approach the difficult task with advantages of knowing them, which perhaps few Irish writers ever possessed; and this is the only merit which I claim.

A few words now upon the moral and physical condition of the people may not be unsuitable before I close, especially for the sake of those who may wish to acquire a knowledge of their general character, previous to their perusal of the following volume. This task, it is true, is not one of such difficulty now as it was some years ago. Much light has been thrown on the Irish character, not only by the great names I have already enumerated, but by some equally high which I have omitted. On this subject it would be impossible to overlook the names of Lever, Maxwell, or Otway, or to forget the mellow hearth-light and chimney-corner tone, the happy dialogue and legendary truth which characterize the exquisite fairy legends of Crofton Croker. Much of the difficulty of the task, I say, has been removed by these writers, but there remains enough still behind to justify me in giving a short dissertation upon the habits and feelings of my countrymen.

Of those whose physical state has been and is so deplorably wretched, it may not be supposed that the tone of morals can be either high or pure; and yet if we consider the circumstance in which he has been for such a lengthened period placed, it is undeniable that the Irishman is a remarkably moral man. Let us suppose, for instance, that in England and Scotland the great body of the people had for a couple or three centuries never received



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an adequate or proper education: in that case, let us ask what the moral aspect of society in either country would be to-day? But this is not merely the thing to be considered. The Irishman was not only not educated, but actually punished for attempting to acquire knowledge in the first place, and in the second, punished also for the ignorance created by its absence. In other words, the penal laws rendered education criminal, and then caused the unhappy people to suffer for the crimes which proper knowledge would have prevented them from, committing. It was just like depriving a man of his sight, and afterwards causing him to be punished for stumbling. It is beyond all question, that from the time of the wars of Elizabeth and the introduction of the Reformation, until very recently, there was no fixed system of wholesome education in the country. The people, possessed of strong political and religious prejudices, were left in a state of physical destitution and moral ignorance, such as were calculated to produce ten times the amount of crime which was committed. Is it any wonder, then, that in such a condition, social errors and dangerous theories should be generated, and that neglect, and poverty, and ignorance combined should give to the country a character for turbulence and outrage? The same causes will produce the same effects in any country, and were it not that the standard of personal and domestic comfort was so low in Ireland, there is no doubt that the historian would have a much darker catalogue of crime to record than he has. The Irishman, in fact, was mute and patient under circumstances which would have driven the better fed and more comfortable Englishman into open outrage and contempt of all authority. God forbid that I for a moment should become the apologist of crime, much less the crimes of my countrymen! but it is beyond all question that the principles upon which the country was governed have been such as to leave down to the present day many of their evil consequences behind them. The penal code, to be sure, is now abolished, but so are not many of its political effects among the people. Its consequences have not yet departed from the country, nor has the hereditary hatred of the laws, which unconsciously descended from father to son, ceased to regulate their conduct and opinions. Thousands of them are ignorant that ever such a thing as a penal code existed; yet the feeling against law survives, although the source from which it has been transmitted may be forgotten. This will easily account for much of the political violence and crime which moments of great excitement produce among us; nor need we feel surprised that this state of things should be continued, to the manifest injury of the people themselves, by the baneful effects of agitation.

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The period, therefore, for putting the character of our country fairly upon, its trial has not yet arrived; although we are willing to take the Irishman as we find him; nor would we shrink even at the present moment from comparing him with any of his neighbors. His political sins and their consequences were left him as an heirloom, and result from a state of things which he himself did not occasion. Setting these aside, where is the man to be found in any country who has carried with him through all his privations and penalties so many of the best virtues of our nature? In other countries the man who commits a great crime is always a great criminal, and the whole heart is hardened and debased, but it is not so in Ireland. The agrarian and political outrage is often perpetrated by men who possess the best virtues of humanity, and whose hearts as individuals actually abhor the crime. The moral standard here is no doubt dreadfully erroneous, and until a correct and Christian one, emanating from a better system of education, shall be substituted for it, it will, with a people who so think and feel, be impossible utterly to prevent the occurrence of these great evils. We must wait for thirty or forty years, that is, until the rising or perhaps the subsequent generation shall be educated out of these wild and destructive prejudices, before we can fully estimate the degree of excellence to which our national character may arrive. In my own youth, and I am now only forty-four years, I do not remember a single school under the immediate superintendence of either priest or parson, and that in a parish the extent of which is, I dare say, ten miles by eight. The instruction of the children was altogether a matter in which no clergy of any creed took an interest. This was left altogether to hedge schoolmasters, a class of men who, with few exceptions, bestowed such an education upon the people as is sufficient almost, in the absence of all other causes, to account for much of the agrarian violence and erroneous principles which regulate their movements and feelings on that and similar subjects. For further information on this matter the reader is referred to the "Hedge School."

With respect to these darker shades of the Irish character, I feel that, consistently with that love of truth and impartiality which has guided, and I trust ever shall guide, my pen, I could not pass them over without further notice. I know that it is a very questionable defence to say that some, if not principally all, of their crimes originate in agrarian or political vengeance. Indeed, I believe that, so far from this circumstance being looked upon as a defence, it ought to be considered as an aggravation of the guilt; inasmuch as it is, beyond all doubt, at least a far more manly thing to inflict an injury upon an enemy face to face, and under the influence of immediate resentment, than to crouch like a cowardly assassin behind a hedge and coolly murder him without one moment's

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preparation, or any means whatsoever of defence. This is a description of crime which no man with one generous drop of blood in his veins can think of without shame and indignation. Unhappily, however, for the security of human life, every crime of the kind results more from the dark tyranny of these secret confederacies, by which the lower classes are organized, than from any natural appetite for shedding blood. Individually, the Irish loathe murder as much as any people in the world; but in the circumstances before us, it often happens that the Irishman is not a free agent—very far from it: on the contrary, he is frequently made the instrument of a system, to which he must become either an obedient slave or a victim.

Even here, however, although nothing can or ought to be said to palliate the cowardly and unmanly crime of assassination, yet something can certainly be advanced to account for the state of feeling by which, from time to time, and by frequent occurrence, it came to be so habitual among the people, that by familiarity it became stripped of its criminality and horror.

Now it is idle, and it would be dishonest, to deny the fact, that the lower Irish, until a comparatively recent period, were treated with apathy and gross neglect by the only class to whom they could or ought to look up for sympathy or protection. The conferring of the elective franchise upon the forty-shilling freeholders, or in other words upon paupers, added to the absence of proper education, or the means of acquiring it, generated, by the fraudulent subdivision of small holdings, by bribery, perjury, and corruption, a state of moral feeling among the poorer classes which could not but be productive of much crime. And yet, notwithstanding this shameful prostitution of their morals and comfort, for the purposes of political ambition or personal aggrandizement, they were in general a peaceable and enduring people; and it was only when some act of unjustifiable severity, or oppression in the person of a middleman, agent, or hardhearted landlord, drove them houseless upon the world, that they fell back upon the darker crimes of which I am speaking. But what, I ask, could be expected from such a state of things? And who generated it? It is not, indeed, to be wondered at that a set of men, who so completely neglected their duties as the old landlords of Ireland did, should have the very weapons turned against themselves which their own moral profligacy first put into the hands of those whom they corrupted. Up to this day the peasantry are charged with indifference to the obligation of an oath, and in those who still have anything to do in elections, I fear with too much truth. But then let us inquire who first trained and familiarized them to it? Why, the old landlords of Ireland; and now their descendants, and such of themselves as survive, may behold, in the crimes which disgrace the country, the disastrous effects of a bad system created by their forefathers or themselves.



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In the meantime, I have no doubt that by the removal of the causes which produced this deplorable state of things, their disastrous effects will also soon disappear. That the present landlords of Ireland are, with the ordinary number of exceptions, a very different class of men from those who have gone before them, is a fact which will ultimately tell for the peace and prosperity of the country. Let the ignorance of the people, or rather the positive bad knowledge with which, as to a sense of civil duties, their minds are filled, be removed, and replaced with principles of a higher and more Christian tendency. Let the Irish landlords consider the interests of their tenantry as their own, and there is little doubt that with the aids of science, agricultural improvement, and the advantages of superior machinery, the Irish will become a prosperous, contented, and great people.

It is not just to the general character of our people, however, to speak of these crimes as national; for, in fact, they are not so. If Tipperary and some of the adjoining parts of Munster were blotted out of the moral map of the country, we would stand as a nation in a far higher position than that which we occupy in the opinion of our neighbors. This is a distinction which in justice to us ought to be made, for it is surely unfair to charge the whole kingdom with the crimes which disgrace only a single county of it, together with a few adjacent districts—allowing, of course, for some melancholy exceptions in other parts.

Having now discussed, with, I think, sufficient candor and impartiality, that portion of our national character which appears worst and weakest in the eyes of our neighbors, and attempted to show that pre-existing circumstances originating from an unwise policy had much to do in calling into existence and shaping its evil impulses, I come now to a more agreeable task—the consideration, of our social and domestic virtues. And here it is where the Irishman immeasurably outstrips all competitors. His hospitality is not only a habit but a principle; and indeed of such a quick and generous temperament is he, that in ninety cases out of a hundred the feeling precedes the reflection, which in others prompts the virtue. To be a stranger and friendless, or suffering hunger and thirst, is at any time a sufficient passport to his heart and purse; but it is not merely the thing or virtue, but also his manner of doing it, that constitutes the charm which runs through his conduct. There is a natural politeness and sincerity in his manner which no man can mistake; and it is a fact, the truth of which I have felt a thousand times, that he will make you feel the acceptance of the favor of kindness he bestows to be a compliment to himself rather than to you. The delicate ingenuity with which he diminishes the nature or amount of his own kindness, proves that he is no common man, either in heart or intellect; and when all fails he will lie like Lucifer himself,



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and absolutely seduce you into an acceptance of his hospitality or assistance. I speak now exclusively of the peasantry. Certainly in domestic life there is no man so exquisitely affectionate and humanized as the Irishman. The national imagination is active and the national heart warm, and it follows very naturally that he should be, and is, tender and strong in all his domestic relations. Unlike the people of other nations, his grief is loud but lasting, vehement but deep; and whilst its shadow has been chequered by the laughter and mirth of a cheerful disposition, still in the moments of seclusion, at his bedside prayer, or over the grave of those he loved, it will put itself forth after half a life with a vivid power of recollection which is sometimes almost beyond belief.

The Irish, however, are naturally a refined people; but by this I mean the refinement which appreciates and cherishes whatever there is in nature, as manifested through the influence of the softer arts of music and poetry. The effect of music upon the Irish heart I ought to know well, and no man need tell me that a barbarous or cruel people ever possessed national music that was beautiful and pathetic. The music of any nation is the manifestation of its general feeling, and not that which creates it; although there is no doubt but the one when formed perpetuates and reproduces the other. It is no wonder, then, that the domestic feelings of the Irish should be so singularly affectionate and strong, when we consider that they have been, in spite of every obstruction, kept under the softening influence of music and poetry. This music and poetry, too, essentially their own—and whether streaming of a summer through their still glens, or poured forth at the winter hearth, still, by its soft and melancholy spirit, stirring up a thousand tender associations that must necessarily touch and improve the heart. And it is for this reason that, that heart becomes so remarkably eloquent, if not poetical, when moved by sorrow. Many a time I have seen a Keener commence her wail over the corpse of a near relative, and by degrees she has risen from the simple wail or cry to a high but mournful recitative, extemporized, under the excitement of the moment, into sentiments that were highly figurative and impressive. In this she was aided very much by the genius of the language, which possesses the finest and most copious vocabulary in the world for the expression of either sorrow or love.

It has been said that the Irish, notwithstanding a deep susceptibility of sorrow, are a light-hearted people; and this is strictly true. What, however, is the one fact but a natural consequence of the other? No man for instance ever possessed a higher order of humor, whose temperament was not naturally melancholy, and no country in the world more clearly establishes that point than Ireland. Here the melancholy and mirth are not simply in a proximate state, but frequently flash together, and again separate so quickly, that

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the alternation or blending, as the case may be, whilst it is felt by the spectators, yet stands beyond all known rules of philosophy to solve it. Any one at all acquainted with Ireland, knows that in no country is mirth lighter, or sorrow deeper, or the smile and the tear seen more frequently on the face at the same moment. Their mirth, however, is not levity, nor their sorrow gloom; and for this reason none of those dreary and desponding reactions take place, which, as in France especially, so frequently terminate in suicide.

The recreations of the Irish were very varied and some of them of a highly intellectual cast. These latter, however, have altogether disappeared from the country, or at all events are fast disappearing. The old Harper is now hardly seen; the Senachie, where he exists, is but a dim and faded representative of that very old Chronicler in his palmy days; and the Prophecy-man unfortunately has survived the failure of his best and most cherished predictions. The poor old Prophet's stock in trade is nearly exhausted, and little now remains but the slaughter which is to take place at the mill of Louth, when human blood, and the miller to have six fingers and two thumbs on each hand, as a collateral prognostication of that bloody event.

The amusement derived from these persons was undoubtedly of a very imaginative character, and gives sufficient proof, that had the national intellect been duly cultivated, it is difficult to say in what position as a literary country Ireland might have stood at this day. At present the national recreations, though still sufficiently varied and numerous are neither so strongly marked nor diversified as formerly. Fun, or the love of it, to be sure, is an essential principle in the Irish character; and nothing that can happen, no matter how solemn or how sorrowful it may be, is allowed to proceed without it. In Ireland the house of death is sure to be the merriest one in the neighborhood; but here the mirth is kindly and considerately introduced, from motives of sympathy—in other words, for the alleviation of the mourners' sorrow. The same thing may be said of its association with religion. Whoever has witnessed a Station in Ireland made at some blessed lake or holy well, will understand this. At such places it is quite usual to see young men and women devoutly circumambulating the well or lake on their bare knees, with all the marks of penitence and contrition strongly impressed upon their faces; whilst again, after an hour or two, the same individuals may be found in a tent dancing with ecstatic vehemence to the music of the bagpipe or fiddle.

All these things, however, will be found, I trust I may say faithfully depicted in the following volume—together with many other important features of our general character; which I would dwell on here, were it not that they are detailed very fully in other parts of my works, and I do not wish to deprive them of the force of novelty when they occur, nor to appear heavy by repetition.



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In conclusion, I have endeavored, with what success has been already determined by the voice of my own country, to give a panorama of Irish life among the people—comprising at one view all the strong points of their general character—their loves, sorrows, superstitions, piety, amusements, crimes, and virtues; and in doing this, I can say with solemn truth that I painted them honestly, and without reference to the existence of any particular creed or party.

W. Carleton.

Dublin.

NED M'KEOWN.

Ned M'Keown's house stood exactly in an angle, formed by the cross-roads of Kilrudden. It was a long, whitewashed building, well thatched and furnished with the usual appurtenances of yard and offices. Like most Irish houses of the better sort, it had two doors, one opening into a garden that sloped down from the rear in a southern direction. The barn was a continuation of the dwelling-house, and might be distinguished from it by a darker shade of color, being only rough-cast. It was situated on a small eminence, but, with respect to the general locality of the country, in a delightful vale, which runs up, for twelve or fourteen miles, between two ranges of dark, well-defined mountains, that give to the interjacent country the form of a low inverted arch. This valley, which altogether, allowing for the occasional breaks and intersections of hill-ranges, extends upwards of thirty miles in length, is the celebrated valley of the "Black Pig," so well known in the politico-traditional history of Ireland, and the legends connected with the famous Beal Dearg.*

* The following extract, taken from a sketch by the author called "The Irish Prophecy-man," contains a very appropriate illustration of the above passage. "I have a little book that contains a prophecy of the milk-white hind an' the bloody panther, an' a foreboding of the slaughter there's to be in the Valley of the Black Pig, as foretould by Beal Derg, or the prophet wid the red mouth, who never was known to speak but when he prophesied, or to prophesy but when he spoke."

"The Lord bless an' keep us!—an' why was he called the Man with the Red Mouth, Barney?"

"I'll tell you that: first, bekase he always prophesied about the slaughter an' fightin' that was to take place in the time to come; an', secondly, bekase, while he spoke, the red blood always trickled out of his mouth, as a proof that what he foretould was true."

"Glory be to God! but that's wondherful all out. Well, we'll!"



“Ay, an’ Beal Deig, or the Red Mouth, is still livin’.”

“Livin! why, is he a man of our own time?”

“Our own time! The Lord help you! It’s more than a thousand years since he made the prophecy. The case you see is this: he an’ the ten thousand witnesses are lyin’ in an enchanted sleep in one of the Montherlony mountains.”

“An’ how is that known, Barney?”



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"It's known, Every night at a certain hour one of the witnesses—an' they're all sogers, by the way—must come out to look for the sign that's to come."

"An' what is that, Barney?"

"It's the fiery cross; an' when he sees one on aich of the four mountains of the north, he's to know that the same sign's abroad in all the other parts of the kingdom. Beal Derg an' his men are then to waken up, an' by their aid the Valley of the Black Pig is to be set free forever."

"An' what is the Black Pig, Barney?"

"The Prospitarian church, that stretches from Enniskillen to Darry, an' back again from Darry to Enniskillen."

"Well, well, Barney, but prophecy is a strange thing, to be sure! Only think of men livin' a thousand years!"

"Every night one of Beal Derg's men must go to the mouth of the cave, which opens of itself, an' then look out for the sign that's expected. He walks up to the top of the mountain, an' turns to the four corners of the heavens, to thry if he can see it; an' when he finds that he cannot, he goes back to Beal Derg. who, afther the other touches him, starts up and axis him, 'Is the time come?' He replies, 'No; the *man is*, but the *hour is not!*' an' that instant they're both asleep again. Now, you see, while the soger is on the mountain top, the mouth of the cave is open, an' any one may go in that might happen to see it. One man it appears did, an' wishin' to know from curiosity whether the sogers were dead or livin', he touched one of them wid his hand, who started up an' axed him the same question, 'Is the time come?' Very fortunately he said, 'No;' an' that minute the soger was as sound in his trance as before."

"An', Barney, what did the soger mane when he said. 'The man is, but the hour is not?'"

"What did he mane? I'll tell you that. The man is Bonyparty, which manes, when put into proper explanation, the *right side*; that is, the true cause. Larned men have found *that out*."

That part of it where Ned M'Keown resided was peculiarly beautiful and romantic. From the eminence on which the house stood, a sweep of the most fertile meadowland stretched away to the foot of a series of intermingled hills and vales, which bounded this extensive carpet towards the north. Through these meadows ran a smooth river, called the Mullin-burn, which wound its way through them with such tortuosity, that it was proverbial in the neighborhood to say of any man remarkable for dishonesty, "He's as



crooked as the Mullin-burn," an epithet which was sometimes, although unjustly, jocularly applied to Ned himself. This deep but narrow river had its origin in the glens and ravines of a mountain which bounded the vale in a south-eastern direction; and after sudden and heavy rains it tumbled down with such violence and impetuosity over the crags and rock-ranges in its way, and accumulated so amazingly, that on reaching the meadows it inundated their surface, carrying away sheep, cows, and cocks of hay upon its yellow flood. It also boiled and eddied, and roared with a hoarse *sugh*, that was heard at a considerable distance.



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On the north-west side ran a ridge of high hills, with the cloud-capped peak of Knockmany rising in lofty eminence above them; these, as they extended towards the south, became gradually deeper in their hue, until at length they assumed the shape and form of heath-clad mountains, dark and towering. The prospect on either range is highly pleasing, and capable of being compared with any I have ever seen, in softness, variety, and that serene lustre which reposes only on the surface of a country rich in the beauty of fertility, and improved, by the hand of industry and taste. Opposite Knockmany, at a distance of about four miles, on the south-eastern side, rose the huge and dark outline of Cullimore, standing out in gigantic relief against the clear blue of a summer sky, and flinging down his frowning and haughty shadow almost to the firm-set base of his lofty rival; or, in winter, wrapped in a mantle of clouds, and crowned with unsullied snow, reposing in undisturbed tranquillity, whilst the loud voice of storms howled around him.

To the northward, immediately behind Cullimore, lies Althadhawan, a deep, craggy, precipitous glen, running up to its very base, and wooded with oak, hazel, rowan-tree, and holly. This picturesque glen extends two or three miles, until it melts into the softness of grove and meadow, in the rich landscape below. Then, again, on the opposite side, is *Lumford's Glen*, with its overhanging rocks, whose yawning depth and silver waterfall, of two hundred feet, are at once finely and fearfully contrasted with the elevated peak of Knockmany, rising into the clouds above it.

From either side of these mountains may be seen six or eight country towns—the beautiful grouping of hill and plain, lake, river, grove, and dell—the reverend cathedral (of Clogher)—the white-washed cottage, and the comfortable farm-house. To these may be added the wild upland and the cultivated demesne, the green sheep-walk, the dark moor, the splendid mansion, and ruined castle of former days. Delightful remembrance! Many a day, both of sunshine and storm, have I, in the strength and pride of happy youth, bounded, fleet as the mountain foe, over these blue hills! Many an evening, as the yellow beams of the setting sun shot slantingly, like rafters of gold, across the depth of this blessed and peaceful valley, have I followed, in solitude, the impulses of a wild and wayward fancy, and sought the quiet dell, or viewed the setting sun, as he scattered his glorious and shining beams through the glowing foliage of the trees, in the vista, where I stood; or wandered along the river whose banks were fringed with the hanging willow, whilst I listened to the thrush singing among the hazels that crowned the sloping green above me, or watched the splashing otter, as he ventured from the dark angles and intricacies of the upland glen, to seek his prey in the meadow-stream during the favorable dusk of twilight. Many a time have I heard the simple song of Roger M'Cann, coming from the top of brown Dunroe, mellowed, by the stillness of the hour, to something far sweeter to the heart than all that the labored pomp of musical art and science can effect; or the song of Katty Roy, the beauty of the village, streaming across the purple-flowered moor,



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“Sweet as the shepherd’s pipe upon the mountains.”

Many a time, too, have I been gratified, in the same poetical hour, by the sweet sound of honest Ned M’Keown’s ungreased cartwheels, clacking, when nature seemed to have fallen asleep after the day-stir and animation of rural business—for Ned was sometimes a carman—on his return from Dublin with a load of his own groceries, without as much money in his pocket as would purchase oil wherewith to silence the sounds which the friction produced—regaling his own ears the while, as well as the music of the cart would permit his melody to be heard, with his favorite tune of *Cannie Soogah*.*

* “The Jolly Pedlar,”—a fine old Irish air.

Honest, blustering, good-humored Ned was the indefatigable merchant of the village; ever engaged in some ten or twenty pound speculation, the capital of which he was sure to extort, perhaps for the twelfth time, from the savings of Nancy’s frugality, by the equivocal test of a month or six weeks’ consecutive sobriety, and which said speculation he never failed to wind up by the total loss of the capital for Nancy, and the capital loss of a broken head for himself. Ned had eternally some bargain on his hands: at one time you might see him a yarn-merchant, planted in the next market-town upon the upper step of Mr. Birney’s hall-door, where the yarn-market was held, surrounded by a crowd of eager country-women, anxious to give Ned the preference, first, because he was a well-wisher; secondly, because he hadn’t his heart in the penny; and thirdly, because he gave sixpence a spangle more than any other man in the market.

There might Ned be found; with his twenty pounds of hard silver jingling in the bottom of a green bag, as a decoy to his customers, laughing loud as he piled the yarn in and ostentatious heap, which in the pride of his commercial sagacity, he had purchased at a dead loss. Again you might see him at a horse-fair, cantering about on the back of some sleek but broken-winded jade, with spavined legs, imposed on him as “a great bargain entirely,” by the superior cunning of some rustic sharper; or standing over a hogshead of damaged flaxseed, in the purchase of which he shrewdly suspected himself of having overreached the seller—by allowing him for it a greater price than the prime seed of the market would have cost him. In short, Ned was never out of a speculation, and whatever he undertook was sure to prove a complete failure. But he had one mode of consolation, which consisted in sitting down with the fag-end of Nancy’s capital in his pocket, and drinking night and day with this neighbor and that, whilst a shilling remained; and when he found himself at the end of his tether, he was sure to fasten a quarrel on some friend or acquaintance, and to get his head broken for his pains.

None of all this blustering, however, happened within the range of Nancy’s jurisdiction. Ned, indeed, might drink and sing, and swagger and fight—and he contrived to do so; but notwithstanding all his apparent courage, there was one eye which made him quail, and before which he never put on the hector;—there was one, in whose presence the

loudness of his song would fall away into a very awkward and unmusical quaver, and under whose glance his laughing face often changed to the visage of a man who is disposed to anything but mirth.



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The fact was this: Whenever Ned found that his speculation was gone a shaughran, (*Gone astray*) as he termed it, he fixed himself in some favorite public house, from whence he seldom stirred while his money lasted, except when dislodged by Nancy, who usually, upon learning where he had taken cover, paid him an unceremonious visit, to which Ned's indefensible delinquency gave the color of legitimate authority. Upon these occasions, Nancy, accompanied by two sturdy "servant-boys," would sally forth to the next market-town, for the purpose of bringing home "graceless Ned," as she called him. And then you might see Ned between the two servants, a few paces in advance of Nancy, having very much the appearance of a man performing a pilgrimage to the gallows, or of a deserter guarded back to his barrack, in order to become a target for the muskets of his comrades. Ned's compulsory return always became a matter of some notoriety; for Nancy's excursion in quest of the "graceless" was not made without frequent denunciations of wrath against him, and many melancholy apologies to the neighbors for entering upon the task of personally securing him. By this means her enterprise was sure to get wind, and a mob of the idle young men and barefooted urchins of the village, with Bob M'Cann, "a three-quarter clift" of a fellow—half knave, half fool, was to be found, a little below the village, upon an elevation of the road, that commanded a level stretch of half a mile or so, in anxious expectation of the procession. No sooner had this arrived at the point of observation, than the little squadron would fall rearward of the principal group, for the purpose of extracting from Nancy a full and particular account of the capture.

[Illustration: Page 656— Bringing home "graceless Ned,"]

* This is equal to the proverb—"he wants a square," that is, though knavish not thoroughly rational; in other words, a combination of knave and fool. Bob, in consequence of his accomplishments, was always a great favorite in the village. Upon some odd occasions he was a ready and willing drudge at everything, and as strong as a ditch. Give him only a good fog-meal—which was merely a trifle, just what would serve three men or so—give him, we say, a fog-meal of this kind, about five times a day, with a liberal promise of more, and never was there a Scotch Brownie who could get through so much work. He knew no fatigue; frost and cold had no power over him; wind, sleet, and hail he laughed at; rain! it stretched his skin, he said, after a meal—and that, he added, was a comfort. Notwithstanding all this, he was neither more nor less than an impersonation of laziness, craft, and gluttony. The truth is, that unless in the hope of being gorged he would do nothing; and the only way to get anything out of him was, never to let the gorge precede the labor, but always, on the contrary, to follow it. Bob's accomplishments were not only varied, but of a very elevated order, and



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the means of holding him in high odor among us. Great and wonderful, Heaven knows, did we look upon his endowments to be. No man, wise or otherwise, could “hunt the brock,” alias the badger, within a hundred miles of Bob; for when he covered his mouth with his two hands, and gave forth the very sounds which the badger is said to utter, did we not look upon him—Bob—with as much wonder and reverence as we would have done upon the badger himself? Phup-um-phup— phup-um-phup—phup-um—phup-um—phup-um-phup. Who but a first-rate genius could accomplish this feat in such a style? Bob could crow like a cock, bark like a dog, mew like a cat, neigh like a horse, bray like an ass, or gobble like a turkey-cock. Unquestionably, I have never heard him equalled as an imitator of birds and beasts. Bob’s crack feat, however, was performing the Screw-pin Dance, of which we have only this to say, that by whatsoever means he became acquainted with it, it is precisely the same dance which is said to have been exhibited by some strolling Moor before the late Queen Caroline. It is, indeed, very strange, but no less true, that many of the oriental customs are yet prevalent in the remote and isolated parts of Ireland. Had the late Mr. O’Brien, author of the Essay on Irish Round Towers, seen Bob perform the dance I speak of, he would have hailed him as a regular worshipper of Budh, and adduced his performance as a living confirmation of his theory. Poor Bob! he is gone the way of all fools, and all flesh.

“Indeed, childher, it’s no wonder for yez to enquire! Where did I get him, Dick?—musha, and where would I get him but in the ould place, a-hagur; with the ould set: don’t yez know that a dacent place or dacent company wouldn’t sarve Ned?—nobody but Shane Martin, and Jimmy Tague, and the other blackguards.”*

* The reader, here, is not to rely implicitly upon the accuracy of Nancy’s description of the persons alluded to. It is true the men were certainly companions and intimate acquaintances of Ned’s, but not entitled to the epithet which Nancy in her wrath bestowed upon them. Shane was a rollicking fighting, drinking butcher, who cared not a fig! whether he treated you to a drink or a drubbing, indeed, it was at all times extremely difficult to say whether he was likely to give you the drink first or the drubbing afterwards, or vice versa. Sometimes he made the drubbing the groundwork for the drink and quite as frequently the drink the groundwork for the drubbing. Either one or other you were sure to receive at his hands; but his general practice was to give both. Shane, in fact, was a good- humored fellow, well liked, and nobody’s enemy but his own. Jemmy Tague was a quiet man, who could fight his corner, however, if necessary. Shane, was called Kittogue Shane, from being left-handed. Both were butchers, and both, we believe, alive and kicking at this day.

“And what will you do with him, Nancy?”



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“Och! thin, Dick, avourneen, it’s myself that’s jist tired thinking of that; at any rate, consamin’ to the loose foot he’ll get this blessed month to come, Dick, agra!”

“Throth, Nancy,” another mischievous monkey would exclaim, “if you hadn’t great patience entirely, you couldn’t put up with such threatment, at all at all.”

“Why thin, God knows it’s true for-you, Barney. D’ye hear that, ‘graceless?’ the very childhre making a laughing-stock and a may-game of you!—but wait till we get under the roof, any how.”

“Ned,” a third would say, “isn’t it a burning shame for you to break the poor crathur’s heart this a-way? Throth, but you ought to hould down your head, sure enough—a dacent woman! that only for her you wouldn’t have a house over you, so you wouldn’t.”

“And throth, and the same house is going, Tim,” Nancy would exclaim, “and when it goes, let him see thin who’ll do for him; let him thry if his blackguards will stand to him, when he won’t have poor foolish Nancy at his back.”

During these conversations, Ned would walk on between his two guards with a dogged-looking and condemned face; Nancy behind him, with his own cudgel, ready to administer an occasional bang whenever he attempted to slacken his pace, or throw over his shoulder a growl of dissent or justification.

On getting near home, the neighbors would occasionally pop out their heads, with a smile of good-humored satire on their faces, which Nancy was very capable of translating:

“Ay,” she would say, addressing them, “I’ve caught him—here he is to the fore. Indeed you may well laugh, Kitty Rafferty; not a one of myself blames you for it.—Ah, ye mane crathur,” aside to Ned, “if you had the blood of a hen in you, you wouldn’t have the neighbors braking their hearts laughing at you in sich a way; and above all the people in the world, them Rafferty’s, that got the decree against us at the last sessions, although I offered to pay within fifteen shillings of the differ—the grubs!”

Having seen her hopeful charge safely deposited on the hob, Nancy would throw her cloak into this corner, and her bonnet into that, with the air of a woman absorbed by the consideration of some vexatious trial; she would then sit down, and, lighting her doodeen, (* a short pipe) exclaim—

“Wurrah, wurrah! but it’s me that’s the heart-scalded crathur with that man’s four quarters! The Lord may help me and grant me patience with him, any way!—to have my little honest, hard-earned penny spint among a pack of vagabonds, that don’t care if him and me wor both down the river, so they could get their skinful of drink out of him! No matter, agra, things can’t long be this a-way; but what does Ned care?—give him



drink and fighting, and his blackguards about him, and that's his glory. There now's the landlord coming down upon us for the rint; and unless he takes the cows out of the byre, or the bed from anundher us, what in the wide earth is there for him?"



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The current of this lecture was never interrupted by a single observation from Ned, who usually employed himself in silently playing with “Bunty;” a little black cur, without a tail, and a great favorite with Nancy; or, if he noticed anything out of its place in the house, he would arrange it with great apparent care. In the meantime, Nancy’s wrath generally evaporated with the smoke of the pipe—a circumstance which Ned well knew; for after she had sucked it until it emitted a shrill, bubbling sound, like that from a reed, her brows, which wore at other times an habitual frown, would gradually relax into a more benevolent expression—the parenthetical curves on each side of her mouth, formed by the irascible pursing of her lips, would become less marked—the dog or cat, or whatever else came in her way, instead of being kicked aside, or pursued in an underfit of digressional peevishness, would be put out of her path with gentler force—so that it was, in such circumstances, a matter of little difficulty to perceive that conciliation would soon be the order of the day. Ned’s conduct on these critical occasions was very prudent and commendable: he still gave Nancy her own way; never “jawed back to her;” but took shelter, as it were, under his own patience, until the storm had passed, and the sun of her good humor began to shine out again. Nancy herself, now softened by the fumes of her own pigtail, usually made the first overtures to a compromise, but, without departing from the practice and principles of higher negotiators; always in an indirect manner: as, “Biddy, avourneen,” speaking to her niece, “maybe that crathur,” pointing! to Ned, “ate nothing to-day; you had better, agra! get him the could bacon that’s in the cupboard, and warm for him, upon the greeshaugh, (* hot embers) them yallow-legs (* a kind of potato) that’s in the colindher; though God he knows it’s ill my common (* It’s ill-becoming—or it ill becomes me, to everlook his conduct)—but no matther, ahagur! There’s enough said, I’m thinking—give them to him.”

On Ned seating himself to his bacon and potatoes, Nancy would light another pipe, and plant herself on the opposite hob, putting some interrogatory to him, in the way of business—always concerning a third person, and still in a tone of dry ironical indifference: as—

“Did you see Jimmy Connolly on your travels?”

“No.”

“Humph! Can you tell us if Andy Morrow sould his coults?”

“He did.”

“May be you have *gumption* enough to know what he got for him?”

“Fifteen guineas.”

“In troth, and it’s more nor a poor body would get; but, anyway, Andy Morrow deserves to get a good price; he’s a man that takes care of his own business, and minds nothing

else. I wish that filly of ours was dockt; you ought to spake to Jim M'Quade about her: it's time to make her up—you know, we'll want to sell her for the rint."

This was an assertion, by the way, which Ned knew to have everything but truth in it.



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“Never heed the filly,” Ned would reply, “I’ll get Charley Lawdher (* A blacksmith, and an honest man) to dock her—but it’s not her I’m thinking of: did you hear the news about the tobacky?”

“No; but I hope we won’t be long go.”

“Well, any how, we wor in luck to buy in them three last rowls.”

“Eh?—in luck? death-alive, how, Ned?”

“Sure there was three ships of it lost last week, on their way from the kingdom of Swuzerland, in the Aist Indians, where it grows: we can rise it thruppence a-pound now.”

“No, Ned! you’re not in airnest?”

“Faith, Nancy, you may say I am; and as soon as Tom Loan comes home from Dublin, he’ll tell us all about it; and for that matther, maybe it may rise sixpence a-pound; any how we’ll gain a lob by it, I’m thinking.”

“May I never stir, but that’s luck! Well, Ned, you may thank me for that, any way, or sorra rowl we’d have in the four corners of the house; and you wanted to persuade me against buying them; but I knew betther—for the tobacky’s always sure to get a bit of a hitch at this time o’ the year.”

“Bedad, you can do it, Nancy: I’ll say that for you—that is, and give you your own way.”

“Eh!—can’t I, Ned? And, what waa betther, I bate down Pether M’Entee three-ha’pence a-pound after I bought them.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—by my sannies, Nancy, as to market-making, they may all throw their caps at you, you thief o’ the world; you can do them nately!”

“Ha! ha! ha! Stop, Ned; don’t drink that water—it’s not from the garden-well. I’ll jist mix a sup of this last stuff we got from the mountains, till you taste it: I think it’s not worse nor the last—for Hugh Traynor’s * an ould hand at making it.”

* Hugh, who, by the way, is still living, and, I am glad to hear, in improved circumstances, was formerly in the habit of making a drop of the right sort.

This was all Ned wanted: his point was now carried; but with respect to the rising of the tobacco, the less that is said about it the bettor for his veracity.



Having thus given the reader a slight sketch of Ned and Nancy, and of the beautiful valley in which this worthy speculator had his residence, I shall next proceed to introduce him to the village circle, which, during the long winter nights, might be found in front of Ned's kitchen-fire of blazing turf, whose light was given back in ruddy reflection from the bright pewter plates, that were ranged upon the white and well-scoured dresser in just and gradual order, from the small egg-plate to the large and capacious dish, whereon, at Christmas and Easter, the substantial round of corned beef used to rear itself so proudly over the more ignoble joints at the lower end of the table.



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Seated in this clear-obscure of domestic light—which, after all, gives the heart a finer and more touching notion of enjoyment than the glitter of the theatre or the blaze of the saloon—might be found first, Andy Morrow,* the juryman of the quarter-sessions, sage and important in the consciousness of legal knowledge, and somewhat dictatorial withal in its application to such knotty points as arose out of the subjects of their nocturnal debates. Secondly, Bob Gott, who filled the foreign and military departments, and related the wonderful history of the ghost which appeared to him on the night after the battle of Bunker's-hill. To him succeeded Tom M'Roarkin, the little asthmatic anecdotarian of half the country,—remarkable for chuckling at his own stories. Then came old M'Kinny, poacher and horse-jockey; little, squeaking, thin-faced Alick M'Kinley, a facetious farmer of substance; and Shane Fadh, who handed down, traditions and fairy tales. Enthroned on one hob sat Pat Frayne, the schoolmaster with the short arm, who read and explained the newspaper for “old Square Colwell,” and was looked upon as premier to the aforesaid cabinet; Ned himself filled the opposite seat of honor.

One night, a little before the Christmas holidays in the year 18—, the personages just described were seated around Ned's fire, some with their chirping pints of ale or porter, and others with their quantum of *Hugh Traynor*, or mountain-dew, and all with good humor, and a strong tendency to happiness, visible in their faces. The night was dark, close, and misty; so dark, indeed, that, as Nancy said, “you could hardly see your finger before you.” Ned himself was full of fun, with a pint of porter beside him, and a pipe in his mouth, just in his glory for the night. Opposite to him was Pat Frayne, with an old newspaper on his knee, which he had just perused for the edification of his audience; beside him was, Nancy, busily employed in knitting a pair of sheep's-grey stockings for Ned; the remaining personages formed a semicircular ring about the hearth. Behind, on the kitchen-table sat Paddy Smith, the servant-man, with three or four of the *gorsoons* of the village about him, engaged in an under-plot of their own. On the other, a little removed from the light, sat Ned's two nieces, Biddy and Bessy Connolly, former with Atty Johnson's mouth within whisper-reach of her ear, and the latter seated close to her professed admirer, Billy Fulton, her uncle's shopman.* This group; was completely abstracted from the entertainment which was going forward in the circle round the fire.

* Each pair have been since married, and live not more happily than I wish them. Fulton still lives in Ned's house at the Cross-roads.

“I wondher,” said Andy Morrow, “what makes Joe M'Crea throw down that fine ould castle of his, in Aughtentain?”

“I'm tould,” said M'Roarkin, “that he expects money; for they say there's a lot of it buried somewhere about the same building.”



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“Jist as much as there’s in my wig,” replied Shane Fadh, “and there’s ne’er a pocket to it yet. Why, bless your sowl, how could there be money in it, whin the last man of the Grameses that owned it—I mane of the ould stock, afore it went into Lord Mountjoy’s hands—sould it out, ran through the money, and died begging afther’? Did none of you ever hear of—

’ _____ ——— Ould John Grame,
That swally’d the castle of Aughtentain?’”

“That was long afore my time,” said the poacher; “but I know that the rabbit-burrow between that and Jack Appleden’s garden will soon be run out.”

“Your time!” responded Shane Fadh, with contempt; “ay, and your father’s afore you: my father doesn’t remimber more nor seeing his funeral, and a merry one it was; for my grandfather, and some of them that had a respect for the family and his forbarers, if they hadn’t it for himself, made up as much money among them as berried him dacently any how,—ay, and gave him a rousin’ wake into the bargain, with lashins of whiskey, stout beer, and ale; for in them times—God be with them every farmer brewed his own ale and beer;—more betoken, that one pint of it was worth a keg of this wash of yours, Ned.”

“Wasn’t it he that used to *appear*?” inquired M’Roarkin.

“Sure enough he did, Tom.”

“Lord save us,” said Nancy, “what could trouble him, I dunna?”

“Why,” continued Shane Fadh, “some said one thing, and some another; but the upshot of it was this: when the last of the Grameses sould the estate, castle, and all, it seems he didn’t resave all the purchase money; so, afther he had spint what he got, he applied to the purchaser for the remainder—him that the Mountjoy family bought it from; but it seems he didn’t draw up writings, or sell it according to law, so that the thief o’ the world baffled him from day to day, and wouldn’t give him a penny—bekase he knew, the blaggard, that the Square was then as poor as a church mouse, and hadn’t money enough to thry it at law with him; but the Square was always a simple asy-going man. One day he went to this fellow, riding on an ould garran, with a shoe loose—the only baste he had in the world—and axed him, for God’s sake, to give him of what he owed him, if it was ever so little; ‘for,’ says he, ‘I huve not as much money betune me and death as will get a set of shoes for my horse.’”

“‘Well,’ says the nager, ‘if-you’re not able to keep your horse shod, I would jist recommend you to sell him, and thin his shoes won’t cost you any thing,’ says he.



“The ould Square went away with tears in his eyes,—for he loved the poor brute, bekase they wor the two last branches of the ould stock.”

“Why,” inquired M’Kinley, in his small squeaking voice, “was the horse related to the family?”

“I didn’t say he was related to the fam——

“Get out, you *shingaun!*” (* Fairy-like, or connected to the fairies) returned the old man, perceiving by the laugh that now went round, the sly tendency of the question—“no, nor to your family either, for he had nothing of the ass in him—eh? will you put that in your pocket, my little *skinadhre* (* A thin, fleshless, stunted person.)—ha! ha! ha!”



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The laugh was now turned against M'Kinley.

Shane Fadh proceeded: "The ould Square, as I was tellin yez, cried to find himself an' the poor baste so dissolute; but when he had gone a bit from the fellow, he comes back to the vagabone—'Now,' says he, 'mind my words—if you happen to live afther me, you need never expect a night's pace; for I here make a serous an' solemn vow, that as long as my property's in your possession, or in any of your seed, breed, or generation's, I'll never give over hauntin' you an' them, till you'll rue to the back-bone your dishonesty an' chathery to me an' this poor baste, that hasn't a shoe to his foot.'

"'Well,' says the nager, 'I'll take chance of that, any way.'"

"I'm tould, Shane," observed the poacher, "that the Square was a fine man in his time, that wouldn't put up with sich treatment from anybody."

"Ay, but he was ould now," Shane replied, "and too wakely to fight.—A fine man, Bill!—he was the finest man, 'cepting ould Square Storey, that ever was in this country. I hard my granfather often say that he was six feet four, and made in proportion—a handsome, black-a-vis'd man, with great dark whiskers. Well! he spent money like sklates, and so he died miserable—but had a merry birrel, as I said."

"But," inquired Nancy, "did he ever appear to the rogue that chated him?"

"Every night in the year, Nancy, exceptin' Sundays; and what was more, the horse along with him—for he used to come ridin' at midnight upon the same garran; and it was no matther what place or company the other 'ud be in, the ould Square would come reglarly, and crave him for what he owed him."

"So it appears that horses have sowls," observed M'Roarkin, philosophically, giving, at the same time, a cynical chuckle at the sarcasm contained in his own conceit.

"Whether they have sowls or bodies," replied the narrator, "what I'm tellin' you is truth; every night in the year the ould chap would come for what was indue him; find as the two went along, the noise of the loose shoe upon the horse would be hard rattlin', and seen knockin' the fire out of the stones, by the neighbors and the thief that chated him, even before the Square would appeal at all at all."

"Oh, wurrah!" exclaimed Nancy, shuddering with terror. "I wouldn't take anything and be out now on the *Drumfarrar road**, and nobody with me but myself."

A lonely mountain-road, said to have been haunted. It is on this road that the coffin scenes mentioned in the Party fight and Funeral is laid.



“I think if you wor,” said M’Kinley, “the light weights and short measures would be comin’ across your conscience.”

“No, in troth, Alick, wouldn’t they; but may be if you wor, the promise you broke to Sally Mitchell might trouble you a bit: at any rate, I’ve a prayer, and if I only repated it wanst, I mightn’t be afeard of all the divils in hell.”



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“Throth, but it’s worth havin’, Nancy: where did you get it?” asked M’Kinley.

“Hould your wicked tongue, you thief of a heretic,” said Nancy, laughing, “when will *you* larn anything that’s good? I got it from one that wouldn’t have it if it *wasn’t* good—Darby M’Murt, the pilgrim, since you must know.”

“Whisht!” said Frayne: “upon my word, I blieve the old Square’s comin’ to pay tis a visit; does any of yez hear a horse trottin’ with a shoe loose?”

“I sartinly hear it,” observed Andy Morrow.

“And I,” said Ned himself.

There was now a general pause, and in the silence a horse, proceeding from the moors in the direction of the house, was distinctly heard; and nothing could be less problematical than that one of his shoes was loose.

“Boys, take care of yourselves,” said Shane Fadh, “if the Square comes, he won’t be a pleasant customer—he was a terrible fellow in his day: I’ll hould goold to silver that he’ll have the smell of brimstone about him.”

“Nancy, where’s your prayer now?” said M’Kinley, with a grin: “I think you had betther out with it, and thry if it keeps this old brimstone Square on the wrong side of the house.”

“Behave yourself, Alick; it’s a shame for you to be sich a hardened crathur: upon my sannies, I blieve your afeard of neither God nor the divil—the Lord purtect and guard us from the dirty baste!”

“You mane particklarly them that uses short measures and light weights,” rejoined M’Kinley.

There was another pause, for the horseman was within a few perches of the crossroads. At this moment an unusual gust of wind, accompanied by torrents of rain, burst against the house with a violence that made its ribs creak; and the stranger’s horse, the shoe still clanking, was distinctly heard to turn in from the road to Ned’s door, where it stopped, and the next moment a loud knocking intimated the horseman’s intention to enter. The company now looked at each other, as if uncertain what to do. Nancy herself grew pale, and, in the agitation of the moment, forgot to think of her protecting prayer. Bidy and Bessy Connolly started from the settle on which they had been sitting with their sweethearts, and sprung beside their uncle, on the hob. The stranger was still knocking with great violence, yet there was no disposition among the company to admit him, notwithstanding the severity of the night—blowing, as it really did, a perfect hurricane. At length a sheet of lightning flashed through the house, followed by an amazing loud clap of thunder; while, with a sudden push from without,



the door gave way, and in stalked a personage Whose stature was at least six feet four, with dark eyes and complexion, and coal-black whiskers of an enormous size, the very image of the Squire they had been describing. He was dressed in a long black surtout, which him appear even taller than he actually was, had a pair of heavy boots upon



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and carried a tremendous whip, large enough to fell an ox. He was in a rage on entering; and the heavy, dark, close-knit-brows, from beneath which a pair of eyes, equally black, shot actual fire, whilst the Turk-like whiskers, which curled themselves up, as it were, in sympathy with his fury, joined to his towering height, gave him altogether, when we consider the frame of mind in which he found the company, an appalling and almost supernatural appearance.

“Confound you, for a knot of lazy scoundrels,” exclaimed the stranger, “why do you sit here so calmly, while any being craves admittance on such a night as this? Here, you lubber in the corner, with a pipe in your mouth, come and put up this horse of mine until the night settles.”

“May the blessed mother purtect us!” exclaimed Nancy, in a whisper, to Andy Morrow, “if I believe he’s a right thing!—would it be the ould Square? Did you ever set your eyes upon sich a”—

“Will you bestir yourself, you boor, and’ not keep my horse and saddle out under such a torrent?” he cried, “otherwise I must only bring him into the house, and then you may say for once that you’ve had the devil under your roof.”

“Paddy Smith, you lazy spalpeen,” said Nancy, winking at Ned to have nothing to do with the horse, “why don’t you fly and put up the gintleman’s horse? And you, Atty, avourneen, jist go out with him, and hould the candle while he’s doin’ it: be quick now, and I’ll give you glasses a-piece when you come in.”

“Let them put him up quickly; but I say, you Caliban,” added the stranger, addressing Smith, “don’t be rash about him except you can bear fire and brimstone; get him, at all events, a good feed of oats. Poor Satan!” he continued, patting the horse’s head, which was now within the door, “you’ve had a hard night of it, my poor Satan, as well as myself. That’s my dark spirit—my brave chuck, that fears neither man nor devil.”

This language was by no means calculated to allay the suspicions of those who were present, particularly of Nancy and her two nieces. Ned sat in astonishment, with the pipe in his hand, which he had, in the surprise of the moment, taken from his mouth, his eyes fixed upon the stranger, and his mouth open. The latter noticed him, and stretching over the heads of the circle, tapped him on the shoulder with his whip:—

“I have a few words to say to you, sir,” he said.

“To me, your honor!” exclaimed Ned, without stirring, however.

“Yes,” replied the other, “but you seem to be fastened to your seat: come this way.”



“By all manner of manes, sir,” said Ned, starting up, and going over to the dresser, against which the stranger stood.

When the latter had got him there, he very coolly walked up, and secured Ned’s comfortable seat on the hob, at the same time observing—

“You hadn’t the manners to ask me to sit down; but I always make it a point of conscience to take care of myself, landlord.”



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There was not a man about the fire who did not stand up, as if struck with a sudden recollection, and offer him a seat.

“No,” said he, “thank you, my good fellows, I am very well as it is: I suppose, mistress, you are the landlady,” addressing Nancy; “if you be, I’ll thank you to bring me a gill of your best whiskey,—your best, mind. Let it be as strong as an evil spirit let loose, and as hot as fire; for it can’t be a jot too ardent such a night as this, for a being that rides the devil.”

Nancy started up instinctively, exclaiming, “Indeed, please your honor’s reverence, I am the landlady, as you say, sir, sure enough; but, the Lawk save and guard us! won’t a gallon of raw whiskey be too much for one man to drink?”

“A gallon! I only said a gill, my good hostess; bring me a gill—but I forget—I believe you have no such measure in this country; bring me a pint, then.”

Nancy now went into the bar, whither she gave Ned a wink to follow her; and truly was glad of an opportunity of escaping from the presence of the visitor. When there, she ejaculated—

“May the holy Mother keep and guard us, Ned, but I’m afeard that’s no Christian crathur, at all at all! Arrah, Ned, aroon, would he be that ould Square Grame, that Shane Fadh, maybe, angered, by spakin’ of him?”

“Troth,” said Ned, “myself doesn’t know what he is; he bates any mortal I ever seen.”

“Well, hould agra! I have it: we’ll see whether he’ll drink this or not, any how.”

“Why, what’s that you’re doin’?” asked Ned.

“Jist,” replied Nancy, “mixin’ the smallest taste in the world of holy wather with the whiskey, and if he drinks that, you know he can be nothing that’s bad.”*

* The efficacy of holy water in all Roman Catholic countries, but especially in Ireland, is supposed to be very great. It is kept in the house, or, in certain cases, about the person, as a safeguard against evil spirits, fairies, or sickness. It is also used to allay storms and quench conflagrations; and when an Irishman or Irishwoman is about to go a journey, commence labor or enter upon any other important undertaking, the person is sure to be sprinkled with holy water, under the hope that the journey or undertaking will prosper.

Nancy, however, did not perceive that the trepidation of her hand was such as to incapacitate her from making nice distinctions in the admixture. She now brought the spirits to the stranger, who no sooner took a mouthful of it, than he immediately stopped it on its passage, and fixing his eyes earnestly on herself, squirted it into the fire, and

the next moment the whiskey was in a blaze that seemed likely to set the chimney in flames.

“Why, my honest hostess,” he exclaimed, “do you give this to me for whiskey? Confound me, but two-thirds of it is water; and I have no notion to pay for water when I want spirits: have the goodness to exchange this, and get me some better stuff, if you have it.”



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He again put the jug to his mouth, and having taken a little, swallowed it:—"Why, I tell you, woman, you must have made some mistake; one-half of it is water."

Now, Nancy, from the moment he refused to swallow the liquor, had been lock-jawed; the fact was, she thought that the devil himself, or old Squire Graham, had got under her roof; and she stood behind Ned, who was nearly as terrified as herself, with her hands raised, her tongue clinging to the roof of her mouth, and the perspiration falling from her pale face in large drops. But as soon as she saw him swallow a portion of that liquid, which she deemed beyond the deglutition of ghost or devil, she instantly revived—her tongue resumed its accustomed office—her courage, as well as her good-humor, returned, and she went up to him with great confidence, saying,

"Why, then, your Reverence's honor, maybe I did make a bit of a mistake, sir"—taking up the jug, and tasting its contents: "Hut! bad scran to me, but I did, beggin' your honor's pardon; how-an-diver, I'll soon rightify that, your Reverence."

So saying, she went and brought him a pint of the stoutest the house afforded. The stranger drank a glass of it, and then ordered hot water and sugar, adding—

"My honest friends here about the fire will have no objection to help me with this; but, on second consideration, you had better get us another quart, that as the night is cold, we may have a jorum at this pleasant fire, that will do our hearts good; and this pretty girl here," addressing Bidy, who really deserved the epithet, "will sit beside me, and give us a song."

It was surprising what an effect the punch even in perspective, had upon the visual organs of the company; second-sight was rather its precursor than its attendant; for, with intuitive penetration, they now discovered various good qualities in his ghost-ship, that had hitherto been beyond their ken; and those very personal properties, which before struck them dumb with terror, already called forth their applause.

"What a fine man he is!" one would whisper, loud enough, however, to be heard by the object of his panegyric.

"He is, indeed, and a rale gintleman," another would respond in the same key.

"Hut! he's none of your proud, stingy upsthart bodagahs*—none of your beggarly half-sirs*," a third would remark: "he's the dacent thing entirely—you see he hasn't his heart in a thrifle."

* A person vulgar, but rich, without any pretensions but those of wealth to the character of a gentleman; a churl.
Half-sir; the same as above.



“And so sign’s on him,” a fourth would add, with comic gravity, “he wasn’t bred to shabbiness, as you may know by his fine behavior and his big whiskers.”

When the punch was made, and the kitchen-table placed endwise towards the fire, the stranger, finding himself very comfortable, inquired if he could be accommodated with a bed and supper, to which Nancy replied in the affirmative.



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“Then, in that case,” said he, “I will be your guest for the night.”

Shane Fadh now took courage to repeat the story of old Squire Graham and his horse with the loose shoe; informing the stranger, at the same time, of the singular likeness which he bore to the subject of the story, both in face and size, and dwelling upon the remarkable coincidence in the time and manner of his approach.

“Tut, man!” said the stranger, “a far more extraordinary adventure happened to one of my father’s tenants, which, if none of you have any objection, I will relate.”

There was a buzz of approbation at this; and they all thanked his honor, expressing the strongest desire to hear his story. He was just proceeding to gratify them, when another rap came to the door, and, before any of the inmates had time to open it, Father Ned Deleery and his curate made their appearance, having been on their way home from a conference held in the town of —, eighteen miles from the scene of our present story.

It may be right here to inform the reader, that about two hundred yards from Ned’s home stood a place of Roman Catholic worship, called “the Forth,”* from the resemblance it bore to the *Forts* or *Baths*, so common in Ireland. It was a small green, perfectly circular, and about twenty yards in diameter. Around it grew a row of old overspreading hawthorns, whose branches formed a canopy that almost shaded it from sun and storm. Its area was encompassed by tiers of seats, one raised above another, and covered with the flowery grass. On these the congregation used to sit—the young men chatting or ogling their sweethearts on the opposite side; the old ones in little groups, discussing the politics of the day, as retailed by Mick M’Caffry.** the politician; while, up near the altar, hemmed in by a ring of old men and women, you might perceive a *votteen*, repeating some new prayer or choice piece of devotion—or some other, in a similar circle, perusing, in a loud voice. Dr. Gallagher’s *Irish Sermons*, Pastorini’s *History of the Christian Church*, or *Columbkil’s Prophecy*—and, perhaps, a strolling pilgrim, the centre of a third collection, singing the *Dies irae*, in Latin, or the *Hermit of Killarney*, in English.

* This very beautiful but simple place of worship does not now exist. On its site is now erected a Roman Catholic chapel.

** Mick was also a schoolmaster, and the most celebrated village politician of his day. Every Sunday found him engaged as in the text.

At the extremity of this little circle was a plain altar of wood, covered with a little thatched shed, under which the priest celebrated mass; but before the performance of this ceremony, a large multitude usually assembled opposite Ned’s shop-door, at the cross-roads. This crowd consisted of such as wanted to buy tobacco, candles, soap,



potash, and such other groceries as the peasantry remote from market-towns require. After mass, the public-house was filled to the door-posts, with those who wished to get a sample of Nancy's *Iska-behagh** and many a time has little Father Ned himself, of a frosty day, after having performed mass with a celerity highly agreeable to his auditory, come in to Nancy, nearly frost-bitten, to get his breakfast, and a toothful of mountain dew to drive the cold out of his stomach.



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Usquebaugh—literally, “water of life.”

The fact is, that Father Deleery made himself quite at home at Ned’s without any reference to Nancy’s saving habits; the consequence was, that her welcome to him was extremely sincere—“from the teeth out.” Father Ned saw perfectly through her assumed heartiness of manner, but acted as if the contrary was the case; Nancy understood him also, and with an intention of making up by complaisance for their niggardliness in other respects, was a perfect honeycomb. This state of cross-purposes, however, could not last long; neither did it. Father Ned never paid, and Nancy never gave credit; so, at length, they came to an open rupture; she threatened to process him for what he owed her, and he, in return, threatened to remove the congregation from “The Forth” to Ballymagowan bridge, where he intended to set up his nephew in the “public line,” to the ruin of Nancy’s flourishing establishment.

“Father Ned,” said Nancy, “I’m a hardworking, honest woman, and I don’t see why my substance is to be wasted by your Reverence when you won’t pay for it.”

“And do you forget,” Father Ned would reply, “that it’s me that brings you your custom? Don’t you know that if I remove my flock to Ballymagowan, you’ll soon sing to another tune? so lay that to your heart.”

“Troth, I know that whatever I get I’m obliged to pay for it; and I think every man should do the same, Father Ned. You must get a hank of yarn from me, and a bushel or two of oats from Ned, and your riglar dues along with all; but, avourneen, it’s yourself that won’t pay a penny when you can help it.”

“Salvation to me, but you’d skin a flint!”

“Well, if I would, I pay my debts first.”

“You do?”

“Yes, troth, do I.”

“Why then that’s more than you’ll be able to do long, plase the fates.”

“If all my customers wor like your Reverence, it is.”

“I’ll tell you what it is, Nancy, I often threatened to take the congregation from ‘The Forth,’ and I’ll do it—if I don’t, may I never sup sorrow!”

Big with such a threat, Father Ned retired. The apprehensions of Nancy on this point, however, were more serious than she was willing to acknowledge. This dispute took place a few days before the night in question.



Father Ned was a little man, with a red face, slender legs, and flat feet; he was usually cased in a pair of ribbed minister's grey small-clothes, with leggings of the same material. His coat, which was much too short, rather resembled a jerkin, and gave him altogether an appearance very much at variance with an idea of personal gravity or reverence. Over this dress he wore in winter, a dark great-coat, with high collar, that buttoned across his face, showing only the point, of his red nose; so that, when riding or walking, his hat rested more upon the collar of his coat than upon his head.



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The curate was a tall, raw-boned young man, with high jutting cheek-bones, low forehead, and close knees; to his shoulders, which were very high, hung a pair of long bony arms, whose motions seemed rather the effect of machinery than volition. His hair, which was a bad black, was cropped close, and trimmed across his eye-brows, like that of a Methodist preacher; the small-clothes he wore were of the same web which had produced Father Ned's, and his body-coat was a dark blue, with black buttons. Each wore a pair of gray woollen mittens.

"There, Pether," said Father Ned, as he entered, "hook my bridle along with your own, as your hand is in—God save all here! Paddy Smith, ma bouchal, put these horses in the stable, till we dry ourselves a bit—Father Pether and I."

"Musha, but you're both welcome," said Nancy, wishing to wipe out the effects of the last tift with Father Ned, by the assistance of the stranger's punch; "will ye bounce, ye spalpeens, and let them to the fire? Father Ned, you're dhreepin' with the rain; and, Father Pether, avourneen, you're wet to the skin, too."

"Troth, and he is, Nancy, and a little bit farther, if you knew but all. Mr. Morrow, how do you do, sir?—And—eh?—Who's this we've got in the corner? A gintleman, boys, if cloth can make one! Mr. Morrow, introduce me."

"Indeed, Father Ned, I hav'nt the pleasure of knowing the gintleman myself."

"Well, no matter—come up, Pether. Sir, I have the honor of introducing you to my curate and coadjutor, the Reverend Pether M'Clatchaghan, and to myself, his excellent friend, but spiritual superior, the Reverend Edward Deleery, Roman Catholic Rector of this highly respectable and extensive parish; and I have further the pleasure," he continued, taking up Andy Morrow's Punch, "of drinking your very good health, sir."

"And I have the honor," returned the stranger, rising up, and diving his head among the fitches of bacon that hung in the chimney, "of introducing you and the Rev. Mr. M'—M'—M'—"

"Clatchagan, sir," subjoined Father Ned.

"Peter M'Ilclatchagan, to Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"By my word, sir, but it's a good and appropriate name, sure enough," said Father Ned, surveying his enormous length; "success to me but you're an Alexandrine from head to foot—non solum Longinus, sed Alexandrinus."

"You're wrong, sir, in the Latin," said Father Peter.

"Prove it, Peter—prove it."



“It should be non tantum, sir.”

“By what rule Pether?”

“Why, sir, there’s a phrase in Corderius’s Colloquies that I could condimn you from, if I had the book.”

“Pether, you think you’re a scholar, and, to do you justice, you’re cute enough sometimes; but, Pether, you didn’t travel for it, as I did—nor were you obliged to lep out of a college windy in Paris, at the time of the French Revolution, for your larning, as I was: not you, man, you ate the king’s mutton comfortably at home in Maynooth, instead of travelling like your betters.”



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"I appale to this gintleman," said Father Peter turning to the stranger. "Are you a classical scholar, sir—that is, do you understand Latin?"

"What kind?" demanded the stranger dryly.

"If you have read Corderius's Colloquies, it will do," said Father Peter.

"No, sir," replied the other, "but I have read his commentator, *Bardolphus*, who wrote a treatise upon the *Nasus Rubricundus* of the ancients."

"Well, sir, if you did, it's probable that you may be able to understand our dispute, so"—

"Peter, I'm afeard you've got into the wrong box; for I say he's no chicken that's read *Nasus Rubricundus*, I can tell you that; I had my own trouble with it: but, at any rate, will you take your punch, man alive, and don't bother us with your Latin?"

"I beg your pardon, Father Ned: I insist that. I'm right; and I'll convince you that you're wrong, if God spares me to see Corderius to-morrow."

"Very well then, Pether, if you're to decide it to-morrow, let us have no more of it tonight."

During this conversation between the two reverend worthies, the group around the fire were utterly astonished at the erudition displayed in this learned dispute.

"Well, to be sure, larnin's a great thing, entirely," said M'Roarkin, aside, to Shane Fadh.

"Ah, Tom, there's nothing like it: well, any way, it's wonderful what they know!"

"Indeed it is, Shane—and in so short a time, too! Sure, it's not more nor five or six years since Father Pether there used to be digging praties on the one ridge with myself—by the same token, an excellent spadesman he was—and now he knows more nor all the Protestant parsons in the Diocy."

"Why, how could they know any thing, when they don't belong to the throe church?" said Shane.

"Throe for you, Shane," replied M'Roaran; "I disremimbered that clincher."

This discourse ran parallel with the dispute between the two priests, but in so low a tone as not to reach the ears of the classical champions, who would have ill-brooked this eulogium upon Father Peter's agricultural talent.



“Don’t bother us, Pether, with your arguing to-night,” said Father Ned, “it’s enough for you to be seven days in the week at your disputations.—Sir, I drink to our better acquaintance.”

“With all my heart, sir,” replied the stranger.

“Father Ned,” said Nancy, “the gentleman was going to tell us a strange story, sir, and maybe your Reverence would wish to hear it, dothor?”

“Certainly, Nancy, we’ll be very happy to hear any story the gentleman may please to tell us; but, Nancy, achora, before he begins, what if you’d just fry a slice or two of that glorious flitch, hanging over his head, in the corner?—that, and about six eggs, Nancy, and you’ll have the priest’s blessing, gratis.”

“Why, Father Ned, it’s too fresh, entirely—sure it’s not a week hanging yet.



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“Sorra matter, Nancy dheelish, we’ll take with all that—just try your hand at a slice of it. I rode eighteen miles since I dined, and I feel a craving, Nancy, a *whacuum* in my stomach, that’s rather troublesome.”

“To be sure, Father Ned, you must get a slice, with all the veins in my heart; but I thought maybe you wouldn’t like it so fresh: but what on earth will we do for eggs? for there’s not an egg under the roof with me.”

“Bidly, a hatur,” said Father Ned, “just slip out to Molshy Johnson, and tell her to send me six eggs for a rasher, by the same token that I heard two or three hens cackling in the byre, as I was going to conference this morning.”

“Well, Docthor,” said Pat Frayne, when Bidly had been gone some time, on which embassy she delayed longer than the priest’s judgment, influenced by the cravings of his stomach, calculated to be necessary,—“Well, Docthor, I often pity you, for fasting so long; I’m sure, I dunna how you can stand it, at all, at all.”

“Troth, and you may well wonder, Pat; but we have that to support us, that you, or any one like you, know nothing about—inward support, Pat—inward support.”

“Only for that, Father Ned,” said Shane Fadh, “I suppose you could never get through with it.”

“Very right, Shane—very right: only for it, we never could do.—What the dickens is keeping this girl with the eggs?—why she might be at Mr. Morrow’s, here, since. By the way, Mr. Morrow,” he continued, laughing, “you must come over to our church: you’re a good neighbor, and a worthy fellow, and it’s a thousand pities you should be sent down.”

“Why, Docthor,” said Andy, “do you really believe I’ll go downwards?”

“Ah, Mr. Morrow, don’t ask me that question—out of the pale, you know—out of the pale.”

“Then you think, sir, there’s no chance for me, at all?” said Andy, smiling.

“Not the laste, Andy, you must go this way,” said Father Ned, striking the floor with the butt end of his whip, and winking—“to the lower raigons; and, upon my knowledge, to tell you the truth, I’m sorry for it, for you’re a worthy fellow.”

“Ah, Docthor,” said Ned, “it’s a great thing entirely to be born of the true church—one’s always sure, then.”

“Ay, ay; you may say that, Ned,” returned the priest, “come or go what will, a man’s always safe at the long run, except he dies without his clargy.—Shane, hand me the jug, if you please.—Where did you get this stuff, Nancy?—faith, it’s excellent.”



“You forget, Father Ned, that that’s a secret.—But here’s Biddy with the eggs, and now you’ll have your rasher in no time.”

When the two clergymen had discussed the rashers and eggs, and while the happy group were making themselves intimately acquainted with a fresh jug of punch, as it circulated round the table—

“Now, sir,” said Father Ned to the stranger, “we’ll hear your story with the greatest satisfaction possible; but I think you might charge your tumbler before you set to it.”



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When the stranger had complied with this last hint, “Well, gentlemen,” said he, “as I am rather fatigued, will you excuse me for the position I am about to occupy, which is simply to stretch myself along the hob here, with my head upon the straw hassoch? and if you have no objection to that, I will relate the story.”

To this, of course, a general assent was given. When he was stretched completely at his ease—

“Well, upon my veracity,” observed Father Peter, “the gentleman’s supernaturally long.”

“Yes, Pether,” replied Father Ned, “but observe his position—*Polysyllaba cuncta supina*, as Psorody says.—Arrah, salvation to me but you’re a dull man, afther all!—but we’re interrupting the gentleman. Sir, go on, if you please, with your story.”

“Give me a few minutes,” said he, “until I recollect the particulars.”

He accordingly continued quiescent for two or three minutes more, apparently arranging the materials of his intended narration, and then commenced to gratify the eager expectations of his auditory, by emitting those nasal enunciations which are the usual accompaniments of sleep!

“Why, bad luck to the morsel of ’im but’s asleep,” said Ned; “Lord pardon me for swearin’ in your Reverence’s presence.”

“That’s certainly the language of a sleeping man,” replied Father Ned, “but there might have been a little more respect than all that snoring comes to. Your health, boys.”

The stranger had now wound up his nasal organ to a high pitch, after which he commenced again with somewhat of a lower and finer tone.

“He’s beginning a new paragraph,” observed Father Peter with a smile at the joke.

“Not at all,” said Father Ned, “he’s turning the tune; don’t you perceive that he’s snoring ‘God save the King,’ in the key of *bass relieve*?”

“I’m no judge of instrumental music, as you are,” said the curate, “but I think it’s liker the ‘Dead March of Saul,’ than ‘God save the King;’ however, if you be right, the gentleman certainly snores in a truly loyal strain.”

“That,” said little M’Roarkin, “is liker the Swine’s melody, or the Bedfordshire hornpipe—he—he—he!”

“The poor gintleman’s tired,” observed Nancy, “afther a hard day’s thravelling.”



“I dare say he is,” said Father Ned, in the sincere hospitality of his country; “at all events, take care of him, Nancy, he’s a stranger, and get the best supper you can for him—he appears to be a truly respectable and well-bred man.”

“I think,” said M’Kinley, with a comical grin, “you might know that by his high-flown manner of sleeping—he snores very politely, and like a gentleman, all out.”

“Well done, Alick,” said the priest, laughing; “go home, boys, it’s near bed-time; Paddy, ma bouchal, are the horses ready?”

“They’ll be at the door in a jiffy, your Reverence,” said Paddy going out.

In the course of a few minutes, he returned, exclaiming, “Why, thin, is it thinkin’ to venthur out sich a night as it’s comin’ on yer Reverences would be? and it plashin’ as if it came out of methers! Sure the life would be dhrownded out of both of ye, and yees might colch a faver into the bargain.”



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“Sit down, gintlemen,” said Ned; “sit down, Father Ned, you and Father Pether—we’ll have another tumbler; and, as it’s my turn to tell a story, I’ll give yez something, amuse yez,—the best I can, and, you all know, who can do more?”

“Very right, Ned; but let us see”—replied father Ned, putting his head out of the door to ascertain what the night did; “come, pether, it’s good to be on the safe side of any house in such a storm; we must only content ourselves until it gets fair. Now, Ned, go on with your story, and let it be as pleasant as possible.”

“Never fear, your Reverence,” replied Ned—“here goes—and healths a-piece to begin with.”

THE THREE TASKS.

“Every person in the parish knows the purty knoll that rises above the Routing Burn, some few miles from the renowned town of Knockimdowny, which, as all the world must allow, wants only houses and inhabitants to be as big a place as the great town of Dublin itself. At the foot of this little hill, just under the shelter of a dacent pebble of a rock, something above the bulk of half a dozen churches, one would be apt to see—if they knew how to look sharp, otherwise they mightn’t be able to make it out from the gray rock above it, except by the smoke that ris from the chimbley—Nancy Magennis’s little cabin, snug and cosey with its corrag* or ould man of branches, standing on the windy side of the door, to keep away the blast. Upon my word, it was a dacent little residence in its own way, and so was Nancy herself, for that matther; for, though a poor widdy, she was very *punctwell* in paying for Jack’s schooling, as I often heard ould Terry M’Phaudeen say, who told me the story. Jack, indeed, grew up a fine slip; and for hurling, foot-ball playing, and lepping, hadn’t his likes in the five quarters of the parish. It’s he that knew how to handle a spade and a raping-hook, and what was betther nor all that, he was kind and tindher to his poor ould mother, and would let her want for nothing. Before he’d go to his day’s work in the morning, he’d be sure to bring home from the clear-spring well that ran out of the other side of the rock, a pitcher of water to serve her for the day; nor would he forget to bring in a good creel of turf from the snug little peat-sack that stood thatched with rushes before the door, and leave it in the corner, beside the fire; so that she had nothing to do but put over her hand, without rising off of her sate, and put down a sod when she wanted it.

The _Corrag_ is a roll of branches tied together when green and used for the purposes mentioned the story. It is six feet high, and much thicker than a sack, and is changed to either side of the door according to the direction from which the wind blows.

“Nancy, on her part, kept Jack very clane and comfortable; his linen, though coorse, was always a good color, his working clothes tidily mended at all times; and when he’d have occasion to put on his good coat to work in for the first time, Nancy would sew on



the fore-part of each sleeve a stout patch of ould cloth, to keep them from being worn by the spade; so that when she'd rip these off them every Saturday night, they would look as new and fresh as if he hadn't been working in them at all, at all.



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“Then when Jack came home in the winter nights, it would do your heart good to see Nancy sitting at her wheel, singing, ‘*Stachan Varagah*,’ or ‘*Peggy Na Laveen*,’ beside a purty clear fire, with a small pot of *murphys* boiling on it for their supper, or laid up in a wooden dish, comfortably covered with a clane praskeen on the well-swept hearth-stone; whilst the quiet, dancing blaze might be seen blinking in the nice earthen plates and dishes that stood over against the side-wall of the house. Just before the fire you might see Jack’s stool waiting for him to come home; and on the other side, the brown cat washing her face with her paws, or sitting beside the dog that lay asleep, quite happy and continted, purring her song, and now and then looking over at Nancy, with her eyes half-shut, as much as to say, ‘Catch a happier pair nor we are, Nancy, if you can.’

“Sitting quietly on the roost above the door, were Dicky the cock, and half-a-dozen hens, that kept this honest pair in eggs and *egg-milk* for the best part of the year, besides enabling Nancy to sell two or three clutches of March-birds every season, to help to buy wool for Jack’s big-coat, and her own gray-beard gown and striped red and blue petticoat.

“To make a long story short—No two could be more comfortable, considering every thing. But, indeed, Jack was always obsarved to have a dacent ginteel turn with him; for he’d scorn to see a bad gown on his mother, or a broken Sunday coat on himself; and instead of drinking his little earning in a shebeen-house, and then eating his praties dry, he’d take care to have something to kitchen* them; so that he was not only snug and dacent of a Sunday, regarding wearables, but so well-fed and rosy, that a point of a rush would take a drop of blood out of his cheek.** Then he was the comeliest and best-looking young man in the parish, could tell lots of droll stories, and sing scores of merry songs that would make you split your sides with downright laughing; and when a wake or a dance would happen to be in the neighborhood, maybe there wouldn’t be many a sly look from the purty girls for pleasant Jack Magennis!

* The straits to which the poor Irish are put for what is termed kitchen—that is some liquid that enables them to dilute and swallow the dry potato—are grievous to think of. An Irishman in his miserable cabin will often feel glad to have salt and water in which to dip it, but that alluded to in the text is absolute comfort. Egg milk is made as follows:—A measure of water is put down suited to the number of the family; the poor woman then takes the proper number of eggs, which she beats up, and, when the water is boiling, pours it in, stirring it well for a couple of minutes. It is then made, and handed round in wooden noggins, every one salting for themselves. In color it resembles milk, which accounts for its name. Our readers must have heard of the



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old and well known luxury of “potatoes and point,” which, humorous as it is, scarcely falls short of the truth. An Irish family, of the cabin class, hangs up in the chimney a herring, or “small taste” of bacon, and as the national imagination is said to be strong, each individual points the potato he is going to eat at it, upon the principle, I suppose, of *crede et habes*. It is generally said that the act communicates the flavor of the herring or bacon, as the case may be, to the potato; and this is called “potatoes and point.”** This proverb, which is always used as above, but without being confined in its application, to only one sex, is a general one in Ireland. In delicacy and beauty I think it inimitable.

“In this way lived Jack and his mother, as happy and contented as two lords; except now and then, that Jack would feel a little concern for not being able to lay past anything for the *sorefoot*,* or that might enable him to think of marrying—for he was beginning to look about him for a wife; and why not, to be sure? But he was prudent for all that, and didn’t wish to bring a wife and small family into poverty and hardship without means to support them, as too many do.

* Accidents—future calamity—or old age.

“It was one fine, frosty, moonlight night—the sky was without a cloud, and the stars all blinking that it would delight anybody’s heart to look at them, when Jack was crossing a bog that lay a few fields beyond his own cabin. He was just crooning the ‘*Humors of Glynn*’ to himself and thinking that it was a very hard case that he couldn’t save anything at all, at all, to help him to the wife, when, on coming down a bank in the middle of the bog, he saw a dark-looking man leaning against a clamp of turf, and a black dog, with a pipe of tobacco in his mouth, sitting at his ease beside him, and he smoking as sober as a judge. Jack, however, had a stout heart, because his conscience was clear, and, barring being a little daunted, he wasn’t very much afraid. ‘Who is this coming down towards us?’ said the black-favored man, as he saw Jack approaching them. ‘It’s Jack Magennis,’ says the dog, making answer, and taking the pipe out of his mouth with his right paw; and after puffing away the smoke, and rubbing the end of it against his left leg, exactly as a Christian (this day’s Friday, the Lord stand before us and harm) would do against his sleeve, giving it at the same time to his comrade—‘It’s Jack Magennis,’ says the dog, ‘honest Widow Magennis’s decent son.’ ‘The very man,’ says the other, back to him, ‘that I’d wish to serve out of a thousand. Arrah, Jack Magennis, how is every tether-length of you?’ says the old fellow, putting the *furrawn** on him—‘and how is every bone in your body, Jack, my darling? I’ll hold a thousand guineas,’ says he, pointing to a great big bag that lay beside him, ‘and that’s only the tenth part of what’s in this bag, Jack, that you’re just going to be in luck to-night above all the nights in the year.’



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* That frank, cordial manner of address which brings strangers suddenly to intimacy.

“And may worse never happen you, Jack, my bouchal,’ says the dog, putting in his tongue, then wagging his tail, and houlding out his paw to shake hands with Jack.

“Gintlemen,’ says Jack, never minding to give the dog his hand, bekase he heard it wasn’t safe to touch the likes of him—’Gintlemen,’ says he, ‘ye’re sitting far from the fire this frosty night.’

“Why, that’s true, Jack,’ answers the ould fellow; ‘but if we’re sitting far from the fire, we’re sitting very near the makins of it, man alive.’ So, with this, he pulls the bag of goold over to him, that Jack might know, by the jingle of the shiners, what was in it.

“Jack,’ says dark-face, ‘there’s some born with a silver ladle in their mouth, and others with a wooden spoon; and if you’ll just sit down on the one end of this clamp with me, and take a hand at the five and ten,’ pulling out, as he spoke, a deck of cards, ‘you may be a made man for the remainder of your life.’

“Sir,’ says Jack, ‘with submission, both yourself and this cur—I mane,’ says he, not wishing to give the dog offence, ‘both yourself and this dacint gintleman with the tail and claws upon him, have the advantage of me, in respect of knowing my name; for, if I don’t mistake,’ says he, putting his hand to his caubeen, ‘I never had the pleasure of seeing either of ye before.’

“Never mind that,’ says the dog, taking back the pipe from the other, and clapping it in his mouth; ‘we’re both your well-wishers, anyhow, and it’s now your own fault if you’re not a rich man.’

“Jack, by this time, was beginning to think that they might be afther wishing to throw luck in his way; for he had often heard of men being made up entirely by the fairies, till there was no end to their wealth.

“Jack,’ says the black man, ‘you had better be led by us for this bout—upon the honor of a gintleman we wish you well: however, if you don’t choose to take the ball at the right hop, another may; and you’re welcome to toil all your life, and die a beggar after.’

“Upon my reputation, what he says is true, Jack,’ says the dog, in his turn, ‘the lucky minute of your life is come: let it pass without doing what them that wishes your mother’s son well desire you, and you’ll die in a ditch.’

“And what am I to do,’ says Jack, ‘that’s to make me so rich all of a sudden?’

“Why only to sit down, and take a game of cards with myself says black-brow, ‘that’s all, and I’m sure its not much.’



“And what is it to be for?’ Jack inquires; ‘for I have no money—tare-nation to the rap itself’s in my company.’

“Well, you have yourself,’ says the dog, putting up his fore-claw along his nose, and winking at Jack; ‘you have yourself, man—don’t be faint-hearted: he’ll bet the contents of this bag;’ and with that the ould thief gave it another great big shake, to make the guineas jingle again. ‘It’s ten thousand guineas in hard goold; if he wins, you’re to sarve him for a year and a day; and if he loses, you’re to have the bag.’



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“And the money that’s in it?” says Jack, wishing, you see, to make a sure bargain, anyhow.

“Ev’ry penny,” answered the ould chap, ‘if you win it;’ and there’s fifty to one in your favor.’

“By this time the dog had gone into a great fit of laughing at Jack’s sharpness about the money. ‘The money that’s in it, Jack!’ says he; and he took the pipe out of his mouth, and laughed till he brought on a hard fit of coughing. ‘O, by this and by that says he, ‘but that bates Bannagher! And you’re to get ev’ry penny, you thief o’ the world, if you win it!’ but for all that he seemed to be laughing at something that Jack wasn’t up to.

“At any rate, surely, they palavered Jack betune them until he sot down and consinted. ‘Well,’ says he, scratching his head, ‘why, worse nor lose I can’t, so here goes for one trial at the shiners, any how!’

“Now,” says the obscure gntleman, just whin the first card was in his hand, ready to be laid down, ‘you’re to sarve me for a year and a day, if I win; and if I lose, you shall have all the money in the bag.’

“Exactly,” said Jack, and, just as he said the word, he saw the dog putting the pipe in his pocket, and turning his head away, for fraid Jack would see him breaking his sides laughing. At last, when he got his face sobered, he looks at Jack, and says, ‘Surely, Jack, if you win, you must get all the money in the bag; and, upon my reputation, you may build castles in the air with it, you’ll be so rich.’

“This plucked up Jack’s courage a little, and to work they went; and how could it end otherwise than Jack to lose betune two such knowing schamers as they soon turned out to be? For, what do you think? but, as Jack was beginning the game, the dog tips him a wink—laying his fore-claw along his nose as before, as much as to say, ‘Watch me, and you’ll win’—turning round, at the same time, and showing Jack a nate little looking-glass, that was set in his oxther, in which Jack saw, dark as it was, the spots of all the other fellow’s cards, as he thought, so that he was cock-sure of bating him. But they were a pair of downright knaves any how; for Jack, by playing to the cards that he saw in the looking-glass, instead of to them the other held in his hand, lost the game and the money. In short, he saw that he was blarnied and chated by them both; and when the game was up, he plainly tould them as much.

“What?—you scoundrel!” says the black fellow, starting up and catching him by the collar; ‘dare you go for to impache my honor?’

“Leather him, if he says a word,” says the dog, running over on his hind-legs, and laying his shut paw upon Jack’s nose. ‘Say another word, you rascal!’ says he, ‘and I’ll down you;’ with this, the ould fellow gives him another shake.



“I don’t blame you so much,’ says Jack to him; ‘it was the looking-glass that desaved me. That cur’s nothing but a black leg!’

“What looking-glass?—you knave you!’ says dark-face, giving him a fresh haul.



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“Why, the one I saw under the dog's oxther,” replied Jack.

“Under my oxther, you swindling rascal!” replied the dog, giving him a pull by the other side of the collar; ‘did ever any honest pair of gintlemen hear the like?—but he only wants to break through the agreement: so let us turn him at once into an ass, and then he’ll break no more bargains, nor strive to take in honest men and win their money. Me a black-leg!’ So the dark fellow drew his two hands over Jack’s jaws, and in a twinkling there was a pair of ass’s ears growing up out of his head. When Jack found this, he knew that he wasn’t in good hands: so he thought it best to get himself as well out of the scrape as possible.

“Gintlemen, be aisy,” says he, ‘and let us understand one another: I’m very willing to sarve you for a year and a day; but I’ve one requist to ax, and it’s this: I’ve a helpless ould mother at home,—and if I go with you now, she’ll break her heart with grief first, and starve afterwards. Now, if your honor will give me a year to work hard, and lay in provision to support her while I’m away, I’ll serve you with all the veins of my heart—for a bargain’s a bargain.’

“With this, the dog gave his companion a pluck by the skirt, and, after some chat together that Jack didn’t hear, they came back and said that they would comply with his wishes that far: ‘So, on to-morrow twelvemonth, Jack,’ says the dark fellow, ‘the dog here will come to your mother’s, and if you follow him he’ll bring you safe to my castle.’

“Very well, your honor,” says Jack; ‘but as dogs resemble one another so much, how will I know him when he comes?’

“Why,” answers the other, ‘he’ll have a green ribbon and a spy-glass about his neck, and a pair of Wellington boots on his hind legs.’

“That’s enough, sir,” says Jack, ‘I can’t mistake him in that dress, so I’ll be ready; but, jintlemen, if it would be plasing to you both I’d every bit as soon not go home with these,’ and he handled the brave pair of ears he had got, as he spoke. ‘The truth is, jintlemen, I’m deluding enough without them; and as I’m so modest, you persave, why if you’d take them away, you’d oblige me!’

“To this they had no objection, and during that year Jack wrought night and day, that he might be able to lave as much provision with his poor mother as would support her in his absence; and when the morning came that he was to bid her farewell, he went down on his two knees and got her blessing. He then left her with tears in his eyes, and promised to come back the very minute his time would be up. ‘Mother,’ says he, ‘be kind to your little family here, and feed them well, as they are all you’ll have to keep you company till you see me again.’



“His mother then stuffed his pockets with bread, till they stuck out behind him, and gave him a crooked six-pence for luck; after which, he got his staff, and was just ready to tramp, when, sure enough, he spies his ould friend the dog, with the green ribbon about his neck, and the Wellington boots upon his hind legs. He didn’t go in, but waited on the outside till Jack came out. They then set off, but no one knows how far they travelled, till they reached the dark gintleman’s castle, who appeared very glad to see Jack, and gave him a hearty welcome.



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“The next day, in consequence of his long journey, he was ax'd to do nothing; but in the course of the evening, the dark chap brought him into a long, frightful room, where there were three hundred and sixty-five hooks sticking out of the wall, and on every hook but one a man's head. When Jack saw this agreeable sight, his dinner began to quake within him; but he felt himself still worse, when his master pointed to the empty hook, saying, 'Now, Jack, your business to-morrow is to clane out a stable that wasn't claned for the last seven years, and if you don't have it finished before dusk—do you see that hook?'

“‘Ye—yes,’ replied Jack, hardly able to spake.

“‘Well, if you don't have it finished before dusk, your head will be hanging on that hook as soon as the sun sets.’

“‘Very well, your honor,’ replied Jack; scarcely knowing what he said, or he wouldn't have said ‘very well’ to such a bloody-minded intention, any how—‘Very well,’ says he, ‘I'll do my best, and all the world knows that the best can do no more.’

“Whilst this discourse was passing betune them, Jack happened to look at the upper end of the room, and there he saw one of the beautifulest faces that ever was seen on a woman, looking at him through a little panel that was in the wall. She had a white, snowy forehead—such eyes, and cheeks, and teeth, that there's no coming up to them; and the clusters of dark hair that hung about her beautiful temples!—by the laws, I'm afraid of falling in love with her myself, so I'll say no more about her, only that she would charm the heart of a wheel-barrow. At any rate, in spite of all the ould fellow could say—heads and hooks, and all, Jack couldn't help throwing an eye, now and then, to the panel; and to tell the truth, if he had been born to riches and honor, it would be hard to fellow him, for a good face and a good figure.

“‘Now, Jack,’ says his master, ‘go and eat your supper, and I hope you'll be able to perform your task—if not, off goes your head.’

“‘Very well, your honor,’ says Jack, again scratching it in the hoith of perplexity, ‘I must only do what I can.’

“The next morning Jack was up with the sun, if not before him, and hard at his task; but before breakfast time he lost all heart, and little wonder he should, poor fellow, bekase for every one shovelful he'd throw out, there would come three more in: so that instead of making his task less, according as he got on, it became greater. He was now in the greatest dilemmy, and didn't know how to manage, so he was driven at last to such an amplush, that he had no other shift for employment, only to sing *Paddeen O'Rafferty* out of mere vexation, and dance the hornpipe trebling step to it, cracking his fingers, half mad, through the stable. Just in the middle of this tantrum, who comes to the door to call him to his breakfast, but the beautiful crathur he saw the evening before peeping at

him through the panel. At this minute, Jack had so hated himself by the dancing, that his handsome face was in a fine glow, entirely.



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“I think,’ said, she to Jack, with one of her own sweet smiles, ‘that this is an odd way of performing your task.’

“Och, thin, ‘tis you that may say that,’ replies Jack; ‘but it’s myself that’s willing to have my head hung up any day, just for one sight of you, you darling.’

“Where did you come from?’ asked the lady, with another smile that bate the first all to nothing.

“Where did I come from, is it?’ answered Jack; ‘why, death-alive! did you never hear of ould Ireland, my jewel!—hem—I mane, plase your ladyship’s honor.’

“No,’ she answered; ‘where is that country?’

“Och, by the honor of an Irishman,’ says Jack, ‘that takes the shine!—not heard of Erin—the Imerald Isle—the Jim of the ocean, where all the men are brave and honorable, and all the women—hem—I mane the ladies—chaste and beautiful?’

“No,’ said she; ‘not a word: but if I stay longer I may get you blame—come in to your breakfast, and I’m sorry to find that you have done so little at your task. Your roaster’s a man that always acts up to what he threatens: and, if you have not this stable cleared out before dusk, your head will be taken of your shoulders this night.’

“Why, thin,’ says Jack, ‘my beautiful darl—plase your honor’s ladyship—if he Dangs it up, will you do me the favor, *acushla machree*, to turn my head toardst that same panel where I saw a sartin fair face that I won’t mintion: and if you do, let me alone for watching a sartin purty face I’m acquainted with.’

“What means *cushla machree*? inquired the lady, as she turned to go away.

“It manes that you’re the pulse of my heart, avourneen, plase your ladyship’s Reverence,’ says Jack.

“Well,’ said the lovely crathur, ‘any time you speak to me in future, I would rather you would omit terms of honor, and just call me after the manner of your own country; instead, for instance, of calling me your ladyship, I would be better pleased if you called me *cushla*—something—’ ‘*Cushla machree, ma vourneen—the pulse of my heart—my darling,*’ said Jack, consthering it (the thief) for her, for fraid she wouldn’t know it well enough.

“Yes,’ she replied, ‘*cushla machree*; well, as I can pronounce it, *acushla machree*, will you come in to your breakfast?’ said the darling, giving Jack a smile that would be enough, any day, to do up the heart of an Irishman. Jack, accordingly, went after her, thinking of nothing except herself; but on going in he could see no sign of her, so he-sat



down to his breakfast, though a single ounce, barring a couple of pounds of beef, the poor fellow couldn't ate, at that bout, for' thinking of her.



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“Well, he went again to his work, and thought he’d have better luck; but it was still the ould game—three shovelfuls would come in for ev’ry one he’d throw out; and now he began, in earnest, to feel something about his heart that he didn’t like, bekase he couldn’t, for the life of him, help thinking of the three hundred and sixty-four heads, and the empty hook. At last he gave up the work entirely, and took it into his head to make himself scarce from about the old fellow’s castle, altogether; and without more to do, he set off, never saying as much as ‘good-bye’ to his master: but he hadn’t got as far as the lower end of the yard, when his ould friend, the dog, steps out of a kennel, and meets him full but in the teeth.

“‘So, Jack,’ says he, ‘you’re going to give us leg bail, I see; but walk back with yourself, you spalpeen, this minute, and join your work, or if you don’t,’ says he, ‘it’ll be worse for your health. I’m not so much your enemy now as I was, bekase you have a friend in coort that you know nothing about; so just do whatever you are bid, and keep never minding.’

“Jack went back with a heavy heart, as you may be sure, knowing that, whenever the black cur began to blarney him, there was no good to come in his way. He accordingly went into the stable, but consuming to the hand’s turn he did, knowing it would be only useless; for, instead of clearing it out, he’d be only filling it.

“It was near dinner-time, and Jack was very sad and sorrowful, as how could he be otherwise, poor fellow, with such a bloody-minded ould chap to dale with? when up comes the darling of the world again, to call him to his dinner.

“‘Well, Jack,’ says she, with her white arms so beautiful, and her dark clusters tossed about by the motion of her walk—how are you coming on at your task?’ ‘How am I coming on, is it? Och, thin,’ says Jack, giving a good-humored smile through the frown that was on his face, ‘plase your lady—a cushla machree—it’s all over with me; for I’ve still the same story to tell, and off goes my head, as sure as it’s on my shoulders, this blessed night.’

“‘That would be a pity, Jack,’ says she, ‘for there are worse heads on worse shoulders; but will you give me the shovel?’ ‘Will I give you the shovel, is it?—Och thin, wouldn’t I be a right big baste to do the likes of that, any how?’ says Jack; ‘what! avourneen dheelish! to stand up with myself, and let this hard shovel into them beautiful, soft, white hands of your own! Faix, my jewel, if you knew but all, my mother’s son’s not the man to do such a disgraceful turn, as to let a lady like you take the shovel out of his hand, and he standing with his mouth under his nose, looking at you—not myself auourneen! we have no such ungenteel manners as that in our country.’ ‘Take my advice, Jack,’ says she, pleased in her heart at what Jack said, for all she didn’t purtend it—‘give me the shovel, and depend upon it, I’ll do more



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in a short time to clear the stable than you would for years.' 'Why, thin, avour-neen, it goes to my heart to refuse you; but, for all that, may I never see yesterday, if a taste of it will go into your purty, white fingers,' says the thief, praising her to her face all the time —'my head may go off, any day, and welcome, but death before dishonor. Say no more, darling; but tell your father I'll be to my dinner immediately.'

"Notwithstanding all this, by jingo, the lady would not be put off; like a raal woman, she'd have her own way; so on telling Jack that she didn't intend to work with the shovel, at all, at all, but only to take it for a minute in her hand, at long last he gave it to her; she then struck it three times on the threshel of the door, and, giving it back into his hand, tould him to try what he could do. Well, sure enough, now there was a change; for, instead of three shovelfuls coming in, as before, when he threw one out, there went nine more along with it. Jack, in coorse, couldn't do less than thank the lovely crathur for her assistance; but when he raised his head to speak to her, she was gone. I needn't say, howsomever, that he went in to his dinner with a light heart and a murdhering appetite; and when the ould fellow axed him how he was coming on, Jack tould him he was doing gloriously. 'Remember the empty hook, Jack,' said he. 'Never fear, your honor,' answered Jack, 'if I don't finish my task, you may bob my head off anytime.'

"Jack now went out, and was a short time getting through his job, for before the sun set it was finished, and he came into the kitchen, ate his supper, and, sitting down before the fire, sung 'Love among the Roses,' and the 'Black Joke,' to vex the ould fellow.

"This was one task over, and his head was safe for that bout; but that night, before he went to bed, his master called him upstairs, brought him into the bloody room, and gave him his orders for the next day. 'Jack,' says he, 'I have a wild filly that has never been caught, and you must go to my demesne to-morrow, and catch her, or if you don't—look there,' says the big blackguard, 'on that hook it hangs, before to-morrow, if you havn't her at sunset in the stable that you claned yesterday.' 'Very well, your honor,' said Jack, carelessly, 'I'll do every thing in my power, and if I fail, I can't help it.'

"The next morning, Jack was out with a bridle in his hand, going to catch the filly. As soon as he got into the domain, sure enough, there she was in the middle of a green field, grazing quite at her ase. When Jack saw this he went over towards her, houlding out his hat as if it was full of oats; but he kept the hand that had the bridle in it behind his back, for fraid she'd see it and make off. Well, my dear, on he went till he was almost within grip of her, cock-sure that he had nothing more to do than slip the bridle over her neck and secure her; but he made a bit of a mistake in his reckoning, for



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though she smelt and snoaked about him, just as if she didn't care a feed of oats whether he caught her or not, yet when he boulded over to hould her fast, she was off like a shot with her tail cocked, to the far end of the demesne, and Jack had to set off hot foot after here. All, however, was to no purpose; he couldn't come next or near her for the rest of the day, and there she kept coarsing him about from one field to another, till he hadn't a blast of breath in his body.

"In this state was Jack when the beautiful crathur came out to call him home to his breakfast, walking with the pretty small feet and light steps of her own upon the green fields, so bright and beautiful, scarcely bending the flowers and the grass as she went along, the darling.

"'Jack,' says she, 'I fear you have as difficult a task to-day as you had yesterday.'

"'Why, and it's you that may say that with your own purty mouth,' says Jack, says he; for out of breath and all as he was, he couldn't help giving her a bit of blarney, the rogue.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'take my advice, and don't tire yourself any longer by attempting to catch her; truth's, best—I tell you, you could never do it; come home to your breakfast, and when you return again, 'just amuse yourself as well as you can until dinner-time.'

"'Och, och!' says Jack, striving to look, the sly thief, as if she had promised to help him —'I only wish I was a king, and, by the powers, I know who would be my queen, any how; for it's your own sweet lady—savourneen dheelish—I say, amn't I bound to you for a year and a day longer, for promising to give me a lift, as well as for what you done yesterday?'

"'Take care, Jack,' says she, smiling, however, at his ingenuity in striving to trap her into a promise, 'I don't think I made any promise of assistance.'

"'You didn't,' says Jack, wiping his face with the skirt of his coat, 'cause why?—you see pocket-handkerchiefs weren't invented in them times: 'why, thin, may I never live to see yesterday, if there's not as much rale beauty in that smile that's diverting itself about them sweet-breathing lips of yours, and in them two eyes of light that's breaking both their hearts laughing at me, this minute, as would encourage any poor fellow to expect a good turn from you—that is, whin you could do it, without hurting or harming yourself; for it's he would be the right rascal that could take it, if it would injure a silken hair of your head.'

"'Well,' said the lady, with a mighty roguish smile, 'I shall call you home to your dinner, at all events.'



“When Jack went back from his breakfast, he didn’t slave himself after the filly toy more, but walked about to view the demesne, and the avenues, and the green walks, and nice temples, and fish-ponds, and rookeries, and everything, in short, that was worth seeing. Towards dinner-time, however, he began to have an eye to the way the sweet crathur was to come, and sure enough she that wasn’t one minute late.



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“Well, Jack,’ says she, ‘I’ll keep you no longer in doubt:’ for the tender-hearted crathur saw that Jack, although he didn’t wish to let an to her, was fretting every now and then about the odd hook and the bloody room—‘So, Jack,’ says she, ‘although I didn’t promise, yet I’ll perform;’ and with that she pulled a small ivory whistle out of her pocket, and gave three blasts on it that brought the wild filly up to her very hand, as quick as the wind. She then took the bridle, and threw it over the baste’s neck, giving her up, at the same time, to Jack; ‘You needn’t fear now, Jack,’ says she, ‘you’ll find her as quiet as a lamb, and as tame as you wish; as proof of it, just walk before her, and you will see she will follow you to any part of the field.’

“Jack, you maybe sure, paid her as many and as sweet compliments as he could, and never heed one from his country for being able to say something toothsome to the ladies. At any rate, if he laid it on thick the day before, he gave two or three additional coats this time, and the innocent soul went away smiling, as usual.

“When Jack brought the filly home, the dark fellow, his master, if dark before, was a perfect thunder-cloud this night: bedad, he was nothing less than near bursting with vexation, bekase the thieving ould sinner intended to have Jack’s head upon the hook, but he fell short in his reckoning now as well as before. Jack sung ‘Love among the Roses,’ and the ‘Black Joke,’ to help him into better timper.

“‘Jack,’ says he, striving to make himself speak pleasant to him, ‘you’ve got two difficult tasks over you; but you know the third time’s the charm—take care of the next.’

“‘No matter about that,’ says Jack, speaking up to him stiff and stout, bekase, as the dog tould him, he knew he had a friend in coort—‘let’s hear what it is, any how.’

“‘To-morrow, then,’ says the other, ‘you’re to rob a crane’s nest, on the top of a beech-tree which grows in the middle of a little island in the lake that you saw yesterday in my demesne; you’re to have neither boat, nor oar, nor any kind of conveyance, but just as you stand; and if you fail to bring me the eggs, or if you break one of them,—look here!’ says he, again pointing to the odd hook, for all this discourse took place in the bloody room.

“‘Good again,’ says Jack; ‘if I fail I know my doom.’

“‘No, you don’t, you spalpeen,’ says the other, getting vexed with him entirely, ‘for I’ll roast you till you’re half dead, and ate my dinner off you after; and, what is more than that, you blackguard, you must sing the ‘Black Joke’ all the time for my amusement.’

“‘Div’I fly away with you,’ thought Jack, ‘but you’re fond of music, you vagabone.’



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“The next morning Jack was going round and round the lake, trying about the edge of it, if he could find any place shallow enough to wade in; but he might as well go to wade the say, and what was worst of all, if he attempted to swim, it would be like a tailor’s goose, straight to the bottom; so he kept himself safe on dry land, still expecting a visit from the ‘lovely crathur,’ but, bedad, his good luck failed him for wanst, for instead of seeing her coming over to him, so mild and sweet, who does he observe steering at a dog’s trot, but his ould friend the smoking cur. ‘Confusion to that cur,’ says Jack to himself, ‘I know now there’s some bad fortune before me, or he wouldn’t be coming across me.’

“‘Come home to your breakfast, Jack,’ says the dog, walking up to him, ‘it’s breakfast time.’

“‘Ay,’ says Jack, scratching his head, ‘it’s no matter whether I do or not, for I bleeve my head’s hardly worth a flat-dutch cabbage at the present speaking.’

“‘Why, man, it was never worth so much,’ says the baste, pulling out his pipe and putting it in his mouth, when it lit at once.

“‘Take care of yourself,’ says Jack, quite desperate,—for he thought he was near the end of his tether,—‘take care of yourself, you dirty cur, or maybe I might take a gintleman’s toe from your tail.’

“‘You had better keep a straight tongue in your head,’ says four-legs, ‘while it’s on your shoulders, or I’ll break every bone in your skin—Jack, you’re a fool,’ says he, checking himself, and speaking kindly to him—‘you’re a fool; didn’t I tell you the other day to do what you were bid, and keep never minding?’

“‘Well,’ thought Jack to himself, ‘there’s no use in making him any more my enemy than he is—particularly as I’m in such a hobble.’

“‘You lie,’ says the dog, as if Jack had spoken out to him, wherein he only thought the words to himself, ‘you lie,’ says he, ‘I’m not, nor never was, your enemy, if you knew but all.’

“‘I beg your honor’s pardon,’ answers Jack, ‘for being so smart with your honor, but, bedad, if you were in my case,—if you expected your master to roast you alive,—eat his dinner of your body,—make you sing the ‘Black Joke,’ by way of music for him; and, to crown all, know that your head was to be stuck upon a hook after—maybe you would be a little short, in your temper, as well as your neighbors.’

“‘Take heart, Jack,’ says the other, laying his fore claw as knowingly as ever along his nose, and winking slyly at Jack, didn’t I tell you that you had a friend in coort—the day’s not past yet, so cheer up, who knows but there is luck before you still?’



“‘Why, thin,’ says Jack, getting a little cheerful, and wishing to crack a joke with him, ‘but your honor’s very fond of the pipe!’ ‘Oh! don’t you know, Jack,’ says he, ‘that that’s the fashion at present among my tribe; sure all my brother puppies smoke now, and a man might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion, you know.’



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“When they drew near home, they got quite thick entirely; ‘Now,’ says Jack, in a good-humored way, ‘if you can give me a lift in robbing this crane’s nest, do; at any rate, I’m sure your honor won’t be my enemy. I know you have too much good nature in your face to be one that wouldn’t help a lame dog over a stile—that is,’ says he, taking himself up for fear of offending the other,—‘I’m sure you’d be always inclined to help the weak side.’

“‘Thank you for the compliment,’ says, the dog; ‘but didn’t I tell you that you have a friend in court?’

“When Jack went back to the lake, he could only sit and look sorrowfully at the tree, or walls; about the edge of it, without being able to do anything else. He spent the whole day this way, till dinner-time, when what would you have of it, but he sees the darlin’ coming out to him, as fair and as blooming as an angel. His heart, you may be sure, got up to his mouth, for he knew she would be apt to take him out of his difficulties. When she came up—

“‘Now, Jack,’ says she, ‘there is not a minute to be lost, for I’m watch’d; and if it’s discovered that I gave you any assistance, we will both be destroyed.’

“‘Oh, murder sheery!’ (* Murder everlasting) says Jack, ‘fly back, avourneen machree—for rather than anything should happen you, I’d lose fifty-lives.’

“‘No,’ says she, ‘I think I’ll be able to get you over this, as well as the rest; so have a good heart, and be faithful’ ‘That’s it,’ replied Jack, ‘that’s it, acushla—my own *correcthur* to a shaving; I’ve a heart worth its weight in bank notes, and a more faithful boy isn’t alive this day nor I’m to yez all, ye darlings of the world.’

“She then pulled a small white wand out of her pocket, struck the lake, and there was the prettiest green ridge across it to the foot of the tree that ever eye beheld. ‘Now,’ says she, turning her back to Jack, and stooping down to do something that he couldn’t see, ‘Take these,’ giving him her ten toes, ‘put them against the tree, and you will have steps to carry you to the top, but be sure, for your life and mine, not to forget any of them. If you do, my life will be taken tomorrow morning, for your master puts on my slippers with his own hands.’

“Jack was now going to swear that he would give up the whole thing and surrender his head at once; but when he looked at her feet, and saw no appearance of blood, he went over without more to do, and robbed the nest, taking down the eggs one by one, that he mightn’t brake them. There was no end to his joy, as he secured the last egg; he instantly took down the toes, one after another, save and except the little one of the left foot, which in his joy and hurry he forgot entirely. He then returned by the green ridge to the shore, and accordingly as he went along, it melted away into water behind him.

“Jack,’ says the charmer, ‘I hope you forgot none of my toes.’



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“Is it me?’ says Jack, quite sure that he had them all—’arraah, catch any one from my country making a blunder of that kind.’

“Well,’ says she, ’let us see; so, taking the toes, she placed them on again, just as if they had never been off. But, lo and behold! on coming to the last of the left foot, it wasn’t forthcoming. ‘Oh! Jack, Jack,’ says she, ’you have destroyed me; to-morrow morning your master will notice the want of this toe, and that instant I’ll be put to death.’

“Lave that to me,’ says Jack; ’by the powers, you won’t lose a drop of your darling blood for it. Have you got a pen-knife about you? and I’ll soon show you how you won’t.’

“What do you want with the knife?’ she inquired.

“What do I want with it?—Why to give you the best toe on both my feet, for the one I lost on you; do you think I’d suffer you to want a toe, and I having ten thumping ones at your sarvice?—I’m not the man, you beauty you, for such a shabby trick as that comes to.’

“But you forget,’ says the lady, who was a little cooler than Jack, ’that none of yours would fit me.’

“And must you die to-morrow, *acushla?*’ asked Jack, in desperation.

“As sure as the sun rises,’ answered the lady ’for Your master would know at once that it was by my toes the nest was robbed.’

“By the powers,’ observed Jack, ’he’s one of the greatest ould vag—I mane, isn’t he a terrible man, out and out, for a father?’

“Father!’ says the darling,—’he’s not my father, Jack, he only wishes to marry me and if I’m not able to outdo him before three days more, it’s decreed that he must.

“When Jack heard this, surely the Irishman must come out; there he stood, and began to wipe his eyes with the skirt of his coat, making out as if he was crying, the thief of the world. ‘What’s the matter with you?’ she asked.

“All!’ says Jack, ’you darling, I couldn’t find it in my heart to desave you; for I have no way at home to keep a lady like you, in proper style, at all at all; I would only bring I you into poverty, and since you wish to know what ails me, I’m vexed that I’m not rich for your sake; and next, that that thieving ould villain’s to have you; and, by the powers, I’m crying for both these misfortunes together.’

“The lady could not help being touched and plaised with Jack’s tinderness and ginerosity; so, says she, ’Don’t be cast down, Jack, come or go what will, I won’t marry him—I’d die first. Do you go home as usual; but take care and don’t sleep at all this



night. Saddle the wild filly—meet me under the whitethorn bush at the end of the lawn, and we'll both leave him for ever. If you're willin' to marry me, don't let poverty distress you, for I have more money than we'll know what to do with.'

"Jack's voice now began to tremble in earnest, with downright love and tenderness, as good right it had; so he promised to do everything just as she bid him, and then went home with a vacant appetite enough to his supper.



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“You may be sure the ould fellow looked darker and grimmer than ever at Jack: but what could he do? Jack had done his duty? so he sat before the fire, and sung ‘Love among the Roses,’ and the ‘Black Joke,’ with a stouter and a lighter heart than ever, while the black chap, could have seen him skivered.

“When midnight came, Jack, who kept a hawk’s eye to the night, was at the hawthorn with the wild filly, saddled and all—more betoken, she wasn’t a bit wild then, but as tame as a dog. Off they set, like Erin-go-bragh, Jack and the lady, and never pulled bridle till it was one o’clock next day, when they stopped at an inn, and had some refreshment. They then took to the road again, full speed; however, they hadn’t gone far, when they heard a great noise behind them, and the tramp of horses galloping like mad. ‘Jack,’ says the darling, on hearing the hubbub, ‘look behind you, and see what’s this.’

[Illustration PAGE 676— Throw it over your left shoulder]

“‘Och! by the elevens,’ says Jack, ‘we’re done at last; it’s the dark fellow, and half the country after us.’ ‘Put your hand,’ says she, ‘in the filly’s right ear, and tell me what you find in it.’ ‘Nothing at all,’ says Jack, ‘but a weeshy bit of a dry stick.’ ‘Throw it over your left shoulder says she, ‘and see what will happen.’ Jack did so at once, and there was a great grove of thick trees growing so close to one another, that a dandy could scarcely get his arm betwixt them. ‘Now,’ said she, ‘we are safe for another day.’ ‘Well,’ said Jack, as he pushed on the filly, ‘you’re the jewel of the world, sure enough; and maybe it’s you that won’t live happy when we get to the Jim of the Ocean.’

“As soon as dark-face saw what happened, he was obliged to scour the country for hatchets and hand-saws, and all kinds of sharp instruments, to hew himself and his men a passage through the grove. As the saying goes, many hands make light work, and sure enough, it wasn’t long till they had cleared a way for themselves, thick as it was, and set off with double speed after Jack and the lady.

“The next day, about’ one o’clock, he and she were after taking another small refreshment of roast-beef and porther, and pushing on, as before, when they heard the same tramping behind them, only it was ten times louder.

“‘Here they are again,’ says Jack; ‘and I’m afeard they’ll come up with us at last.’

“‘If they do,’ says she, ‘they’ll put us to death on the spot; but we must try somehow to stop them another day, if we can; search the filly’s right ear again, and let me know what you find in it.’

“Jack pulled out a little three-cornered pebble, telling her that it was all he got; ‘well,’ says she, ‘throw it over your left shoulder like the stick.’



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“No sooner said than done; and there was a great chain of high, sharp rocks in the way of divel-face and all his clan. ‘Now,’ says she, ‘we have gained another day.’ ‘Tundher-and-turf!’ says Jack, ‘what’s this for, at all, at all?—but wait till I get you in the Immerald Isle, for this, and if you don’t enjoy happy days any how, why I’m not sitting before you on this horse, by the same token that it’s not a horse at all, but a filly though; if you don’t get the hoith of good aiting and drinking—lashings of the best wine and whisky that the land can afford, my name’s not Jack. We’ll build a castle, and you’ll have upstairs and downstairs—a coach and six to ride in—lots of sarvints to attend on you, and full and plinty of everything; not to mintion—hem!—not to mintion that you’ll have a husband that the fairest lady in the land might be proud of,’ says he, stretching himself up in the saddle, and giving the filly a jag of the spurs, to show off a bit; although the coaxing rogue knew that the money which was to do all this was her own. At any rate, they spent the remainder of this day pleasantly enough, still moving on, though, as fast as they could. Jack, every now and then, would throw an eye behind, as if to watch their pursuers, wherein, if the truth was known, it was to get a peep at the beautiful glowing face and warm lips that were breathing all kinds of *fragrancies* about him. I’ll warrant he didn’t envy the king upon his throne, when he felt the honeysuckle of her breath, like the smell of Father Ned’s orchard there, of a May morning.

“When Fardorougha (* the dark man) found the great chain of rocks before him, you may set it down that he was likely to blow up with vexation; but, for all that, the first thing he blew up was the rocks—and that he might lose little or no time in doing it, he collected all the gunpowder and crowbars, spades and pickaxes, that could be found for miles about him, and set to it, working as if it was with inch of candle. For half a day there was nothing but boring and splitting, and driving of iron wedges, and blowing up pieces of rocks as big as little houses, until, by hard, labor, they made a passage for themselves sufficient to carry them over. They then set off again, full speed; and great advantage they had over the poor filly that Jack and the lady rode on, for their horses were well rested, and hadn’t to carry double, like Jack’s. The next day they spied Jack and his beautiful companion, just about a quarter of a mile before them.

“‘Now,’ says dark-brow, ‘I’ll make any man’s fortune forever that will bring me them two, either living or dead, but, if possible, alive: so, spur on, for whoever secures them, man, woman, or child, is a made man, but, above all, make no noise.’

“It was now divil take the hindmost among the bloody pack—every spur was red with blood, and every horse smoking. Jack and the lady were jogging on across a green field, not suspecting that the rest were so near them, and talking over the pleasant days they would spind together in Ireland, when they hears the hue-and-cry once more at their very heels.



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“Quick as lightning, Jack,’ says she, ‘or we’re lost—the right ear and the left shoulder, like thought—they’re not three lengths of the filly from us!’

“But Jack knew his business; for just as a long, grim-looking villain, with a great rusty rapier in his hand, was within a single leap of them, and quite sure of either killing or making prisoners of them both, Jack flings a little drop of green water that he got in the filly’s ear over his left shoulder, and in an instant there was a deep, dark gulf, filled with black, pitchy-looking water between them. The lady now desired Jack to pull up the filly a bit, that they might see what would become of the dark fellow; but just as they turned round, the ould nagur set ‘spurs to his horse, and, in a fit of desperation, plunged himself, horse and all, into the gulf, and was never seen or heard of more. The rest that were with him went home, and began to quarrel about his wealth, and kept murdering and killing one another, until a single vagabond of them wasn’t left alive to enjoy it.

“When Jack saw what happened, and that the blood-thirsty ould villain got what he deserved so richly, he was as happy as a prince, and ten times happier than most of them as the world goes, and she was every bit as delighted. ‘We have nothing more to fear,’ said the darling that put them all down so cleverly, seeing that she was but a woman; but, bedad, it’s she was the right sort of a woman—‘all our dangers are now over, at least, all yours are; regarding myself,’ says she, ‘there’s a trial before me yet, and that trial, Jack, depends upon your faithfulness and constancy.’

“On me, is it?—Och, then, murder! isn’t it a poor case entirely, that I have no way of showing you that you may depend your life upon me, only by telling you so?’

“‘I do depend upon you,’ says she—‘and now, as you love me, do not, when the trial comes, forget her that saved you out of so many troubles, and made you such a great and wealthy man.’

“The foregoing part of this Jack could well understand, but the last part of it, making collusion to the wealth, was a little dark, as he thought, bekase, he hadn’t fingered any of it at the time: still, he knew she was truth to the back-bone, and wouldn’t desave him. They hadn’t travelled much farther, When Jack snaps his fingers with a ‘Whoo! by the powers, there it is, my darling—there it is, at long last!’

“‘There is what, Jack?’ said she, surprised, as well she might, at his mirth and happiness—‘There is what?’ says she. ‘Cheer up!’ says Jack; ‘there it is, my darling,—the Shannon!—as soon as we get to the other side of it, we’ll be in ould Ireland once more.’

“There was no end to Jack’s good humor, when he crossed the Shannon; and she was not a bit displeased to see him so happy. They had now no enemies to fear, were in a civilized country, and among green fields and well-bred people. In this way they

travelled at their ase, till they came within a few miles of the town of Knockimdowny, near which Jack's mother lived.



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“Now, Jack,’ says she, ‘I told you that I would make you rich. You know the rock beside your mother’s cabin; in the east end of that rock there is a loose stone, covered over with gray moss, just two feet below the cleft out of which the hanging rowan-tree grows—pull that stone out, and you will find more goold than would make a duke. Neither speak to any person, nor let any living thing touch your lips till you come back to me, or you’ll forget that you ever saw me, and I’ll lie left poor and friendless in a strange, country.’

“Why, thin, *manim asthee hu,*’ (* My soul’s within you.) says Jack, ‘but the best way to guard against that, is to touch your own sweet lips at the present time,’ says he, giving her a smack that you’d hear, of a calm evening, across a couple of fields. Jack set off to touch the money, with such speed that when he fell he scarcely waited to rise again; he was soon at the rock, any how, and without either doubt or disparagement, there was a cleft of real goolden guineas, as fresh as daisies. The first thing he did, after he had filled his pockets with them, was to look if his mother’s cabin was to the fore; and there surely it was, as snug as ever, with the same dacent column of smoke rowling from the chimbley.

“Well,’ thought he, ‘I’ll just stale over to the door-cheek, and peep in to get one sight of my poor mother; then I’ll throw her in a handful of these guineas, and take to my scrapers.’

“Accordingly, he stole up at a half bend to the door, and was just going to take a peep in, when out comes the little dog Trig, and begins to leap and fawn upon him, as if it would eat him. The mother, too, came running out to see what was the matter, when the dog made another spring up about Jack’s neck, and gave his lips the slightest lick in the world with its tongue, the crathur was so glad to see him: the next minute, Jack forgot the lady, as clane as if he had never seen her; but if he forgot her, catch him at forgetting the money—not he, avick!—that stuck to him like pitch.

“When the mother saw who it was, she flew to him, and, clasping her arms about his neck, hugged him till she wasn’t worth three halfpence. After Jack sot a while, he made a trial to let her know what had happened him, but he disremembered it all, except having the money in the rock, so he up and tould her that, and a glad woman she was to hear of his good fortune. Still he kept the place where the goold was to himself, having been often forbid by her ever to trust a woman with a sacret when he could avoid it.

“Now everybody knows what changes the money makes, and Jack was no exception to this ould saying. In a few years he built himself a fine castle, with three hundred and sixty-four windies in it, and he would have added another, to make one for every day in the year, only that would be equal to the number in the King’s palace, and the Lord of the Black Rod would be sent to take his head off, it being high



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thrason for a subject to have as many windies in his house as the king. (* Such is the popular opinion.) However, Jack, at any rate, had enough of them; and he that couldn't be happy with three hundred and sixty-four, wouldn't deserve to have three hundred and sixty-five. Along with all this, he bought coaches and carriages, and didn't get proud like many another beggarly upstart, but took especial good care of his mother, whom he dressed in silks and satins, and gave her nice nourishing food, that was fit for an ould woman in her condition. He also got great tachers, men of great larning, from Dublin, acquainted with all subjects; and as his own abilities were bright, he soon became a very great scholar, entirely, and was able, in the long run, to outdo all his tutherers.

“In this way he lived for some years—was now a man of great larning himself—could spake the seven *langidges*, and it would delight your ears to hear how high-flown and Englified he could talk. All the world wondered where he got his wealth; but as he was kind and charitable to every one that stood in need of assistance, the people said that wherever he got it it couldn't be in better hands. At last he began to look about him for a wife, and the only one in that part of the country that would be at all fit for him, was the Honorable Miss Bandbox, the daughter of a nobleman in the neighborhood. She indeed flogged all the world for beauty; but it was said that she was proud and fond of wealth, though, God he knows, she had enough of that any how. Jack, however, saw none of this; for she was cunning enough to smile, and simper, and look pleasant, whenever he'd come to her father's. Well, begad, from one thing, and one word, to another, Jack thought it was best to make up to her at wanst, and try if she'd accept of him for a husband; accordingly he put the word to her like a man, and she, making as if she was blushing, put her fan before her face and made no answer. Jack, however, wasn't to be daunted; for he knew two things worth knowing, when a man goes to look for a wife: the first is—that 'faint heart never won fair lady,' and the second—that 'silence gives consint;' he, therefore, spoke up to her in fine English, for it's he that knew how to speak now, and after a little more fanning and blushing, by jingo, she consinted. Jack then broke the matter to her father, who was as fond of money as the daughter, and only wanted to grab at him for the wealth.

“When the match was a making, says ould Bandbox to Jack, 'Mr. Magennis,' says he, (for nobody called him Jack now but his mother)—'these two things you must comply with, if you marry my daughter, Miss Gripsy:—you must send away your mother from about you, and pull down the cabin in which you and she used to live; Gripsy says that they would jog her memory consarning your low birth and former poverty; she's nervous and high-spirited, Mr. Magennis, and declares upon her honor that she couldn't bear the thoughts of having the delicacy of her feeling offended by these things.'

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“Good morning to you both,’ says Jack, like an honest fellow as he was, ‘if she doesn’t marry me except on these conditions, give her my compliments, and tell her our courtship is at an end.’

“But it wasn’t long till they soon came out with another story, for before a week passed they were very glad to get him on his own conditions. Jack was now as happy as the day was long—all things appointed for the wedding, and nothing wanting to make everything to his heart’s content but the wife, and her he was to have in less than no time. For a day or two before the wedding, there never was seen such grand preparations: bullocks, and hogs, and sheep were roasted whole—kegs of whiskey, both Roscrea and Innishowen, barrels of ale and beer were there in dozens. All descriptions of niceties and wild-fowl, and fish from the say; and the dearest wine that could be bought with money, was got for the gentry and grand folks. Fiddlers, and pipers, and harpers, in short all kinds of music and musicianers, played in shoals. Lords and ladies, and squares of high degree were present—and, to crown the thing, there was open house to all comers.

“At length the wedding-day arrived; there was nothing but roasting and boiling; servants dressed in rich liveries ran about with joy and delight in their countenances, and white gloves and wedding favors on their hats and hands. To make a long story short, they were all seated in Jack’s castle at the wedding breakfast, ready for the priest to marry them when they’d be done; for in them times people were never married until they had laid in a good foundation to carry them through the ceremony. Well, they were all seated round the table, the men dressed in the best of broadcloth, and the ladies rustling in their silks and satins—their heads, necks, and arms hung round with jewels both rich and rare; but of all that were there that day, there wasn’t the likes of the bride and bridegroom. As for him, nobody could think, at all at all, that he was ever any thing else than a born gentleman; and what was more to his credit, he had his kind ould mother sitting beside the bride, to tache her that an honest person, though poorly born, is company for the king. As soon as the breakfast was served up, they all set to, and maybe the various kinds of eatables did not pay for it; and among all this cutting and thrusting, no doubt but it was remarked, that the bride herself was behindhand wid none of them—that she took her *dalin-trick* without flinching, and made nothing less than a right fog meal of it; and small blame to her for that same, you persave.



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“When the breakfast was over, up gets Father Flannagan—out with his book, and on with his stole, to marry them. The bride and bridegroom went up to the end of the room, attended by their friends, and the rest of the company stood on each side of it, for you see they were too high bred, and knew their manners too well, to stand in a crowd like spalpeens. For all that, there was many a sly look from the ladies to their bachelors, and many a titter among them, grand as they were; for, to tell the truth, the best of them likes to see fun in the way, particularly of that sort. The priest himself was in as great a glee as any of them, only he kept it under, and well he might, for sure enough this marriage was nothing less than a rare windfall to him and the parson that was to marry them after him—bekase you persave a Protestant and Catholic must be married by both, otherwise it does not hould good in law. The parson was as grave as a mustard-pot, and Father Flannagan called the bride and bridegroom his childher, which was a big bounce for him to say the likes of, more betoken that neither of them was a drop’s blood to him.

“However, he pulled out the book, and was just beginning to buckle them when in comes Jack’s ould acquaintance, the smoking cur, as grave as ever. The priest had just got through two or three words of Latin, when the dog gives him a pluck by the sleeve; Father Flannagan, of coorse, turned round to see who it was that *nudged* him: ‘Behave yourself,’ says the dog to him, just as he peeped over his shoulder—‘behave yourself,’ says he; and with that he sat him down on his hunkers beside the priest, and pulling a cigar instead of a pipe out of his pocket, he put it in his mouth, and began to smoke for the bare life of him. And, by my own word, it’s he that could smoke: at times he would shoot the smoke in a slender stream like a knitting-needle, with a round curl at the one end of it, ever so far out of the right side of his mouth; then he would shoot it out of the left, and sometimes make it swirl out so beautiful from the middle of his lips!—why, then, it’s he that must have been the well-bred puppy all out, as far as smoking went. Father Flannagan and they all were thundherstruck.

“‘In the name of St. Anthony, and of that holy nun, St. Teresa,’ said his Reverence to him, ‘who and what are you, at all at all?’

“‘Never mind that,’ says the dog, taking the cigar for a minute between his claws; ‘but if you wish particularly to know, I’m a thirty-second cousin of your own by the mother’s side.’

“‘I command you in the name of all the saints,’ says Father Flarmagan, believing him to be the devil, ‘to disappear from among us, and never become visible to any one in this house again.’

“‘The sorra a budge, at the present time, will I budge,’ says the dog to him, ‘until I see all sides rightified, and the rogues disappointed.’



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“Now one would be apt to think the appearance of a *spaking* dog might be after fright’ning the ladies; but doesn’t all the world know that *spaking* puppies are their greatest favorites? Instead of that, you see, there was half a dozen fierce-looking whiskered fellows, and three or four half-pay officers, that were nearer making off than the ladies. But, besides the cigar, the dog had his beautiful eye-glass, and through it, while he was spaking to Father Flannigan, he ogled all the ladies, one after another, and when his eye would light upon any that pleased him, he would kiss his paw to her and wag his tail with the greatest politeness.

“‘John,’ says Father Flannigan, to one of the servants, ‘bring me salt and water, till I consecrate them* to banish the divil, for he has appeared to us all during broad daylight in the shape of a dog.’

* Salt and water consecrated by a particular form is Holy Water.

“‘You had better behave yourself, I say again,’ says the dog, ‘or if you make me speak, by my honor as a gintleman I’ll expose you: I say you won’t marry the same two, neither this nor any other day, and I’ll give you my raisons presently; but I repate it, Father Flannigan, if you compel me to speak, I’ll make you look nine ways at once.’

“‘I defy you, Satan,’ says the priest; ‘and if you don’t take yourself away before the holy watcher’s made, I’ll send you off in a flame of fire.’

“‘Oh! yes, I’m trimbling,’ says the dog: ‘plenty of spirits you laid in your day, but it was in a place that’s nearer to us than the Red Sea, you did it: listen to me though, for I don’t wish to expose you, as I said;’ so he gets on his hind legs, puts his nose to the priest’s ear, and whispers something that none of the rest could hear—all before the priest had time to know where he was. At any rate, whatever he said seemed to make his Reverence look double, though, faix, that wasn’t hard to do, for he was as big as two common men. When the dog was done speaking, and had put his cigar in his mouth, the priest seemed thunderstruck, crossed himself, and was, no doubt of it, in great perplexity.

“‘I say it’s false,’ says Father Flannigan, plucking up his courage; ‘but you know you’re a liar, and the father of liars.’

“‘As thrue as gospel, this bout, I tell you,’ says the dog.

“‘Wait till I make my holy wather,’ says the priest, ‘and if I don’t cork you in a thumb-bottle for this,* I’m not here.’

* According to the superstitious belief of the Irish, a priest, when banishing a spirit, puts it into a thumb-bottle, which he either buries deep in the earth, or in some lake.



“Just at this minute, the whole company sees a gentleman galloping for the bare life of him, up to the hall-door, and he dressed like an officer. In three jiffeys he was down off his horse, and in among the company. The dog, as soon as he made his appearance, laid his paw as usual on his nose, and gave the bridegroom a wink, as much as to say, ‘watch what’ll happen.’



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“Now it was very odd that Jack, during all this time, remembered the dog very well, but could never once think of the darling that did so much for him. As soon, however, as the officer made his appearance, the bride seemed as if she would sink outright; and when he walked up to her, to ask what was the meaning of what he saw, why, down she drops at once—fainted dead. The gentleman then went up to Jack, and says, ‘Sir, was this lady about to be married to you?’

“‘Sartinly,’ says Jack, ‘we were going to be yoked in the blessed and holy tackle of matrimony;’ or some high-flown words of that kind.

“‘Well, sir,’ says the other back to him, ‘I can only say that she is most solemnly sworn never to marry another man but me at a time; that oath she took when I was joining my regiment before it went abroad; and if the ceremony of your marriage be performed, you will sleep with a perjured bride.’

“Beggad, he did plump before all their faces. Jack, of course, was struck all of aghape at this; but as he had the bride in his arms, giving her a little sup of whiskey to bring her to, you persave, he couldn’t make him an answer. However, she soon came to herself, and, on opening her eyes, ‘Oh, hide me, hide me,’ says she, ‘for I can’t bear to look on him!’

“‘He says you are his sworn bride, my darling,’ says Jack.

“‘I am—I am,’ says she, covering her eyes, and crying away at the rate of a wedding: ‘I can’t deny it; and, by tare-an-ountry!’ says she, ‘I’m unworthy to be either his wife or yours; for, except I marry you both, I dunna how to settle this affair between you at all;—oh, murder sheery! but I’m the misfortunate crathur, entirely.’

“‘Well,’ says Jack to the officer, ‘nobody can do more than be sorry for a wrong turn; small blame to her for taking a fancy to your humble servant, Mr. Officer,’—and he stood as tall as possible to show himself off: ‘you see the fair lady is sorrowful for her folly, so as it’s not yet too late, and as you came in the nick of time, in the name of Providence take my place, and let the marriage go an.’

“‘No,’ says she, ‘never; I’m not worthy of him, at all, at all; thunder-an-age, but I’m the unlucky thief!’

“While this was going forward, the officer looked closely at Jack, and seeing him such a fine, handsome fellow, and having heard before of his riches, he began to think that, all things considered, she wasn’t so much to be *blemt*. Then, when he saw how sorry she was for having forgot him, he steps *forrid*.

“‘Well,’ says he, ‘I’m still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel contrition—’”

“He should have said contrition, confession, and satisfaction,” observed Father Peter.



“Pettier, will you keep your theology to yourself,” replied Father Ned, “and let us come to the plot without interruption.”

“Plot!” exclaimed Father Peter; “I’m sure it’s no rebellion that there should be a plot in it, any way!”



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“Tace,” said Father Ned—“*tace*, and that’s Latin for a candle.”

“I deny that,” said the curate; “*tace* is the imperative mood from *tacco*, to keep silent. *Tacco, taces, tacui, tacere, tacendi, tacendo tac*—”

“Ned, go on with your story, and never mind that deep larning of his—he’s almost cracked with it,” said the superior: “go on, and never mind him.”

“‘Well,’ says he, ‘I’m still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel conthrition for what you were going to do.’ So, with this, they all gother about her, and, as the officer was a fine fellow himself, prevailed upon her to let the marriage be performed, and they were accordingly spliced as fast as his Reverence could make them.

“‘Now, Jack,’ says the dog, ‘I want to spake with you for a minute—it’s a word for your own ear;’ so up he stands on his two hind legs, and purtinded to be whisp’ring something to him; but what do you think?—he gives him the slightest touch on the lips with his paw, and that instant Jack remimbered the lady and everything that happened betune them.

“‘Tell me, this instant,’ says Jack, seizing him by the throat, ‘where’s the darling, at all, at all, or by this and by that you’ll hang on the next tree!’

“Jack spoke finer nor this, to be sure, but as I can’t give his tall English, the sorra one of me will bother myself striving to do it.

“‘Behave yourself,’ says the dog, ‘just say nothing, only follow me.’

“Accordingly, Jack went out with the dog, and in a few minutes comes in again, leading along with him, on the one side, the loveliest lady that ever eye beheld, and the dog, that was her brother, metamurphied into a beautiful, illegant gintleman, on the other.

“‘Father Flannagan,’ says Jack, ‘you thought a little while ago you’d have no marriage, but instead of that you’ll have a brace of them;’ up and telling the company, at the same time, all that had happened to him, and how the beautiful crathur that he had brought in with him had done so much for him.

“Whin the gintlemen heard this, as they Were all Irishmen, you may be sure there was nothing but huzzaing and throwing up of hats from them, and waving of hankerchers from the ladies. Well, my dear, the wedding dinner was ate in great style; the nobleman proved himself no disgrace to his rank at the trencher; and so, to make a long story short, such faisting and banquetteering was never since or before. At last, night came; among ourselves, not a doubt of it, but Jack thought himself a happy man; and maybe, if all was known, the bride was much in the same opinion: be that as it may, night came—the bride, all blushing, beautiful, and modest as your own sweetheart, was getting tired after the dancing; Jack, too, though much stouter, wished for a trifle of repose, and

many thought it was near time to throw the stocking, as is proper, of course, on every occasion of the kind.



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Well, he was just on his way up stairs, and had reached the first landing, when he hears a voice at his ear, shouting, 'Jack—Jack—Jack Magennis!' Jack could have spitted anybody for coming to disturb him at such a criticality. 'Jack Magennis!' says the voice. Jack looked about to see who it was that called him, and there he found himself lying on the green Rath, a little above his mother's cabin, of a fine, calm summer's evening, in the month of June. His mother was stooping over him, with her mouth at his ear, striving to waken him, by shouting and shaking him out of his sleep.

"'Oh! by this and by that, mother,' says Jack, 'what did you waken me for?'

"'Jack, avourneen,' says the mother, 'sure and you war lying grunting, and groaning, and sniffling there, for all the world as if you had the cholic, and I only nudged you for fraid you war in pain.'

"'I wouldn't for a thousand guineas,' says Jack, 'that ever you wakened me, at all, at all; but whisht, mother, go into the house, and I'll be afther you in less than no time.'

"The mother went in, and the first thing Jack did was to try the rock; and, sure enough, there he found as much money as made him the richest man that ever was in the country. And what was to his credit, when, he did grow rich, he wouldn't let his cabin be thrown down, but built a fine castle on a spot near it, where he could always have it under his eye, to prevent him from getting proud. In the coorse of time, a harper, hearing the story, composed a tune upon it, which every body knows is called the 'Little House under the Hill' to this day, beginning with—

'Hi for it, ho for it, hi for it still;
Och, and whoo! your sowl—hi for the little house under the hill!'

"So you see that was the way the great Magennisses first came by their wealth, and all because Jack was indistrrious, and an obadient, dutiful, and tindher son to his helpless ould mother, and well he deserved what he got, *ershi misha* (* Say I.) Your healths, Father Ned—Father Pether—all kinds of happiness to us; and there's my story."

* * * * *

"Well," said Father Peter, "I think that dog was nothing more or less than a downright cur, that deserved the lash nine times a day, if it was only for his want of respect to the clergy; if he had given me such insolence, I solemnly declare I would have bate the devil out of him with a hazel cudgel, if I failed to exorcise him with a prayer."

Father Ned looked at the simple and credulous curate with an expression of humor and astonishment.



“Paddy,” said he to the servant, “will you let us know what the night’s doing?”

Paddy looked out. “Why, your Rev’rence, it’s a fine night, all out, and cleared up it is bravely.”

At this moment the stranger awoke.

“Sir,” said Father Ned, “you missed an amusing story, in consequence of your somnolency.”



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“Though I missed the story,” replied the stranger, “I was happy enough to hear your friend’s critique upon the dog.”

Father Ned seemed embarrassed; the curate, on the contrary, exclaimed with triumph—“but wasn’t I right, sir?”

“Perfectly,” said the stranger; “the moral you applied was excellent.”

“Good-night, boys,” said Father Ned—“good-night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus!”

“Good-night, boys,” said Father Peter, imitating Father Ned, whom he looked upon as a perfect model of courtesy—“Good-night, boys—good night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus.”

“Good-night,” replied the stranger—“good-night, Doctor Edward Deleery; and good-night, Doctor Peter M’Clatchaghan—good-night.”

When the clergymen were gone, the circle about the fire, excepting the members of Ned’s family and the stranger, dispersed to their respective homes; and thus ended the amusement of that evening.

After they had separated, Ned, whose curiosity respecting the stranger was by no means satisfied, began to sift him in his own peculiar manner, as they both sat at the fire.

“Well, sir,” said Ned, “barring the long play-acther that tumbles upon the big stage in the street of our market-town, here below, I haven’t seen so long a man this many a day; and, barring your big whiskers, the sorra one of your honor’s unlike him. A fine portly vagabone he is, indeed—a big man, and a bigger rogue, they say, for he pays nobody.”

“Have you got such a company in your neighborhood?” inquired the stranger, with indifference.

“We have, sir,” said Ned, “but, plase goodness, they’ll soon be lashed like hounds from the place—the town boys are preparing to give them a chivey some fine morning out of the country.”

“Indeed!—he—hem! that will be very spirited of the town boys,” said the stranger dryly.

“That’s a smart looking horse your honor rides,” observed Ned; “did he carry you far to-day, with submission?”

“Not far,” replied his companion—“only fourteen miles; but, I suppose, the fact is, you wish to know who and what I am, where I came from and whither I am going. Well, you



shall know this. In the first place, I am agent to Lord Non Resident's estate, if you ever heard of that nobleman, and am on my way from Castle Ruin, the seat of his Lordship's Incumbrances, to Dublin. My name you have already heard. Are you now satisfied?"

"Parfitly, your honor," replied Ned, "and I am much obliged to you, sir."

"I trust you are an honest man," said the stranger, "because for this night I am about to place great confidence in you."

"Well, sir," said his landlord, "if I turn out dishonest to you, it's more nor I did in my whole life to any body else, barring to Nancy."

"Here, then," said the stranger, drawing out a large packet, inclosed in a roll of black leather—"here is the half year's rent of the estate, together with my own property: keep it secure till morning, when I shall demand it, and, of course, it will be safe?"



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“As if it was five *fathom*, under ground,” replied Ned. “I will put it along with our own trifle of silver; and after that, let Nancy alone for keeping it safe, so long as it’s there;” saying which, Ned secured the packet, and showed the stranger his bed.

About five o’clock the next morning their guest was up, and ordered a snack in all haste; “Being a military man,” said he, “and accustomed to timely hours, I shall ride down to the town, and put a letter into the post-office in time for the Dublin mail, after which you may expect me to breakfast. But, in the meantime, I am not to go with empty pockets,” he added; when mounting his horse at the door—“bring me some silver, landlord, and be quick.”

“How much, please your honor?”

“Twenty or thirty shillings; but, harkee, produce my packet, that I may be quite certain my property is safe.”

“Here it is, your honor, safe and sound,” replied Ned, returning from within; “and Nancy, sir, has sent you all the silver she has, which was One Pound Five; but I’d take it as a favor if your honor would be content with twenty shillings, and leave me the odd five, for you see the case is this, sir, please your honor, *she*,” and Ned, with a shrewd, humorous nod, pointed with his thumb over his shoulder, as he spoke— “she wears the — what you know, sir.”

“Ay, I thought so,” replied the stranger; “but a man of your size to be henpecked must be a great knave, otherwise your wife would allow you more liberty. Go in, man; you deserve no compassion in such an age of freedom as this. I sha’n’t give you a farthing till after my return, and only then if it be agreeable to your wife.”*

* Ned M’Keown was certainly a very remarkable individual, and became, in consequence of his appearance in these pages, a person of considerable notoriety during the latter years of his life. His general character, and the nature of his unsuccessful speculations, I have drawn with great truth. There is only one point alone in which I have done him injustice, and that is in depicting him as a henpecked husband. The truth is, I had a kind of good humored pique in against Ned, and for the following reasons:—The cross-roads at which he lived formed a central point for all the youngsters of the neighborhood to assemble for the purpose of practising athletic exercises, of which I, in my youth, was excessively fond. Now Ned never would suffer me to join my young acquaintances in these harmless and healthful sports, but on every occasion, whenever he saw me, he would run out with a rod or cudgel and chase me from the scene of amusement. This, to a boy so enthusiastically devoted to such diversions as I was, often occasioned me to give him many a hearty malediction when at a safe distance. In fact, he continued this practice until I became too much of a man to run away, after which he durst only growl and mutter abuse, whilst I snapped my fingers at him. For this reason, then,



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and remembering all the vexatious privations of my favorite sports which he occasioned me, I resolved to turn the laugh against him, which I did effectually, by bringing him out in the character of a hen-pecked husband, which was indeed very decidedly opposed to his real one. My triumph was complete, and Ned, on hearing himself read of "in a book," waxed indignant and wrathful. In speaking of me he could not for the life of him express any other idea of my age and person than that by which he last remembered me. "What do you think?" he would exclaim, "there's that young Carleton has put me in a book, and made Nancy leather me!" Ned survived Nancy several years, and married another wife, whom I never saw. About twenty-five years ago he went to America, where he undertook to act as a tanner, and nearly ruined his employer. After some time he returned, home, and was forced to mend roads. Towards the close of his life, however, he contrived to get an ass and cart, and became egg-merchant, but I believe with his usual success. In this last capacity, I think about two years ago, he withdrew from all his cares and speculations, and left behind him the character of an honest, bustlin, good-humored man, whom everybody knew and everybody liked, and whose harmless eccentricities many will long remember with good-humor and regret.

"Murdher!" said Ned, astonished, "I beg your honor's pardon; but murdher alive, sir, where's your whiskers?"

The stranger put his hand hastily to his face, and smiled—"Where are my whiskers? Why, shaved off, to be sure," he replied; and setting spurs to his horse, was soon out of sight and hearing.

It was nearly a month after that, when Ned and Nancy, in presence of Father Deleery, opened the packet, and discovered, not the half-year's rent of Lord Non-Resident's estate, but a large sheaf of play-bills packed up together—their guest having been the identical person to whom Ned affirmed he bore so strong a resemblance.

SHANE FADH'S WEDDING.

On the following evening, the neighbors were soon assembled about Ned's hearth in the same manner as on the night preceding:—And we may observe, by the way, that though there was a due admixture of opposite creeds and conflicting principles, yet even then, and the time is not so far back, such was their cordiality of heart and simplicity of manners when contrasted with the bitter and rancorous spirit of the present day that the very remembrance of the harmony in which they lived is at once pleasing and melancholy.

After some preliminary chat, "Well Shane," said Andy Morrow, addressing Shane Fadh, "will you give us an account of your wedding? I'm tould it was the greatest let-out that ever was in the country, before or since."

“And you may say that, Mr. Morrow,” said Shane, “I was at many a wedding myself, but never at the likes of my own, barring Tim Lannigan’s, that married Father Corrigan’s niece.”



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“I believe,” said Andy, “that, too, was a dashing one; however, it’s your own we want. Come, Nancy, fill these measures again, and let us be comfortable, at all events, and give Shane a double one, for talking’s druthy work:—I’ll stand this round.”

When the liquor was got in, Shane, after taking a draught, laid down his pint, pulled out his steel tobacco-box, and, after twisting off a chew between his teeth, closed the box, and commenced the story of his wedding.

“When I was a Brine-Oge,”* said Shane, “I was as wild as an unbroken cowlt—no divilment was too hard for me; and so sign’s on it, for there wasn’t a piece of mischief done in the parish, but was laid at my door—and the dear knows I had enough of my own to answer for, let alone to be set down for that of other people; but, any way, there was many a thing done in my name, when I knew neither act nor part about it. One of them I’ll mention: Dick Cuillenan, father to Paddy, that lives at the crass-roads, beyant Gunpowdher Lodge, was over head and ears in love with Jemmy Finigan’s eldest daughter, Mary, then, sure enough, as purty a girl as you’d meet in a fair—indeed, I think I’m looking at her, with her fair flaxen ringlets hanging over her shoulders, as she used to pass our house, going to mass of a Sunday. God rest her sowl, she’s now in glory—that was before she was my wife. Many a happy day we passed together; and I could take it to my death, that an ill word, let alone to rise our hands to one another, never passed between us—only one day, that a word or two happened about the dinner, in the middle of Lent, being a little too late, so that the horses were kept nigh half an hour out of the plough; and I wouldn’t have valued that so much, only that it was Beal Cam** Doherty that joined*** me in ploughing that year—and I was vexed not to take all I could out of him, for he was a raal Turk himself.

* A young man full of fun and frolic. The word literally signifies Young Brian. Such phrases originate thus:—A young man remarkable for one or more qualities of a particular nature becomes so famous for them that his name, in the course of time, is applied to others, as conveying the same character.

** Crooked mouth.

***In Ireland, small farmers who cannot afford to keep more than one horse are in the habit of “joining,” as it is termed—that is, of putting their horses together so as to form a yoke, when they plough each other’s farms, working alternately, sometimes, by the week, half-week, or day; that is, I plough this day, or this week, and you the next day, or week, until our crops are got down. In this case, each is anxious to take as much out of the horses as he can, especially where the farms are unequal. For instance, where one farm is larger than another the difference must be paid by the owner of the larger one in horse-labor, man-labor, or money; but that he may have as little to pay as possible,

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he ploughs as much for himself, by the day, as he can, and often strives to get the other to do as little per day, on the other side, in order to diminish what will remain due to his partner. There is, consequently, a ludicrous undercurrent of petty jealousy running between them, which explains the passage in question.

“I disremember now what passed between us as to words—but I know I had a duck-egg in my hand, and when she spoke, I raised my arm, and nailed—poor Larry Tracy, our servant boy, between the two eyes with it, although the crathur was ating his dinner quietly forment me, not saying a word.

“Well, as I tould you, Dick was ever after her, although her father and mother would rather see her under boord* than joined to any of that connection; and as for herself, she couldn’t bear the sight of him, he was sich an upsetting, conceited puppy, that thought himself too good for every girl. At any rate, he tried often and often, in fair and market, to get striking up with her; and both coming from and going to mass, ’twas the same way, for ever after and about her, till the state he was in spread over the parish like wild fire. Still, all he could do was of no use; except to bid him the time of day, she never entered into discoorse with him at all at all. But there was no putting the likes of him off; so he got a quart of spirits in his pocket, one night, and without saying a word to mortal, off he sets full speed to her father’s, in order to brake the thing to the family.

* In that part of the country where the scene of Shane Fadh’s Wedding is laid, the bodies of those who die are not stretched out on a bed, and the face exposed; on the contrary, they are placed generally on the ground, or in a bed, but with a board resting upon two stools or chairs over them. This is covered with a clean sheet, generally borrowed from some wealthier neighbor; so that the person of the deceased is altogether concealed. Over the sheet upon the board, are placed plates of cut tobacco, pipes, snuff, &c. This is what is meant by being “undher boord.”

“Mary might be about seventeen at this time, and her mother looked almost as young and fresh as if she hadn’t been married at all. When Dick came in, you may be sure they were all surprised at the sight of him; but they were civil people—and the mother wiped a chair, and put it over near the fire for him to sit down upon, waiting to hear what he’d say, or what he wanted, although, they could give a purty good guess as to that!—but they only wished to put him off with as little offince as possible. When Dick sot a while, talking about what the price of hay and oats would be in the following summer, and other subjects that he thought would show his knowledge of farming and cattle, he pulls out his bottle, encouraged to by their civil way of talking—and telling the ould couple, that as he came over on his kailyee,* he had brought a drop in his pocket to sweeten the discoorse, axing Susy Finigan, the mother, for a glass to send it round with—at the same time drawing over his chair close to Mary who was knitting her stocken up beside her little brother Michael, and chatting to the gorsoon, for fraid that Cuillenan might think she paid him any attention.



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* Kailyee—a friendly evening visit.

When Dick got alongside of her, he began of coorse, to pull out her needles and spoil her knitting, as is customary before the young people come to close spaking. Mary, howsomever, had no welcome for him; so, says she, 'You ought to know, Dick Cuillenan, who you spake to, before you make the freedom you do'

"But you don't know, says Dick, 'that I'm a great hand at spoiling the girls' knitting,—it's a fashion I've got,' says he.

"It's a fashion, then,' says Mary, 'that'll be apt to get you a broken mouth, sometime'.*

* It is no unusual thing in Ireland for a country girl to repulse a fellow whom she thinks beneath her, if not by a flat at least by a flattening refusal; nor is it seldom that the "argumentum fistycuffum" resorted to on such occasions. I have more than once seen a disagreeable lover receive, from that fair hand which he sought, so masterly a blow, that a bleeding nose rewarded his ambition, and silenced for a time his importunity.

"Then,' says Dick, 'whoever does that must marry me.'

"And them that gets you, will have a prize to brag of,' says she; 'stop yourself, Cuillenan—single your freedom, and double your distance, if you plase; I'll cut my coat off no such cloth.'

"Well, Mary,' says he, 'maybe, if *you*, don't, as good will; but you won't be so cruel as all that comes to—the worst side of you is out, I think.'

"He was now beginning to make greater freedom; but Mary rises from her seat, and whisks away with herself, her cheek as red as a rose with vexation at the fellow's imperance. 'Very well,' says Dick, 'off you go; but there's as good fish in the say as ever was caught.—I'm sorry to see, Susy,' says he to her mother, 'that Mary's no friend of mine, and I'd be mighty glad to find it otherwise; for, to tell the truth, I'd wish to become connected with the family. In the mane time, hadn't you better get us a glass, till we drink one bottle on the head of it, anyway.'

"Why, then, Dick Cuillenan,' says the mother, 'I don't wish you anything else than good luck and happiness; but, as to Mary, She's not for you herself, nor would it be a good match between the families at all. Mary is to have her grandfather's sixty guineas; and the two *moulleens** that her uncle Jack left her four years ago has brought her a good stock for any farm. Now if she married you, Dick, where's the farm to bring her to?—surely it's not upon them seven acres of stone and bent, upon the long Esker,** that I'd let my daughter go to live. So, Dick, put up your bottle, and in the name of God, go home, boy, and mind your business; but, above all, when you want a wife, go to them



that you may have a right to expect, and not to a girl like Mary Finigan, that could lay down guineas where you could hardly find shillings.'

* Cows without horns.

** Esker; a high ridge of land, generally barren and unproductive, when upon a small scale. It is also a ridgy height that runs for many miles through a country.



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“Very well, Susy,’ says Dick, nettled enough, as he well might, ’I say to you, just as I say to your daughter, if you be proud there’s no force.”

“But what has this to do with you, Shane?” asked Andy Morrow; “sure we wanted to hear an account of your wedding, but instead of that, it’s Dick Cuillenan’s history you’re giving us.”

“That’s just it,” said Shane; “sure, only for this same Dick, I’d never got Mary Finigan for a wife. Dick took Susy’s advice, bekase, after all, the undacent drop was in him? or he’d never have brought the bottle out of the house at all; but, faith he riz up, put the whiskey in his pocket, and went home with a face on him as black as my hat with venom. Well, things passed on till the Christmas following, when one night, after the Finigans had all gone to bed, there comes a crowd of fellows to the door, thumping at it with great violence, and swearing that if the people within wouldn’t open it immediately, it would be smashed into smithereens. The family, of coorse, were all alarmed; but somehow or other, Susy herself got suspicious that it might be something about Mary, so up she gets, and sends the daughter to her own bed, and lies down herself in the daughter’s.

“In the mane time, Finigan got up, and after lighting a candle, opened the door at once. ‘Come, Finigan,’ says a strange voice, ’put out the candle, except you wish us to make a candlestick of the thatch,’ says he—’or to give you a prod of a bagnet under the ribs,’ says he.

“It was a folly for one man to go to bell-the-cat with a whole crowd; so he blew the candle out, and next minute they rushed in, and went as straight as a rule to Mary’s bed. The mother all the time lay close, and never said a word. At any rate, what could be expected, only that, do what she could, at the long-run she must go? So according, after a very hard battle on her side, being a powerful woman, she was obliged to travel—but not till she had left many of them marks to remimber her by; among the rest, Dick himself got his nose split on his face, with the stroke of a churn-staff, so that he carried half a nose on each cheek till the day of his death. Still there was very little spoke, for they didn’t wish to betray themselves on any side. The only thing that Finigan could hear, was my name repeated several times, as if the whole thing was going on under my direction; for Dick thought, that if there was any one in the parish likely to be set down for it, it was me.

“When Susy found they were for putting her behind one of them, on a horse, she rebelled again, and it took near a dozen of boys to hoist her up; but one vagabone of them, that had a rusty broad-sword in his hand, gave her a skelp with the flat side of it, that subdued her at once, and off they went. Now, above all nights in the year, who should be dead but my own full cousin, Denis Fadh—God be good to him!—and I, and Jack, and Dan, his brothers, while bringing; home whiskey for the wake and berrin,



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met them on the road. At first we thought them distant relations coming to the wake, but when I saw only one woman among the set, and she mounted on a horse, I began to suspect that all wasn't right. I accordingly turned back a bit, and walked near enough without their seeing me to hear the discourse, and discover the whole business. In less than no time I was back at the wake-house, so I up and tould them what I saw, and off we set, about forty of us, with good cudgels, scythe-snedds, and flails, fully bent to bring her back from them, come or go what would. And troth, sure enough, we did it; and I was the man myself, that rode afore the mother on the same horse that carried her off.

“From this out, when and wherever I got an opportunity, I whispered the soft nonsense, Nancy, into poor Mary's ear, until I put my *comedher** on her, and she couldn't live at all without me. But I was something for a woman to look at then, any how, standing six feet two in my stocking soles, which, you know, made them call me Shane *Fadh*.** At that time I had a dacent farm of fourteen acres in Crocknagooran—the same that my son, Ned, has at the present time; and though, as to wealth, by no manner of manes fit to compare with the Finigans, yet, upon the whole, she might have made a worse match. The father, however, wasn't for me; but the mother was: so after drinking a bottle or two with the mother, Sarah Traynor, her cousin, and Mary, along with Jack Donnellan, on my part, in their own barn, unknown to the father, we agreed to make, a runaway match of it, and appointed my uncle Brian Slevin's as the house we'd go to. The next Sunday was the day appointed; so I had my uncle's family prepared, and sent two gallons of whiskey, to be there before us, knowing that neither the Finigans nor my own friends liked stinginess.

* Comedher—come hither—alluding to the burden of an old love-charm which is still used by the young of both sexes on May-morning. It is a literal translation of the Irish word “gutsho.”

** Fadh is tall, or long

“Well, well, after all, the world is a strange thing—it's myself hardly knows what to make of it. It's I that did doat night and day upon that girl; and indeed there was them that could have seen me in Jimmaiky for her sake, for she was the beauty of the country, not to say of the parish, for a girl in her station. For my part, I could neither ate nor sleep, for thinking that she was so soon to be my own married wife, and to live under my roof. And when I'd think of it, how my heart would bounce to my throat, with downright joy and delight! The mother had made us promise not to meet till Sunday, for fraid of the father becoming suspicious: but if I was to be shot for it, I couldn't hinder myself from going every night to the great flowering whitethorn that was behind their garden; and although she knew I hadn't promised to come, yet there she still was; something, she said, tould her I would come.



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“The next Sunday we met at *Althadhawan* wood, and I’ll never forget what I felt when I was going to the green at St. Patrick’s Chair, where the boys and girls meet on Sunday; but there she was—the bright eyes dancing: with joy in her head to see me. We spent the evening in the wood, till it was dusk—I bating them all leaping, dancing, and throwing the stone; for, by my song, I thought I had the action of ten men in me; she looking on, and smiling like an angel, when I’d lave them miles behind me. As it grew dusk, they all went home, except herself and me, and a few more who, maybe, had something of the same kind on hands.

“‘Well Mary,’ says I, ‘acushla machree, it’s dark enough for us to go; and, in the name of God, let us be off.’”

“The crathur looked into my face, and got pale—for she was very young then: ‘Shane,’ says she, and she thrimbled like an aspen lafe, ‘I’m going to trust myself with—you for ever—for ever, Shane, avourueen,—and her sweet voice broke into purty murmurs as she spoke; ‘whether for happiness or sorrow God he only knows. I can bear poverty and distress, sickness and want will’ you, but I can’t bear to think that you should ever forget to love me as you do now, or your heart should ever cool to me: but I’m sure,’ says she, ‘you’ll never forget this night—and the solemn promises you made me, before God and the blessed skies above us.’”

“We were sitting at the time under the shade of a rowan-tree, and I had only one answer to make—I pulled her to my breast, where she laid her head and cried like a child with her cheek against mine. My own eyes weren’t dry, although I felt no sorrow, but—but—I never forgot that night—and I never will.”

He now paused a few minutes, being too much affected to proceed.

“Poor Shane,” said Nancy, in a whisper to Andy Morrow, “night and day he’s thinking about that woman; she’s now dead going on a year, and you would think by him, although he bears up very well before company that she died only yestherday—but indeed it’s he that was always the kind-hearted, affectionate man; and a better husband never broke bread.”

“Well,” said Shane, resuming the story, and clearing his voice, “it’s great consolation to me, now that she’s gone, to think that I never broke the promise I made her that night; for as I tould you, except in regard to the duck-egg, a bitter word never passed between us. I was in a passion then, for a wonder, and bent upon showing her that I was a dangerous man to provoke; so just to give her a *spice* of what I could do, I made *Larry* feel it—and may God forgive me for raising my hand even then to her. But sure he would be a brute that would beat such a woman except by proxy. When it was clear dark we set off, and after crossing the country for two miles, reached my uncle’s, where a great many of my friends were expecting us. As soon as we came to the door I struck

it two or three times, for that was the sign, and my aunt came out, and taking Mary in her arms, kissed her, and, with a thousand welcomes, brought us both in.



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“You all know that the best of aiting and dhrinking is provided when a runaway couple is expected; and indeed there was galore of both there. My uncle and all that were within welcomed us again; and many a good song and hearty jug of punch was sent round that night. The next morning my uncle went to her father’s, and broke the business to him at once: indeed it wasn’t very hard to do, for I believe it reached him afore he saw my uncle at all; so she was brought home* that day, and, on the Thursday night after, I, my father, uncle, and several other friends, went there and made the match. She had sixty guineas, that her grandfather left her, thirteen head of cattle, two feather- and two chaff-beds, with sheeting, quilts, and blankets; three pieces of bleached linen, and a flock of geese of her own rearing—upon the whole, among ourselves, it wasn’t aisy to get such a fortune.

* One-half, at least, of the marriages in a great portion of Ireland are effected in this manner. They are termed “runaway matches,” and are attended with no disgrace. When the parents of the girl come to understand that she has “gone off,” they bring her home in a day or two; the friends of the parties then meet, and the arrangements for the marriage are made as described in the tale.

“Well, the match was made, and the wedding day appointed; but there was one thing still to be managed, and that was how to get over *standing* at mass on Sunday, to make satisfaction for the scandal we gave the church by running away with one another—but that’s all stuff, for who cares a pin about standing, when three halves of the parish are married in the same way! The only thing that vexed me was, that it would keep back the wedding-day. However, her father and my uncle went to the priest, and spoke to him, trying, of coorse, to get us off it, but he knew we were fat geese, and was in for giving us a plucking.—Hut, tut!—he wouldn’t hear of it at all, not he; for although he would ride fifty miles to sarve either of us, he couldn’t break the new orders that he had got only a few days before that from the bishop. No; we must *stand**—for it would be setting a bad example to the parish; and if he would let us pass, how could he punish the rest of his flock, when they’d be guilty of the same thing?

* Matches made in this manner are discountenanced by the Roman Catholic clergy, as being liable to abuse; and, for this reason, the parties, by way of punishment, are sometimes, but not always, made to stand up at mass for one or three Sundays; but, as Shane expresses it, the punishment is so common that it completely loses its effect. To “stand,” in the sense meant here, is this: the priest, when the whole congregation are on their knees, calls the young man and woman by name, who stand up and remain under the gaze of the congregation, whilst he rebukes them for the scandal they gave to the church, after which they



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kneel down. In general it is looked upon more in fun than punishment. Sometimes, however, the wealthier class compromise this matter with the priest, as described above.

“Well, well, your Reverence,’ says my uncle, winking at her father, ‘if that’s the case, it can’t be helped, any how—they must only stand, as many a dacent father and mother’s child has done before them, and will again, plase God—your Reverence is right in doing your duty.’

“True for you, Brian,’ says his Reverence, ‘and yet, God knows, there’s no man in the parish would be sorrier to see such a dacent, comely young couple put upon a level with all the scrubs of the parish; and I know, Jemmy Finigan, it would go hard with your young, bashful daughter to get through with it, having the eyes of the whole congregation staring on her.’

“Why, then, your Reverence, as to that,’ says my uncle, who was just as stiff as the other was stout, ‘the bashfulest of them will do more nor that to get a husband.’

“But you tell me,’ says the priest, ‘that the wedding-day is fixed upon; how will you manage there?’

“Why, put it off for three Sundays longer, to be sure,’ says the uncle.

“But you forget this, Brian,’ says the priest, ‘that good luck or prosperity never attends the putting off of a wedding.’

“Now here, you see, is where the priest had them; for they knew that as well as his Reverence himself—so they were in a puzzle again.

“It’s a disagreeable business,’ says the priest, ‘but the truth is, I could get them off with the bishop, only for one thing—I owe him five guineas of altar-money, and I am so far back in dues that I’m not able to pay him. If I could inclose this to him in a letter, I would get them off at once, although it would be bringing myself into trouble with the parish afterwards; but, at all events,’ says he, ‘I wouldn’t make every one of you both—so, to prove that I wish to sarve you, I’ll sell the best cow in my byre, and pay him myself, rather than their wedding day should be put off, poor things, or themselves brought to any bad luck—the Lord keep them from it!’

“While he was speaking, he stamped his foot two or three times on the flure, and the housekeeper came in.—’Katty,’ says he, ‘bring us in a bottle of whiskey; at all events, I can’t let you away,’ says he, ‘without tasting something, and drinking luck to the young folks.’



“‘In troth,’ says Jemmy Finigan, ‘and begging your Reverence’s pardon, the sorra cow you’ll sell this bout, any how, on account of me or my childhre, bekase I’ll lay down on the nail what’ll clear you wid the bishop; and in the name of goodness, as the day is fixed and all, let the crathurs not be disappointed.’

“‘Jemmy,’ says my uncle, ‘if you go to that, you’ll pay but your share, for I insist upon laying down one-half, at laste.’

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“At any rate they came down with the cash, and after drinking a bottle between them, went home in choice spirits entirely at their good luck in so aisily getting us off. When they had left the house a bit, the priest sent after them—’Jemmy,’ says he to Finigan, ’I forgot a circumstance, and that is, to tell you that I will go and marry them at your own house, and bring Father James, my curate with me.’ ’Oh, wurrah, no,’ said both, ’don’t mention that, your Reverence, except you wish to break their hearts, out and out! why, that would be a thousand times worse nor making them stand to do penance: doesn’t your Reverence know that if they hadn’t the pleasure of running for the bottle, the whole wedding wouldn’t be worth three half-pence?’ ’Indeed, I forgot that, Jemmy.’ ’But sure,’ says my uncle, ’your Reverence and Father James must be at it, whether or not—for that we intended from the first.’ ’Tell them I’ll run for the bottle, too,’ says the priest, laughing, ’and will make some of them look sharp, never fear.’

“Well, by my song, so far all was right; and may be it’s we that weren’t glad—maning Mary and myself—that there was nothing more in the way to put off the wedding-day. So, as the bridegroom’s share of the expense always is to provide the whiskey, I’m sure, for the honor and glory of taking the blooming young crathur from the great lot of bachelors that were all breaking their hearts about her, I couldn’t do less nor finish the thing dacintly; knowing, besides, the high doings that the Finigans would have of it—for they were always looked upon as a family that never had their heart in a trifle, when it would come to the push. So, you see, I and my brother Mickey, my cousin Tom, and Dom’nick Nulty, went up into the mountains to Tim Cassidy’s still-house, where we spent a glorious day, and bought fifteen gallons of stuff, that one drop of it would bring the tear, if possible, to a young widdy’s eye that had berrid a bad husband. Indeed, this was at my father’s bidding, who wasn’t a bit behindhand with any of them in cutting a dash. ’Shane,’ says he to me, ’you know the Finigans of ould, that they won’t be contint with what would do another, and that, except they go beyant the thing, entirely, they won’t be satisfied. They’ll have the whole countryside at the wadding, and we must let them see that we have a spirit and a faction of our own,’ says he, ’that we needn’t be ashamed of. They’ve got all kinds of ateables in cart-loads, and as we’re to get the drinkables, we must see and give as good as they’ll bring. I myself, and your mother, will go round and invite all we can think of, and let you and Mickey go up the hills to Tim Cassidy, and get fifteen gallons of whiskey, for I don’t think less will do us.’



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“This we accordingly complied with, as I said, and surely better stuff never went down the red lane (* Humorous periphrasis for throat) than the same whiskey; for the people knew nothing about watering it then, at all at all. The next thing I did was to get a fine shop cloth coat, a pair of top-boots, and buckskin breeches fit for a squire; along with a new Caroline hat that would throw off the wet like a duck. Mat Kavanagh, the schoolmaster from Findramore bridge, lent me his watch for the occasion, after my spending near two days learning from him to know what o’clock it was. At last, somehow, I mastered that point so well that, in a quarter of an hour at least, I could give a decent guess at the time upon it.

“Well, at last the day came. The wedding morning, or the bride’s part of it,* as they say, was beautiful. It was then the month of July. The evening before my father”* and my brother went over to Jemmy Finigan’s, to make the regulations for the wedding. We, that is my party, were to be at the bride’s house about ten o’clock, and we were then to proceed, all on horseback, to the priest’s, to be married. We were then, after drinking something at Tom Hance’s public-house, to come back as far as the Dumbhill, where we were to start and run for the bottle. That morning we were all up at the shriek of day. From six o’clock my own faction, friends and neighbors, began to come, all mounted; and about eight o’clock there was a whole regiment of them, some on horses, some on mules, others on raheries** and asses; and, by my word, I believe little Dick Snudaghan, the tailor’s apprentice, that had a hand in making my wedding-clothes, was mounted upon a buck goat, with a bridle of salvages tied to his horns. Anything at all to keep their feet from the ground; for nobody would be allowed to go with the wedding that hadn’t some animal between them and the earth.

* The morning or early part of the day, on which an Irish couple are married, up until noon, is called the bride’s part, which, if the fortunes of the pair are to be happy, is expected to be fair—rain or storm being considered indicative of future calamity.

** A small, shaggy pony, so called from being found in great numbers on the Island of that name.

“To make a long story short, so large a bridegroom’s party was never seen in that country before, save and except Tim Lannigans, that I mentioned just now. It would make you split your face laughing to see the figure they cut; some of them had saddles and bridles—others had saddles and halthers; some had back-suggawns of straw, with hay Stirrups to them, but good bridles; others sacks filled up as like saddles as they could make them, girthed with hay-ropes five or six times tied round the horse’s body. When one or two of the horses wouldn’t carry double, except the hind rider sat stride-ways, the women had to be put foremost, and the men behind them. Some had decent pillions enough, but most of them had none at all, and the women were obliged to sit where the pillion ought to be—and a hard card they had to play to keep their seats even when the horses walked asy, so what must it be when they came to a gallop! but that same was nothing at all to a trot.



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“From the time they began to come that morning, you may be sartain that the glass was no cripple, any how—although, for fear of accidents, we took care not to go too deep. At eight o’clock we sat down to a rousing breakfast, for we thought it best to eat a trifle at home, lest they might think that what we were to get at the bride’s breakfast might be thought any novelty. As for my part, I was in such a state, that I couldn’t let a morsel cross my throat, nor did I know what end of me was uppermost. After breakfast they all got their cattle, and I my hat and whip, and was ready to mount, when my uncle whispered to me that I must kneel down and ax my father and mother’s blessing, and forgiveness for all my disobedience and offinces towards them—and also to requist the blessing of my brothers and sisters. Well, in a short time I was down; and my goodness! such a hullabaloo of crying as there was in a minute’s time! ‘Oh, Shane Fadh—Shane Fadh, acushla machree!’ says my poor mother in Irish, ‘you’re going to break up the ring about your father’s hearth and mine—going to lave us, avourneen, for ever, and we to hear your light foot and sweet voice, morning, noon, and night, no more! Oh!’ says she, ‘it’s you that was the good son all out; and the good brother, too: kind and cheerful was your voice, and full of love and affection was your heart! Shane, avourneen dheelish, if ever I was harsh to you, forgive your poor mother, that will never see you more on her flure as one of her own family.’

“Even my father, that wasn’t much given to crying’, couldn’t speak, but went over to a corner and cried till the neighbors stopped him. As for my brothers and sisters, they were all in an uproar; and I myself cried like a Trojan, merely bekase I see them at it. My father and mother both kissed me, and gave me their blessing; and my brothers and sisters did the same, while you’d think all their hearts would break. ‘Come, come,’ says my uncle, ‘I’ll have none of this: what a hubbub you make, and your son going to be well married—going to be joined to a girl that your betters would be proud to get into connection with. You should have more sense, Rose Campbell—you ought to thank God that he had the luck to come acrass such a colleen for a wife; and that it’s not going to his grave, instead of into the arms of a purty girl—and what’s better, a good girl. So quit your blubbering, Rose; and you, Jack,’ says he to my father, ‘that ought to have more sense, stop this instant. Clear off, every one of you, out of this, and let the young boy go to his horse. Clear out, I say, or by the powers I’ll—look at them three stags of huzzies; by the hand of my body they’re blubbering bekase it’s not their own story this blessed day. Move—bounce!—and you, Rose Oge, if you’re not behind Dudley Pulton in less than no time, by the hole of my coat, I’ll marry a wife myself, and then where will the twenty guineas be that I’m to lave you?’

“God rest his soul, and yet there was a tear in his eye all the while—even in spite of his joking!



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“Any how, it’s easy knowing that there wasn’t sorrow at the bottom of their grief: for they were all now laughing at my uncle’s jokes, even while their eyes were red with the tears: my mother herself couldn’t but be in a good humor, and join her smile with the rest.

“My uncle now drove us all out before him; not, however, till my mother had sprinkled a drop of holy water on each of us, and given me and my brothers and sisters a small taste of blessed candle, to prevent us from sudden death and accidents.* My father and she didn’t come with us then, but they went over to the bride’s while we were all gone to the priest’s house. At last we set off in great style and spirits—I well mounted on a good horse of my own, and my brother (On one that he had borrowed from Peter Dannellon), fully bent on winning the bottle. I would have borrowed him myself, but I thought it dacent to ride my own horse manfully, even though he never won a side of mutton or a saddle, like Dannellon’s. But the man that was most likely to come in for the bottle was little Billy Cormick, the tailor, who rode a blood-racer that young-John Little had wickedly lent him for the special purpose; he was a tall bay animal, with long small legs, a switch tail, and didn’t know how to trot. Maybe we didn’t cut a dash—and might have taken a town before us. Out we set about nine o’clock, and went across the country: but I’ll not stop to mention what happened some of them, even before we got to the bride’s house. It’s enough to say here, that sometimes one in crossing a stile or ditch would drop into the shough;** sometimes another would find himself head foremost on the ground; a woman would be capsized here in crossing a ridgy field, bringing her fore-rider to the ground along with her; another would be hanging like a broken arch, ready to come down, till some one would ride up and fix her on the seat. But as all this happened in going over the fields, we expected that when we’d get out on the king’s highway there would be less danger, as we would have no ditches or drains to cross. When we came in sight of the house, there was a general shout of welcome from the bride’s party, who were on the watch for us: we couldn’t do less nor give them back the chorus; but we had better have let that alone, for some of the young horses took the stadh,*** others of them capered about; the asses—the sorra choke them—that were along with us should begin to bray, as if it was the king’s birthday—and a mule of Jack Urwin’s took it into his head to stand stock still. This brought another dozen of them to the ground; so that, between one thing or another, we were near half an hour before we got on the march again. When the blood-horse that the tailor rode saw the crowd and heard the shouting, he cocked his ears, and set off with himself full speed; but before he had got far he was without a rider, and went galloping up to the bride’s house, the bridle hangin’ about his feet. Billy, however, having taken a glass or two, wasn’t to be cowed: so he came up in great blood, and swore he would ride him to America, sooner than let the bottle be won from the bridegroom’s party.



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* In many parishes of Ireland a number of small wax candles are blessed by the priest upon Ash-Wednesday, and these are constantly worn about the person until that day twelve months, for the purposes mentioned above.

** Dyke or drain.

*** Became restive.

“When we arrived, there was nothing but shaking hands and kissing, and all kinds of *slewsthering*—men kissing men—women kissing women—and after that men and women all through other. Another breakfast was ready for us; and here we all sat down; myself and my next relations in the bride’s house, and the others in the barn and garden; for one house wouldn’t hold the half of us. Eating, however, was all only talk: of course we took some of the poteen again, and in a short time afterwards set off along the paved road to the priest’s house, to be tied as fast as he could make us, and that was fast enough. Before we went out to mount our horses though, there was just such a hullabaloo with the bride and her friends as there was with myself: but my uncle soon put a stop to it, and in five minutes had them breaking their hearts laughing.

“Bless my heart, what doings! what roasting and boiling!—and what tribes of beggars and shulers, and vagabonds of all sorts and sizes, were sunning themselves about the doors wishing us a thousand times long life and happiness. There was a fiddler and piper: the piper was to stop in my father-in-law’s while we were going to be married, to keep the neighbors that were met there shaking their toes while we were at the priest’s; and the fiddler was to come with ourselves, in order you know, to have a dance at the priest’s house, and to play for us coming and going; for there’s nothing like a taste of music when one’s on for sport. As we were setting off, ould Mary M’Quade from Kilnahushogue, who was sent for bekase she understood charms, and had the name of being lucky, took myself aside: ‘Shane Fadh,’ says she, ‘you’re a young man well to look upon; may God bless you and keep you so; and there’s not a doubt but there’s them here that wishes you ill—that would rather be in your shoes this blessed day, with your young *colleen bawn*, (* Fair Girl) that will be your wife before the sun sets, plase the heavens. There’s ould Fanny Barton, the wrinkled thief of a hag, that the Finigans axed here for the sake of her decent son-in-law, who ran away with her daughter Betty, that was the great beauty some years ago: her breath’s not good, Shane, and many a strange thing’s said of her. Well, maybe, I know more about that nor I’m not going to mintion, any how: more betoken that it’s not for nothing the white hare haunts the shrubbery behind her house.’

“‘But what harm could she do me, Sonsy Mary?’ says I—for she was called Sonsy—‘we have often sarved her one way or other.’

“‘Ax me no questions about her, Shane,’ says she, ‘don’t I know what she did to Ned Donnelly, that was to be pitied, if ever a man was to be pitied, for as good as seven



months after his marriage, until I relieved him; was gone to a thread he was, and didn't they pay me decently for my throuble!



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“Well, and what am I to do, Mary?’ says I, knowing very well that what she sed was thru enough, although I didn’t wish her to see that I was afeard.

“Why,’ says she, ’you must first exchange money with me, and then, if you do as I bid you you may lave the rest to myself.’

“I then took out, begad, a daicent lot of silver—say a crown or so—for my blood was up and the money was flush—and gave it to her for which I got a cronagh-bawn* half-penny in exchange.

* So-called from Cronebane, in the county of Wicklow, where there is a copper mine.

“Now,’ says she, ’Shane, you must keep this in your company, and for your life and sowl, don’t part wid it for nine days after your marriage; but there’s more to be done,’ says she—’hould out your right knee;’ so with this she unbuttoned three buttons of my buckskins, and made me loose the knot of my garther on the right leg. ‘Now,’ says she, ’if you keep them loose till after the priest says the words, and won’t let the money I gave you go out of your company for nine days, along with something else I’ll do that you’re to know nothing about, there’s no fear of all their pisthroges.’* She then pulled off her right shoe, and threw it after us for luck.

* Charms of an evil nature. These are ceremonies used by such women, and believed to be of efficacy by the people. It is an undoubted fact that the woman here named—and truly named—was called in by honest Ned Donnelly, who, I believe, is alive, and could confirm the truth of it. I remember her well, as I do the occasion on which she was called in by Ned or his friends. I also remember that a neighbor of ours, a tailor named Cormick M’Elroy—father, by the way, to little Billy Cormick, who figures so conspicuously at the wedding— called her in to cure, by the force of charms, some cows he had that were sick.

“We were now all in motion once more—the bride riding behind my man, and the bridesmaid behind myself—a fine bouncing girl she was, but not to be mintioned in the one year with my own darlin’—in troth, it wouldn’t be aisy getting such a couple as we were the same day, though it’s myself that says it. Mary, dressed in a black castor hat, like a man’s, a white muslin coat, with a scarlet silk handkercher about her neck, with a silver buckle and a blue ribbon, for luck, round her waist; her fine hair wasn’t turned up, at all at all, but hung down in beautiful curls on her shoulders; her eyes, you would think, were all light; her lips as plump and as ripe as cherries—and maybe it’s myself that wasn’t to that time o’ day without tasting them, any how; and her teeth, so even, and as white as a burned bone. The day bate all for beauty; I don’t know whether it was from the lightness of my own spirit it came, but, I think, that such a day I never saw from that to this; indeed, I thought everything was dancing and smiling about me, and sartinly

every one said, that such a couple hadn't been married, nor such a wedding seen in the parish for many a long year before.



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“All the time, as we went along, we had the music; but then at first we were mightily puzzled what to do with the fiddler. To put him as a hind rider it would prevent him from playing, becase how could he keep the fiddle before him and another so close to him? To put him foremost was as bad, for he couldn't play and hould the bridle together; so at last my uncle proposed that he should get behind himself, turn his face to the horse's tail, and saw away like a Trojan.

“It might be about four miles or so to the priest's house, and, as the day was fine, we' got on gloriously. One thing, however, became troublesome; you see there was a cursed set of ups and downs on the road, and as the riding coutrements were so bad with a great many of the weddiners, those that had no saddles, going down steep places, would work onward bit by bit, in spite of all they could do, till they'd be fairly on the horse's neck, and the women behind them would be on the animal's shoulders; and it required nice managing to balance themselves, for they might as well sit on the edge of a dale board. Many of them got tosses this way, though it all passed in good humor. But no two among the whole set were more puzzled by this than my uncle and the fiddler—I think I see my uncle this minute with his knees sticking into the horse's shoulders, and his two hands upon his neck, keeping himself back, with a *cruiht** upon him, and the fiddler with his heels away, towards the horse's tail, and he stretched back against my uncle, for all the world like two bricks laid against one another, and one of them falling. 'Twas the same thing going up a hill; whoever was behind, would be hanging over the horse's tail, with the arm about the fore-rider's neck or body, and the other houlding the baste by the mane, to keep them both from sliding off backwards. Many a come-down there was among them—but, as I said, it was all in good humor; and, accordingly, as regularly as they fell, they were sure to get a cheer.

* The hump, which constitutes a round-shouldered man. If the reader has ever seen Hogarth's Illustrations of Hudibras, and remembers the redoubtable hero as he sits on horseback, he will be at no loss in comprehending what a *cruiht* means. *Cruiht* is the Irish for harp, and the simile is taken from the projection between the shoulders of the harper which was caused by carrying that instrument.

“When we got to the priest's house, there was a hearty welcome for us all. The bride and I, with our next kindred and friends, went into the parlor; along with these, there was a set of young fellows, who had been bachelors of the bride's, that got in with an intention of getting the first kiss* and, in coorse, of bating myself out of it. I got a whisper of this; so by my song, I was determined to cut them all out in that, as well as I did in getting herself; but you know, I couldn't be angry, even if they had got the foreway of me in it, becase



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it's an ould custom. While the priest was going over the business, I kept my eye about me, and sure enough, there were seven or eight fellows all waiting to snap at her. When the ceremony drew near a close, I got up on one leg, so that I could bounce to my feet like lightning, and when it was finished, I got her in my arm, before you could say Jack Robinson, and swinging her behind the priest, gave her the husband's first kiss. The next minute there was a rush after her; but, as I had got the first, it was but fair that they should come in according as they could, I thought, bekase, you know, it was all in the coorse of practice; but, hould, there were two words to be said to that, for what does Father Dollard do but shoves them off, and a fine stout shoulder he had—shoves them off, like childre, and getting his arms about Mary, gives her half a dozen smacks at least—oh, consuming to the one less—that mine was only a cracker** to. The rest, then, all kissed her, one after another, according as they could come in to get one. We then went straight to his Reverence's barn, which had been cleared out for us the day before, by his own directions, where we danced for an hour or two, his Reverence and his Curate along with us.

* There is always a struggle for this at an Irish wedding, where every man is at liberty—even the priest himself—to anticipate the bridegroom if he can.

** Cracker is the small, hard cord which is tied to a rustic whip, in order to make it crack. When a man is considered to be inferior to another in anything, the people say, "he wouldn't make a cracker to his whip."

"When this was over we mounted again, the fiddler taking his ould situation behind my uncle. You know it is usual, after getting the knot tied, to go to a public-house or shebeen, to get some refreshment after the journey; so, accordingly, we went to little lame Larry Spooney's—grandfather to him that was transported the other day for staling Bob Beaty's sheep; he was called Spooney himself, for his sheep-stealing, ever since Paddy Keenan made the song upon him, ending with 'his house never wants a good ram-horn spoon;' so that let people say what they will, these things run in the blood—well, we went to his shebeen house, but the tithe of us couldn't get into it; so we sot on the green before the door, and, by my song, we took (* drank) dacently with him, any how; and, only for my uncle, it's odds but we would have been all fuddled.

"It was now that I began to notish a kind of coolness between my party and the bride's, and for some time I didn't know what to make of it—I wasn't long so, however; for my uncle, who still had his eye about him, comes over to me, and says, 'Shane, I doubt there will be bad work amongst these people, particularly betwixt the Dorans and the Flannagans—the truth is, that the old business of the law-shoot will break out, except they're kept from drink, take my word for it, there will be blood spilled. The running for

the bottle will be a good excuse,' says he, 'so I think we had better move home before they go too far in the drink.'



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“Well, any way, there was truth in this; so, accordingly, the reckoning was ped, and, as this was the thrate of the weddinners to the bride and bridegroom, every one of the men clubbed his share, but neither I nor the girls anything. Ha—ha—ha! Am I alive at all? I never—ha—ha—ha—!—I never laughed so much in one day as I did in that, today I can’t help laughing at it yet. Well, well! when we all got on the top of our horses, and sich other iligant cattle as we had—the crowning of a king was nothing to it. We were now purty well I thank you, as to liquor; and, as the knot was tied, and all safe, there was no end to our good spirits; so, when we took the road, the men were in high blood, particularly Billy Cormick, the tailor, who had a pair of long cavalry spurs upon him, that he was scarcely able to walk in—and he not more nor four feet high. The women, too, were in blood, having faces upon them, with the hate of the day and the liquor, as full as trumpeters.

“There was now a great jealousy among thim that were bint for winning the bottle; and when one horseman would cross another, striving to have the whip hand of him when they’d set off, why you see, his horse would get a cut of the whip itself for his pains. My uncle and I, however, did all we could to pacify them; and their own bad horsemanship, and the screeching of the women, prevented any strokes at that time. Some of them were ripping up ould sores against one another as they went along; others, particularly the youngsters, with their sweethearts behind them, coorting away for the life of them, and some might be heard miles off, singing and laughing; and you may be sure the fiddler behind my uncle wasn’t idle, no more nor another. In this way we dashed on gloriously, till we came in sight of the Dumb-hill, where we were to start for the bottle. And now you might see the men themselves on their saddles, sacks and suggans; and the women tying kerchiefs and shawls about their caps and bonnets, to keep them from flying off, and then gripping their fore-riders hard and fast by the bosoms. When we got to the Dumb-hill, there were five or six fellows that didn’t come with us to the priest’s, but met us with cudgels in their hands, to prevent any of them from starting before the others, and to show fair play.

“Well, when they were all in a lump,—horses, mules, raheries, and asses—some, as I said, with saddles, some with none; and all jist as I tould you before;—the word was given and off they scoured, myself along with the rest; and divil be off me, if ever I saw such another sight but itself before or since. Off they skelped through thick and thin, in a cloud of dust like a mist about us; but it was a mercy that the life wasn’t trampled out of some of us; for before we had gone fifty perches, the one-third of them were sprawling a-top of one another on the road. As for the women, they went down right and left—sometimes bringing the horsemen with them; and many of the boys getting black eyes and bloody noses on the stones. Some of them, being half blind with the motion of the whiskey, turned off the wrong way, and galloped on, thinking they had completely distanced the crowd; and it wasn’t until they cooled a bit that they found out their mistake.



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[Illustration: PAGE 693— How he kept his sate so long has puzzled me]

“But the best sport of all was, when they came to the Lazy Corner, just at Jack Gallagher’s flush,* where the water came out a good way across the road; being in such a flight, they either forgot or didn’t know how to turn the angle properly, and plash went above thirty of them, coming down right on the top of one another, souse in the pool. By this time there was about a dozen of the best horsemen a good distance before the rest, cutting one another up for the bottle: among these were the Dorans and Flanagans; but they, you see, wisely enough, dropped their women at the beginning, and only rode single. I myself didn’t mind the bottle, but kept close to Mary, for fraid that among sich a divil’s pack of half-mad fellows, anything might happen her. At any rate, I was next the first batch: but where do you think the tailor was all this time? Why away off like lightning, miles before them—flying like a swallow: and how he kept his sate so long has puzzled me from that day to this; but, any how, truth’s best—there he was topping the hill ever so far before them. After all, the unlucky crathur nearly missed the bottle; for when he turned to the bride’s house, instead of pulling up as he ought to do—why, to show his horsemanship to the crowd that was out looking at them, he should begin to cut up the horse right and left, until he made him take the garden ditch in full flight, landing him among the cabbages. About four yards or five from the spot where the horse lodged himself was a well, and a purty deep one, by my word; but not a sowl present could tell what become of the tailor, until Owen Smith chanced to look into the well, and saw his long spurs just above the water; so he was pulled up in a purty pickle, not worth the washing; but what did he care? although he had a small body, the sorra one of him but had a sowl big enough for Golias or Sampson the Great.

* Flush is a pool of water that spreads nearly across a road. It is usually fed by a small mountain stream, and in consequence of rising and falling rapidly, it is called “Flash.”

“As soon as he got his eyes clear, right or wrong, he insisted on getting the bottle: but he was late, poor fellow, for before he got out of the garden, two of them comes up—Paddy Doran and Peter Flanagan—cutting one another to pieces, and not the length of your nail between them. Well, well, that was a terrible day, sure enough. In the twinkling of an eye they were both off the horses, the blood streaming from their bare heads, struggling to take the bottle from my father, who didn’t know which of them to give it to. He knew if he’d hand it to one, the other would take offence, and then he was in a great puzzle, striving to reason with them; but long Paddy Doran caught it while he was spaking to Flanagan, and the next instant Flanagan measured him with a heavy loaded whip, and



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left, him stretched upon the stones.—And now the work began: for by this time the friends of both parties came up and joined them. Such knocking down, such roaring among the men, and screeching and clapping of hands and wiping of heads among the women, when a brother, or a son, or a husband would get his gruel! Indeed, out of a fair, I never saw anything to come up to it. But during all this work, the busiest man among the whole set was the tailor, and what was worst of all for the poor creature, he should single himself out against both parties, because you see he thought they were cutting him out of his right to the bottle.

“They had now broken up the garden gate for weapons, all except one of the posts, and fought into the garden; when nothing should serve Billy, but to take up the large heavy post, as if he could destroy the whole faction on each side. Accordingly he came up to big Matthew Flanagan, and was rising it just as if he’d fell him, when Matt, catching him by the nape of the neck, and the waistband of the breeches, went over very quietly, and dropped him a second time, heels up, into the well; where he might have been yet, only for my mother-in-law, who dragged him out with a great deal to do: for the well was too narrow to give him room to turn.

“As for myself and all my friends, as it happened to be my own wedding, and at our own place, we couldn’t take part with either of them; but we endeavored all in our power to red (* Pacify or separate) them, and a tough task we had of it, until we saw a pair of whips going hard and fast among them, belonging to Father Corrigan and Father James, his curate. Well, its wonderful how soon a priest can clear up a quarrel! In five minutes there wasn’t a hand up—instead of that they were ready to run into mice-holes:

“‘What, you murderers,’ says his Reverence, ‘are you bint to have each other’s blood upon your heads; ye vile infidels, ye cursed unchristian Anthemtarians?* are ye going to get yourself hanged like sheep-stalers? down with your sticks, I command you: do you know—will you give yourselves time to see who’s spaking to you—you bloodthirsty set of Episcopalians? I command you, in the name of the Catholic Church and the Blessed Virgin Mary, to stop this instant, if you don’t wish me,’ says he, ‘to turn you into stocks and stones where you stand, and make world’s wonders of you as long as you live.—Doran, if you rise your hand more, I’ll strike it dead on your body, and to your mouth you’ll never carry it while you have breath in your carcass,’ says he.—‘Clear off, you Flanagans, you butchers you—or by St. Domnick I’ll turn the heads round upon your bodies, in the twinkling of an eye, so that you’ll not be able to look a quiet Christian in the face again. Pretty respect you have for the decent couple at whose house you have kicked up such a hubbub. Is this the way people are to be deprived of their dinners on your accounts, you fungaleering thieves!’



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* Antitrinitarians; the peasantry are often extremely fond of hard and long words, which they call tall English.

“Why then, please your Reverence, by the—hem—I say Father Corrigan, it wasn’t my fault, but that villain Flanagan’s, for he knows I fairly won the bottle—and would have distanced him, only that when I was far before him, the vagabone, he galloped across me on the way, thinking to thrip up the horse.’

“‘You lying scoundrel,’ says the priest, ‘how dare you tell me a falsity,’ says he, ‘to my face? how could he gallop across you if you were far before him? Not a word more, or I’ll leave you without a mouth to your face, which will be a double share of provision and bacon saved any way. And, Flanagan, you were as much to blame as he, and must be chastised for your raggamuffianly conduct,’ says he, ‘and so must you both, and all your party, particularly you and he, as the ringleaders. Right well I know it’s the grudge upon the lawsuit you had and not the bottle, that occasioned it: but by St. Peter, to Loughderg both of you must tramp for this.’

“‘Ay, and by St. Pether, they both deserve it as well as a thief does the gallows,’ said a little blustering voice belonging to the tailor, who came forward in a terrible passion, looking for all the world like a drowned rat. ‘Ho, by St. Pether, they do, the vagabones; for it was myself that won the bottle, your Reverence; and by this and by that,’ says he, ‘the bottle I’ll have, or some of their crowns, will crack for it: blood or whiskey I’ll have, your Reverence, and I hope that you’ll assist me.

“‘Why, Billy, are you here?’ says Father Corrigan, smiling down upon the figure the little fellow cut, with his long spurs and his big whip; ‘what in the world tempted you to get on horseback, Billy?’

“‘By the powers, I was miles before them,’ says Billy; ‘and after this day, your Reverence, let no man say that I couldn’t ride a steeplechase across Crocknagooran.’

“‘Why, Billy, how did you stick on at all, at all?’ says his Reverence.

“‘How do I know how I stuck on?’ says Billy, ‘nor whether I stuck on at all or not; all I know is, that I was on horseback leaving the Dumb-hill, and that I found them pulling me by the heels out of the well in the corner of the garden—and that, your Reverence, when the first was only topping the hill there below, as Lanty Magowran tells me who was looking on.’

“‘Well, Billy,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘you must get the bottle; and as for you Dorans and Flanagans, I’ll make examples of you for this day’s work—that you may reckon on. You are a disgrace to the parish, and, what’s more, a disgrace to your priest. How can luck or grace attend the marriage of any young couple that there’s such work at? Before you leave this, you must all shake hands, and promise never to quarrel with each other



while grass grows or water runs; and if you don't, by the blessed St. Domnick, I'll exkimmicate* ye both, and all belonging to you into the bargain; so that ye'll be the pitiful examples and shows to all that look upon you.'



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* Excommunicate. It is generally pronounced as above by the people.

“Well, well, your Reverence,’ says my father-in-law, ‘let all by-gones be by-gones; and please God, they will, before they go, be better friends than ever they were. Go now and clane yourselves, take the blood from about your faces, for the dinner’s ready an hour ago; but if you all respect the place you’re in, you’ll show it, in regard of the young crathurs that’s going, in the name of God, to face the world together, and of coorse wishes that this day at laste should pass in pace and quietness: little did I think there was any friend or neighbor here that would make so little of the place or people, as was done for nothing at all, in the face of the country.’

“God he sees,’ says my mother-in-law, ‘that there’s them here this day we didn’t deserve this from, to rise such a *norratio*, as if the house was a shebeen or a public-house! It’s myself didn’t think either me or my poor coolleen here, not to mention the dacent people she’s joined to, would be made so little of, as to have our place turned into a play-acthur—for a play-acthur couldn’t be worse.’

“Well,’ says my uncle, ‘there’s no help for spilt milk, I tell you, nor for spilt blood either; tare-an-ouny, sure we’re all Irishmen, relations, and Catholics through other, and we oughtn’t to be this way. Come away to the dinner—by the powers, we’ll duck the first man that says a loud word for the remainder of the day. Come, Father Corrigan, and carve the goose, or the geese, for us—for, by my sannies, I bleeve there’s a baker’s dozen of them; but we’ve plenty of Latin for them, and your Reverence and Father James here understands that langidge, any how—larned enough there, I think, gintlemen.’

“That’s right, Brian,’ shouts the tailor—‘that’s right; there must be no fighting: by the powers, the first man attempts it, I’ll brain him—fell him to the earth like an ox, if all belonging to him was in my way.’

“This threat from the tailor went farther, I think, in putting them into good humor nor even what the priest said. They then washed and claned themselves, and accordingly went to their dinners.—Billy himself marched with his terrible whip in his hand, and his long cavalry spurs sticking near ten inches behind him, draggled to the tail like a bantling cock after a shower. But, maybe, there was more draggled tails and bloody noses nor poor Billy’s, or even nor was occasioned by the fight; for after Father Corrigan had come, several of them dodged up, some with broken shins and heads and wet clothes, that they’d got on the way by the mischances of the race, particularly at the Flush. But I don’t know how it was; somehow the people in them days didn’t value these things a straw. They were far hardier then nor they are now, and never went to law at all at all. Why, I’ve often known skulls to be broken, and the people to die afterwards, and there



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would be nothing more about it, except to brake another skull or two for it; but neither crowner's quest, nor judge, nor jury, was ever troubled at all about it. And so sign's on it, people were then innocent, and not up to law and counsellors as they are now. If a person happened to be killed in a fight at a fair or market, why he had only to appear after his death to one of his friends, and get a number of masses offered up for his sowl, and all was right; but now the times are clane altered, and there's nothing but hanging and transporting for such things; although that won't bring the people to life again."

"I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "you had a famous dinner, Shane?"

"'Tis you that may say that, Mr. Morrow," replied Shane: "but the house, you see, wasn't able to hould one-half of us; so there was a dozen or two tables borrowed from the neighbors and laid one after another in two rows, on the green, beside the river that ran along the garden-hedge, side by side. At one end Father Corrigan sat, with Mary and myself, and Father James at the other. There were three five-gallon kegs of whiskey, and I ordered my brother to take charge of them; and there he sat beside them, and filled the bottles as they were wanted—bekase, if he had left that job to strangers, many a spalpeen there would make away with lots of it. Mavrone, such a sight as the dinner was! I didn't lay my eye on the fellow of it since, sure enough, and I'm now an ould man, though I was then a young one. Why there was a pudding boiled in the end of a sack; and troth it was a thumper, only for the straws—for you see, when they were making it, they had to draw long straws acrass in order to keep, it from falling asunder—a fine plan it is, too. Jack M'Kenna, the carpenter, carved it with a hand-saw, and if he didn't curse the same straws, I'm not here. 'Draw them out, Jack,' said Father Corrigan—'draw them out.—It's asy known, Jack, you never ate a polite dinner, you poor awkward spalpeen, or you'd have pulled out the straws the first thing you did, man alive.'

"Such lashins of corned beef, and rounds of beef, and legs of mutton, and bacon—turkeys and geese, and barn-door fowls, young and fat. They may talk as they will, but commend me to a piece of good ould bacon, ate with crock butther, and phaties, and cabbage. Sure enough, they leathered away at everything, but this and the pudding were the favorites. Father Corrigan gave up the carving in less than no time, for it would take him half a day to sarve them all, and he wanted to provide for number one. After helping himself, he set my uncle to it, and maybe he didn't slash away right and left. There was half a dozen gorsoons carrying about the beer in cans, with froth upon it like barm—but that was beer in airnest, Nancy—I'll say no more."



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“When the dinner was over, you would think there was as much left as would sarve a regiment; and sure enough, a right hungry ragged regiment was there to take care of it—though, to tell the truth, there was as much taken into Finigan’s as would be sure to give us all a rousing supper. Why, there was such a troop of beggars—men, women, and childher, sitting over on the sunny side of the ditch, as would make short work of the whole dinner, had they got it. Along with Father Corrigan and me, was my father and mother, and Mary’s parents; my uncle, cousins, and nearest relations on both sides. Oh, it’s Father Corrigan, God rest his sowl, he’s now in glory, and so he was then, also—how he did crow and laugh! ‘Well, Matthew Finigan,’ says-he, ‘I can’t say but I’m happy that your Colleen Bawn here has lit upon a husband that’s no discredit to the family—and it is herself didn’t drive her pigs to a bad market,’ says he. ‘Why, in troth, Father avourneen,’ says my mother-in law, ‘they’d be hard to plase that couldn’t be satisfied with them she got; not saying but she had her pick and choice of many a good offer, and might have got richer matches; but Shane Fadh M’Cawell although you’re sitting there beside my daughter, I’m prouder to see you on my own flure, the husband of my child, nor if she’d got a man with four times your substance.’

“‘Never heed the girls for knowing where to choose,’ says his Reverence, slyly enough: ‘but, upon my word, only she gave us all the slip, to tell the truth, I had another husband than Shane in my eye for her, and that was my own nevvu, Father James’s brother here.’

“‘And I’d be proud of the connection,’ says my father-in-law, ‘but you see, these girls won’t look much to what you or I’ll say, in choosin’ a husband for themselves. How-and-iver, not making little of your nevvu, Father Michael, I say he’s not to be compared with that same bouchal sitting beside Mary there.’

“‘No, nor by the powdhers-o-war, never will,’ says Billy M’Cormick the tailor, who had come over and slipped in on the other side betune Father Corrigan and the bride—‘by the powdhers-o’ war, he’ll never be fit to be compared with me, I tell you, till yesterday comes back again.’

“‘Why, Billy,’ says the priest, ‘you’re every place.’ ‘But where I ought to be!’ says Billy; ‘and that’s hard and fast tackled to Mary Bane, the bride here, instead of that steeple of a fellow she has got,’ says the little cock.

“‘Billy, I thought you were married,’ said Father Corrigan.

“‘Not I, your Reverence,’ says Billy; ‘but I’ll soon do something, Father Michael—I have been threatening this longtime, but I’ll do it at last’

“‘He’s not exactly married, Sir, says my uncle ‘but there’s a colleen present’ (looking at the bridesmaid) ‘that will soon have his name upon her.’

“Very good, Billy,’ says the priest, ‘I hope you will give us a rousing wedding-equal, at least, to Shane Fadh’s.’



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“Why then, your Reverence, except I get sich a darling as Molly Bane, here—and by this and that, it’s you that is the darling Molly asthore—what come over me, at all at all, that I didn’t think of you,’ says the little man, drawing close to her, and poor Mary smiling good-naturedly at his spirit.

“Well, and what if you did get such a darling as Molly Bane, there?’ says his Reverence.

“Why, except I get the likes of her for a wife—upon second thoughts, I don’t like marriage, any way,’ said Billy, winking against the priest—‘I lade such a life as your Reverence; and by the powdhers, it’s a thousand pities that I wasn’t made into a priest, instead of a tailor. For, you see, if I had’ says he, giving a verse of an old song—

‘For you see, if I had,
It’s I’d be the lad
That would show all my people such larning;
And when they’d do wrong,
Why, instead of a song,
I’d give them a lump of a sarmin.’

“Billy,’ says my father-in-law, ‘why don’t you make a hearty dinner, man alive? go back to your sate and finish your male—you’re aiting nothing to signify.’ ‘Me!’ says Billy—‘why, I’d scorn to ate a hearty dinner; and, I’d have you to know, Matt Finigan, that it wasn’t for the sake of your dinner I came here, but in regard to your family, and bekase I wished him well that’s sitting beside your daughter: and it ill becomes your father’s son to cast up your dinner in my face, or any one of my family; but a blessed minute longer I’ll not stay among you. Give me your hand, Shane Fadh, and you, Mary—may goodness grant you pace and happiness every night and day you both rise out of your beds. I made that coat your husband has on his back beside you—and a, betther fit was never made; but I didn’t think it would come to my turn to have my dinner cast up this a-way, as if I was aiting it for charity.’

“Hut, Billy,’ says I, ‘sure it was all out of kindness; he didn’t mane to offind you.’

“It’s no matter,’ says Billy, beginning to cry, ‘he did offend me; and it’s, low days with me to bear an affront from him, or the likes of him; but by the powdhers-o’-war,’ says he, getting into a great rage, ‘I won’t bear it,—only as you’re an old man yourself, I’ll not rise my hand to you; but, let any man now that has the heart to take up your quarrel, come out and stand before me on the sod here.’

“Well, by this time, you’d tie all that were present with three straws, to see Billy stripping himself, and his two wrists not thicker than drumsticks. While the tailor was raging, for he was pretty well up with what he had taken, another person made his appearance at the far end of the boreen* that led to the green where we sot. He was mounted upon the top of a sack that was upon the top of a sober-looking baste enough—God knows;



he jogging along at his ase, his legs dangling down from the sack on each side, and the long skirts of his coat hanging down behind him. Billy was now getting pacified, bekase they gave way to him a little; so the fun went round, and they sang, roared, danced, and coorted, right and left.



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* A small pathway or bridle road leading to a farm-house.

“When the stranger came as far as the skirt of the green, he turned the horse over quite nathural to the wedding; and, sure enough, when he jogged up, it was Friar Rooney himself, with a sack of oats, for he had been *questin*.^{*} Well, sure the ould people couldn’t do less nor all go over to put the *failtah*^{**} on him. ‘Why, then,’ says my father and mother-in-law, ’tis yourself, Friar Rooney, that’s as welcome as the flowers of May; and see who’s here before you—Father Corrigan, and Father Dollard.’

* *Questin*—When an Irish priest or friar collects corn or money from the people in a gratuitous manner, the act is called “questin.”

** Welcome.

“Thank you, thank you, Molshy—thank you, Matthew—troth, I know that ’tis I am welcome.’

“Ay, and you’re welcome again, Father Rooney,’ said my father, going down and shaking hands with him, ’and I’m proud to see you here. Sit down, your Reverence—here’s everything that’s good, and plinty of it, and if you don’t make much of yourself, never say an ill fellow dealt with you.’

“The friar stood while my father was speaking, with a pleasant, contented face upon him, only a little roguish and droll.

“‘Hah! Shane Fadh,’ says he, smiling dryly at me, ’you did them all, I see. You have her there, the flower of the parish, blooming beside you; but I knew as much six months ago, ever since I saw you bid her good-night at the hawthorn. Who looked back so often, Mary, eh? Ay, laugh and blush—do—throth, ’twas I that caught you, but you didn’t see me, though. Well, a colleen, and if you did, too, you needn’t be ashamed of your bargain, any how. You see, the way I came to persave yez that evening was this—but I’ll tell it, by and by. In the mane time,’ says he, sitting down and attacking a fine piece of corn-beef and greens, ‘I’ll take care of a certain acquaintance of mine,’ says he. ‘How are you, reverend gintlemen of the Secularity? You’ll permit a poor friar to sit and ate his dinner, in your presence, I humbly hope.’

“‘Frank,’ says Father Corrigan, ’lay your hand upon your conscience, or upon your stomach, which is the same thing, and tell us honestly, how many dinners you eat on your travels among my parishioners this day.’

“‘As I’m a sinner, Michael, this is the only thing to be called a dinner I eat this day;—Shane Fadh—Mary, both your healths, and God grant you all kinds of luck and happiness, both here and hereafter! All your healths in gineral! gintlemen seculars!’



“Thank you, Frank,’ said Father Corrigan; how did you speed to-day?’

“How can any man speed, that comes after you?’ says the Friar; ‘I’m after travelling the half of the parish for that poor bag of oats that you see standing against the ditch.’

“In other words, Frank,’ says the Priest, ‘you took Allhadhawan in your way, and in about half a dozen houses filled your sack, and then turned your horse’s head towards the good cheer, by way of accident only.’



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“And was it by way of accident, Mr. Secular, that I got you and that illoquent young gntleman, your curate, here before me? Do you feel that, man of the world? Father James, your health, though—you’re a good young man as far as saying nothing goes; but it’s better to sit still than to rise up and fall, so I commend you for your discretion,’ says he; ‘but I’m afeared your master there won’t make you much fitter for the kingdom of heaven any how.’

“I believe, Father Corrigan,’ says my uncle, who loved to see the priest and the friar at it, ‘that you’ve met with your match—I think Father Rooney’s able for you.’

“Oh, sure,’ says Father Corrigan, he was joker to the college of the Sorebones (* Sorbonne) in Paris; he got as much education as enabled him to say mass in Latin, and to beg oats in English, for his jokes.’

“Troth, and,’ says the friar, ‘if you were to get your larning on the same terms, you’d be guilty of very little knowledge; why, Michael, I never knew you to attempt a joke but once, and I was near shedding tears, there was something so very sorrowful in it.’

“This brought the laugh against the priest—‘Your health, Molshy,’ says he, winking at my mother-in-law, and then giving my uncle, who sat beside him, a nudge; ‘I believe, Brian, I’m giving it to him.’ ”Tis yourself that is,’ says my uncle; ‘give him a wipe or two more.’ ‘Wait till he answers the last,’ says the friar.

“He’s always joking,’ says Father James, ‘when he thinks he’ll make any thing by it.’

“Ah!’ says the friar, ‘then God help you both if you were left to your jokes for your feeding; for a poorer pair of gentlemen wouldn’t be found in Christendom.’

“And I believe,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘if you depinded for your feeding upon your divinity instead of your jokes, you’d be as poor as a man in the last stage of a consumption.’

“This drew the laugh against the friar, who smiled himself; but he was a dry man that never laughed much.

“Sure,’ says the friar, who was seldom at a loss, ‘I have yourself and your nephew for examples that it’s possible to live and be well fed without divinity.’

“At any rate,’ says my uncle, putting in his tongue, ‘I think you’re both very well able to make divinity a joke betune you,’ says he.

“Well done, Brian,’ says the friar, ‘and so they are, for I believe it is the only subject they can joke upon! and I beg your pardon, Michael, for not excepting it before; on that subject I allow you to be humorsome.’



“If that be the case, then,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘I must give up your company, Frank, in order to avoid the force of bad example; for you’re so much in the habit of joking on everything else, that you’re not able to accept even divinity itself.’

“You may aisily give me up,’ says the friar, ‘but how will you be able to forget Father Corrigan? I’m afeard you’ll find his acquaintance as great a detriment to yourself, as it is to others in that respect.’



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“What makes you say,’ says Father James, who was more in airnest than the rest, ‘that my uncle won’t make me fit for the kingdom of heaven?’

“I had a pair of rasons for it, Jemmy,’ says the friar; ‘one is, that he doesn’t understand the subject himself; another is, that you haven’t capacity for it, even if he did. You’ve a want of natural parts—a *whackuum* here’ pointing to his forehead.

“I beg your pardon, Frank,’ says Father James ‘I deny your premises, and I’ll now argue in Latin with you, if you wish, upon any subject you please.’

“Come, then,’ says the friar,—‘Kid eat ivy mare eat hay.’

“Kid—what?’ says the other.

“Kid eat ivy mare eat hay,’ answers the friar.

“I don’t know what you’re at,’ says Father James, ‘but I’ll argue in Latin with you as long as you wish.’

“Tut man,’ says Father Rooney, ‘Latin’s for school-boys; but come, now, I’ll take you in another language—I’ll try you in Greek—*In-mud-eel-is in-clay-none-is in-fir-tar-is in-oak-no ne-is.*’

“The curate looked at him, amazed, not knowing what answer to make. At last says he, ‘I don’t profess to know Greek, bekase I never larned it—but stick to the Latin, and I’m not afeard of you.’

“Well, then,’ says the friar, ‘I’ll give you a trial at that—*Aflat te canis ter—Forte dux fel flat in guttur.*’

“A flat tay-canisther—Forty ducks fell flat in the gutthers!’ says Father James,—‘why that’s English!’

“English!’ says the friar, ‘oh, good-bye to you, Mr. Secular; ‘if that’s your knowledge of Latin, you’re an honor to your tachers and to your cloth.’

“Father Corrigan now laughed heartily at the puzzling the friar gave Father James. ‘James,’ says he, ‘never heed him; he’s only pesthering you with bog-Latin; but, at any rate to do him justice, he’s not a bad Scholar, I can tell you that.... Your health, Prank, you droll crathur—your health. I have only one fault to find with you, and that is, that you fast and mortify yourself too much. Your fasting has reduced you from being formerly a friar of very genteel dimensions to a cut of corpulency that smacks strongly of penance—fifteen stone at least.



“‘Why,’ says the friar, looking down quite pleased, entirely, at the cut of his own waist, Uch, among ourselves, was no trifle, and giving a growl of a laugh—the most he ever gave, ‘if what you pray here benefits you in the *next life* as much as what *I fast* does for me *in this*, it will be well for the world in general Michael.’

“‘How can you say, Frank,’ says Father ‘with such a carbage as that, you’re a poor friar? Upon my credit, when you die, I think the angels will have a job of it in wafting you upwards.’”

“‘Jemmy, man, was it *you* that said it?—why, my light’s beginning to shine upon you, or you never could have got out so much,’ says Father Rooney, putting his hands over his brows, and looking up towardst him; ‘but if you ever read scripthur, which I suppose you’re not overburdened with, you would know that it says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” but not blessed are the poor in flesh—now, mine is spiritual poverty.’



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“Very true, Frank,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘I believe there’s a great dearth and poverty of spirituality about you, sure enough. But of all kinds of poverty, commend me to a friar’s. Voluntary poverty’s something, but it’s the divil entirely for a man to be poor against his will. You friars boast of this voluntary poverty; but if there’s a fat bit in any part of the parish, we, that are the lawful clergy, can’t eat it, but you’re sure to drop in, just in the nick of time, with your voluntary poverty.’

“I’m sure, if we do,’ says the friar, ‘it’s nothing out of your pocket, Michael. I declare I believe you begrudge us the air we breathe. But don’t you know very well that our ordhers are apostolic, and that, of coorse, we have a more primitive appearance than you have.’

“No such thing,’ says the other; ‘you, and the parsons, and the fat bishops, are too far from the right place—the only difference between you is, that you are fat and lazy by toleration, whereas the others are fat and lazy by authority. You are fat and lazy on your ould horses, jogging about from house to house, and stuffing yourselves either at the table of other people’s parishioners, or in your own convents in Dublin and elsewhere. They are rich, bloated gluttons, going about in their coaches, and wallying in wealth. Now, we are the golden mean, Frank, that live upon a little, and work hard for it.’

“Why, you cormorant,’ says the friar, a little nettled, for the dhrop was beginning to get up into his head, ‘sure if we’re fat by toleration, we’re only tolerably fat, my worthy secular!’

“You see,’ says the friar, in a whisper to my uncle, ‘how I sobered them in the larning, and they are good scholars for all that, but not near so deep read as myself.’ ‘Michael,’ says he, ‘now that I think on it—sure I’m to be at Denis O’Flaherty’s Month’s mind on Thursday next.’

“Indeed I would not doubt you,’ says Father Corrigan; ‘you wouldn’t be apt to miss it.’

“Why, the widdy Flaherty asked me yesterday, and I think that’s proof enough that I’m not going unsent for.’

“By this time the company was hard and fast at the punch, the songs, and the dancing. The dinner had been cleared off, except what was before the friar, who held out wonderfully, and the beggars and shulers were clawing and scoulding one another about the divide. The dacentest of us went into the house for a while, taking the fiddler with us, and the rest, with the piper, staid on the green to dance, where they were soon joined by lots of the counthry people, so that in a short time there was a large number entirely. After sitting for some time within, Mary and I began, you may be sure, to get unasy, sitting palavering among a parcel of ould sober folks; so, at last, out we slipped, and the few other dacent young people that were with us, to join the dance, and shake

our toe along with the rest of them. When we made our appearance, the flure was instantly cleared for us, and then she and I danced the *Humors of Glin*.



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“Well, it’s no matter—it’s all past now, and she lies low; but I may say that it wasn’t very often danced in better style since, I’d wager. Lord, bless us, what a drame the world is! The darling of my heart you war, avourneen machree. I think I see her with the modest smile upon her face, straight, and fair, and beautiful, and—hem—and when the dance was over, how she stood leaning upon me, and my heart within melting to her, and the look she’d give into my eyes and my heart, too, as much as to say, ‘This is the happy day with me;’ and the blush still would fly across her face, when I’d press her, unknownst to the bystanders, against my beating heart. A *suilish machree*, (* Light of my heart.) she is now gone from me—lies low, and it all appears like a drame to me; but—hem—God’s will be done!—sure she’s happy—och, och!!

“Many a shake hands did I get from the neighbors’ sons, wishing me joy; and I’m sure I couldn’t do less than thrate them to a glass, you know; and ‘twas the same way with Mary: many a neighbors’ daughter, that she didn’t do more nor know by eyesight, maybe, would come up and wish her happiness in the same manner, and she would say to me, ‘Shane, avourneen, that’s such a man’s daughter—they’re a dacent friendly people, and we can’t do less nor give her a glass.’ I, of coorse, would go down and bring them over, after a little pulling—making, you see, as if they wouldn’t come—to where my brother was handing out the native.

“In this way we passed the time till the evening came on, except that Mary and the bridesmaid were sent for to dance with the priests, who were within at the punch, in all their glory,—Friar Rooney along with them as jolly as a prince. I and my man, on seeing this, were for staying with the company; but my mother, who ‘twas that came for them, says, ‘Never mind the boys, Shane, come in with the girls, I say. You’re just wanted at the present time, both of you, follow me for an hour or two, till their Reverences within have a bit of a dance with the girls, in the back room; we don’t want to gother a crowd about them.’ Well, we went in, sure enough, for awhile; but, I don’t know how it was, I didn’t at all feel comfortable with the priests; for, you see, I’d rather sport my day figure with the boys and girls upon the green: so I gives Jack *the hard word** and in we went, when, behold you, there was Father Corrigan planted upon the side of a settle, Mary along with him, waiting till they’d have the fling of a dance together, whilst the Curate was capering on the flure before the bridesmaid, who was a purty dark-haired girl, to the tune of ‘Kiss my lady;’ and the friar planted between my mother and my mother-in-law, one of his legs stretched out on a chair, he singing some funny song or other, that brought the tears to their eyes with laughing.

* A pass-word, sign, or brief intimation, touching something of which a man is ignorant, that he may act accordingly.



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“Whilst Father James was dancing with the bridesmaid, I gave Mary the wink to! come away from Father Corrigan, wishing, as I told you, to get out amongst the youngsters once more; and Mary, herself, to tell the truth, although he was the priest, was very willing to do so. I went over to her, and says, 'Mary, asthore, there's a friend without that wishes to spake to you.'

“‘Well,’ says Father Corrigan, 'tell that friend that she's better employed, and that they must wait, whoever they are. I'm giving your wife, Shane,' says he, 'a little good advice that she won't be the worse for, and she can't go now.'

“Mary, in the meantime, had got up, and was coming away, when his Reverence wanted her to stay till they'd finished their dance. 'Father Corrigan,' says she, 'let me go now, sir, if you please, for they would think it bad threatment of me not to go out to them.'

“‘Troth, and you'll do no such thing, acushla,' says he, spaking so sweet to her; 'let them come in if they want you. Shane, says his Reverence, winking at me, and spiking in a whisper, 'stay here, you and the girls, till we take a hate at the dancing—don't you know that the ould women here, and me will have to talk over some things about the fortune; you'll maybe get more nor you expect. Here, Molshy,' says he to my mother-in-law, 'don't let the youngsters out of this.'”

“‘Musha, Shane, ahagur,' say's the ould woman 'why will yez go and lave the place; sure you needn't be dashed before them—they'll dance themselves.'

“Accordingly we stayed in the room; but just on the word, Mary gives one spring away, leaving his Reverence by himself on the *settle*. 'Come away,' says she, 'lave them there, and let us go to where I can have a dance with yourself, Shane.'

“Well, I always loved Mary, but at that minute, if it would save her, I think I could spill my heart's blood for her. 'Mary,' says I full to the throat, 'Mary, acushla agus asthore machree,* I could lose my life for you.'

The very pulse and delight of my heart.

“She looked in my face, and the tears came into her—yes—'Shane, achora,' says she, 'amn't I your happy girl, at last?' She was leaning over against my breast; and what answer do you think I made?—I pressed her to my heart: I did more—I took off my hat, and looking up to God, I thanked him with tears in my eyes, for giving me such a treasure. 'Well, come now,' says she, 'to the green;' so we went—and it's she that was the girl, when she did go among them, that threw them all into the dark for beauty and figure; as fair as a lily itself did she look—so tall and illegant, that you wouldn't think she was a farmer's daughter at all; so we left the priests dancing away, for we could do no good before them.



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“When we had danced an hour or so, them that the family had the greatest regard for were brought in unknown to the rest, to drink tay. Mary planted herself beside me, and would sit nowhere else; but the friar got beside the bridesmaid, and I surely observed that many a time she’d look over, likely to split, at Mary, and it’s Mary herself that gave her many’s a wink, to come to the other side; but, you know, out of manners, she was obliged to sit quietly, though among ourselves it’s she that was like a hen on a hot griddle, beside the ould chap. It was now that the bride-cake was got. Ould Sony Mary marched over, and putting the bride on her feet, got up on a chair and broke it over her head, giving round a *fadge** of it to every young person in the house, and they again to their acquaintances: but, lo and behold you, who should insist on getting a whang of it but the friar, which he rolled up in a piece of paper, and put it in his pocket. ‘I’ll have good fun,’ says he, ‘dividing this to-morrow among the colleens when I’m collecting my oats—the sorra one of me but I’ll make them give me the worth of it of something, if it was only a fat hen or a square of bacon.’

* A liberal portion torn off a thick cake.

“After tay the ould folk got full of talk; the youngsters danced round them; the friar sung like a thrush, and told many a droll story. The tailor had got drunk a little too early, and had to be put to bed, but he was now as fresh as ever, and able to dance a hornpipe, which he did on a door. The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his courtship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berial, when they were at it as fresh as ever. Several of those that were at the wedding were lying drunk about the ditches, or roaring, and swaggering, and singing about the place. The night falling, those that were dancing on the green removed to the barn. Father Corrigan and Father James weren’t ill off; but as for the friar, although he was as pleasant as a lark, there was hardly any such thing as making him tipsy. Father Corrigan wanted him to dance—‘What!’ says he, ‘would you have me to bring on an earthquake, Michael?—but who ever heard of a follower of St. Domnick, bound by his vow to voluntary poverty and mortification——young couple, your health—will anybody tell mo who mixed this, for they’ve knowledge worth a folio of the fathers——poverty and mortification, going to shake his heel? By the bones of St. Domnick, I’d deserve to be suspended if I did. Will no one tell me who mixed this, I say, for they had a jewel of a hand at it?—Och—

‘Let parsons prache and pray—
Let priests to pray and prache, sir;
What’s the rason they
Don’t practise what they tache, sir?
Ferral, orral, loll,
Ferral, orral, laddy—



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Sho da slainthah ma collenee agus ma bouchalee. Hoigh, oigh, oigh, healths all! gintlemen seculars! Molshy,' says the friar to my mother-in-law, 'send that bocaun* to bed—poor fellow, he's almost off—rouse yourself, James! It's aisy to see that he's but young at it yet—that's right—he's sound asleep—just toss him into bed, and in an hour or so he'll be as fresh as a daisy.

* A soft, unsophisticated youth.

Let parsons prache and pray—
----Forral, orral, loll.'

"For dear's sake, Father Rooney,' says my uncle, running in, in a great hurry, 'keep yourself quiet a little; here's the Squire and Mister Francis coming over to fulfil their promise; he would have come up airlier, he says, but that he was away all day at the 'sizes.'

"Very well,' says the friar, 'let him come—who's afeard—mind yourself, Michael.'

"In a minute or two they came in, and we all rose up of course to welcome them. The Squire shuck hands with the ould people, and afterwards with Mary and myself, wishing us all happiness, then with the two clergymen, and introduced Master Frank to them; and the friar made the young chap sit beside him. The mather then took a sate himself, and looked on while they were dancing, with a smile of good-humor on his face—while they, all the time, would give new touches and trebles, to show off all their steps before him. He was landlord both to my father and father-in-law; and it's he that was the good man, and the gintleman every inch of him. They may all talk as they will, but commend me, Mr. Morrow, to some of the ould squires of former times for a landlord. The priests, with all their larning, were nothing to him for good breeding—he appeared so free, and so much at his ase, and even so respectful, that I don't think there was one in the house but would put their two hands under his feet to do him a sarvice.

"When he sat a while, my mother-in-law came over with a glass of nice punch that she had mixed, at least equal to what the friar praised so well, and making a low curtshy, begged pardon for using such freedom with his honor, but hoped that he would just taste a little to the happiness of the young couple. He then drank our healths, and shuck hands with us both a second time, saying—although I can't, at all at all, give it in anything like his own words—'I am glad,' says he, to Mary's parents, 'that your daughter has made such a good choice;'—throth he did—the Lord be merciful to his sowl—God forgive me for what I was going to say, and he a Protestant;—but if ever one of yez went to heaven, Mr. Morrow, he did;—' such a prudent choice; and I Congr—con—grathu-late you,' says he to my father, 'on your connection with so industrious and respectable a family. You are now beginning the world for yourselves,' says he to Mary and me, 'and I



cannot propose a better example to you both than that of your respective parents. From this forrid,' says he, 'I'm



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to consider you my tenants; and I wish to take this opportunity of informing you both, that should you act up to the opinion I entertain of you, by an attentive course of industry and good management, you will find in me an encouraging and indulgent landlord. I know, Shane,' says he to me, smiling a little, knowingly enough too, 'that you have been a little wild or so, but that's past, I trust. You have now serious duties to perform, which you cannot neglect—but you will not neglect them; and be assured, I say again, that I shall feel pleasure in rendering you every assistance in my power in the cultivation and improvement of your farm.'—'Go over, both of you,' says my father, 'and thank his honor, and promise to do everything he says.' Accordingly, we did so; I made my scrape as well as I could, and Mary blushed to the eyes, and dropp'd her curtsy.

“‘Ah!’ says the friar, ‘see what it is to have a good landlord and a Christian gentleman to dale with. This is the feeling which should always bind a landlord and his tenants together. If I know your character, Squire Whitethorn, I believe you’re not the man that would put a Protestant tenant over the head of a Catholic one, which shows, sir, your own good sense; for what is a difference of religion, when people do what they ought to do? Nothing but the name. I trust, sir, we shall meet in a better place than this—both Protestant and Catholic’

“‘I am happy, sir,’ says the Squire, ‘to hear such principles from a man who I thought was bound to hold different opinions.’

“‘Ah, sir!’ says the friar, ‘you little know who you’re talking to, if you think so. I happened to be collecting a taste of oats, with the permission of my friend Doctor Corrigan here, for I’m but a poor friar, sir, and dropped in *by mere accident*; but, you know the hospitality of our country, Squire; and that’s enough—go they would not allow me, and I was mentioning to this young gentleman, your son, how we collected the oats, and he insisted on my calling—a generous, noble child! I hope, sir, you have got proper instructors for him?’

“‘Yes,’ said the Squire; ‘I’m taking care of that point.’

“‘What do you think, sir, but he insists on my calling over to-morrow, that he may give me his share of oats, as I told him that I was a friar, and that he was a little parishioner of mine: but I added, that that wasn’t right of him, without his papa’s consent.’

“‘Well, sir,’ says the Squire, ‘as he has promised, I will support him; so if you’ll ride over to-morrow, you shall have a sack of oats—at all events I shall send you a sack in the course of the day.’



“I humbly thank you, sir,’ says Father Rooney and I thank my noble little parishioner for his generosity to the poor old friar—God mark you to grace, my dear; and wherever you go, take the ould man’s blessing along with you.’

“They then bid us good-night, and we rose and saw them to the door.



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“Father Corrigan now appeared to be getting sleepy. While this was going on, I looked about me, but couldn’t see Mary. The tailor was just beginning to get a little hearty once more. Supper waa talked of, but there was no one that could ate anything; even the friar, was against it. The clergy now got their horses, the friar laving his oats behind him; for we promised to send them home, and something more along with them the next day. Father James was roused up, but could hardly stir with a *heddick*. Father Corrigan was correct enough; but when the friar got up, he ran a little to the one side, upsetting Sonsy Mary that sat a little beyond him. He then called over my mother-in-law to the dresser, and after some collogin (* whispering) she slipped two fat fowl, that had never been touched, into one of his coat pockets, that was big enough to hould a leg of mutton. My father then called me over and said, ‘Shane,’ says he, ‘hadn’t you better slip Father Rooney a bottle or two of that whiskey; there’s plenty of it there that wasn’t touched, and you won’t be a bit the poorer of it, may be, this day twelve months.’ I accordingly dropped two bottles of it into the other pocket, so that his Reverence was well balanced any how.

“‘Now,’ said he, ‘before I go, kneel down both of you, till I give you my benediction.’

“We accordingly knelt down, and he gave us his blessing in Latin before he bid us good-night!

“After they went, Mary threw the stocking—all the unmarried folks coming in the dark, to see who it would hit. Bless my sowl, but she was the droll Mary—for what did she do, only put a big brogue of her father’s into it, that was near two pounds weight; and who should it hit on the bare sconce, but Billy Cormick, the tailor—who thought he was fairly shot, for it levelled the crathur at once; though that wasn’t hard to do any how.

“This was the last ceremony: and Billy was well continted to get the knock, for you all know, whoever the stocking strikes upon is to be married first. After this, my mother and mother-in-law set them to the dancing—and ’twas themselves that kept it up till long after daylight the next morning—but first they called me into the next room where Mary was; and—and—so ends my wedding; by the same token that I’m as dry as a stick.”

“Come, Nancy,” says Andy Morrow, “replenish again for us all, with a double measure for Shane Fadh—because he well desarves it.”

“Why, Shane,” observed Alick, “you must have a terrible memory of your own, or you couldn’t tell it all so exact.”

“There’s not a man in the four provinces has sich a memory,” replied Shane. “I never hard that story yet, but I could repate it in fifty years afterwards. I could walk up any town in the kingdom, and let me look at the signs and I would give them to you agin jist exactly as they stood.”

Thus ended the account of Shane Fadh's wedding; and, after finishing the porter, they all returned home, with an understanding that they were to meet the next night in the same place.



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LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.

The succeeding evening found them all assembled about Ned's fireside in the usual manner; where M'Roarkin, after a wheezy fit of coughing and a draught of Nancy's Porter, commenced to give them an account of Larry M'Farland's Wake. We have observed before, that M'Roarkin was desperately asthmatic, a circumstance which he felt to be rather an unpleasant impediment to the indulgence either of his mirth or sorrow. Every chuckle at his own jokes ended in a disastrous fit of coughing; and when he became pathetic, his sorrow was most ungraciously dissipated by the same cause; two facts which were highly relished by his audience.

"Larry M'Farland, when a young man, was considered the best laborer within a great way of him; and no servant-man in the parish got within five shillings a quarter of his wages. Often and often, when his time would be near out, he'd have offers from the rich farmers and gentlemen about him, of higher terms; so that he was seldom with one master more nor a year at the very most. He could handle a flail with e'er a man that ever stepped in black leather; and at spade-work there wasn't his equal. Indeed, he had a brain for everything: he could thatch better nor many that earned their bread by it; could make a slide-car, straddle, or any other rough carpenter work, that it would surprise you to think of it; could work a kish or side creel beautifully; mow as much as any two men, and go down a ridge of corn almost as fast as you could walk; was a great hand at ditching, or draining meadows and bogs; but above all things he was famous for building hay-ricks and corn-stacks; and when Squire Farmer used to enter for the prize at the yearly plowing-match, he was sure to borrow the loan of Larry from whatever master he happened to be working with. And well he might, for the year out of four that he hadn't Larry he lost the prize: and every one knew that if Larry had been at the tail of his plough, they would have had a tighter job of it in beating him.

"Larry was a light, airy young man, that knew his own value; and was proud enough, God knows, of what he could do. He was, indeed, too much up to sport and diversion, and never knew his own mind for a week. It was against him that he never stayed long in one place; for when he got a house of his own afterwards, he had no one that cared anything in particular about him. Whenever any man would hire him, he'd take care to have Easter and Whiss'n Mondays to himself, and one or two of the Christmas Maragahmores.* He was also a great dancer, fond of the dhrop—and used to dress above his station: going about with a shop-cloth coat, cassimoor small-clothes, and a Caroline hat; so that you would little think he was a poor sarvint-man, laboring for his wages. One way or other, the money never staid long with him; but he had light spirits, depended entirely on his good hands, and cared very little about the world, provided he could take his own fling out of it.



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* Anglice—Big markets. There are three of these held before Christmas, and one or two before Easter, to enable the country folks to make their markets, and prepare for the more comfortably celebrating those great convivial festivals. They are almost as numerously attended as fairs; for which reason they are termed “big markets.”

“In this way he went on from year to year, changing from one master to another; every man that would employ him thinking he might get him to stop with him for a constancy. But it was all useless; he’d be off after half a year, or sometimes a year at the most, for he was fond of roving; and that man would never give himself any trouble about him afterwards; though, may be if he had continted himself with him, and been sober and careful, he would be willing to assist and befriend him, when he might stand in need of assistance.

“It’s an ould proverb, that ‘birds of a feather flock together,’ and Larry was a good proof of this, There was in the same neighborhood a young woman name Sally Lowry, who was just the other end of himself (* meaning his counterpart) for a pair of good hands, a love of dress and of dances. She was well-looking, too, and knew it; light and showy, but a tight and clane sarvint, any way. Larry and she, in short, began to coort, and were pulling a coard together for as good as five or six years. Sally, like Larry, always made a bargain, when hiring, to have the holly-days to herself; and on these occasions she and Larry would meet and sport their figure; going off with themselves, as soon as mass would, be over, into Ballymavourneen, where he would collect a pack of fellows about him, and she a set of her own friends; and there they’d sit down and drink for the length of a day, laving themselves without a penny of whatever little aiming the dress left behind it; for Larry was never right, except when he was giving a thrate to some one or other.

“After corrousing away till evening, they’d then set off to a dance; and when they’d stay there till it would be late, he should see her home, of coorse, never parting till they’d settle upon meeting another day.

“At last they got fairly tired of this, and resolved to take one another for better for worse. Indeed they would have done this long ago, only that they could never get as much together as would pay the priest. Howandever, Larry spoke to his brother, who was a sober, industrious boy, that had laid by his *scollops* for the windy-day,* and tould him that Sally Lowry and himself were going to yoke for life. Tom was a well-hearted, friendly lad, and thinking that Sally, who bore a good name for being such a clane sarvint, would make a good wife, he lent Larry two guineas, which along with two more that Sally’s aunt, who had no childhre of her own, gave her, enabled them to over their difficulties and get married. Shortly after this, his brother Tom followed his example; but as he had saved something, he made up to Val Slevin’s daughter, that had a fortune of twenty guineas, a cow and a heifer, with two good chaff beds and bedding.



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* In Irish the proverb is—"Ha naha la na guiha la na scuilipagh:" that is, the windy or stormy day is not that on which the scollops should be cut. Scollops are osier twigs, sharpened at both ends, and inserted in the thatch, to bind it at the eave and rigging. The proverb inculcates preparation for future necessity.

"Soon after Tom's marriage, he comes to Larry one day and says 'Larry, you and I are now going to face the world; we're both young', healthy, and willin' to work—so are our wives; and it's bad if we can't make out bread for ourselves, I think.'

"'Thru for you, Tom,' says Larry, 'and what's to hinder us? I only wish we had a farm, and you'd see we'd take good bread out of it: for my part there's not another *he* in the country I'd turn my back upon for managing a farm, if I had one.'

"' Well,' says the other, 'that's what I wanted to overhaul as we're together; Squire Dickson's steward was telling me yesterday, as I was coming up from my father-in-law's, that his master has a farm of fourteen acres to set at the present time; the one the Nultys held, that went last spring to America—'twould be a dacent little take between us.'

"'I know every inch of it,' says Larry, 'and good strong land it is, but it was never well wrought; the Nultys weren't fit for it at all; for one of them didn't know how to folly a plough. I'd engage to make that land turn out as good crops as e'er a farm within ten miles of it.'

"'I know that, Larry,' says Tom, 'and Squire Dickson knows that no man could handle it to more advantage. Now if you join me in it, whatever means I have will be as much yours as mine; there's two snug houses under the one roof, with out-houses and all, in good repair—and if Sally and Biddy will pull manfully along with us, I don't see, with the help of Almighty Grod, why we shouldn't get on dacently, and soon be well and comfortable to live.'

"'Comfortable!' says Larry, 'no, but wealthy itself, Tom: and let us *at* it at wanst; Squire Dickson knows what I can do as well as any man in Europe; and I'll engage won't be hard upon us for the first year or two; our best plan is to go to-morrow, for fraid some-other might get the foreway of us.'

"The Squire knew very well that two better boys weren't to be met with than the same M'Farlands, in the way of knowing how to manage land; and although he had his doubts as to Larry's light and careless ways, yet he had good depindance out of the brother and thought, on the whole, that they might do very-well together. Accordingly, he set them the farm at a reasonable rint, and in a short time they were both living on it with their two wives. They divided the fourteen acres into aquil parts; and for fraid were would be any grumbling between them about better or worse, Tom proposed that they

should draw lots, which was agreed to by Larry; but, indeed, there was very little difference in the two halves; for Tom



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took care, by the way he divided them, that none of them should have any reason to complain. From the time they went to live upon their farms, Tom was up early and down late, improving it—paid attention to nothing else; axed every man's opinion as to what crop would be best for such a spot, and to tell the truth he found very few, if any, able to instruct him so well as his own brother Larry. He was no such laborer, however, as Larry—but what he was short in, he made up by perseverance and care.

“In the course 'of two or three years you would hardly believe how he got on, and his wife was every bit equal to him. She spun the yarn for the linen that made their own shirts and sheeting, bought an odd pound of wool now and then when she could get it cheap, and put it past till she had a stone or so; she would then sit down and spin it—get it wove and dressed; and before one would know anything about it she'd have the making of a decent comfortable coat for Tom, and a bit of heather-colored druggit for her own gown, along with a piece of striped red and blue for a petticoat—all at very little cost.

“It wasn't so with Larry. In the beginning, to be sure, while the fit was on him, he did very well; only that he would go off an odd time to a dance; or of a market or fair day, when he'd see the people pass by, dressed in their best clothes, he'd take the notion, and set off with himself, telling Sally that he'd just go in for a couple of hours, to see how the markets were going on.

“It's always an unpleasant thing for a body to go to a fair or market without anything in their pocket; accordingly, if money was in the house, he'd take some of it with him, for fear that any friend or acquaintance might thrate him; and then it would be a poor, man-spirited thing, he would say, to take another man's thrate, without giving one for it. He'd seldom have any notion, though, of breaking in upon or spending the money, he only brought it to keep his pocket, just to prevent him from being shamed, should he meet a friend.

“In the meantime, Sally, in his absence, would find herself lonely, and as she hadn't, may be, seen her aunt for some time before, she'd lock the door, and go over to spend a while with her; or take a trip as far as her old mistress's place to see the family. Many a thing people will have to say to one another about the pleasant times they had together, or several other subjects best known to themselves, of course. Larry would come home in her absence, and finding the door locked, would slip down to Squire Dickson's, to chat with the steward or gardener, or with the servants in the kitchen.



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“You all remimber Torn Hance, that kept the public-house at Tullyvernon cross-roads, a little above the. Squire’s—at laste, most of you do—and ould Willy Butledge, the fiddler, that spint his time between Tom’s and the big house—God, be good to Wilty!—it’s himself was the droll man entirely: he died of ating boiled banes, for a wager that the Squire laid on him agin ould Captain Mint, and dhrinking porter after them till he was swelled like a tun; but the Squire berried him at his own expense. Well, Larry’s haunt, on finding Sally out when he came home, was either at the Squire’s kitchen, or Tom Hance’s; and as he was the broth of a boy at dancing, the sarvints, when he’d go down, would send for Wilty to Hance’s, if he didn’t happen to be with themselves at the time, and strike up a dance in the kitchen; and, along with all, may be Larry would have a sup in his head.

“When Sally would come home, in her turn, she’d not find Larry before her; but Larry’s custom was to go in to Tom’s wife, and say,—‘Biddy, tell Sally, when she comes home, that I’m gone down awhile to the big house (or to Tom Hance’s, as it might be), but I’ll not be long.’ Sally, after waiting awhile, would put on her cloak, and slip down to see what was keeping him. Of course, when finding the sport going on, and carrying a light heel at the dance herself, she’d throw off the cloak, and take a hand at it along with the rest. Larry and she would then go their ways home, find the fire out, light a sod of turf in Tom’s, and feeling their own place very cowld and naked, after the blazing comfortable fire they had left behind them, go to bed, both in very middling spirits entirely.

“Larry, at other times, would quit his work early in the evening, to go down towards the Squire’s, bekase he had only to begin work earlier the next day to make it up. He’d meet the Squire himself, may be, and, after putting his hand to his hat, and getting a ‘how do you do, Larry,’ from his honor, enter into discourse with him about his honor’s plan of stacking his corn. Now, Larry was famous at this.

“‘Who’s to build your stacks this saison, your honor?’

“‘Tim Dillon, Larry.’

“‘Is it he, your honor?—he knows as much about building a stack of corn as Mas-ther George, here. He’ll only botch them, sir, if you let him go about them.’

“‘Yes;’ but what can I do, Larry? He’s the only man I have that I could trust them to.’

“‘Then it’s your honor needn’t say that anyhow; for rather then see them spoiled, I’d come down myself and put them up for you.’

“‘Oh, I couldn’t expect that, Larry.’

“‘Why, then, I’ll do it, your honor; and you may expect, me down in the morning at six o’clock, plase God.’



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“Larry would keep his word, though his own corn was drop-ripe; and havin’ once undertaken the job, he couldn’t give it up till he’d, finish it off dacently. In the meantime, his own crop would go to destruction; sometimes a windy day would come, and not leave him every tenth grain; he’d then get some one to cut it down for him—he had to go to the big house, to build the master’s corn; he was then all bustle—a great man entirely—there was *non* such; would be up with, the first light, ordering and commanding, and directing the Squire’s laborers, as if he was the king of the castle. Maybe, ‘tis after he’d come from the big’ house, that he’d, collect a few of the neighbors, and get a couple of cars and horses from the Squire, you see, to bring home his own oats to the hagyar with moonlight, after the dews would begin to fall; and. in a week afterwards every stack would be heated, and all in a reek of froth and smoke. It’s not aisy to do anything in a hurry, and especially it’s not aisy to build a corn-stack after night, when a man cannot see how it goes on: so ’twas no wonder if Larry’s stacks were supporting one another the next day—one leaning north and another south.

“But, along with this, Larry and Sally were great people for going to the dances that Hance used to have at the crass-roads, bekase he wished to put money into his own pocket; and if a neighbor died, they were sure to be the first at the wake-house—for Sally was a great hand at washing down a corpse—and they would be the last home from the berril; for you know, they couldn’t but be axed in to the dhrinking, after the friends would lave the churchyard, to take a sup to raise their spirits and drown sorrow, for grief is always drouthy.

“When the races, too, would come, they would be sure not to miss them; and if you’d go into a tint, it’s odds but you’d find them among a knot of acquaintances, dhrinking and dancing, as if the world was no trouble to them. They were, indeed, the best nathured couple in Europe; they would lend you a spade or a hook in potato time or harvest, out of pure kindness, though their own corn, that was drop-ripe, should be uncut, or their potatoes, that were a tramping every day with their own cows or those of the neighbors, should be undug—all for fraid of being thought unneighborly.

“In this way they went on for some years, not altogether so bad but that they were able just to keep the house over their heads. They had a small family of three children on their hands, and every likelihood of having enough of them. Whenever they got a young one christened, they’d be sure to have a whole lot of the neighbors at it; and surely some of the young ladies, or Master George, or John, or Frederick, from the big house, should stand gossip, and have the child called after them. They then should have tay enough to sarve them, and loaf-bread and punch; and though Larry should sell a sack of seed-oats or seed-potatoes to get it, no doubt but there should be a bottle of wine, to thrate the young ladies or gintlemen.



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“When their childre grew up, little care was taken of them, bekase their parents minded other people’s business more nor their own. They were always in the greatest poverty and distress; for Larry would be killing time about the Squire’s, or doing some handy job for a neighbor who could get no other man to do it. They now fell behind entirely in the rint, and Larry got many hints from the Squire that if he didn’t pay more attention to his business, he must look after his arrears, or as much of it as he could make up from the cattle and the crop. Larry promised well, as far as words went, and no doubt hoped to be able to perform; but he hadn’t steadiness to go through with a thing. Thruth’s best;—you see both himself and his wife neglected their business in the beginning, so that everything went at sixes and sevens. They then found themselves uncomfortable at their own hearth, and had no heart to labor: so that what would make a careful person work their fingers to the stumps to get out of poverty, only prevented *them* from working at all, or druv them to work for those that had more comfort, and could give them a better male’s mate than they had themselves.

“Their tempers, now, soon began to get sour: Larry thought, bekase Sally wasn’t as careful as she ought to be, that if he had taken any other young woman to his wife, he wouldn’t be as he was;—she thought the very same thing of Larry. ‘If he was like another,’ she would say to his brother, ‘that would be up airly and late at his own business, I would have spirits to work, by rason it would cheer my heart to see our little farm looking as warm and comfortable as anothers; but, *fareer gairh* (* bitter misfortune) that’s not the case, nor likely to be so, for he spinds his time from one place to another, working for them that laughs at him for his pains; but he’d rather go to his neck in wather than lay down a hand for himself, except when he can’t help it.’

“Larry, again, had his complaint—‘Sally’s a lazy trollop,’ he would say to his brother’s wife, ‘that never does one hand’s turn that she can help, but sits over the fire from morning till night, making bird’s nests in the ashes with her yallow heels, or going about from one neighbor’s house to another, gosthering and palavering about what doesn’t consarn her, instead of minding the house. How can I have heart to work, when I come in—expecting to find my dinner ready; but, instead of that, get her sitting upon her hunkers on the hearthstone; blowing at two or three green sticks with her apron, the pot hanging on the crook, without even the white horses on it.* She never puts a stitch in my clothes, nor in the childher’s clothes, nor in her own, but lets them go to rags at once—the divil’s luck to her! I wish I had never met with her, or that I had married a sober girl, that wasn’t fond of dress and dancing. If she was a good sarvint, it was only because she liked to have a good name; for when she got a house and place of her own, see how she turned out!’



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* The white horses are produced by the extrication of air, which rises in white bubbles to the surface when the potatoes are beginning to boil; so that when the first symptoms of boiling commence, it is a usual phrase to say, the white horses are on the pot—sometimes the white friars.

“From less to more, they went on squabbling and fighting, until at last you might see Sally one time with a black eye or a cut head, or another time going off with herself, crying, up to Tom Hance’s or some other neighbor’s house, to sit down and give a history of the ruction that he and she had on the head of some trifle or another that wasn’t worth naming. Their childher were shows, running about without a single stitch upon them, except ould coats that some of the sarvints from the big house would throw them. In these they’d go sailing about, with the long skirts trailing on the ground behind them; and sometimes Larry would be mane enough to take the coat from the gorsoon, and ware it himself. As for giving them any schooling, ’twas what they never thought of; but even if they were inclined to it, there was no school in the neighborhood to send them to, for God knows it’s the counthry that was in a neglected state as to schools in those days, as well as now.

“It’s a throe saying, that as the ould cock crows the young one larns; and this was throe here, for the childher fought one another like so many divils, and swore like Trojans— Larry, along with everything else, when he was a Brine-oge, thought it was a manly thing to be a great swearer; and the childher, when they got able to swear, warn’t worse nor their father. At first, when any of the little souls would thry at an oath, Larry would break his heart laughing at them; and so, from one thing to another, they got quite hardened in it, without being any way checked in wickedness. Things at last drew on to a bad state, entirely. Larry and Sally were now as ragged as Dives and Lazarus, and their childher the same. It was no strange sight, in summer, to see the young ones marching about the street as bare as my hand, with scarce a blessed stitch upon them that ever was seen, they dirt and ashes to the eyes, waddling after their uncle Tom’s geese and ducks, through the green sink of rotten water that lay before their own door, just beside the dunghill: or the bigger ones running after the Squire’s laborers, when bringing home the corn or the hay, wanting to get a ride as they went back with the empty cars.

“Larry and Sally would never be let into the Squire’s kitchen now to eat or drink, or spend an evening with the sarvints; he might go out and in to his meal’s mate along with the rest of the laborers, but there was no *grah* (* goodwill) for him. Sally would go down with her jug to get some buttermilk, and have to stand among a set of beggars and cotters, she as ragged and as poor as any of them, for she wouldn’t be let into the kitchen till her turn came, no more nor another, for the sarvints would turn up their noses with the greatest disdain possible at them both.



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“It was hard to tell whether the inside or the outside of their house was worse;—within, it would amost turn your stomach to look at it—the flure was all dirt, for how could it be any other way, when at the end of every meal the *schrahag** would be emptied down on it, and the pig, that was whining and grunting about the door, would brake into the hape of praty-skins that Sally would there throw down for it. You might reel Larry’s shirt, or make a surveyor’s chain of it; for, bad cess (* Bad success) to me, but I bleeve it would reach from this to the Bath. The blanket was in tatters, and, like the shirt, would go round the house: their straw-beds were stocked with the *black militia*—the childer’s heads were garrisoned with *Scotch greys*, and their heels and heads ornamented with all description of kibes. There wor only two stools in all the house, and a hassock of straw for the young child, and one of the stools wanted a leg, so that it was dangerous for a stranger to sit down upon it, except he knew of this failing. The flure was worn into large holes, that were mostly filled up with slop, where the childher used to daddle about, and amuse themselves by sailing egg-shells upon them, with bits of boiled praties in them, by way of a little faste. The dresser was as black as dirt could make it, and had on it only two or three wooden dishes, clasped with tin, and noggins without hoops, a beetle, and some crockery. There was an ould chest to hold their male, but it wanted the hinges; and the childher, when they’d get the mother out, would mix a sup of male and wather in a noggin, and stuff themselves with it, raw and all, for they were almost starved.

“Then, as the cow-house had never been kept in repair, the roof fell in, and the cow and pig had to stand in one end of the dwelling-house; and, except Larry did it, whatever dirt the same cow and pig, and the childher to the back of that, were the occasion of, might stand there till Saturday night, when, for dacency’s sake, Sally herself would take a shovel, and out with it upon the hape that was beside the sink before the door. If a wet day came, there wasn’t a spot you could stand in for *down-rain*; and wet or dry, Sally, Larry, and the childher were spotted like trouts with the soot-dhrops, made by the damp of the roof and the smoke. The house on the outside was all in ridges of black dirt, where the thatch had rotted, or covered over with chickenweed or blind-oats; but in the middle of all this misery they had a horseshoe nailed over the door-head for good luck.

“You know, that in telling this story, I needn’t mintion everything just as it happened, laying down year after year, or day and date; so you may suppose, as I go on, that all this went forward in the coorse cf time. They didn’t get bad of a sudden, but by degrees, neglecting one thing after another, until they found themselves in the state I’m relating to you—then struggling and struggling, but never taking the right way to mend.



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“But where’s the use in saying much more about it?—things couldn’t stand—they were terribly in arrears; but the landlord was a good kind of man, and, for the sake of the poor childher, didn’t wish to turn them on the wide world, without house or shelter, bit or sup. Larry, too, had been, and still was, so ready to do difficult and nice jobs for him, and would resave no payment, that he couldn’t think of taking his only cow from him or prevent him from raising a bit of oats’ or a plat of potatoes, every year, out of the farm. —The farm itself was all run to waste by this time, and had a miserable look about it—sometimes you might see a piece of a field that had been ploughed, all overgrown with grass, because it had never been sowed or set with anything. The slaps were all broken down, or had only a piece of an ould beam, a thorn bush, or crazy car lying across, to keep the cattle out of them. His bit of corn was all eat away and cropped here and there by the cows, and his potatoes rooted up by the pigs.—The garden, indeed, had a few cabbages, and a ridge of early potatoes, but these were so choked with burtlocks and nettles, that you could hardly see them.

“I tould you before that they led the divil’s life, and that was nothing but God’s truth; and according as they got into greater poverty it was worse. A day couldn’t pass without a fight; if they’d be at their breakfast, maybe he’d make a potato hop off her skull, and she’d give him the contents of her noggin of buttermilk about the eyes; then he’d flake her, and the childher would be in an uproar, crying out, ‘Oh, daddy, daddy, don’t kill my mammy!’ When this would be over, he’d go off with himself to do something for the Squire, and would sing and laugh so pleasant, that you’d think he was the best-tempered man alive; and so he was, until neglecting his business, and minding dances, and fairs, and drink, destroyed him.

“It’s the maxim of the world, that when a man is down, down with him; but when a man goes down through his own fault, he finds very little mercy from any one. Larry might go to fifty fairs before he’d meet any one now to thrate him; instead of that, when he’d make up to them, they’d turn away, or give him the cowld shoulder. But that wouldn’t satisfy him: for if he went to buy a slip of a pig, or a pair of brogues, and met an ould acquaintance that had got well to do in the world, he should bring him in, and give him a dram, merely to let the other see that he was still *able* to do it; then, when they’d sit down, one dram would bring on another from Larry, till the price of the pig or the brogues would be spint, and he’d go home again as he came, sure to have another battle with Sally.

“In this way things went on, when one day that Larry was preparing to sell some oats a son of Nicholas Roe Sheridan’s of the Broad bog came in to him. ‘Good-morrow,’ says he. ‘Good-morrow, kindly, Art,’ says Larry—‘how are you, ma bou-chal?’



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“Why I’ve no rason to complain, thank God, and you,’ says the other; ‘how is yourself?’

“Well, thank you, Art: how is the family?’

“Faix, all stout except my father, that has got a touch of the toothache. When did you hear from the Slevins?’

“Sally was down on Thursday last, and they’re all well, your soul.’

“Where’s Sally now?’

“She’s just gone down to the big house for a pitcher of buttermilk; our cow won’t calve these three weeks to come, and she gets a sup of kitchen for the childher till then; won’t you take a sate, Art? but you had better have a care of yourself, for that stool wants a leg.’

“I didn’t care she was within, for I brought a sup of my own stuff in my pocket,’ said Art.

“Here, Hurrish’ (he was called Horatio after one of the Square’s sons), ‘fly down to the Square’s, and see what’s keeping your mother; the divil’s no match for her at staying out with herself wanst she’s from under the roof.’

“Let Dick go,’ says the little fellow, ‘he’s betther able to go nor I am; he has got a coat on him.’

“Go yourself, when I bid you,’ says the father.

“Let him go,’ says Hurrish, ‘you have no right to bid me to go, when he has a coat upon him: you promised to ax one for me from Masther Francis, and you didn’t do it; so the divil a toe I’ll budge to-day,’ says he, getting betune the father and the door.

“Well, wait,’ says Larry, ‘faix, only the strange man’s to the fore, and I don’t like to raise a hubbub, I’d pay you for making me such an answer. Dick, agra, will you run down, like a good bouchal, to the big house, and tell your mother to come home, that there’s a strange man here wants her?’

“Twas Hurrish you bid,’ says Dick—‘and make him: that’s the way he always thrates you—does nothing that you bid him.’

“But you know, Dick,’ says the father, ‘that he hasn’t a stitch to his back, and the crathur doesn’t like to go out in the cowl’d, and he so naked.’

“Well, you bid him go,’ says Dick, ‘an let him; the sorrayard I’ll go—the shinburnt spalpeen, that’s always the way with him; whatever he’s bid to do, he throws it on me, bekase, indeed, he has no coat; but he’ll folly Masther Thomas or Masther Francis



through sleet and snow up the mountains when they're fowling or tracing; he doesn't care about a coat then.'

"'Hurrish, you must go down for your mother when I bid you,' says the weak man, turning again to the other boy.

"I'll not,' says the little fellow; 'send Dick.'

"Larry said no more, but, laying down the child he had in his hands, upon the flure, makes at him; the lad, however, had the door of him, and was off beyant his reach like a shot. He then turned into the house, and meeting Dick, felled him with a blow of his fist at the dresser. 'Tundher-an-ages, Larry,' says Art, 'what has come over you at all at all? to knock down the gorsoon with such a blow! couldn't you take a rod or a switch to him? —*Dher manhim*, (* By my soul!) man, but I bleeve you've killed him outright,' says he, lifting the boy, and striving to bring him to life. Just at this minit Sally came in.



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“Arrah, sweet bad-luck to you, you lazy vagabond you,” says Larry, “what kept you away till this hour?”

“The devil send you news, you nager you,” says Sally, “what kept me—could I make the people churn sooner than they wished or were ready?”

“Ho, by my song, I’ll flake you as soon as the dacent young man leaves the house,” says Larry to her, aside.

“You’ll flake me, is it?” says Sally, speaking out loud—“in troth, that’s no new thing for you to do, any how.”

“Spake asy, you had betther.”

“No, in troth, won’t I spake asy; I’ve spoken asy too long, Larry, but the devil a taste of me will bear what I’ve suffered from you any longer, you mane-spirited blackguard you; for he is nothing else that would rise his hand to a woman, especially to one in my condition, and she put her gown tail to her eyes. When she came in, Art turned his back to her, for fraid she’d see the state the gorsoon was in—but now she noticed it—

“Oh, murdher, murdher,” says she, clapping her hands, and running over to him, “what has happened my child? oh! murdher, murdher, this is your work, murdherer!” says she to Larry. “Oh, you villain, are you bent on murdhering all of us—are you bent on destroying us out o’ the face! Oh, wurrah sthrew! wurrah sthrew! what’ll become of us! Dick, agra,” says she, crying, “Dick, acushla machree, don’t you hear, me spaiking to you!—don’t you hear your poor broken-hearted mother spaiking to you? Oh! wurrah! wurrah! amn’t I the heart-brokenest crathur that’s alive this day, to see the likes of such doings! but I knew it would come to this! My sowl to glory, but my child’s murdhered by that man standing there!—by his own father—his own father! Which of us will you murther next, you villain!”

“For heaven’s sake, Sally,” says Art, “don’t exaggerate him more nor he is—the boy is only stunned—see, he’s coming to: Dick, ma bouchal, rouse yourself, that’s a man: hut! he’s well enough—that’s it, alannah; here, take a slug out of this bottle, and it’ll set all right—or stop, have you a glass within, Sally?” “Och, inusha, not a glass is under the roof wid me,” says Sally; “the last we had was broke the night Barney was christened, and we hadn’t one since—but I’ll get you an egg-shell.”* “It’ll do as well as the best,” says Art. And to make a long story short, they sat down, and drank the bottle of whiskey among them. Larry and Sally made it up, and were as great friends as ever; and Dick was made drunk for the bating he got from his father.

* The ready wit of the Irish is astonishing. It often happens that they have whiskey when neither glasses nor cups are at hand; in which case they are never at a loss. I



have seen them use not only egg-shells, but pistol barrels, tobacco boxes, and scooped potatoes, in extreme cases.

“What Art wanted was to buy some oats that Larry had to sell, to run in a private Still, up in the



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mountains, of course, where every Still is kept. Sure enough, Larry sould him the oats, and was to bring them up to the still-house the next night after dark. According to appointment, Art came a short time after night-fall, with two or three young boys along with him. The corn was sacked and put on the horses; but before that was done, they had a dhop, for Art's pocket and the bottle were ould acquaintances. They all then sat down in Larry's, or, at laste, as many as there were seats for, and fell to it. Larry, however, seemed to be in better humor this night, and more affectionate with Sally and the childher: he'd often look at them, and appear to feel as if something was over him* but no one observed that till afterwards. Sally herself seemed kinder to him, and even went over and sat beside him on the stool, and putting her arm about his neck, kissed him in a joking way, wishing to make up, too, for what Art saw the night before—poor thing—but still as if it wasn't all a joke, for at times she looked sorrowful. Larry, too, got his arm about her, and looked, often and often on her and the childher, in a way that he wasn't used to do, until the tears fairly came into his eyes.

* This is precisely tantamount to what the Scotch call "fey." It means that he felt as if some fatal doom were over him.

"Sally, avourneen,' says he, looking at her, 'I saw you when you had another look from what you have this night; when it wasn't asy to fellow you *in* the parish or *out* of it;' and when he said this he could hardly spake.

"Whist, Larry, acushla,' says she, 'don't be spaking that way—sure we may do very well yet, plase God: I know, Larry, there was a great dale of it—maybe, indeed, it was all my fault; for I wasn't to you, in the way of care and kindness, what I ought to be.'

"Well, well, aroon, says Larry, 'say no more; you might have been all that, only it was my fault: but where's Dick, that I struck so terribly last night? Dick, come over to me, agra—come over, Dick, and sit down here beside me. Arrah, here, Art, ma bouchal, will you fill this egg-shell for him?—Poor gorsoon! God knows, Dick, you get far from fair play, acushla—far from the ating and drinking that other people's childher get, that hasn't as good a skin to put it in as you, alannah! Kiss me, Dick, acushla—and God knows your face is pale, and that's not with good feeding, anyhow: Dick, agra, I'm sorry for what I done to you last night; forgive your father, Dick, for I think that my heart's breaking, acushla, and that you won't have me long with you.'



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“Poor Dick, who was naturally a warmhearted, affectionate gorsoon, kissed his father, and cried bitterly. Sally herself, seeing Larry so sorry for what he done, sobbed as if she would drop on the spot: but the rest began, and betwixt scoulding and cheering them up, all was as well as ever. Still Larry seemed as if there was something entirely very strange the matter with him, for as he was going out, he kissed all the childher, one after another; and even went over to the young baby that was asleep in the little cradle of boards that he himself had made for it, and kissed it two or three times, asily, for fraid of wakening it. He then met Sally at the door, and catching her hand when none of the rest saw him, squeezed it, and gave her a kiss, saying, ‘Sally, darling!’ says he.

“‘What ails you, Larry, asthore?’ says Sally.

“‘I don’t know,’ says he; ‘nothing, I bleeve—but Sally, acushla, I have thrated you badly all along. I forgot, avourneen, how I loved you *once* and now it breaks my heart that I have used you so ill.’

“‘Larry she answered, ‘don’t be talking that way, bekase you make me sorrowful and unasy—don’t, acushla: God above me knows I forgive you it all. Don’t stay long,’ says she ‘and I’ll borry a lock of meal from Bidy, till we get home our own meldhre, and I’ll have a dish of stirabout ready to make for you when you come home. Sure, Larry, who’d forgive you, if I, your own wife, wouldn’t? But it’s I that wants it from you, Larry; and in the presence of God and ourselves, I now beg your pardon, and ax your forgiveness for all the sin I done to you.’ She dropped on her knees, and cried bitterly; but he raised her up, himself a choking at the time, and as the poor crathur got to her feet, she laid herself on his breast, and sobbed out, for she couldn’t help it. They then went away, though Larry, to tell the thruth, wouldn’t have gone with them at all, only that the sacks were borried from his brother, and he had to bring them home, in regard of Tom wanting them the very next day.

“The night was as dark as pitch—so dark, faiks, that they had to get long pieces of bog fir, which they lit, and held in their hand, like the lights that Ned there says the lamplighters have in Dublin to light the lamps with.

“At last, with a good dale of trouble, they got to the still-house; and, as they had all taken a drop before, you may be sure they were better inclined, to take another now. They, accordingly, sat down about the fine rousing fire that was under the still, and had a right good jorum of strong whiskey that never seen a drop of water. They all were in very good spirits, not thinking of to-morrow, and caring at the time very little about the world as it went.

“When the night was far advanced, they thought of moving home; however, by that time they weren’t able to stand: but it’s one curse of being drunk, that a man doesn’t know what he’s about for the time, except some few, like that poaching ould fellow, Billy M’Kinny, that’s cuininger when he’s drunk than when he’s sober; otherwise they would

not have ventured out in the clouds of the night, when it was so dark and severe, and they in such a state.



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“At last they staggered away together, for their road lay for a good distance in the same direction. The others got on, and reached home as well as they could; but, although Sally borrowed the dish of male from her sister-in-law, to have a warm pot of stirabout for Larry, and sat up till the night was more than half gone, waiting for him, yet no Larry made his appearance. The childher, too, all sat up, hoping he’d come home before they’d fall asleep and miss the supper: at last the crathurs, after running about, began to get sleepy, and one head would fall this way and another that way; so Sally thought it hard to let them go without getting their share, and accordingly she put down the pot on a bright fire, and made a good lot of stirabout for them, covering up Larry’s share in a red earthen dish before the fire.

“This roused them a little; and they sat about the hearth with their mother, keeping her company with their little chat, till their father would come back.

“The night, for some time before this, got very stormy entirely. The wind ris, and the rain fell as if it came out of methers.* The house was very cowld, and the door was bad; for the wind came in very strong under the foot of it, where the ducks and hens, and the pig when it was little, used to squeeze themselves in when the family was absent, or after they went to bed. The wind now came whistling under it; and the ould hat and rags, that stopped up the windies, were blown out half a dozen times with such force, that the ashes were carried away almost from the hearth. Sally got very low-spirited on hearing the storm whistling so sorrowfully through the house, for she was afraid that Larry might be out on the dark moors under it; and how any living soul could bear it, she didn’t know. The talk of the childhre, too, made her worse; for they were debating among themselves, the crathurs, about what he had better do under the tempest; whether he ought to take the sheltry side of a hillock, or get into a long heather bush or under the ledge of a rock or tree, if he could meet such a thing.

* An old Irish drinking vessel, of a square form, with a handle or ear on each side, out of which all the family drank successively, or in rotation. The expression above is proverbial.

“In the mane time, terrible blasts would come over and through the house, making the ribs crack so that you would think the roof would be taken away at wanst. The fire was now getting low, and Sally had no more turf in the house; so that the childher crouched closer and closer about it, their poor hungry-looking pale faces made paler with fear that the house might come down upon them, or be stripped, and their father from home—and with worse fear that something might happen him under such a tempest of wind and rain as it blew. Indeed it was a pitiful sight to see the ragged crathurs drawing in in a ring nearer and nearer the dying fire; and their poor, naked, half-starved mother, sitting with her youngest infant lying between her knees and her breast; for the bed was too cowld to put it into it, without being kept warm by the heat of them that it used to sleep with.”



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“Musha, God help her and them,” says Ned, “I wish they were here beside me on this comfortable hob, this minute; I’d fight Nancy to get a fog-meal for them, any way—a body can’t but pity them after all!”

“You’d fight Nancy!” said Nancy herself—“maybe Nancy would be as willing to do something for the crathurs as you would—I like every body that’s able to pay for what they get! but we ought to have some bowels in us for all that. You’d fight Nancy, indeed!”

“Well,” continued the narrator, “there’ they sat, with cowld and fear in their pale faces, shiverin’ over the remains of the fire, for it was now nearly out, and thinking, as the deadly blast would drive through the creaking ould door and the half-stuffed windies, of what their father would do under such a terrible night. Poor Sally, sad and sorrowful, was thinking of all their ould quarrels, and taking the blame all to herself for not bein’ more attentive to her business, and more kind to Larry; and when she thought of the way she thrated him, and the ill-tongue she used to give him, the tears began to roll from her eyes, and she rocked herself from side to side, sobbing as if her heart would brake. When the childher saw her wiping her eyes with the corner of the little handkerchief that she had about her neck, they began to cry along with her. At last she thought, as it was now so late, that it would be folly to sit up any longer; she hoped, too, that he might have thought of going into some neighbor’s house on his way, to take shelter, and with these thoughts, she raked the greeshough (* warm ashes and embers) over the fire, and after, putting the childher in their little straw nest, and spreading their own rags over them, she and the young one went to bed, although she couldn’t sleep at all at all, for thinking of Larry.

“There she lay, trembling under the light cover of the bed-clothes, for they missed Larry’s coat, listening to the dreadful night that was in it, so lonely, that the very noise of the cow, in the other corner, chewing her cud, in the silence of a short calm, was a great relief to her. It was a long time before she could get a wink of sleep, for there was some uncommon weight upon her that she couldn’t account for by any chance; but after she had been lying for about half an hour, she heard something that almost fairly knocked her up. It was the voice of a woman, crying and wailing in the greatest distress, as if all belonging to her were under-board.

“When Sally heard it first, she thought it was nothing but the whistling of the wind; but it soon came again, more sorrowful than before, and as the storm arose, it rose upon the blast along with it, so strange and mournful that she never before heard the like of it. ‘The Lord be about us!’ said she to herself, ‘what can that be at all?—or who is it? for its not Nelly,’ maning her sister-in-law. Again she listened, and there was, sobbing and sighing in the greatest grief, and she thought she heard it



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louder than ever, only that this time it seemed to name whomsoever it was lamenting. Sally now got up and put her ear to the door, to see if she could hear what it said. At this time the wind got calmer, and the voice also got lower; but although it was still sorrowful, she never heard any living Christian's voice so sweet, and what was very odd, it fell in fits, exactly as the storm sunk, and rose as it blew louder.

"When she put her ear to the chink of the door, she heard the words repeated, no doubt of it, only couldn't be quite sure, as they weren't very plain; but as far as she could make any sense out of them, she thought that it said—'Oh, Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!'

"Sally's hair stood on end when she heard this; but on listening again, she thought it was her own name instead of Larry's that it repeated, and that it said, 'Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!' Still she wasn't sure, for the words weren't plain, and all she could think was, that they resembled her own name or Larry's more than any other words she knew. At last, as the wind fell again, it melted away, weeping most sorrowfully, but so sweetly, that the likes of it was never heard. Sally then went to bed, and the poor woman was so harrished with one thing or another, that at last she fell asleep."

"'Twas the Banshee," said Shane Fadh.

"Indeed it was nothing else than that same," replied M'Roarkin.

"I wonder Sally didn't think of-that," said Nancy—"sure she might know that no living crathur would be out lamenting under such a night as that was."

"She did think of that," said Tom; "but as no Banshee ever followed *her own** family, didn't suppose that it could be such a thing; but she forgot that it might follow Larry's. I, myself, heard his brother Tom say, afterwards, that a Banshee used always to be heard before any of them died."

* The Banshee in Ireland is, or rather was, said to follow only particular families—principally the Old Milesians. It appeared or was heard before the death of any member of the family. Its form was always that of a female—weeping, wailing, wringing its hands, and uttering the national keene, or lamentation for the dead. Banshee signifies gentle woman.

"Did his brother hear it?" Ned inquired.

"He did," said Tom, "and his wife along with him, and knew, at once, that some death would happen in the family—but it wasn't long till he suspected who it came for; for, as he was going to bed that night, on looking towards his own hearth, he thought he saw



his brother standing at the fire, with a very sorrowful face upon him. 'Why, Larry,' says he, 'how did you get in, after me barring the door?—or did you turn back from helping them with the corn? You surely hadn't time to go half the way since.'

[Illustration: PAGE 713— 'Why, Larry,' says he, 'how did you get in']



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“Larry, however, made him no answer; and, on looking for him again, there was no Larry there for him. ‘Nelly,’ says he to his wife, ‘did you see any sight of Larry since, he went to the still-house?’ ‘Arrah, no indeed, Tom,’ says she; ‘what’s coming over you to spake to the man that’s near Drum-furrar by this time?’ ‘God keep him from harm!’ said Tom; —‘poor fellow, I wish nothing ill may happen him this night! I’m afeard, Nelly, that I saw his *fetch*;* and if I did, he hasn’t long to live; for when one’s fetch is seen at this time of night, their lase of life, let them be sick or in health, is always short.’

* This in the North of Ireland is called wraith, as in Scotland. The Fetch is a spirit that assumes the likeness of a particular person. It does not appear to the individual himself whose resemblance it assumes, but to some of his friends. If it is seen in the morning, it betokens long life; if after sunset, approaching death; after nightfall, immediate death.

“‘Hut, Tom aroon!’ says Nelly, ‘it was the shadow of the jamb or yourself you saw in the light of the candle, or the shadow of the bed-post.’

“The next morning they were all up, hoping that he would drop in to them. Sally got a creel of turf, notwithstanding her condition, and put down a good fire to warm him; but the morning passed, and no sign of him. She now got very unasy, and mintioned to his brother what she felt, and Tom went up to the still-house to know if he was there, or to try if he could get any tidings of him. But, by the laws! when he heard that he had left that for home the night before, and he in a state of liquor, putting this, and what he had heard and seen in his house together, Tom knew that something must have happened him. He went home again, and on his way had his eye about him, thinking that it would be no miracle, if he’d meet him lying head-foremost in a ditch; however, he did not, but went on, expecting to find him at home before him.

“In the mane time, the neighbors had been all raised to search for him; and, indeed, the hills were alive with people. It was the second day after, that Sally was standing, looking out at her own door towards the mountains, expecting that every man with a blue coat upon him might be Larry, when she saw a crowd of people coming down the hills. Her heart leaped to her mouth, and she sent Dick, the eldest of the sons, to meet them, and run back with word to her if he was among them. Dick went away; but he hadn’t gone far when he met his uncle Tom, coming on before the rest.

“‘Uncle,’ says Dick, ‘did you get my father? for I must fly back with word to my mother, like lightning.’



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“Come here, Dick,’ says Tom; ‘God help you, my poor bouchal (* boy)—Come here, and walk alongside of me, for you can’t go back to your mother, till I see her first—God help you, my poor bouchal, it’s you that’s to be pitied, this blessed and sorrowful day;’ and the poor fellow could by no means keep in the tears. But he was saved the trouble of breaking the dismal tidings to poor Sally; for as she stood watching the crowd, she saw a door carried upon their shoulders, with something like a man stretched upon it. She turned in, feeling as if a bullet had gone through her head, and sat down with her back to the door, for fraid she might see the thruth, for she couldn’t be quite sure, they we’re at such a distance. At last she ventured to take another look out, for she couldn’t bear what she felt within her, and just as she rose and came to the door, the first thing she saw coming down the hill a little above the house, was the body of her husband stretched on a door—dead. At that minute, her brother-in-law, Tom, just entered, in time to prevent her and the child she had in her arms from falling on the flure. She had seen enough, God help her!—for she took labor that instant, and, in about two hours, afterwards, was stretched a corpse beside her husband, with her heart-broken and desolate orphans in an uproar of outhier misery about them. That was the end of Larry M’Farland and Sally Lowry; two that might have done well in the world, had they taken care of themselves—avoided, fairs and markets—except when they had business there—not given themselves idle fashions by drinking, or going to dances, and wrought as well for themselves as they did for others.”

“But how did he lose his life, at all at all?” inquired Nancy.

“Why, they found his hat in a bog-hole upon the water, and on searching the hole itself poor Larry was fished up from the bottom of it.”

“Well, that’s a murdhnering sorrowful story,” said Shane Fadh: “but you won’t be after passing that on us for the wake, ainy how.”

“Well, you must learn patience, Shane,” said the narrator, “for you know patience is a virtue.”

“I’ll warrant you that Tom and his wife made a better hand of themselves,” said Alick M’Kinley, “than Larry and Sally did.”

“Ah! I wouldn’t fear, Alick,” said Tom, “but you would come at the truth—’tis you that may say they did; there wasn’t two in the parish more comfortable than the same two, at the very time that Larry and Sally came by their deaths. It would do you good to look at their hagyar—the corn stacks were so nately roped and trimmed, and the walls so well made up, that a bird could scarcely get into it. Their barn and cowhouse, too, and dwelling-house, were all comfortably thatched, and the windies all glazed, with not a broken pane in them. Altogether they had come on wondherfully; sould a good dale of male and praties every year; so that in a short time they were able to lay by a little money to help to fortune off their little girls, that were growing up fine colleens, all out.”



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“And you may add, I suppose,” said Andy Morrow, “that they lost no time going to fairs and dances, or other foolish diversions. I’ll engage they never were at a dance in the Squire’s kitchen; that they never went about losing their time working for others, when their own business was going at sixes and sevens, for want of hands; nor spent their money drinking and thrating a parcel of friends that only laugh at them for their pains, and wouldn’t, maybe, put one foot past the other to sarve them; nor never fought and abused one another for what they both were guilty of.”

“Well,” says Tom, “you have saved me some trouble, Mr. Morrow, for you just said, to a hair, what they were. But I mustn’t forget to mintion one thing that I saw the morning of the berril. We were,—about a dozen neighbors of us, talking in the street, just before the door; both the hayyards were forninst us—Tom’s snug and nate—but Charley Lawdher had to go over from where we stood to drive the pig out of poor Larry’s. There was one of the stacks with the side out of it, just as he had drawn away the sheaves from time to time; for the stack leaned to one side, and he pulled sheaves out of the other side to keep it straight. Now, Mr. Morrow, wasn’t he an unfortunate man? for whoever would go down to Squire Dickson’s hayyard, would see the same Larry’s handiwork so beautiful and illegant, though his own was in such *brutheen*.* Even his barn to wrack; and he was obliged to thrash his oats in the open air when ther would be a frost, and he used to lose one-third of it; and if there came a thaw, ’twould almost brake the crathur.”

* Brutheen is potatoes champed with butter. Anything in a loose, broken, and irregular state, is said to be in brutheen—that is in disorder and contusion.

“God knows,” said Nancy, looking over at Ned very significantly, “and Larry’s not alone in neglecting his business; that is, if certain people were allowed to take their own way; but the truth of it is, that he met with a bad woman. If he had a careful, sober, industrious wife of his own, that would take care of the house and place—(*Biddy, will you hand me over that other dew out of the windy-stool there till I finish this stocking for Ned*)—the story would have another ending any how.”

“In throth,” said Tom, “that’s no more than thruth, Nancy; but he had not, and everything went to the bad with them entirely.”

“It’s a thousand pities he hadn’t yourself, Nancy,” said Alick, grinning; “if he had, I haven’t the laste doubt at all, but he’d die worth money.”

“Go on, Alick—go on, Avick; I will give you lave to have your joke, any way; for it’s you that’s the pATTERN to any man that would wish to thrive in the world.”



“If Ned dies, Nancy, I don’t know a woman I’d prefer; I’m now a widdy’ these five years; and I feel, somehow, particularly since I began to spend my evenings here, that I’m disremembering very much the old proverb—a burnt child, dreads the fire.”



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* The peasantry of a great portion of Ireland use this word as applicable to both sexes.

“Thank you, Alick; you think I swallow that; but as for Ned, the never a fear of him; except that an increasing stomach is a sign of something; or what’s the best chance of all, Alick, for you and me, that he should meet Larry’s fate in some of his drunken fits.”

“Now, Nancy,” says Ned, “there’s no use in talking that way; it’s only last Thursday, Mr. Morrow, that, in presence of her own brother, Jemmy Connolly, the breeches-maker, and Billy M’Kinny, there, that I put my two five fingers across, and swore solemnly by them five crosses, that, except my mind changed, I’d never drink more nor one-half pint of spirits and three pints of portner in a day.”

“Oh, hold your tongue, Ned—hold your tongue, and don’t make me spake,” said Nancy; “God help you! many a time you’ve put the same fingers across, and many a time your mind has changed; but I’ll say no more now—wait till we see how you’ll keep it.”

“Healts a-piece, your sowsls,” said Ned, winking at the company.

“Well, Tom,” said Andy Morrow, “about the wake?”

“Och, och! that was the merry wake, Mr. Morrow. From that day to this I remarked, that, living or dead, them that won’t respect themselves, or take care of their families, won’t be respected: and sure enough, I saw full proof of that same at poor Larry’s wake. Many a time afterwards I pitied the childher, for if they had seen better, they wouldn’t turn out as they did—all but the two youngest, that their uncle took to himself, and reared afterwards; but they had no one to look after them, and how could it be expected from what they seen, that good could come of them? Squire Dickson gave Tom the other seven acres, although he could have got a higher rint from others; but he was an industrious man that desarved encouragement, and he got it.”

“I suppose Tom was at the expense of Larry’s berrin, as well as of his marriage,” said Alick.

“In troth and he was,” said Tom, “although he didn’t desarve it from him when he was alive;* seeing he neglected many a good advice that Tom and his dacent woman of a wife often gave him; for all that, blood is thicker than wather—and it’s he that waked and berried him dacently; by the same token that there was both full and plenty of the best over him: and everything, as far as Tom was consarned, dacint and creditable about the place.”



* The genuine blunders of the Irish—not those studied for them by men ignorant of their modes of expression and habits of life—are always significant, clear, and full of strong sense and moral truth.

“He did it for his own sake, of coorse,” said Nancy, “bekase one wouldn’t wish, if—they had it at all, to see any one belonging to them worse off than another at their wake or berrin.”

“Thrue for you, Nancy,” said M’Roarkin, “and, indeed, Tom was well spoken of by the neighbors for his kindness to his brother after his death; and luck and grace attended him for it, and the world flowed upon him before it came to his own turn.”



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“Well, when a body dies even a natural death, it’s wondrous how soon it goes about; but when they come to an untimely one, it spreads like fire on a dry mountain.”

“Was there no inquest?” asked Andy Morrow.

“The sorra inquist, not making you an ill answer, sir—the people weren’t so exact in them days: but any how the man was dead, and what good could an inquist do him? The only thing that grieved them was, that they both died without the priest; and well it might, for it’s an awful thing entirely to die without having the clergy’s hands over a body. I tould you that the news of his death spread over all the counthry in less than no time. Accordingly, in the coorse of the day, their relations began to come to the place; but, any way, messengers had been sent especially for them.

“The squire very kindly lent sheets for them both to be laid out in, and mould candlesticks to hould the lights; and, God he knows, ’twas a grievous sight to see the father and mother both stretched beside one another in their poor place, and their little orphans about them; the gorsoons,—them that had sense enough to know their loss,—breaking their hearts, the craythurs, and so hoarse, that they weren’t able to cry or spake. But, indeed, it was worse to see the two young things going over, and wanting to get across to waken their daddy and mammy, poor desolite childher!

“When the corpses were washed and dressed, they looked uncommonly well, consitherin’. Larry, indeed, didn’t bear death so well as Sally; but you couldn’t meet a purtier corpse than she was in a day’s travelling. I say, when they were washed and dressed, their friends and neighbors knelt down around them, and offered up a Pather and Ave a-piece, for the good of their sows: when this was done, they all raised the keena, stooping over them at a half bend, clapping their hands, and praising them, as far as they could say anything good of them; and indeed, the craythurs, they were never any one’s enemy but their own, so that nobody could say an ill word of either of them. Bad luck to it for potteen-work every day it rises! only for it, that couple’s poor orphans wouldn’t be left without father or mother as they were; nor poor Hurrish go the gray gate he did, if he had his father living, may be; but having nobody to bridle him in, he took to horse riding for the squire, and then to staling them for himself. He was hanged afterwards, along with Peter Doraghy Croll, that shot Ned Wilson’s uncle of the Black Hills.

“After the first keening, the friends and neighbors took their sates about the corpse. In a short time, whiskey, pipes, snuff, and tobacco came, and every one about the place got a glass and a fresh pipe. Tom, when he held his glass in his hand, looking at his dead brother, filled up to the eyes, and couldn’t for some time get out a word; at last, when he was able to spake—‘Poor Larry,’ says he, ‘you’re lying there low before me,



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and many a happy day we spint with one another. When we were childher,' said he, turning to the rest, 'we were never asunder; he was oulder nor me by two years, and can I ever forget the leathering he gave Dick Rafferty long ago, for hitting me with the rotten egg—although Dick was a great dale bigger than either of us. God knows, although you didn't thrive in life, either of you, as you might and could have done, there wasn't a more neighborly or friendly couple in the parish they lived in; and now, God help them both, and their poor orphans over them! Larry, acushla, your health, and Sally, yours; and may God Almighty have marcy on both your sowl's.'

"After this, the neighbors began to flock in more generally. When any relation of the corpses would come, as soon, you see, as they'd get inside the door, whether man or woman, they'd raise the shout of a keena, and all the people about the dead would begin along with them, stooping over them and clapping their hands as before.

"Well, I said, it's it that was the merry wake, and that was only the thruth, neighbors. As soon as night came, all the young boys and girls from the countryside about them flocked to it in scores. In a short time the house was crowded; and maybe there wasn't laughing, and story-telling, and singing, and smoking, and drinking, and crying—all going on, heller-skelter, together. When they'd be all in full chorus this way, may be, some new friend or relation, that wasn't there before, would come in, and raise the keena; of coorse, the youngsters would then keep quiet; and if the person coming in was from the one neighborhood with any of them that were so merry, as soon as he'd raise the shout, the merry folks would rise up, begin to pelt their hands together, and cry along with him till their eyes would be as red as a ferret's. That once over, they'd be down again at the songs, and divarsion, and divilment—just as if nothing of the kind had taken place: the other would then shake hands with the friends of the corpses, get a glass or two, and a pipe, and in a few minutes be as merry as the best of them."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "I should like to know if the Scotch and English are such heerum-skeerum kind of people as we Irishmen are."

"Musha, in throth I'm sure they're not," says Nancy, "for I believe that Irishmen are like nobody in the wide world but themselves; quare crathurs, that'll laugh or cry, or fight with any one, just for nothing else, good or bad but company."

"Indeed, and you all know, that what I'm sayin's thruth, except Mr. Morrow there, that I'm telling it to, bekase he's not in the habit of going to wakes; although, to do him justice he's very friendly in going to a neighbor's funeral; and, indeed, *kind father for you** Mr. Morrow, for it's he that was a real good hand at going to such places.

* That is, in this point you are the, same kind as your father; possessing that prominent trait in his disposition or character.



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“Well, as I was telling you, there was great sport going on. In one corner, you might see a knot of ould men sitting together, talking over ould times—ghost stores, fairy tales, or the great rebellion of '41, and the strange story of Lamh Dearg, or the *bloody hand*—that, maybe, I'll tell you all some other night, plase God: there they'd sit smoking—their faces quite plased with the pleasure of the pipe—amusing themselves and a crowd of people, that would be listening to them with open mouth. Or, it's odd, but there would be some droll young fellow among them, taking a rise out of them; and, positively, he'd often find, them able enough for him, particularly ould Ned Magin, that wanted at the time only four years of a hundred. The Lord be good to him, and rest his sowl in glory, it's he that was the pleasant ould man, and could tell a story with any one that ever got up.

“In another corner there was a different set, bent on some piece of divilment of their own. The boys would be sure to get beside their sweethearts, any how; and if there was a purty girl, as you may set it down there was, it's there the *skroodging*, (* pressure of the crowd) and the pushing, and the shoving, and, sometimes, the knocking down itself, would be, about seeing who'd get her. There's ould Katty Duffy, that's now as crooked as the hind leg of a dog, and it's herself was then as straight as a rush, and as blooming as a rose—Lord bless us, what an alteration time makes upon the strongest and fairest of us!—it's she that was the purty girl that night, and it's myself that gave Frank M'Shane, that's still alive to acknowledge it, the broad of his back upon the flure, when he thought to pull her off my knee. The very gorsoons and girshas were sporting away among themselves, and learning one another to smoke in the dark corners. But all this, Mr. Morrow, took place in the corpse-house, before ten or eleven o'clock at night; after that time the house got too thronged entirely, and couldn't huld the half of them; so by jing, off we set, maning all the youngsters of us, both boys and girls, out to Tom's barn, that was *red up* (* Cleared up for us—set in order), there to commence the plays. When we were gone, the ould people had more room, and they moved about on the sates we had left them. In the mane time, lashings of tobacco and snuff, cut in platefuls, and piles of fresh new pipes, were laid on the table for any one that wished to use them.

“When we got to the barn, it's then we *took our pumps off* (* Threw aside all restraint) in airnest—by the hokey, such sport you never saw. The first play we began was *Hot-loof*; and maybe there wasn't skelping then. It was the two parishes of Errigle-Keeran and Errigle-Truagh against one another. There was the Slip from Althadhawan, for Errigle-Truagh, against Pat M'Ardle, that had married Lanty Gorman's daughter of Cargach, for Errigle-Keeran. The way they play it, Mr.



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Morrow, is this—two young men out of each parish go out upon the flure—one of them stands up, then bends himself, sir, at a half bend, placing his left hand behind on the back part of his ham, keeping it there to receive what it's to get. Well, there he stands, and the other coming behind him, places his left foot out before him, doubles up the cuff of his coat, to give his hand and wrist freedom: he then rises his right arm, coming down with the heel of his hand upon the other fellow's palm, under him, with full force. By jing, it's the devil's own divarsion; for you might as well get a stroke of a sledge as a blow from one of them able, hard-working fellows, with hands upon them like limestone. When the fellow that's down gets it hot and heavy, the man that struck him stands bent in his place, and some friend of the other comes down upon him, and pays him for what the other fellow got.

“In this way they take it, turn about, one out of each parish, till it's over; for I believe if they were to pelt one another *since* (* from that hour to this), that they'd never give up. Bless my soul, but it was terrible to hear the strokes that the Slip and Pat M'Ardle did give that night. The Slip was a young fellow upwards of six feet, with great able bones and little flesh, but terrible thick shinnins (*sinews*); *his wrist was as hard and strong as a bar of iron. M'Ardle was a low, broad man, with a rucket head and bull neck, and a pair of shoulders that you could hardly get your arms about, Mr. Morrow, long as they are; it's he, indeed, that was the firm, well built chap, entirely. At any rate, a man might as well get a kick from a horse as a stroke from either of them.*

“Little Jemmy Teague, I remimber, struck a cousin of the Slip's a very smart blow, that made him dance about the room, and blow his fingers for ten minutes after it. Jemmy, himself, was a tight, smart fellow. When the Slip saw what his cousin had got, he rises up, and stands over Jemmy so coolly, and with such good humor, that every one in the house trembled for poor Jemmy, bekase, you see, whenever the Slip was bent on mischief, he used always to grin. Jemmy, however, kept himself bent firm; and to do him justice, didn't flinch from under the stroke, as many of them did—no, he was like a rock. Well, the Slip, as I said, stood over him, fixing himself for the stroke, and coming down with such a pelt on poor Jemmy's hand, that the first thing we saw was the blood across the Slip's own legs and feet, that had burst out of poor Jemmy's finger-ends. The Slip then stooped to receive the next blow himself, and you may be sure there was above two dozen up to be at him. No matter; one man they all gave way to, and that was Pat M'Ardle.

“‘Hould away,’ says Pat,—‘clear off, boys, all of you—this stroke's mine by right, any how;—and,’ says he, swearing a terrible oath, ‘if you don't sup sorrow for that stroke,’ says he to the Slip, ‘why Pat M'Ardle's not behind you here.’



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“He, then, up with his arm, and came down—why, you would think that the stroke he gave the Slip had druv his right hand into his body: but, any way, it’s he that took full satisfaction for what his cousin got; for if the Slip’s fingers had been cut off at the tops, the blood couldn’t spring out from under his nails more nor it did. After this the Slip couldn’t strike another blow, bekase his hand was disabled out and out.

“The next play they went to was the *Sitting Brogue*. This is played by a ring of them sitting down upon the bare ground, keeping their knees up. A shoemaker’s leather apron is then got, or a good stout brogue, and sent round under their knees. In the mane time one stands in the middle; and after the brogue is sent round, he is to catch it as soon as he can. While he stands there, of course, his back must be to some one, and accordingly those that are behind him thump him right and left with the brogue, while he, all the time, is striving to catch it. Whoever he catches this brogue with must stand up in his place, while he sits down where the other had been, and then the play goes on as before.

“There’s another play called the *Standing Brogue*—where one man gets a brogue of the same kind, and another stands up facing him with his hands locked together, forming an arch turned upside down. The man that houlds the brogue then strikes him with it betune the hands; and even the smartest fellow receives several pelts before he is able to close his hands and catch it; but when he does, he becomes brogueman, and the man who held the brogue stands for him, until he catches it. The same thing is gone through, from one, to another, on each side, until it is over.

“The next is *Frimsy Framty*, and is played in this manner:—A chair or stool is placed in the middle of the flure, and the man who manages the play sits down upon it, and calls his sweetheart, or the prettiest girl in the house. She, accordingly, comes forward, and must kiss him. He then rises up, and she sits down. ‘Come, now,’ he says, ‘fair maid—Frimsy framsy, who’s your fancy?’ She then calls them she likes best, and when the young man she calls comes over and kisses her, he then takes her place, and calls another girl—and so on, smacking away for a couple of hours. Well, throth, it’s no wonder that Ireland’s full of people; for I believe they do nothing but coort from the time they’re the hoith of my leg. I dunno is it true, as I hear Captain Sloethern’s steward say, that the Englishwomen are so fond of Irishmen?”

“To be sure it is,” said Shane Fadh; “don’t I remimber myself, when Mr. Fowler went to England—and he as fine looking a young-man, at the time, as ever got into a saddle—he was riding up the street of London, one day, and his servant after him—and by the same token he was a thousand pound worse than nothing; but no matter for that, you see luck was before him—what do you think, but a rich dressed livery servant came out, and stopping the Squire’s man, axed whose servant he was?”



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“Why, thin,’ says Ned Magavran, who-was his body servant at the time, ‘bad luck to you, you spalpeen, what a question do you ax, and you have eyes in your head!’ says he—‘hard feeling to you!’ says he, ‘you vagabone, don’t you see I’m my master’s?’

“The Englishman laughed. ‘I know that, Paddy,’ says he—for they call us all Paddies in England, as if we had only one name among us, the thieves; ‘but I wish to know his name,’ says the Englishman.

“‘You do!’ says Ned; ‘and by the powers!’ says he, ‘but you must first tell me which side of the head you’d wish to hear it an.’

“‘Oh! as for that,’ says the Englishman—not up to him, you see——‘I don’t care much, Paddy, only let me hear it, and where he lives.’

“‘Just keep your ground, then,’ says Ned, ‘till I light off this blood-horse of mine’—he was an ould garron that was fattened up, not worth forty shillings—‘this blood-horse of mine,’ says Ned, ‘and I’ll tell you.’

“So down he gets, and lays the Englishman sprawling in the channel.

“‘Take that, you vagabone! says he, and it’ll larn you to call people by their right names agin: I was christened as well as you, you spalpeen!’

“All this time the lady was looking out of the windy, breaking her heart laughing at Ned and the servant; but, behold!—she knew a thing or two, it seems; for, instead of sending a man at all at all, what does she do but sends her own maid—a very purty girl, who comes up to Ned, putting the same question to him.

“‘What’s his name, avourneen?’ says Ned, melting, to be sure, at the sight of her ‘Why, then, darling, who could refuse you anything?—but, you jewel! by the hoky, you must bribe me or I’m dumb,’ says he.

“‘How could I bribe you?’ says she, with a sly smile—for Ned himself was a well-looking young fellow at the time.

“‘I’ll show you that,’ says Ned, ‘if you tell me where you live; but, for fraid you forget it—with them two lips of your own, my darling.’

“‘There, in that great house,’ says the maid; ‘my mistress is one of the beautifullest and richest young ladies in London, and she wishes to know where your master could be heard of.’

“‘Is that the house?’ says Ned, pointing to it.



“‘Exactly’, says she: ‘that’s it.’ ‘Well, acushla,’ says he, ‘you’ve a purty and an innocent-looking face; but I’m tould there’s many a trap in London well baited. Just only run over while I’m looking at you, and let me see that purty face of yours smiling at me out of the windy that that young lady is peeping at us from.’

“This she had to do.

“‘My master,’ thought Ned, while she was away, ‘will aisily find out what kind of a house it is, any how, if that be it.’

“In a short time he saw her in the windy, and Ned then gave her a sign to come down to him.

“‘My master,’ says he, ‘never was afeard to show his face, or tell his name to any one—he’s a Squire Fowler,’ says he—‘a Sarjen-major in a great militia regiment: he shot five men in his time; and there’s not a gentleman in the country he lives in that dare say Boo to his blanket. And now, what’s your name,’ says Ned, ‘you flattering little blackguard you?’



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“My name’s Betty Cunningham,’ says she.

“And next, what’s your mistress’s, my darling?’ says Ned.

“There it is,’ says she, handing him a card.

“Very well,’ says Ned, the thief, looking at it with a great air, making as if he could read; ‘this will just do, a *colleen bawn*.’

“Do you read in your country with the wrong side of the print up?’ says she.

“Up or down,’ says Ned, ‘it’s all one to us in Ireland; but, any how, I’m left-handed, you deluder!’

“The upshot of it was, that her mistress turned out to be a great hairess, and a great beauty; and she and Fowler got married in less than a month. So, you see, it’s true enough that the Englishwomen are fond of Irishmen,” says Shane; “but, Tom, with, submission for stopping you, go on with your Wake.”

“The next play, then, is Marrying——”

“Hooh!” says Andy Morrow, “why, all their plays are about kissing and marrying, and the like of that.”

“Surely and they are, sir,” says Tom.

“It’s all the nathur of the baste,” says Alick.

“The next is marrying. A bouchal puts an ould dark coat on him, and if he can, borry a wig from any of the ould men in the wake-house, why, well and good, he’s the liker his work—this is the priest; he takes, and drives all the young men out of the house, and shuts the door upon them, so, that they can’t get in till he lets them. He then ranges the girls all beside one another, and, going to the first, makes her name him she wishes to be her husband; this she does, of coorse, and the priest lugs him in, shutting the door upon the rest. He then pronounces this marriage sarvice, when the husband smacks her first, and then the priest:—‘Amo amas, avourneen—in nomine gomine, betwuxt and between—for hoc erat in votis, squeeze ’em please ’em—omnia vincit amor, wid two horns to caput nap it—poluphlasboio, the lasses—’Quid,’ says Cleopatra; ‘Shid,’ says Antony—ragibus et clatibus solemus stapere windous—nine months—big-bottle, and a honeymoon—Aneas poque Dido’ poque Roymachree—hum not fiem viat—lag rag, merry kerry, Parawig and breeches—hoc manifestibus omnium—Kiss your wife under the nose, then seek repose.’ ‘Tis’ done,’ says the priest. ‘Vinculum trinculum; and now you’re married. Amen!’ Well, these two are married, and he places his wife upon his knee, for fraid of taking up too much room, *you persave*; there they coort away again, and why shouldn’t they?



“The priest then goes to the next, and makes her name her husband; this is complied with, and he is brought in after the same manner, but no one else till they’re called: he is then married, and kisses his wife, and the priest kisses her after him; and so they’re all married.



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“But if you’d see them that don’t chance to be called at all, the figure they cut—slipping into some dark corner, to avoid the mobbing they get from the priest and the others. When they’re all united, they must each sing a song—man and wife, according as they sit; or if they can’t sing, or get some one to do it for them, they’re divorced. But the priest, himself, usually lilts for any one that’s not able to give a verse. You see, Mr. Morrow, there’s always in the neighborhood some droll fellow that takes all these things upon him, and if he happened to be absent, the wake would be quite dull.”

“Well,” said Andy Morrow, “have you any more of their sports; Tom?”

“Ay, have I; one of the best and pleasantest you heard yet.”

“I hope there’s no more coorting in it,” says Nancy; “God knows we’re tired of their kissing and marrying.”

“Were you always so?” says Ned, across the fire to her.

“Behave yourself, Ned,” says she; “don’t you make me spake; sure you were set down as the greatest Brine-oge that ever was known, in the parish, for such things.”

“No, but don’t you make *me* spake,” replies Ned.

“Here, Biddy,” said Nancy, “bring that uncle of yours another pint; that’s what he wants most at the present time, I’m thinking.”

Biddy, accordingly, complied with this.

“Don’t make *me* spake,” continued Ned.

“Come, Ned,” she replied, “you’ve got a fresh pint now; so drink it, and give me no more *gosther*. (* Gossip—Idle talk.)

“*Shuid-urth!*”* says Ned, putting the pint to his head, and winking slyly at the rest.

* This to you, or upon you; a form of drinking healths.

“Ay, wink; in troth I’ll be up to you for that, Ned,” says Nancy; by no means satisfied that Ned should enter into particulars. “Well, Tom,” says she, diverting the conversation, “go on, and give us the remainder of your Wake.”

“Well,” says Tom, “the next play is in the military line. You see, Mr. Morrow, the man that leads the sports places them all on their sates, gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat, as you would tie a piece of mourning; he then walks round them two or three times singing,



Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid,
And folly the lad with the white cockade?

“When he sings this he takes off his hat, and puts it on the head of the girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arm around him, and then they both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up and goes round with them, singing as before. He next puts it on the girl he loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and he on his sweetheart, and so on. This is called the White Cockade. When it’s all over, that is, when every young man has pitched upon the girl that he wishes to be his sweetheart, they sit down, and sing songs, and coort, as they did at the marrying.



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“After this comes the *Weds or Forfeits*, or what they call putting round the button. Every one gives in a forfeit—the boys a neck-handkerchief or a pen-knife, and the girls a pocket-handkerchief or something that way. The forfeit is held over them, and each of them stoops in turn. They are, then, compelled to command the person that owns that forfeit to sing a song—to kiss such and such a girl—or to carry some ould man, with his legs about their neck, three times round the house, and this last is always great fun. Or, maybe, a young, upsetting fellow, will be sent to kiss some toothless, slaving, ould woman, just to punish him; or if a young woman is any way saucy, she’ll have to kiss some ould, withered fellow, his tongue hanging with age half way down his chin, and the tobacco water trickling from each corner of his mouth.

“By jingo, many a time, when the friends of the corpse would be breaking their very hearts with grief and affliction, I have seen them obligated to laugh out, in spite of themselves, at the drollery of the priest, with, his ould black coat and wig upon him; and when the laughing fit would be over, to see them rocking themselves again with the sorrow—so sad. The best man for managing such sports in this neighborhood, for many a year, was Roger M’Cann, that lives up as you go to the mountains. You wouldn’t begrudge to go ten miles the coldest winter night that ever blew, to see and hear Roger.

“There’s another play that they call the *Priest of the Parish*, which, is remarkably pleasant. One of the boys gets a wig upon himself as before—goes out on the flure, places the boys in a row, calls one *his man Jack* and says to each ‘What will you be?’ One answers ‘I’ll be black cap;’ another—red cap;’ and so on. He then says, ‘The priest of the parish has lost his considhering cap some says this, and some says that, but I say my man Jack!’ Man Jack, then, to put it off himself, says, ‘Is it me, sir?’ ‘Yes, sir!’ ‘You lie, sir!’ ‘Who then, sir?’ ‘Black cap!’ If Black cap, then, doesn’t say ‘Is it me, sir?’ before the priest has time to call him, he must put his hand on his ham, and get a pelt of the brogue. A body must be supple with the tongue in it.

“After this comes one they call *Horns, or the Painter*. A droll fellow gets a lump of soot or lamp black, and after fixing a ring of the boys and girls about him, he lays his two fore-fingers on his knees, and says. ‘Horns, horns, cow horns!’ and then raises his finders by a jerk up above his head; the boys and girls in the ring then do the same thing, for the meaning of the play is this:—the man with the black’ning always raises his fingers every time he names an animal; but if he names any that has no horns, and that the others jerk up their fingers, then they must get a stroke over the face with the soot. ‘Horns, horns, goat horns!’—then he ups with his fingers like lightning; they must all do the same,



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bekase a goat has horns. Horns, horns, horse horns!’—he ups with them again, but the boys and girls ought not, bekase a horse has not horns; however any one that raises them then, gets a slake. So that it all comes to this:—Any one, you see that lifts his fingers when an animal is named that has no horns—or any one that does not raise them when a baste is mintoned that has horns, will get a mark. It’s a purty game, and requires a keen eye and a quick hand; and, maybe, there’s not fun in straiiking the soot over the purty, warm, rosy cheeks of the colleens, while their eyes are dancing with delight in their heads, and their sweet breath comes over so pleasant about one’s face, the darlings!—Och! och!

“There’s another game they call the *Silly ould Man*, that’s played this way:—A ring of the boys and girls is made on the flure—boy and girl about—holding one another by the hands; well and good—a young fellow gets into the middle of the ring, as ‘the silly ould Man.’ There he stands looking at all the girls to choose a wife, and, in the mane time, the youngsters of the ring sing out—

Here’s a silly ould Man that lies all alone,
That lies all alone,
That lies all alone;
Here’s a silly ould man that lies all alone,
He wants a wife and he can get none.

“When the’ boys and girls sing this, the silly ould man must choose a wife from some of the colleens belonging to the ring. Having made choice of her, she goes into the ring along with him, and they all sing out—

Now, young couple, you’re married together,
You’re married together,
You’re married together,
You must obey your father and mother,
And love one another like sister and brother—
I pray, young couple, you’ll kiss together!

“And you may be sure this part of the marriage is not missed, any way.”

“I doubt,” said Andy Morrow, “that good can’t come of so much kissing, marrying, and coorting.”

The narrator twisted his mouth knowingly, and gave a significant groan.

“*Be dhe husth,** hould your tongue, Mither Morrow,” said he; “Biddy avour-neen,” he continued, addressing Bidy and Bessy, “and Bessy, alannah, just take a friend’s



advice, and never mind going to wakes; to be sure there's plenty of fun and diversion at sich places, but—healths apiece!" putting the pint to his lips—"and that's all I say about it."

"Right enough, Tom," observed Shane Fadh—"sure most of the matches are planned at them, and, I may say, most of the runaways, too—poor, young, foolish crathurs, going off, and getting themselves married; then bringing small, helpless families upon their hands, without money or manes to begin the world with, and afterwards likely to eat one another out of the face for their folly; however, there's no putting ould heads upon young shoulders, and I doubt, except the wakes are stopped altogether, that it'll be the ould case still."



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“I never remember being at a country wake,” said Andy Morrow. “How is everything laid out in the house?”

“Sure it’s to you I’m telling the whole story, Mr. Morrow: these thieves about me here know all about it as well as I do—the house, eh? Why, you see, the two corpses were stretched beside one another, washed and laid out. There were long deal boards with their ends upon two stools, laid over the bodies; the boards were covered with a white sheet got at the big house, so the corpses were’nt to be seen. On these, again, were placed large mould candles, plates of cut tobacco, pipes, and snuff, and so on. Sometimes corpses are waked in a bed, with their faces visible; when that is the case, white sheets, crosses, and sometimes flowers, are pinned up about the bed, except in the front; but when they’re undher boord, a set of ould women sit smoking, and rocking themselves from side to side, quite sorrowful—these are keeners—friends or relations; and when every one connected with the dead comes in, they raise the keene, like a song of sorrow, wailing and clapping their hands.

“The furniture is mostly removed, and sates made round the walls, where the neighbors sit smoking, chatting, and gosthering. The best of aiting and dhrinking that they can afford is provided; and, indeed, there is generally open house, for it’s unknown how people injure themselves by their kindness and waste at christenings, weddings, and wakes.

“In regard to poor Larry’s wake—we had all this, and more at it; for, as I obsarved a while agone, the man had made himself no friends when he was living, and the neighbors gave a loose to all kinds of divilment when he was dead. Although there’s no man would be guilty of any disrespect where the dead are, yet, when a person has led a good life, and conducted themselves dacently and honestly, the young people of the neighborhood show their respect by going through their little plays and divarsions quieter and with less noise, lest they may give any offence; but, as I said, whenever the person didn’t live as they ought to do, there’s no stop to their noise and rollikin.

“When it drew near morning, every one of us took his sweetheart, and, after convoying her home, we went to our own houses to get a little sleep—so that was the end of poor Larry, M’Farland, and his wife, Sally Lowry.

“Success, Tom!” said Bill M’Kinnly “take a pull of the malt now, afther the story, your soul!—But what was the funeral like?”

“Why, then, a poor berrin it was,” said Tom; “a miserable sight, God knows—just a few of the neighbors; for those that used to take his thrate, and while he had a shilling in his pocket blarney him up, not one of the skulking thieves showed their faces at it—a good warning to foolish men that throw their money down throats that haven’t hearts anundher them.—But boys, desarve another thrate, I think, afther my story!” This, we

need scarcely add, he was supplied with, and after some further desultory chat, they again separated, with the intention of reassembling at Ned's on the following night.



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THE BATTLE OF THE FACTIONS.

Accordingly, the next evening found them all present, when it was determined unanimously that Pat Frayne, the hedge schoolmaster, should furnish them with the intellectual portion of the entertainment for that night, their object being each to tell a story in his turn.

“Very well,” said Pat, “I am quite simultaneous to the wishes of the company; but you will please to observe, that there is clay which is moist, and clay which is not moist. Now, under certain circumstances, the clay which is not moist, ought to be made moist, and one of those circumstances that in which any larned person becomes loquacious, and indulges in narrative. The philosophical raison, is decided on by Socrates, and the great Phelim M’Poteen, two of the most celebrated liquorary characters that ever graced the sunny side of a plantation, is, that when a man commences a narration with his clay not moist, the said narration is found, by all lamed experience, to be a very dry one—ehem!”

“Very right, Mr. Frayne,” replied Andy Morrow; “so in ordher to avoid a dhry narrative, Nancy, give the masther a jug of your stoutest to wet his whistle, and keep him in wind as he goes along.”

“Thank you, Mr. Morrow—and in requital for your kindness, I will elucidate you such a sample of unadulterated Ciceronian eloquence, as would not be found originating from every chimney-corner in this Province, anyhow. I am not bright, however, at oral relation. I have accordingly composed into narrative the following tale, which is appellated ‘The Battle of the Factions:’—

“My grandfather, Connor O’Callaghan, though a tall, erect man, with white flowing hair, like snow, that falls profusely about his broad shoulders, is now in his eighty-third year: an amazing age, considhering his former habits. His countenance is still marked with honesty and traces of hard fighting, and his cheeks ruddy and cudgel-worn; his eyes, though not as black as they often used to be, have lost very little of that nate fire which characterizes the eyes of the O’Callaghans, and for which I myself have been—but my modesty won’t allow me to allude to that: let it be sufficient for the present to say that there never was remembered so handsome a man in his native parish, and that I am as like him as one Cork-red phatie is to another. Indeed, it has been often said, that it would be hard to meet an O’Callaghan without a black eye in his head. He has lost his fore-teeth, however, a point in which, Unfortunately, I, though his grandson, have strong resemblance to him. The truth is, they were knocked out of him in rows, before he had reached his thirty-fifth year—a circumstance which the kind reader will be pleased to receive in extenuation for the same defect in myself. That, however, is but a trifle, which never gave either of us much trouble.



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“It pleased Providence to bring us through many hair-breadth escapes, with our craniums uncracked; and when we consider that he, on taking a retrogradation of his past life, can indulge in the pleasing recollection of having broken two skulls in his fighting days, and myself one, without either of us getting a fracture in return, I think we have both reason to be thankful. He was a powerful *bulliah battha* * in his day and never met a man able to fight him, except big Mucldemurray, who stood before him the greater part of an hour and a half, in the fair of Knockimdowny, on the day that the first great fight took place—twenty years after the hard, frost—between the O’Callaghans and the O’Hallaghans. The two men fought single hands—for both factions were willing to let them try the engagement out, that they might see what side could boast of having the best man. They began where you enter the north side of Knockimdowny, and fought successively up to the other end, then back again to the spot where they commenced, and afterwards up to the middle of the town, right opposite to the market-place, where my grandfather, by the same a-token, lost a grinder; but he soon took satisfaction for that, by giving Mucldemurray a tip above the eye with the end of an oak stick, dacently loaded with lead, which made the poor man feel very quare entirely, for the few days that he survived it.

* Literally the stroke of a cudgel; put for cudgel-player.

“Faith, if an Irishman happened to be born in Scotland, he would find it mighty inconvenient—after losing two or three grinders in a row—to manage the hard oaten bread that they use there; for which reason, God be good to his soul that first invented the phaties, anyhow, because a man can masticate them without a tooth, at all at all. I’ll engage, if larned books were consulted, it would be found out that he was an Irishman. I wonder that neither Pastorini nor Columkill mentions anything about him in their prophecies concerning the church; for my own part, I’m strongly inclined to believe that it must have been Saint Patrick himself; and I think that his driving all kinds of venomous reptiles out of the kingdom is, according to the Socrastic method of argument, an undeniable proof of it. The subject, to a dead certainty, is not touched upon in the Brehon Code,* nor by any of the three Psalters,** which is extremely odd, seeing that the earth never produced a root equal to it in the multiplying force of proliferation. It is, indeed, the root of prosperity to a fighting people: and many a time my grandfather boasts to this day, that the first bit of bread he ever ett was a phatie.

* This was the old code of laws peculiar to Ireland before the introduction of English legislation into it.



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** There was properly only two Psalters, those of Tara and Cashel. The Psalters were collections of genealogical history, partly in verse; from which latter circumstances they had their name.

“In mentioning my grandfather’s fight with Mucldemurray, I happened to name them blackguards, the O’Hallaghans: hard fortune to the same set, for they have no more discretion in their quarrels, than so many Egyptian mummies, African buffoons, or any other uncivilized animals. It was one of them, he that’s married to my own fourth cousin, Bidy O’Callaghan, that knocked two of my grinders out, for which piece of civility I had the satisfaction of breaking a splinter or two in his carcase, being always honestly disposed to pay my debts.

“With respect to the O’Hallaghans, they and our family, have been next neighbors since before the Flood—and that’s as good as two hundred years; for I believe it’s 198, any how, since my great grandfather’s grand-uncle’s ould mare was swept out of the ‘Island,’ in the dead of the night, about half an hour after the whole country had been ris out of their beds by the thunder and lightning. Many a field of oats and many a life, both of beast and Christian, was lost in it, especially of those that lived on the bottoms about the edge of the river: and it was true for them that said it came before something; for the next year was one ’of the hottest summers ever remembered in Ireland.

“These O’Hallaghans couldn’t be at peace with a saint. Before they and our faction, began to quarrel, it’s said that the O’Donnells, or Donnells, and they had been at it,—and a blackguard set the same O’Donnells were, at all times—in fair and market, dance, wake, and berrin, setting the country on fire. Whenever they met, it was heads cracked and bones broken; till by degrees the O’Donnells fell away, one after another, from fighting, accidents, and hanging; so that at last there was hardly the name of one of them in the neighborhood. The O’Hallaghans, after this, had the country under themselves—were the cocks of the walk entirely;—who but they? A man darn’t look crooked at them, or he was certain of getting his head in his fist. And when they’d get drunk in a fair, it was nothing but ‘Whoo! for the O’Hallaghans!’ and leaping yards high off the pavement, brandishing their cudgels over their heads, striking their heels against their hams, tossing up their hats; and when all would fail, they’d strip off their coats, and trail them up and down the street, shouting, ‘Who dare touch the coat of an O’Hallaghan? Where’s the blackguard Donnells now?’—and so on, till flesh and blood couldn’t stand it.



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“In the course of time, the whole country was turned against them; for no crowd could get together in which they didn’t kick up a row, nor a bit of stray fighting couldn’t be, but they’d pick it up first; and if a man would venture to give them a contrary answer, he was sure to get the crame of a good welting for his pains. The very landlord was timorous of them; for when they’d get behind in their rint, hard fortune to the bailiff, or proctor, or steward, he could find, that would have anything to say to them. And the more wise they; for maybe, a month would hardly pass till all belonging to them in the world would be in a heap of ashes: and who could say who did it? for they were as cunning as foxes.

“If one of them wanted a wife, it was nothing but find out the purtiest and the richest farmer’s daughter in the neighborhood, and next march into her father’s house, at the dead hour of night, tie and gag every mortal in it, and off with her to some friend’s place in another part of the country. Then what could be done? If the girl’s parents didn’t like to give in, their daughter’s name was sure to be ruined; at all events, no other man would think of marrying her, and the only plan was, to make the best of a bad bargain; and God He knows, it was making a bad bargain for a girl to have any matrimonial concatenation with the same O’Hallaghans; for they always had the bad drop in them, from first to last, from big to little—the blackguards! But wait, it’s not over with them yet.

“The bone of contintion that got, between them and our faction was this circumstance; their lands and ours were divided by a river that ran down from the high mountains of Slieve Boglish, and, after a coorse of eight or ten miles, disembogued itself, first into George Duffy’s mill-dam, and afterwards into that superb stream, the Blackwater, that might be well and appropriately appellated the Irish Niger. This river, which, though small at first, occasionally inflated itself to such a gigantic altitude, that it swept away cows, corn, and cottages, or whatever else happened to be in the way, was the march ditch, or merin between our farms. Perhaps it is worth while remarking, as a solution for natural philosophers, that these inundations were much more frequent in winter than in summer; though, when they did occur in summer, they were truly terrific.

“God be with the days, when I and half a dozen gorsoons used to go out, of a warm Sunday in summer, the bed of the river nothing but a line of white meandering stones, so hot that you could hardly stand upon, them, with a small obscure thread of water creeping invisibly among them, hiding itself, as it were, from the scorching sun; except here and there, that you might find a small crystal pool where the streams had accumulated. Our plan was to bring a pocketful of roche lime with us, and put it into the pool, when all the fish used to rise on the instant to the surface, gasping with open mouth for fresh air, and we had only to lift them out of the water; a nate plan which, perhaps, might be adopted successfully, on a more extensive scale, by the Irish fisheries. Indeed, I almost regret that I did not remain in that station of life, for I was much happier then than ever I was since I began to study and practice larning. But this is vagating from the subject.



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“Well, then, I have said that them O’Hallaghans lived beside us, and that this stream divided our lands. About half a quarter—i. e., to accommodate myself to the vulgar phraseology—or, to speak more scientifically, one-eighth of a mile from our house was as purty a hazel glen as you’d wish to see, near half a mile long—its developments and proportions were truly classical. In the bottom of this glen was a small green island, about twelve yards, diametrically, of Irish admeasurement, that is to say, be the same more or less; at all events, it lay in the way of the river, which, however, ran towards the O’Hallaghan side, and, consequently, the island was our property.

“Now, you’ll observe, that this river had been, for ages, the merin between the two farms, for they both belonged to separate landlords, and so long as it kept the O’Hallighan side of the little peninsula in question there could be no dispute about it, for all was clear. One wet winter, however, it seemed to change its mind upon the subject; for it wrought and wore away a passage for itself on our side of the island, and by that means took part, as it were, with the O’Hallighans leaving the territory which had been our property for centhries, in their possession. This was a vexatious change to us, and, indeed, eventually produced very feudal consequences. No sooner had the stream changed sides, than the O’Hallaghans claimed the island as theirs, according to their tenement; and we, having had it for such length of time in our possession, could not break ourselves of the habitude of occupying it. They incarcerated our cattle, and we incarcerated theirs. They summoned us to their landlord, who was a magistrate; and we summoned them to ours, who was another. The verdicts were north and south. Their landlord gave it in favor of them, and ours in favor of us. The one said he had law on his side; the other, that he had proscription and possession, length of time and usage.

“The two squires then fought a challenge upon the head of it, and what was more singular, upon the disputed spot itself; the one standing on their side, the other on ours; for it was just twelve paces every way. Their friend was a small, light man, with legs like drumsticks; the other was a large, able-bodied gentleman, with a red face and hooked nose. They exchanged two shots, only one of which—the second—took effect. It pastured upon their landlord’s spindle leg, on which he held it out, exclaiming, that while he lived he would never fight another challenge with his antagonist, ‘because,’ said he, holding out his own spindle shank, ‘the man who could hit that could hit anything.’

[Illustration: PAGE 725— The man who could hit that could hit anything]



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“We then were advised, by an attorney, to go to law with them; and they were advised by another attorney to go to law with us: accordingly, we did so, and in the course of eight or nine years it might have been decided, but just at the legal term approximated in which the decision was to be announced, the river divided itself with mathematical exactitude on each side of the island. This altered the state and law of the question in toto; but, in the meantime, both we and the O’Hallaghans were nearly fractured by the expenses. Now during the lawsuit we usually houghed and mutilated each other’s cattle, according as they trespassed the premises. This brought on the usual concomitants of various battles, fought and won by both sides, and occasioned the lawsuit to be dropped; for we found it a mighty, inconvenient matter to fight it out both ways; by the same a-token that I think it a proof of stultity to go to law at all at all, as long as a person is able to take it into his own management. For the only incongruity in the matter is this: that, in the one case, a set of lawyers have the law in their hands, and, in the other, that you have it in your own; that’s the only difference, and ’tis easy knowing where the advantage lies.

“We, however, paid the most of the expenses, and would have *ped* them all with the greatest integrity, were it not that our attorney, when about to issue an execution against our property, happened somehow to be shot, one evening, as he returned home from a dinner which was given by him that was attorney for the O’Hallaghans. Many a boast the O’Hallaghan’s made, before the quarrelling between us and them commenced, that they’d sweep the streets with the fighting O’Callaghans, which was an epithet that was occasionally applied to our family. We differed, however, materially from them; for we were honorable, never starting out in dozens on a single man or two, and beating him into insignificance. A couple, or maybe, when irritated, three, were the most we ever set at a single enemy, and if we left him lying in a state of imperception, it was the most we ever did, except in a regular confliction, when a man is justified in saving his own skull by breaking one of an opposite faction. For the truth of the business is, that he who breaks the skull of him who endeavors to break his own is safest; and, surely, when a man is driven to such an alternative, the choice is unhesitating.

“O’Hallaghans’ attorney, however, had better luck; they were, it is true, rather in the retrograde with him touching the law charges, and, of coorse, it was only candid in him to look for his own. One morning, he found that two of his horses had been executed by some incendiary unknown, in the coorse of the night; and, on going to look at them, he found a taste of a notice posted on the inside of the stable-door, giving him intelligence that if he did not find a *horpus corpus** whereby to transfer his body out of the country, he would experience a fate parallel to that of his brother lawyer or the horses. And, undoubtedly, if honest people never perpetrated worse than banishing such varmin, along with proctors, and drivers of all kinds, out of a civilized country, they would not be so very culpable or atrocious.



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* Habeas corpus; the above is the popular pronunciation.

“After this, the lawyer went to reside in Dublin; and the only bodily injury he received was the death of a land-agent and a bailiff, who lost their lives faithfully in driving for rent. They died, however, successfully; the bailiff having been provided for nearly a year before the agent was sent to give an account of his stewardship—as the Authorized Version has it.

“The occasion on which the first re-encounter between us and the O’Hallaghans took place, was a peaceable one. Several of our respective friends undertook to produce a friendly and oblivious potation between us—it was at a berrin belonging to a corpse who was related to us both; and, certainly, in the beginning we were all as thick as whigged milk. But there is no use now in dwelling too long upon that circumstance; let it be sufficient to assert that the accommodation was effectuated by fists and cudgels, on both sides—the first man that struck a blow being one of the friends that wished to bring about the tranquillity. From that out the play commenced, and God he knows when it may end; for no dacent faction could give in to another faction without losing their character, and being kicked, and cuffed, and kilt, every week in the year.

“It is the great battle, however, which I am after going to describe: that in which we and the O’Hallaghans had contrived, one way or other, to have the parish divided—one-half for them, and the other for us; and, upon my credibility, it is no exaggeration to declare that the whole parish, though ten miles by six, assembled itself in the town of Knockimdowny, upon this interesting occasion. In thruth, Ireland ought to be a land of mathemathitians; for I am sure her population is well trained, at all events, in the two sciences of multiplication and division. Before I adventure, however, upon the narration, I must wax pathetic a little, and then proceed with the main body of the story.

“Poor Rose O’Hallaghan!—or, as she was designated—*Rose Galh*, or *Fair Rose*, and sometimes simply, Rose Hallaghan, because the detention of the big O often produces an afflatus in the pronunciation, that is sometimes mighty inconvenient to such as do not understand oratory—besides, that the Irish are rather fond of sending the liquids in a gutthural direction—Poor Rose! that faction fight, was a black day to her, the sweet innocent—when it was well known that there wasn’t a man, woman, or child, on either side that wouldn’t lay their hands under her feet. However, in order to *insense* the reader better into her character, I will commence a small sub-narration, which will afterwards emerge into the parent stream of the story.



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“The chapel of Knockimdowny is a slated house, without any ornament, except a set of wooden cuts, painted red and blue, that are placed *seriatum* around the square of the building in the internal side. Fourteen* of these suspend at equal distances on the walls, each set in a painted frame; these constitute a certain species of country devotion. It is usual, on Sundays, for such of the congregation as are most inclined to piety, to genuflect at the first of these pictures, and commence a certain number of prayers to it after the repetition of which, they travel on their knees along the bare earth to the second, where they repeat another prayer peculiar to that, and so on, till they finish the grand *tower* of the interior. Such, however as are not especially addicted to this kind, of locomotive prayer, collect together in various knots through the chapel, and amuse themselves by auditing or narrating anecdotes, discussing policy, or detraction; and in case it be summer, and the day of a fine texture, they scatter themselves into little crowds on the chapel-green, or lie at their length upon the grass in listless groups, giving way to chat and laughter.

* These are called the “Fourteen Stations of the Cross.”

“In this mode, laired on the sunny side of the ditches and hedges, or collected in rings round that respectable character, the Academician of the village, or some other well-known Senachie, or story-teller, they amuse themselves till the priest’s arrival. Perhaps, too, some walking geographer of a pilgrim may happen to be present; and if there be, he is sure to draw a crowd about him, in spite of all the efforts of the learned Academician to the contrary. It is no unusual thing to see such a vagrant, in all the vanity of conscious sanctimony, standing in the middle of the attentive peasants, like the nave and felloes of a cart-wheel—if I may be permitted the loan of an apt similitude—repeating some piece of unfathomable and labyrinthine devotion, or perhaps warbling, from Stentorian lungs, some *melodia sacra*, in an untranslatable tongue; or, it may be, exhibiting the mysterious power of an amber bade fastened as a Decade to his *paudareens** lifting a chaff or light bit of straw by the force of its attraction. This is an exploit which causes many an eye to turn from the bades to his own bearded face, with a hope, as it were, of being able to catch a glimpse of the lurking sanctimony by which the knave hoaxes them in the miraculous.

* Pilgrims and other impostors pass these things upon the people as miracles upon a small scale.



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“The amusements of the females are also nearly such as I have drafted out. Nosegays of the darlings might be seen sated on green banks, or sauntering about with a sly intention of coming in compact with their sweethearts, or, like bachelors’ buttons in smiling rows, criticising the young men as they pass. Others of them might be seen screened behind a hedge, with their backs to the spectators taking the papers off their curls before small bit of looking-glass placed against the ditch; or perhaps putting on their shoes and stockings—which phrase can be used only by the authority of the figure *heusteron proteron*—inasmuch as if they put on the shoes first, you persave, it would be a scientific job to get on the stockings after; but it’s an idiomatic expression, and therefore justifiable. However, it’s a general custom in the country, which I dare to say has not yet spread into large cities, for the young women to walk bare-footed to the chapel, or within a short distance of it, that they may exhibit their bleached thread stockings and well-greased slippers to the best advantage, not premitting a well-turned ankle and neat leg, which, I may fearlessly assert, my fair country-women can show against any other nation, living or dead.

“One sunny Sabbath, the congregation of Knockimdowny were thus assimilated, amusing themselves in the manner I have just outlined; a series of country girls sat on a little green mount, called the Rabbit Bank, from the circumstance of its having been formerly an open burrow, though of late years it has been closed. It was near twelve o’clock, the hour at which Father Luke O’Shaughran was generally seen topping the rise of the hill at Larry Mulligan’s public-house, jogging on his bay hack at something between a walk and a trot—that is to say, his horse moved his fore and hind legs on the off side at one motion, and the fore and hind legs of the near side in another, going at a kind of dog’s trot, like the pace of an idiot with sore feet in a shower—a pace, indeed, to which the animal had been set for the last sixteen years, but beyond which, no force, or entreaty, or science, or power, either divine or human, of his Reverence could drive him. As yet, however, he had not become apparent; and the girls already mentioned were discussing the pretensions which several of their acquaintances had to dress or beauty.

“‘Peggy,’ said Katy Carroll to her companion, Peggy Donohue, ‘were you out* last Sunday?’

* Out.—This expression in remote parts of the country is understood to mean being at mass.

“‘No, in troth, Katty, I was disappointed in getting my shoes from Paddy Mellon, though I left him the measure for my foot three weeks ago, and gave him a thousand warnings to make them duck-nebs; but, instead of that,’ said she, holding out a very purty foot, ‘he has made them as sharp in the toe as a pick-axe, and a full mile too short for me. But why do ye ax was I out, Katty?’



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* Paddy Mellon—a short, thick-set man, with gray hair, which he always kept cropped close—the most famous shoemaker in the parish: in fact the Drummond of a large district. No shoes considered worth wearing if he did not make them. But, having admitted this, I am bound in common justice and honesty to say that so big a liar never put an awl into leather. No language could describe his iniquity in this respect. I myself am a living-witness of this. Many a trudge has the villain taken out of me in my boyhood, and as sure as I went on the appointed day—which was always Saturday—so surely did he swear that they would be ready for me on that day week. He was, as a tradesman, the most multifarious and barefaced liar I ever met; and what was the most rascally trait about him, was the faculty he possessed of making you believe the lie as readily after the fifteenth repetition of it, as when it was uttered fresh from his lips.

“Oh, nothing,” responded Katty, ‘only that you missed a sight, anyway.’

“What was it Kitty, ahagur?” asked her companion with mighty great curiosity.

“Why, nothing less, indeed, nor Rose Cullenan decked out in a white muslin gown, and a black sprush bonnet, tied under her chin wid a silk ribbon, no less; but what killed us out and out was—you wouldn’t guess?”

“Arrah, how could I guess, woman alive? A silk handkerchy, maybe; for I wouldn’t doubt the same Rose but she would be setting herself up for the likes of such a thing.’

“It’s herself that had, as red as scarlet, about her neck; but that’s not it.’

“Arrah, Katty, tell it to us at wanst; out with it, ahagur; sure there’s no treason in it, anyhow.’

“Why, thin, nothing less nor a crass-bar red-and-white pocket-handkerchy, to wipe her purty complexion wid!’

“To this Peggy replied by a loud laugh, in which it was difficult to say whether there was more of satire than astonishment.

“A pocket-handkerchy!’ she exclaimed; ‘musha, are we alive afther that, at all at all! Why, that bates Molly M’Cullagh and her red mantle entirely. I’m sure, but it’s well come up for the likes of her, a poor, imperint crathur, that sprung from nothing, to give herself such airs.’

“Molly M’Cullagh, indeed,’ said Katty, ‘why, they oughtn’t to be mintioned in the one day, woman. Molly’s come of a dacent ould stock, and kind mother for her to keep herself in genteel ordher at all times; she sees nothing else, and can afford it, not all as one as the other flipe* that would go to the world’s end for a bit of dress.’



* Flipe—One who is “flippant”—of which word it is the substantive, and a good one too.

“‘Sure she thinks she’s a beauty, too, if you please,’ said Peggy, tossing her head with an air of disdain; ‘but tell us, Katty, how did the muslin sit upon her at all, the upsetting crathur?’

“‘Why, for all the world like a shift on a Maypowl, or a stocking on a body’s nose: only nothing killed us outright but the pocket-handkerchy!’



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“Hut!” said the other, ‘what could we expect from a proud piece like her, that brings a Manwill* to mass every Sunday, purtending she can read in it, and Jem Finigan saw the wrong side of the book towards her, the Sunday of the Purcession!’**

* Manuel—a Catholic Prayer-book.

** The priest described in “Ned M’Keown” having been educated on the Continent, was one of the first to introduce the Procession of the Host in that part of the country. The Consecrated Host, shrined in a silver vessel formed like a chalice, was borne by a priest under a silken canopy; and to this the other clergymen present offered up incense from a censer, whilst they circumambulated the chapel inside and out, if the day was fine.

“At this hit they both formed another risible junction, quite as sarcastic as the former—in the midst of which the innocent object of their censure, dressed in all her obnoxious finery, came up and joined them. She was scarcely sated—I blush to the very point of my pen during the manuscription—when the confabulation assumed a character directly antipodial to that which marked the precedent dialogue.

“My gracious, Rose, but that’s a purty thing you have got in your gown!—where did you buy it?’

“Och, thin, not a one of myself likes it over much. I’m sorry I didn’t buy a gingham: I could have got a beautiful pattrn, all out, for two shillings less; but they don’t wash so well as this. I bought it in Paddy McGartland’s, Peggy.’

“Troth, it’s nothing else but a great beauty; I didn’t see anything on you this long time that becomes you so well, and I’ve remarked that you always look best in white.’

“Who made it, Rose?’ inquired Katty; ‘for it sits illegant’

“Indeed,’ replied Rose, ‘for the differ of the price, I thought it better to bring it to Peggy Boyle, and be sartin of not having it spoiled. Nelly Keenan made the last; and although there was a full breadth more in it nor this, bad cess to the one of her but spoiled it on me; it was ever so much too short in the body, and too tight in the sleeves, and then I had no step at all at all.’

“The sprush bonnet is exactly the fit for the gown,’ observed Katty; ‘the black and the white’s jist the cut—how many yards had you, Rose?’

“Jist ten and a half; but the half-yard was for the tucks.’

“Ay, faix! and brave full tucks she left in it; ten would do me, Rose?’

“Ten!—no, nor ten and a half; you’re a size bigger nor me at the laste, Peggy; but you’d be asy fitted, you’re so well made.’



“Rose, *darling*,’ said Peggy, ‘that’s a great beauty, and shows off your complexion all to pieces; you have no notion how well you look in it and the sprush.’

“In a few minutes after this her namesake, Rose Galh O’Hallaghan, came towards the chapel, in society with her father, mother, and her two sisters. The eldest, Mary, was about twenty-one; Rose, who was the second, about nineteen, or scarcely that; and Nancy, the junior of the three, about twice seven.



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“There’s the O’Hallaghans,’ says Rose.

“‘Ay,’ replied Katty; ‘you may talk of beauty, now; did you ever lay your two eyes on the likes of Rose for downright—musha, if myself knows what to call it—but, anyhow, she’s the lovely crathur to look at.’

“Kind reader, without a single disrespectful insinuation against any portion of the fair sex, you may judge what Rose O’Hallaghan must have been, when even these three were necessitated to praise her in her absence!

“‘I’ll warrant,’ observed Katty, ‘we’ll soon be after seeing John O’Callaghan’—(he was my own cousin)—‘sthrolling afther them, at his ase.’

“‘Why,’ asked Rose, ‘what makes you say that?’

“‘Bekase,’ replied the other, ‘I’ve a rason for it.’

“‘Sure John O’Callaghan wouldn’t be thinking of her,’ observed Rose, ‘and their families would see other shot: their factions would never have a crass marriage, anyhow.’

“‘Well,’ said Peggy, ‘it’s the thousand pities that the same two couldn’t go together; for fair and handsome as Rose is, you’ll not deny but John comes up to her; but I faix! sure enough it’s they that’s the proud people on both sides, and dangerous to make or meddle with, not saying that ever there was the likes of the same two for dacency and peaceableness among either of the factions.’

“‘Didn’t I tell yez?’ cried Katty; ‘look at him now staling afther her; and it’ll be the same thing going home again; and, if Rose is not much belied, it’s not a bit displasing to her.’

“‘Between ourselves, observed Peggy, it would be no wondher the darling young crathur would fall in love with him; for you might thravel the country afore you’d meet with his fellow for face and figure.’

“‘There’s Father Ned,’ remarked Katty; ‘we had betther get into the chapel before the *scroodgin* comes an, or your bonnet and gown, Rose, won’t be the betther for it.’

“They now proceeded to the chapel, and those who had been amusing themselves after the same mode, followed their exemplar. In a short time the hedges and ditches adjoining the chapel were quite in solitude, with the exception of a few persons from the extreme parts of the parish, who might be seen running with all possible velocity ‘to overtake mass,’ as the phrase on that point expresses itself.

“The chapel of Knockimdowny was situated at the foot of a range of lofty mountains; a by-road went past the very door, which had under subjection a beautiful extent of cultivated country, diversificated by hill and dale, or rather by hill and hollow; for, as far



as my own geographical knowledge goes, I have uniformly found them inseparable. It was also ornamented with the waving verdure of rich corn-fields and meadows, not pretermitted phatie-fields in full blossom—a part of rural landscape which, to my utter astonishment, has escaped the pen of poet, and the brush of painter; although I will risk my reputation as a man of pure and categorical taste,



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if a finer ingredient in the composition of a landscape could be found than a field of Cork-fed phaties or Moroky *blacks* in full bloom, allowing a man to judge by the pleasure they confer upon the eye, and therefore to the heart. About a mile up from the chapel, towards the south, a mountain-stream, not the one already intimated—over which there was no bridge, crossed the road. But in lieu of a bridge, there was a long double plank laid over it, from bank to bank; and as the river was broad, and not sufficiently incarcerated within its channel, the neighbors were necessitated to throw these planks across the narrowest part they could find in the contiguity of the road. This part was consequently the deepest, and, in floods, the most dangerous; for the banks were elevated as far as they went, and quite tortuous.

“Shortly after the priest had entered the chapel, it was observed that the hemisphere became, of a sudden, unusually obscure, though the preceding part of the day had not only been uncloudously bright, but hot in a most especial manner. The obscurity, however, increased rapidly, accompanied by that gloomy stillness which always takes precedence of a storm, and fills the mind with vague and interminable terror. But this ominous silence was not long unfractured; for soon after the first appearance of the gloom, a flash of lightning quivered through the chapel, followed by an extragavantly loud clap of thunder, which shook the very glass in the windows, and filled the congregation to the brim with terror. Their dismay, however, would have been infinitely greater, only for the presence of his Reverence, and the confidence which might be traced to the solemn occasion on which they were assimilated.

“From this moment the storm became progressive in dreadful magnitude, and the thunder, in concomitance with the most vivid flashes of lightning, pealed through the sky, with an awful grandeur and magnificence, that were exalted and even rendered more sublime by the still solemnity of religious worship. Every heart now prayed fervently—every spirit shrunk into a deep sense of its own guilt and helplessness—and every conscience was terror-stricken, as the voice of an angry God thundered out of his temple of storms through the heavens; for truly, as the Authorized Version has it, ‘darkness was under his feet, and his pavilion round about was dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies, because he was wroth.’

“The rain now condescended in even-down torrents, and thunder succeeded thunder in deep and terrific peals, whilst the roar of the gigantic echoes that deepened and reverberated among the glens and hollows, ‘laughing in their mountain mirth,’—hard fortune to me, but they made the flesh creep on my bones!



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“This lasted for an hour, when the thunder slackened: but the rain still continued. As soon as mass was over, and the storm had elapsed, except an odd peal which might be heard rolling at a distance behind the hills, the people began gradually to reprove their spirits, and enter into confabulation; but to venture out was still impracticable. For about another hour it rained incessantly, after which it ceased; the hemisphere became lighter—and the sun shone out once more upon the countenance of nature with its former brightness. The congregation then decanted itself out of the chapel—the spirits of the people dancing with that remarkable buoyancy or juvenility which is felt after a thunderstorm, when the air is calm, soople, and balmy—and all nature garmented with glittering verdure and light. The crowd next began to commingle on their way home, and to make the usual observations upon the extraordinary storm which had just passed, and the probable effect it would produce on the fruit and agriculture of the neighborhood.

“When the three young women, whom we have already introduced to our respectable readers, had evacuated the chapel, they determined to substantiate a certitude, as far as their observation could reach, as to the truth of what Kitty Carroll had hinted at, in reference to John O’Callaghan’s attachment to Rose Galh O’Hallaghan, and her taciturn approval of it. For this purpose they kept their eye upon John, who certainly seemed in no especial hurry home, but lingered upon the chapel green in a very careless method. Rose Galh, however, soon made her appearance, and, after going up the chapel-road a short space, John slyly walked at some distance behind, without seeming to pay her any particular notice, whilst a person up to the secret might observe Rose’s bright eye sometimes peeping back to see if he was after her. In this manner they proceeded until they came to the river, which, to their great alarm, was almost fluctuating over its highest banks.

“A crowd was now assembled, consulting as to the safest method of crossing the planks, under which the red boiling current ran, with less violence, it is true, but much deeper than in any other part of the stream. The final decision was, that the very young and the old, and such as were feeble, should proceed by a circuit of some miles to a bridge that crossed it, and that the young men should place themselves on their knees along the planks, their hands locked in each other, thus forming a support on one side, upon which such as had courage to venture across might lean, in case of accident or megrim. Indeed, anybody that had able nerves might have crossed the planks without this precaution, had they been dry; but, in consequence of the rain, and the frequent attrition of feet, they were quite slippery; and, besides, the flood rolled terrifically two or three yards below them, which might be apt to beget a megrim that would not be felt if there was no flood.



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“When this expedient had been hit upon, several young men volunteered themselves to put it in practice; and in a short time a considerable number of both sexuals crossed over, without the occurrence of any unpleasant accident. Paddy O’Hallaghan and his family had been stationed for some time on the bank, watching the success of the plan; and as it appeared not to be attended with any particular danger, they also determined to make the attempt. About a perch below the planks stood John O’Callaghan, watching the progress of those who were crossing them, but taking no part in what was going forward. The river, under the planks, and for some perches above and below them, might be about ten feet deep; but to those who could swim, it was less perilous, should any accident befall them, than those parts where the current was more rapid, but shallower. The water here boiled, and bubbled, and whirled about; but it was slow, and its yellow surface unbroken by rocks or fords.

“The first of the O’Hallaghans that ventured over it was the youngest, who, being captured by the hand, was encouraged by many cheerful expressions from the young men who were clinging to the planks. She got safe over, however; and when she came to the end, one who was stationed on the bank gave her a joyous pull, that translated her several yards upon terra firma.

“‘Well, Nancy,’ he observed, ‘you’re safe, anyhow; and if I don’t dance at your wedding for this, I’ll never say you’re dacent.’

“To this Nancy gave a jocular promise, and he resumed his station, that he might be ready to render similar assistance to her next sister. Rose Galh then went to the edge of the plank several times, but her courage as often refused to be forthcoming. During her hesitation, John O’Callaghan stooped down, and privately untied his shoes, then unbuttoned his waistcoat, and very gently, being unwilling to excite notice, slipped the knot of his cravat. At long last, by the encouragement of those who were on the plank, Rose attempted the passage, and had advanced as far as the middle of it, when a fit of dizziness and alarm seized her with such violence, that she lost all consciousness—a circumstance of which those who handed her along were ignorant. The consequence, as might be expected, was dreadful; for as one of the young men was receiving her hand, that he might pass her to the next, she lost her momentum, and was instantaneously precipitated into the boiling current.

“The wild and fearful cry of horror that succeeded this cannot be laid on paper. The eldest sister fell into strong convulsions, and several of the other females fainted on the spot. The mother did not faint; but, like Lot’s wife, she seemed to be translated into stone: her hands became clenched convulsively, her teeth locked, her nostrils dilated, and her eyes shot half way out of her head. There she stood, looking upon her daughter struggling in the flood, with a fixed gaze or wild and impotent frenzy, that, for fearful ness, beat the thunder-storm all to nothing. The father rushed to the edge of the river, oblivious of his incapability to swim, determined to save her or lose his own life,

which latter would have been a dead certainty, had he ventured; but he was prevented by the crowd, who pointed out to him the madness of such a project.



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“For God’s sake, Paddy, don’t attempt it,” they exclaimed, “except you wish to lose your own life, without being able to save hers: no man could swim in that flood, and it upwards of ten feet deep.”

“Their arguments, however, were lost upon him; for, in fact, he was insensible to everything but his child’s preservation. He, therefore, only answered their remonstrances by attempting to make another plunge into the river.

“Let me alone, will ye,” said he—“let me alone! I’ll either save my child, Rose, or die along with her! How could I live after her? Merciful God, any of them but her! Oh! Rose, darling,” he exclaimed, “the favorite of my heart—will no one save you?” All this passed in less than a minute.

“Just as these words were uttered, a plunge was heard a few yards below the bridge, and a man appeared in the flood, making his way with rapid strokes to the drowning girl. Another cry now arose from the spectators: ‘It’s John O’Callaghan,’ they shouted—‘it’s John O’Callaghan, and they’ll both be lost.’ ‘No,’ exclaimed others; ‘if it’s in the power of man to save her, he will!’ ‘O, blessed father, she’s lost!’ now burst from all present; for, after having struggled and been kept floating for some time by her garments, she at length sunk, apparently exhausted and senseless, and the thief of a flood flowed over her, as if she had not been under its surface.

“When O’Callaghan saw that she went down, he raised himself up in the water, and cast his eye towards that part of the bank opposite which she disappeared, evidently, as it proved, that he might have a mark to guide him in fixing on the proper spot where to plunge after her. When he came to the place, he raised himself again in the stream, and, calculating that she must by this time have been borne some distance from the spot where she sank, he gave a stroke or two down the river, and disappeared after her. This was followed by another cry of horror and despair, for somehow, the idea of desolation which marks, at all times, a deep, over-swollen torrent, heightened by the bleak mountain scenery around them, and the dark, angry voracity of the river where they had sunk, might have impressed the spectators with utter hopelessness as to the fate of those now engulfed in its vortex. This, however, I leave to those who are deeper read in philosophy than I am.

“An awful silence succeeded the last shrill exclamation, broken only by the hoarse rushing of the waters, whose wild, continuous roar, booming hollowly and dismally in the ear, might be heard at a great distance over all the country. But a new sensation soon invaded the multitude; for after the lapse of about half a minute, John O’Callaghan emerged from the flood, bearing in his sinister hand the body of his own Rose Galh—for it’s he that loved her tenderly. A peal of joy congratulated them from the assembled crowd; hundreds of directions were given to him how to act to the best advantage. Two young men in especial, who were both dying about the lovely creature that he held, were quite anxious to give advice.



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“Bring her to the other side, John, ma bouchal; it’s the safest,” said Larry Carty.

“Will you let him alone, Carty?” said Simon Tracy, who was the other, ‘you’ll only put him in a perplexity.’

“But Carty should order in spite of every thing. He kept bawling out, however, so loud, that John raised his eye to see what he meant, and was near losing hold of Rose. This was too much for Tracy, who ups with his fist, and downs him—so they both at it; for no one there could take themselves off those that were in danger, to interfere between them. But at all events, no earthly thing can happen among Irishmen without a fight.

“The father, during this, stood breathless, his hands clasped, and his eyes turned to heaven, praying in anguish for the delivery of his darling. The mother’s look was still wild and fixed, her eyes glazed, and her muscles hard and stiff; evidently she was insensible to all that was going forward; while large drops of paralytic agony hung upon her cold brow. Neither of the sisters had yet recovered, nor could those who supported them turn their eyes from the more imminent danger, to pay them any particular attention. Many, also, of the other females, whose feelings were too much wound up when the accident occurred, now fainted, when they saw she was likely to be rescued; but most of them were weeping with delight and gratitude.

“When John brought her to the surface, he paused for a moment to recover breath and collectedness; he then caught her by the left arm, near the shoulder, and cut, in a slanting direction, down the stream, to a watering place, where a slope had been formed in the bank. But he was already too far down to be able to work across the stream to this point; for it was here much stronger and more rapid than under the planks. Instead, therefore, of reaching the slope, he found himself in spite of every effort to the contrary, about a perch below it; and, except he could gain this point, against the strong rush of the flood, there was very little hope of being able to save either her or himself—for he was now much exhausted.

“Hitherto, therefore, all was still doubtful, whilst strength was fast failing him. In this trying and almost hopeless situation, with an admirable presence of mind, he adopted the only expedient which could possibly enable him to reach the bank. On finding himself receding down, instead of advancing up the current, he approached the bank, which was here very deep and perpendicular; he then sank his fingers into and pressed his right foot against the firm blue clay with which it was stratified, and by this means advanced, bit by bit, up the stream, having no other force by which to propel himself against it. After this mode did he breast the current with all his strength—which must have been prodigious, or he never could have borne it out—until he reached the slope, and got from the influence of the tide, into dead water. On arriving here,



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his hand was caught by one of the young men present, who stood up to the neck, waiting his approach. A second man stood behind him, holding his other hand, a link being thus formed, that reached out to the firm bank; and a good pull now brought them both to the edge of the river. On finding bottom, John took his Colleen Galh in his own arms, carried her out, and pressing his lips to hers, laid her in the bosom of her father; then, after taking another kiss of the young drowned flower, he burst into tears, and fell powerless beside her. The truth is, the spirit that had kept him firm was now exhausted; both his legs and arms having become nerveless by the exertion.

“Hitherto her father took no notice of John, for how could he? seeing that he was entirely wrapped up in his daughter; and the question was, though rescued from the flood, if life was in her. The sisters were by this time recovered, and weeping over her, along with the father—and, indeed, with all present; but the mother could not be made to comprehend what they were about at all at all. The country people used every means with which they were intimate to recover Rose; she was brought instantly to a farmer’s house beside the spot, put into a warm bed, covered over with hot salt, wrapped in half-scorched blankets, and made subject to every other mode of treatment that could possibly revoke the functions of life. John had now got a dacent draught of whiskey, which revived him. He stood over her, when he could be admitted, watching for the symptomatics of her revival; all, however, was vain. He now determined to try another course: by-and-by he stooped, put his mouth to her mouth, and, drawing in his breath, respired with all his force from the bottom of his very heart into hers; this he did several times rapidly—faith, a tender and agreeable operation, any how. But mark the consequence: in less than a minute her white bosom heaved—her breath returned—her pulse began to play—she opened her eyes, and felt his tears of love raining warmly on her pale cheek!

“For years before this no two of these opposite factions had spoken, nor up to this minute had John and they, even upon this occasion, exchanged a monosyllable. The father now looked at him—the tears stood afresh in his eyes; he came forward—stretched out his hand—it was received; and the next moment he fell upon John’s neck, and cried like an infant.

“When Rose recovered, she seemed as if striving to recordate what had happened; and, after two or three minutes, inquired from her sister, in a weak but sweet voice, ‘Who saved me?’

“‘Twas John O’Callaghan, Rose darling,’ replied the sister, in tears, ‘that ventured his own life into the boiling flood, to save yours—and did save it, jewel!’

“Rose’s eye glanced at John—and I only wish, as I am a bachelor not further than my forty-fourth, that I may ever have the happiness to get such a glance from two blue



eyes, as she gave him that moment—a faint smile played about her mouth, and a slight blush lit up her fair cheek, like the evening sunbeams on the virgin snow, as the poets have said for the five-hundredth time, to my own personal knowledge. She then extended her hand, which John, you may be sure, was no way backward in receiving, and the tears of love and gratitude ran silently down her cheeks.



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“It is not necessary to detail the circumstances of this day farther; let it be sufficient to say, that a reconciliation took place between those two branches of the O’Hallaghan and O’Callaghan families, in consequence of John’s heroism and Rose’s soft persuasion, and that there was, also, every perspective of the two factions being penultimately amalgamated. For nearly a century they had been pell-mell at it, whenever and wherever they could meet. Their forefathers, who had been engaged in the lawsuit about the island which I have mentioned, wore dead and petrified in their graves; and the little peninsula in the glen was gradationally worn away by the river, till nothing remained but a desert, upon a small scale, of sand and gravel. Even the ruddy, able-bodied squire, with the longitudinal nose, projecting out of his face like a broken arch, and the small, fiery magistrate—both of whom had fought the duel, for the purpose of setting forth a good example, and bringing the dispute to a peaceable conclusion—were also dead. The very memory of the original contention! had been lost (except that it was preserved along with the cranium of my grandfather), or became so indistinct that the parties fastened themselves on some more modern provocation, which they kept in view until another fresh motive would start up, and so on. I know not, however, whether it was fair to expect them to give up at once the agreeable recreation of fighting. It’s not easy to abolish old customs, particularly diversions; and every one knows that this is our national amusement.

“There were, it is true, many among both, factions who saw the matter in this reasonable light, and who wished rather, if it were to cease, that it should die away by degrees, from the battle of the whole parish, equally divided between the factions, to the subordinate row between certain members of them—from that to the faint broil of certain families, and so on to the single-handed play between individuals. At all events, one-half of them were for peace, and two-thirds of them were equally divided between peace and war.

“For three months after the accident which befell Rose Galh O’Hallaghan, both factions had been tolerantly quiet—that is to say, they had no general engagement. Some slight skirmishes certainly did take place on market-nights, when the drop was in, and the spirits up; but in those neither John nor Rose’s immediate families took any part. The fact was, that John and Rose were on the evening of matrimony; the match had been made—the day appointed, and every other necessary stipulation ratified. Now, John was as fine a young man as you would meet in a day’s traveling; and as for Rose, her name went far and near for beauty: and with justice, for the sun never shone on a fairer, meeker, or modester virgin than Rose Galh O’Hallaghan.



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“It might be, indeed, that there were those on both sides who thought that, if the marriage was obstructed, their own sons and daughters would have a better chance. Rose had many admirers; they might have envied John his happiness; many fathers, on the Other side, might have wished their sons to succeed with Rose. Whether I am sinister in this conjecture is more than I can say. I grant, indeed, that a great portion of it is speculation on my part. The wedding-day, however, was arranged; but, unfortunately, the fair-day of Knockimdowny occurred, in the rotation of natural time, precisely one week before it. I know not from what motive it proceeded, but the factions on both sides were never known to make a more light-hearted preparation for battle. Cudgels of all sorts and sizes (and some of them, to my own knowledge, great beauties) were provided.

“I believe I may as well take this opportunity of saying that real Irish cudgels must be root-growing, either oak, black-thorn, or crab-tree—although crab-tree, by the way, is apt to fly. They should not be too long—three feet and a few inches is an accommodating length. They must be naturally top-heavy, and have around the end that is to make acquaintance with the cranium three or four natural lumps, calculated to divide the flesh in the natest manner, and to leave, if possible, the smallest taste in life of pit in the skull. But if a good root-growing *kippeen* be light at the fighting-end, or possess not the proper number of knobs, a hole, a few inches deep, is to be bored in the end, which must be filled with melted lead. This gives it a widow-and-orphan-making quality, a child-bereaving touch, altogether very desirable. If, however, the top splits in the boring—which, in awkward hands, is not uncommon—the defect may be remediated by putting on an iron ferrule, and driving two or three strong nails into it, simply to preserve it from flying off; not that an Irishman is ever at a loss for weapons when in a fight, for so long as a scythe, flail, spade, pitchfork, or stone is at hand, he feels quite contented with the lot of war. No man, as they say of great statesmen, is more fertile in expedients during a row; which, by the way, I take to be a good quality, at all events.

“I remember the fair-day of Knockimdowny well; it has kept me from griddle-bread and tough nutriment ever since. Hard fortune to Jack Roe O’Hallaghan! No man had better teeth than I had till I met with him that day. He fought stoutly on his own side; but he was ped then for the same basting that fell to me, though not by my hands, if to get his jaw dacently divided into three halves could be called a fair liquidation of an old debt—it was equal to twenty shillings in the pound, any how.



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“There had not been a larger fair in the town of Knockimdowny for years. The day was dark and sunless, but sultry. On looking through the crowd, I could see no man! without a cudgel; yet, what was strange, there was no certainty of any sport. Several desultory skirmishes had locality, but they I were altogether sequestered from the great factions of the O’s. Except that it was pleasant and stirred one’s blood to look at them, or occasioned the cudgels to be grasped more firmly, there was no personal interest felt by any of us in them; they therefore began and ended, here and there, through the fair, like mere flashes in the pan, dying in their own smoke.

“The blood of every prolific nation is naturally hot; but when that hot blood is inflamed by ardent spirits, it is not to be supposed that men should be cool; and God he knows, there is not on the level surface of this habitable globe, a nation that has been so thoroughly inflamed by ardent spirits of all kinds as Ireland.

“Up till four o’clock that day, the factions were quiet. Several relations on both sides had been invited to drink by John and Rose’s families, for the purpose of establishing a good feeling between them. But this was, after all, hardly to be expected, for they hated one another with an ardency much too good-humored and buoyant; and, between ourselves, to bring Paddy over a bottle is a very equivocal mode of giving him an anti-cudgeling disposition. After the hour of four, several of the factions were getting very friendly, which I knew at the time to be a bad sign. Many of them nodded to each other, which I knew to be a worse one; and some of them shook hands with the greatest cordiality, which I no sooner saw than I slipped the knot of my cravat, and held myself in preparation for the sport.

“I have often had occasion to remark—and few men, let me tell you, had finer opportunities of doing so—the differential symptomatics between a Party Fight, that is, a battle between Orangemen and Ribbon-men, and one between two Roman Catholic Factions. There is something infinitely more anxious, silent, and deadly, in the compressed vengeance, and the hope of slaughter, which characterize a party fight, than is to be seen in a battle between factions. The truth is, the enmity is not so deep and well-grounded in the latter as in the former. The feeling is not political nor religious between the factions; whereas, in the other, it is both, which is a mighty great advantage; for when this is adjuncted to an intense personal hatred, and a sense of wrong, probably arising from a too intimate recollection of the leaded black thorn, or the awkward death of some relative, by the musket or the bayonet, it is apt to produce very purty fighting, and much respectable retribution.



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“In a party fight, a prophetic sense of danger, hangs, as it were, over the crowd—the very air is loaded with apprehension; and the vengeance burst is proceeded by a close, thick darkness, almost sulphury, that is more terrific than the conflict itself, though dearly less dangerous and fatal. The scowl of the opposing parties, the blanched cheeks, the knit brows, and the grinding teeth, not premitting the deadly gleams that shoot from their kindled eyes, are ornaments which a plain battle between factions cannot boast, but which, notwithstanding, are very suitable to the fierce and gloomy silence of that premeditated vengeance which burns with such intensity in the heart, and scorches up the vitals into such a thirst for blood. Not but that they come by different means to the same conclusion; because it is the feeling, and not altogether the manner of operation, that is different.

“Now a faction fight doesn’t resemble this at all at all. Paddy’s at home here; all song, dance, good-humor, and affection. His cheek is flushed with delight, which, indeed, may derive assistance from the consciousness of having no bayonets or loaded carabines to contend with; but anyhow, he’s at home—his eye is lit with real glee—he tosses his hat in the air, in the height of mirth—and leaps, like a mounteback, two yards from the ground. Then, with what a gracious dexterity he brandishes his cudgel! what a joyous spirit is heard in his shout at the face of a friend from another faction! His very ‘who!’ is contagious, and would make a man, that had settled on running away, return and join the sport with an appetite truly Irish. He is, in fact, while under the influence of this heavenly afflatus, in love with every one, man, woman, and child. If he meet his sweetheart, he will give her a kiss and a hug, and that with double kindness, because he is on his way to thrash her father or brother. It is the acumen of his enjoyment; and woe be to him who will adventure to go between him and his amusements. To be sure, skulls and bones are broken, and lives lost; but they are lost in pleasant fighting—they are the consequences of the sport, the beauty of which consists in breaking as many heads and necks as you can; and certainly when a man enters into the spirit of any exercise, there is nothing like elevating himself to the point of excellence. Then a man ought never to be disheartened. If you lose this game, or get your head good-humoredly beaten to pieces, why you may win another, or your friends may mollify two or three skulls as a set-off to yours; but that is nothing.

“When the evening became more advanced, maybe, considering the poor look up there was for anything like decent sport—maybe, in the early part of the day, it wasn’t the delightful sight to see the boys on each side of the two great factions beginning to get frolicsome. Maybe the songs and the shouting, when they began, hadn’t melody and music in them, any how! People may talk about



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harmony; but what harmony is equal to that in which five or six hundred men sing and shout, and leap and caper at each other, as a prelude to neighborly fighting where they beat time upon the drums of each other's ears and heads with oak drumsticks? That's an Irishman's music; and hard fortune to the *garran** that wouldn't have friendship and kindness in him to join and play a stave along with them! 'Whoo; your sowl! Hurroo! Success to our side! Hi for the O'Callaghans! Where's the blackguard to—,' I beg pardon, decent reader; I forgot myself for a moment, or rather I got new life in me, for I am nothing at all at all for the last five months—a kind of nonentity I may say, ever since that vagabond Burges occasioned me to pay a visit to my distant relations, till my friends get that last matter of the collar-bone settled.

* Garran—a horse; but it is always used as meaning a bad one—one without mettle. When figuratively applied to a man, it means a coward

"The impulse which faction fighting gives to trade and business in Ireland is truly surprising; whereas party fighting depreciates both. As soon as it is perceived that a party fight is to be expected, all buying and selling are nearly suspended for the day; and those who are not *up**, and even many who are, take themselves and their property home as quickly as may be convenient. But in a faction fight, as soon as there is any perspective of a row, depend upon it, there is quick work at all kinds of negotiation; and truly there is nothing like brevity and decision in buying and selling; for which reason, faction fighting, at all events, if only for the sake of national prosperity, should be encouraged and kept up.

* Initiated into Whiteboyism

"Towards five o'clock, if a man was placed on an exalted station; so that he could look at the crowd, and wasn't able to fight, he could have seen much that a man might envy him for. Here a hat went up, or maybe a dozen of them; then followed a general huzza. On the other side, two dozen caubeens sought the sky, like so many scaldy crows attempting their own element for the first time, only they were not so black. Then another shout, which was answered by that of their friends on the opposite side; so that you would hardly know which side huzzaed loudest, the blending of both was so truly symphonious. Now there was a shout for the face of an O'Callaghan; this was prosecuted on the very heels by another for the face of an O'Hallaghan. Immediately a man of the O'Hallaghan side doffed his tattered frieze, and catching it by the very extremity of the sleeve, drew it with a tact, known only by an initiation of half a dozen street days, up the pavement after him. On the instant, a blade from the O'Callaghan side peeled with equal alacrity, and stretching his *home-made* * at full length after him, proceeded triumphantly up the street, to meet the other.



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* Irish frieze is mostly manufactured at home, which accounts for the expression here.

“Thunder-an-ages, what’s this for, at all, at all! I wish I hadn’t begun to manuscript an account of it, any how; ’tis like a hungry man dreaming of a good dinner at a feast, and afterwards awaking and finding his front ribs and back-bone on the point of union. Reader, is that a black-thorn you carry—tut, where is my imagination bound for?—to meet the other, I say.

“Where’s the rascally O’Callaghan that will place his toe or his shillely on this frieze?’ ‘Is there no blackguard O’Hallaghan jist to look crucked at the coat of an O’Callaghan, or say black’s the white of his eye?’

“Troth and there is, Ned, avourneen, that same on the sod here.’

“Is that Barney?’

“The same, Ned, ma bouchal; and how is your mother’s son, Ned?’

“In good health at the present time, thank God and you; how is yourself, Barney?’

“Can’t complain as time goes; only take this, any how, to mend your health, ma bouchal.’ (Whack.)

“Success, Barney, and here’s at your sarvice, avick, not making little of what I got, any way.’ (Crack.)

“About five o’clock on a May evening, in the fair of Knockimdowny, was the ice thus broken, with all possible civility, by Ned and Barney. The next moment a general rush took place towards the scene of action, and ere you could bless yourself, Barney and Ned were both down, weltering in their own and each other’s blood. I scarcely know, indeed, though with a mighty respectable quota of experimentality myself, how to describe what followed. For the first twenty minutes the general harmony of this fine row might be set to music, according to a scale something like this:—Whick whack—crick crack—whick whack—crick crack—&c, &c, &o. ‘Here yer sowl—(crack)—there yer sowl—(whack). Whoo for the O’Hallag-hans!’—(crack, crack, crack). ‘Hurroo for the O’Callaghans!’—(whack, whack, whack). The O’Callaghans for ever!’—(whack). ‘The O’Hallaghans for ever!’—(crack). ‘Mur-ther! murther!’—(crick, crack)—foul! foul!—(whack, whack). Blood and turf!—(whack, whick)—tunther-an-ouns’—(crack, crick). ‘Hurroo! my darlings! handle your kip-peens—(crack, crack)—the O’Hallaghans are going!’—(whack, whack).

“You are to suppose them, here to have been at it for about half an hour.



“Whack, crack—’oh—oh—oh! have mercy upon me, boys—(crack—a shriek of murder! murder—crack, crack, whack)—my life—my life—(crack, crack—whack, whack)—oh! for the sake of the living Father!—for the sake of my wife and childher, Ned Hallaghan, spare my life.’

“So we will, but take this, any how’—(whack, crack, whack, crack).

“Oh! for the love of. God, don’t kill—(whack, crack, whack). Oh!’—(crack, crack, whack—dies).

“Huzza! huzza! huzza!’ from the O’Hallaghans. ‘Bravo, boys! there’s one of them done for: whoo! my darlings! hurroo! the O’Hallaghans for ever!’



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“The scene now changes to the O’Callaghan side.

“Jack—oh, Jack, avourneen—hell to their sowls for murdherers—Paddy’s killed—his skull’s smashed! Revinge, boys, Paddy O’Callaghan’s killed! On with you, O’Callaghans—on with you—on with you, Paddy O’Callaghan’s murdhered—take to the stones—that’s it—keep it up, down with: him! Success!—he’s the bloody villain that: didn’t show him marcy—that’s it. Tunder-an-ouns, is it laving him that way you are afther—let me at him!’

“Here’s a stone, Tom!’

“No, no, this stick has the lead in it. It’ll do him, never fear!’

“Let him alone, Barney, he’s got enough.’

“By the powdhers, it’s myself that won’t: didn’t he kill Paddy?—(crack, crack). Take that, you murdhering thief!’—(whack, whack).

“Oh!—(whack, crack)—my head—I’m killed—I’m’—(crack—kicks the bucket).

“Now, your sowl, that does you, any way—(crack, whack)—hurro!—huzza!—huzza!—Man for man, boys—an O’Hallaghan’s done for—whoo! for our side—tol-deroll, folderoll, tow, row, row—huzza!—fol-deroll, fol-deroll, tow, row, row, huzza for the O’Callaghans!’

“From this moment the battle became delightful; it was now pelt and welt on both sides, but many of the kippeens were broken: many of the boys had their fighting arms disabled by a dislocation, or bit of fracture, and those weren’t equal to more than doing a little upon such as were down.

“In the midst of the din, such a dialogue as this might be heard:

“Larry, you’re after being done for, for this day.’ (Whack, crack.)

“Only an eye gone—is that Mickey?’ (whick, whack, crick, crack.)

“That’s it, my darlings!—you may say that, Larry—’tis my mother’s son that’s in it—(crack, crack,—a general huzza.): (Mickey and Larry) huzza! huzza! huzza for the O’Hallaghans! What have you got, Larry?—(crack, crack).

“Only the bone of my arm, God be praised for it, very purtily snapt across!’ (whack, whack).

“Is that all? Well, some people have luck!’—(crack, crack, crack).



“Why I’ve no reason to complain, thank God—(whack, crack!)—purty play that, any way—Paddy O’Callaghan’s settled—did you hear it?—(whack, whack, another shout)—That’s it boys—handle the shilleleys!—Success O’Hallaghans—down with the bloody O’Callaghans!”

“I did hear it: so is Jem O’Hallaghan—(crack, whack, whack, crack)—you’re not able to get up, I see—tare-an-ouny, isn’t it a pleasure to hear that play?—What ails you?”

“Oh, Larry, I’m in great pain, and getting very weak, entirely’—(faints).

“Faix, and he’s settled too, I’m thinking.’

“Oh, murdher, my arm!’ (One of the O’Callaghans attacks him—crack, crack)—

“Take that, you vagabone!’—(whack, whack).

“Murdher, murdher, is it strikin’ a down man you’re after?—foul, foul, and my arm broke!’—(crack, crack).



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“Take that, with what you got before, and it’ll ase you, maybe.’

“(A party of the O’Hallaghans attack the man who is beating him).

“Murdher, murdher!’—(crack, whack, whack, crack, crack, whack).

“Lay on him, your sowls to pirdition—lay on him, hot and heavy—give it to him! He sthruck me and me down wid my broken arm!’

“Foul, ye thieves of the world!—(from the O’Callaghan)—foul! five against one—give me fair play!—(crack, crack, crack)—Oh!—(whack) Oh, oh, oh!’—(falls senseless, covered with blood).

“Ha, hell’s cure to you, you bloody thief; you didn’t spare me with my arm broke’—(Another general shout.) ’Bad end to it, isn’t it a poor case entirely, that I can’t even throw up my caubeen, let alone join in the diversion.’

“Both parties now rallied, and ranged themselves along the street, exhibiting a firm phalanx, wedged close against each other, almost foot to foot. The mass was thick and dense, and the tug of conflict stiff, wild and savage. Much natural skill and dexterity were displayed in their mutual efforts to preserve their respective ranks unbroken, and as the sallies and charges were made on both sides, the temporary rash, the indentation of the multitudinous body, and the rebound into its original position, gave an undulating appearance to the compact mass—reeking, dragging, groaning, and buzzing as it was, that resembled the serpentine motion of a rushing water-spout in the clouds.

“The women now began to take part with their brothers and sweethearts. Those who had no bachelors among the opposite factions, fought along with their brothers; others did not scruple even to assist in giving their enamored swains the father of a good beating. Many, however, were more faithful to love than to natural affection, and these sallied out, like heroines, under the banners of their sweethearts, fighting with amazing prowess against their friends and relations; nor was it at all extraordinary to see two sisters engaged on opposite sides—perhaps tearing each other as, with dishevelled hair, they screamed with a fury that was truly exemplary. Indeed it is no untruth to assert that the women do much valuable execution. Their manner of fighting is this—as soon as the fair one decides upon taking a part in the row, she instantly takes off her apron or her stocking, stoops down, and lifting the first four pounder she can get, puts it in the corner of her apron, or the foot of her stocking, if it has a foot, and marching into the scene of action, lays about her right and left. Upon my credibility, they are extremely useful and handy, and can give mighty nate knockdowns—inasmuch as no guard that a man is acquainted with can ward off their blows. Nay, what is more, it often happens, when a son-in-law is in a faction against his father-in-law and his wife’s people generally, that if he and his wife’s brother meet, the wife will clink him with the *pet* in her

apron, downing her own husband with great skill, for it is not always that marriage extinguishes the hatred of factions; and very often 'tis the brother that is humiliated.



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“Up to the death of these two men, John O’Callaghan and Rose’s father, together with a large party of their friends on both sides, were drinking in a public-house, determined to take no portion in the fight, at all at all. Poor Rose, when she heard the shouting and terrible strokes, got as pale as death, and sat close to John, whose hand she captured hers, beseeching him, and looking up in his face with the most imploring sincerity as she spoke, not to go out among them; the tears falling all the time from her fine eyes, the mellow flashes of which, when John’s pleasantry in soothing her would seduce a smile, went into his very heart. But when, on looking out of the window where they sat, two of the opposing factions heard that a man on each side was killed; and when on ascertaining the names of the individuals, and of those who murdered them, it turned out that one of the murdered men was brother to a person in the room, and his murderer uncle to one of those in the window, it was not in the power of man or woman to keep them asunder, particularly as they were all rather advanced in liquor. In an instant the friends of the murdered man made a rush at the window, before any pacifiers had time to get between them, and catching the nephew of him who had committed the murder, hurled him head-foremost upon the stone pavement, where his skull was dashed to pieces, and his brains scattered about the flags!

“A general attack instantly took place in the room, between the two factions; but the apartment was too low and crowded to permit of proper fighting, so they rushed out to the street, shouting and yelling, as they do when the battle comes to the real point of doing business. As soon as it was seen that the heads of the O’Callaghan’s and O’Hallaghans were at work as well as the rest, the fight was recommenced with retrebled spirit; but when the mutilated body of the man who had been flung from the window, was observed lying in the pool of his own proper brains and blood, such a cry arose among his friends, as would cake (* harden) the vital fluid in the veins of any one not a party in the quarrel. Now was the work—the moment of interest—men and women groaning, staggering, and lying insensible; others shouting, leaping, and huzzaing; some singing, and not a few able-bodied spalpeens blurting, like over-grown children, on seeing their own blood; many raging and roaring about like bulls;—all this formed such a group as a faction fight, and nothing else, could represent.

“The battle now blazed out afresh; and all kinds of instruments were pressed into the service. Some got flails, some spades, some shovels, and one man got his hands upon a scythe, with which, unquestionably, he would have taken more lives than one; but, very fortunately, as he sallied out to join the crowd, he was politely visited in the back of the head by a brick-bat, which had a mighty convincing way with it of giving him a peaceable disposition, for he instantly



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lay down, and did not seem at all anxious as to the result of the battle. The O'Hallaghans were now compelled to give way, owing principally to the introvention of John O'Ohallaghan, who, although he was as good as sworn to take no part in the contest, was compelled to fight merely to protect himself. But, blood-and-turf! when he did begin, he was dreadful. As soon as his party saw him engaged, they took fresh courage, and in a short time made the O'Hallaghan's retreat up the church-yard. I never saw anything equal to John; he absolutely sent them down in dozens; and when a man would give him any inconvenience with the stick, he would down him with the fist, for right and left were all alike to him. Poor Rose's brother and he met, both roused like two lions; but when John saw who it was, he held back his hand:—

“No, Tom,’ says he, ‘I’ll not strike you, for Rose’s sake. I’m not fighting through ill will to you or your family; so take another direction, for I can’t strike you.’

“The blood, however, was unfortunately up in Tom.

“We’ll decide it now,’ said he, ‘I’m as good a man as you, O’Callaghan: and let me whisper this in your ears—you’ll never warm the one bed with Rose, while’s God’s in heaven—it’s past that now—there can be I nothing but blood between us!’

“At this juncture two of the O’Callaghans ran with their shillelaghs up, to beat down Tom on the spot.

“Stop, boys!’ said John, ‘you mustn’t touch him; he had no hand in the quarrel. Go, boys, if you respect me; lave him to myself.’

“The boys withdrew to another part of the fight; and the next instant Tom struck the very man that interfered to save him, across the temple, and cut him severely. John put his hand up and staggered.

“I’m sorry for this,’ he observed; ‘but it’s now self-defence with me;’ and at the same moment, with one blow, he left Tom O’Hallaghan stretched insensible on the street.

“On the O’Hallaghans being driven to the church-yard, they were at a mighty great inconvenience for weapons. Most of them had lost their sticks, it being a usage in fights of this kind to twist the cudgels from the grasp of the beaten men, to prevent them from rallying. They soon, however, furnished themselves with the best they could find, videlicet, the skull, leg, thigh, and arm bones, which they found lying about the grave-yard. This was a new species of weapon, for which the majority of the O’Callaghans were scarcely prepared. Out they sallied in a body—some with these, others with stones, and making fierce assault upon their enemies, absolutely druv then—not so much by the damage they we’re doing, as by the alarm and terror which these



unexpected species of missiles excited. At this moment, notwithstanding the fatality that had taken place, nothing could be more truly comical and facetious than the appearance of the field of battle. Skulls were flying in every direction—so thick, indeed, that it might with truth be asseverated,



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that many who were petrified in the dust, had their skulls broken in this great battle between the factions.—God help poor Ireland! when its inhabitants are so pugnacious, that even the grave is no security against getting their crowns cracked, and their bones fractured! Well, any how, skulls and bones flew in every direction—stones and brick-bats were also put in motion; spades, shovels, loaded whips, pot-sticks, churn-staffs, flails, and all kinds of available weapons were in hot employment.

“But, perhaps, there was nothing more-truly felicitous or original in its way than the mode of warfare adopted by little Neal Malone, who was tailor for the O’Callaghan side: for every tradesman is obliged to fight on behalf of his own faction. Big Frank Farrell, the miller, being on the O’Hallaghan side, had been sent for, and came up from his mill behind the town, quite fresh. He was never what could be called a good man,* though it was said that he could lift ten hundred weight. He puffed forward with a great cudgel, determined to commit slaughter out of the face, and the first man he met was the weeshy fraction of a tailor, as nimble as a hare. He immediately attacked him, and would probably have taken his measure for life had not the tailor’s activity protected him. Farrell was in a rage, and Neal, taking advantage of his blind fury, slipped round him, and, with a short run, sprung upon the miller’s back, and planted, a foot upon the threshold of each coat pocket, holding by the mealy collar of his waistcoat. In this position he belabored the miller’s face and eyes with his little hard fist to such purpose, that he had him in the course of a few minutes nearly as blind as a mill-horse. The’ miller roared for assistance, but the pell-mell was going on too warmly for his cries to be available. In fact, he resembled an elephant with a monkey on his back.

* A brave man. He was a man of huge size and prodigious strength, and died in consequence of an injury he received in lifting one of the cathedral bells at Clogher, which is said to be ten hundredweight.

“‘How do you like that, Farrell?’ Neal would say, giving him a cuff—’and that, and that; but that is best of all. Take it again, gudgeon (two cuffs more)—here’s grist for you (half a dozen additional)—hard fortune to you! (crack, crack.) What! going to lie down!—by all that’s terrible, if you do, I’ll annigulate* you! Here’s a dhuragh,** (another half dozen)—long measure, you savage!—the baker’s dozen, you baste!—there’s five-an’-twenty to the score, Sampson! and one or two in’ (crack, whack).

* Annihilate—Many of the jawbreakers—and this was one in a double sense—used by the hedge-schoolmasters, are scattered among the people, by whom they were so twisted that it would be extremely difficult to recognize them.** Dhuragh—An additional portion of anything thrown in from a spirit of generosity, after the Measure agreed on is given. When the miller, for instance, receives his toll, the country-people usually throw in several handfuls of meal as a Dhuragh.



“Oh! murther sheery!’ shouted the miller. ‘Murther-an-age, I’m kilt! Foul play!—foul play!’



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“You lie, big Nebuchodonosor! it’s not—this is all fair play, you big baste! Fair play, Sampson!—by the same a-token, here’s to jog your memory that it’s the Fair day of Knockimdowny! Irish Fair play, you whale! But I’ll whale you’ (crack, crack, whack).

“Oh! oh!’ shouted the miller.

“Oh! oh! is it? Oh, if I had my scissors here till I’d clip your ears off—wouldn’t I be the happy man, any how, you swab, you?’ (whack, whack, crack).

“Murther! murther! murther!’ shouted the miller. ‘Is there no help?’

“Help, is it?—you may say that (crack crack): there’s a trifle—a small taste in the milling style, you know; and here goes to dislodge a grinder. Did ye ever hear of the tailor on horseback, Sampson? eh? (whack, whack). Did you ever expect to see a tailor on horseback of yourself, you baste? (crack). I tell you, if you offer to lie down, I’ll annigulate you out o’ the face.’

“Never, indeed, was a miller before or since so well dusted; and, I dare say, Neal would have rode him long enough, but for an O’Hallaghan, who had gone into one of the houses to procure a weapon. This man was nearly as original in his choice of one as the tailor in the position which he selected for beating the miller. On entering the kitchen, he found that he had been anticipated: there was neither tongs, poker, nor churn-staff, nor, in fact, anything wherewith he could assault his enemies; all had been carried off by others. There was, however, a goose, in the action of being roasted on a spit at the fire: this was enough; Honest O’Hallaghan saw nothing but the spit, which he accordingly seized, goose and all, making the best of his way, so armed, to the scene of battle. He just came out of an entry as the miller was once more roaring for assistance, and, to a dead certainty, would have spitted the tailor like a cook-sparrow against the miller’s carcase, had not his activity once more saved him. Unluckily, the unfortunate miller got the thrust behind which was intended for Neal, and roared like a bull. He was beginning to shout ‘Foul play!’ again, when, on turning round, he perceived that the thrust had not been intended for him, but for the tailor.

“Give me that spit,’ said he; ‘by all the mills that ever were turned, I’ll spit the tailor this blessed minute beside the goose, and we’ll roast them both together.’

“The other refused to part with the spit, but the miller seizing the goose, flung it with all his force after the tailor, who stooped, however, and avoided the blow.

“No man has a better right to the goose than the tailor,’ said Neal, as he took it up, and, disappearing, neither he nor the goose could be seen for the remainder of the day.



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“The battle was now somewhat abated. Skulls, and bones, and bricks, and stones, were, however, still flying; so that it might be truly said, the bones of contention were numerous. The streets presented a woeful spectacle: men were lying with their bones broken—others, though not so seriously injured, lapped in their blood—some were crawling up, but were instantly knocked down by their enemies—some were leaning against the walls, or groping their way silently along them, endeavoring to escape observation, lest they might be smashed down and altogether murdered. Wives were sitting with the bloody heads of their husbands in their laps, tearing their hair, weeping and cursing, in all the gall of wrath, those who left them in such a state. Daughters performed the said offices to their fathers, and sisters to their brothers; not premitting those who did not neglect their broken-pated bachelors to whom they paid equal attention. Yet was the scene not without abundance of mirth. Many a hat was thrown up by the O’Callaghan side, who certainly gained the day. Many a song was raised by those who tottered about with trickling sconces, half drunk with whiskey, and half stupid with beating. Many a ‘whoo,’ and ‘hurroo,’ and ‘huzza,’ was sent forth by the triumphanters; but truth to tell, they were miserably feeble and faint, compared to what they had been in the beginning of the amusement; sufficiently evincing that, although they might boast of the name of victory, they had got a bellyful of beating; still there was hard fighting.

“I mentioned, some time ago, that a man had adopted a scythe. I wish from my heart there had been no such bloody instrument there that day; but truth must be told. John O’Callaghan was now engaged against a set of the other O’s, who had rallied for the third time, and attacked him and his party. Another brother of Rose Galh’s was in this engagement, and him did John O’Callaghan not only knock down, but cut desperately across the temple. A man, stripped, and covered with blood and dust, at that moment made his appearance, his hand bearing the blade of the aforesaid scythe. His approach was at once furious and rapid, and I may as well add, fatal; for before John O’Callaghan had time to be forewarned of his danger, he was cut down, the artery of his neck laid open, and he died without a groan. It was truly dreadful, even to the oldest fighter present, to see the strong rush of red blood that curvated about his neck, until it gurgled, gurgled, gurgled, and lapped, and bubbled out, ending in small red spouts, blackening and blackening, as they became fainter and more faint. At this criticality, every eye was turned from the corpse to the murderer; but he had been instantly struck down, and a female, with a large stone in her apron, stood over him, her arms stretched out, her face horribly distorted with agony, and her eyes turned backwards, as it were, into her head. In a few seconds she fell into strong convulsions, and was immediately taken away. Alas! alas! it was Rose Galh; and when we looked at the man she had struck down, he was found to be her brother! flesh of her flesh, and blood of her blood! On examining him more closely, we discovered that his under-jaw hung loose, that his limbs were supple; we tried to make him speak, but in vain—he too was a corpse.



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“The fact was, that in consequence of his being stripped, and covered by so much blood and dust, she know him not; and, impelled by her feelings to avenge herself on the murderer of her lover, to whom she doubly owed her life, she struck him a deadly blow, without knowing him to be her brother. The shock produced by seeing her lover murdered, and the horror of finding that she herself, in avenging him, had taken her brother’s life, was too much for a heart so tender as hers. On recovering from her convulsions, her senses were found to be gone for ever! Poor girl! she is still living; but from that moment to this, she has never opened her lips to mortal. She is, indeed, a fair ruin, but silent, melancholy, and beautiful as the moon in the summer heaven. Poor Rose Galh! you and many a mother, and father, and wife, and orphan, have had reason to maledict the *bloody Battles of the Factions*.”

“With regard to my grandfather, he says that he didn’t see purtier fighting within his own memory; not since the fight between himself and Big Mucklemurray took place in the same town. But, to do him justice, he condemns the scythe and every other weapon except the cudgels; because, he says, that if they continue to be resorted to, nate fighting will be altogether forgotten in the country.”

[It was the original intention of the author to have made every man in the humble group about Ned M’Keown’s hearth narrate a story illustrating Irish life, feeling, and manners; but on looking into the matter more closely, he had reason to think that such a plan, however agreeable for a time, would ultimately narrow the sphere of his work, and perhaps fatigue the reader by a superfluity of Irish dialogue and its peculiarities of phraseology. He resolved therefore, at the close of the *Battle of the Factions*, to abandon his original design, and leave himself more room for description and observation.]