

Celt and Saxon — Volume 1 eBook

Celt and Saxon — Volume 1 by George Meredith

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BOOK 1.

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CHAPTER I

WHEREIN AN EXCURSION IS MADE IN A CELTIC MIND

A young Irish gentleman of the numerous clan O'Donnells, and a Patrick, hardly a distinction of him until we know him, had bound himself, by purchase of a railway-ticket, to travel direct to the borders of North Wales, on a visit to a notable landowner of those marches, the Squire Adister, whose family-seat was where the hills begin to lift and spy into the heart of black mountains. Examining his ticket with an apparent curiosity, the son of a greener island debated whether it would not be better for him to follow his inclinations, now that he had gone so far as to pay for the journey, and stay. But his inclinations were also subject to question, upon his considering that he had expended pounds English for the privilege of making the journey in this very train. He asked himself earnestly what was the nature of the power which forced him to do it—a bad genius or a good: and it seemed to him a sort of answer, inasmuch as it silenced the contending parties, that he had been the victim of an impetus. True; still his present position involved a certain outlay of money simply, not at all his bondage to the instrument it had procured for him, and that was true; nevertheless, to buy a ticket to shy it away is an incident so uncommon, that if we can but pause to dwell on the singularity of the act, we are unlikely to abjure our fellowship with them who would not be guilty of it; and therefore, by the aid of his reflections and a remainder of the impetus, Mr. Patrick O'Donnell stepped into a carriage of the train like any ordinary English traveller, between whom and his destination there is an agreement to meet if they can.

It is an experience of hesitating minds, be they Saxon or others, that when we have submitted our persons to the charge of public companies, immediately, as if the renouncing of our independence into their hands had given us a taste of a will of our own, we are eager for the performance of their contract to do what we are only half inclined to; the train cannot go fast enough to please us, though we could excuse it for breaking down; stoppages at stations are impertinences, and the delivery of us at last on the platform is an astonishment, for it is not we who have done it—we have not even desired it. To be imperfectly in accord with the velocity precipitating us upon a certain point, is to be going without our heads, which have



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so much the habit of supposing it must be whither we intend, when we go in a determined manner, that a doubt of it distracts the understanding—decapitates us; suddenly to alight, moreover, and find ourselves dropped at the heels of flying Time, like an unconsidered bundle, is anything but a reconstruction of the edifice. The natural revelry of the blood in speed suffers a violent shock, not to speak of our notion of being left behind, quite isolated and unsound. Or, if you insist, the condition shall be said to belong exclusively to Celtic nature, seeing that it had been drawn directly from a scion of one of those tribes.

Young Patrick jumped from the train as headless as good St. Denis. He was a juvenile thinker, and to discover himself here, where he both wished and wished not to be, now deeming the negative sternly in the ascendant, flicked his imagination with awe of the influence of the railway service upon the destinies of man. Settling a mental debate about a backward flight, he drove across the land so foreign to his eyes and affections, and breasted a strong tide of wishes that it were in a contrary direction. He would rather have looked upon the desert under a sand-storm, or upon a London suburb yet he looked thirstingly. Each variation of landscape of the curved highway offered him in a moment decisive features: he fitted them to a story he knew: the whole circle was animated by a couple of pale mounted figures beneath no happy light. For this was the air once breathed by Adiante Adister, his elder brother Philip's love and lost love: here she had been to Philip flame along the hill-ridges, his rose-world in the dust-world, the saintly in his earthly. And how had she rewarded him for that reverential love of her? She had forborne to kill him. The bitter sylph of the mountain lures men to climb till she winds them in vapour and leaves them groping, innocent of the red crags below. The delicate thing had not picked his bones: Patrick admitted it; he had seen his brother hale and stout not long back. But oh! she was merciless, she was a witch. If ever queen-witch was, she was the crowned one!

For a personal proof, now: he had her all round him in a strange district though he had never cast eye on her. Yonder bare hill she came racing up with a plume in the wind: she was over the long brown moor, look where he would: and vividly was she beside the hurrying beck where it made edges and chattered white. He had not seen, he could not imagine her face: angelic dashed with demon beauty, was his idea of the woman, and there is little of a portrait in that; but he was of a world where the elemental is more individual than the concrete, and unconceived of sight she was a recognised presence for the green-island brain of a youth whose manner of hating was to conjure her spirit from the air and let fly his own in pursuit of her.



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It has to be stated that the object of the youngster's expedition to Earlsfont was perfectly simple in his mind, however much it went against his nature to perform it. He came for the purpose of obtaining Miss Adister's Continental address; to gather what he could of her from her relatives, and then forthwith to proceed in search of her, that he might plead with her on behalf of his brother Philip, after a four years' division of the lovers. Could anything be simpler? He had familiarised himself with the thought of his advocacy during those four years. His reluctance to come would have been accountable to the Adisters by a sentiment of shame at his family's dealings with theirs: in fact, a military captain of the O'Donnells had in old days played the adventurer and charmed a maid of a certain age into yielding her hand to him; and the lady was the squire of Earlsfont's only sister: she possessed funded property. Shortly after the union, as one that has achieved the goal of enterprise, the gallant officer retired from the service nor did north-western England put much to his credit the declaration of his wife's pronouncing him to be the best of husbands. She naturally said it of him in eulogy; his own relatives accepted it in some contempt, mixed with a relish of his hospitality: his wife's were constant in citing his gain by the marriage. Could he possibly have been less than that? they exclaimed. An excellent husband, who might easily have been less than that, he was the most devoted of cousins, and the liberal expenditure of his native eloquence for the furtherance of Philip's love-suit was the principal cause of the misfortune, if misfortune it could subsequently be called to lose an *Adiante*.

The Adister family were not gifted to read into the heart of a young man of a fanciful turn. Patrick had not a thought of shame devolving on him from a kinsman that had shot at a mark and hit it. Who sees the shame of taking an apple from a garden of the Hesperides? And as England cultivates those golden, if sometimes wrinkled, fruits, it would have seemed to him, in thinking about it, an entirely lucky thing for the finder; while a question of blood would have fired his veins to rival heat of self-assertion, very loftily towering: there were Kings in Ireland: cry for one of them in Uladh and you will hear his name, and he has descendants yet! But the youth was not disposed unnecessarily to blazon his princeliness. He kept it in modest reserve, as common gentlemen keep their physical strength. His reluctance to look on Earlsfont sprang from the same source as unacknowledged craving to see the place, which had precipitated him thus far upon his road: he had a horror of scenes where a faithless girl had betrayed her lover. Love was his visionary temple, and his idea of love was the solitary light in it, painfully susceptible to cold air currents from the stories of love abroad over the world. Faithlessness he



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conceived to be obnoxious to nature; it stained the earth and was excommunicated; there could be no pardon of the crime, barely any for repentance. He conceived it in the feminine; for men are not those holy creatures whose conduct strikes on the soul with direct edge: a faithless man is but a general villain or funny monster, a subject rejected of poets, taking no hue in the flat chronicle of history: but a faithless woman, how shall we speak of her! Women, sacredly endowed with beauty and the wonderful vibrating note about the very mention of them, are criminal to hideousness when they betray. Cry, False! on them, and there is an instant echo of bleeding males in many circles, like the poor quavering flute-howl of transformed beasts, which at some remembering touch bewail their higher state. Those women are sovereignly attractive, too, loathsomely. Therein you may detect the fiend.

Our moralist had for some time been glancing at a broad, handsome old country mansion on the top of a wooded hill backed by a swarm of mountain heads all purple-dark under clouds flying thick to shallow, as from a brush of sepia. The dim silver of half-lighted lakewater shot along below the terrace. He knew the kind of sky, having oftener seen that than any other, and he knew the house before it was named to him and he had flung a discolouring thought across it. He contemplated it placably and studiously, perhaps because the shower-folding armies of the fields above likened its shadowed stillness to that of his Irish home. There had this woman lived! At the name of Earlsfont she became this witch, snake, deception. Earlsfont was the title and summary of her black story: the reverberation of the word shook up all the chapters to pour out their poison.

CHAPTER II

MR. ADISTER

Mr. Patrick O'Donnell drove up to the gates of Earlsfont notwithstanding these emotions, upon which light matter it is the habit of men of his blood too much to brood; though it is for our better future to have a capacity for them, and the insensible race is the oxenish.

But if he did so when alone, the second man residing in the Celt put that fellow by and at once assumed the social character on his being requested to follow his card into Mr. Adister's library. He took his impression of the hall that had heard her voice, the stairs she had descended, the door she had passed through, and the globes she had perchance laid hand on, and the old mappemonde, and the severely-shining orderly regiment of books breathing of her whether she had opened them or not, as he bowed to his host, and in reply to, 'So, sir! I am glad to see you,' said swimmingly that Earlsfont was the first house he had visited in this country: and the scenery reminded him of his part of Ireland: and on landing at Holyhead he had gone off straight to the

metropolis by appointment to meet his brother Philip, just returned from Canada a full captain, who heartily despatched his compliments and respects, and hoped to hear of perfect health in this quarter of the world. And Captain Con the same, and he was very flourishing.

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Patrick's opening speech concluded on the sound of a short laugh coming from Mr. Adister.

It struck the young Irishman's ear as injurious and scornful in relation to Captain Con; but the remark ensuing calmed him:

'He has no children.'

'No, sir; Captain Con wasn't born to increase the number of our clan,' Patrick rejoined; and thought: By heaven! I get a likeness of her out of you, with a dash of the mother mayhap somewhere. This was his Puck-manner of pulling a girdle round about from what was foremost in his head to the secret of his host's quiet observation; for, guessing that such features as he beheld would be slumped on a handsome family, he was led by the splendid severity of their lines to perceive an illimitable pride in the man likely to punish him in his offspring, who would inherit that as well; so, as is the way with the livelier races, whether they seize first or second the matter or the spirit of what they hear, the vivid indulgence of his own ideas helped him to catch the right meaning by the tail, and he was enlightened upon a domestic unhappiness, although Mr. Adister had not spoken miserably. The 'dash of the mother' was thrown in to make Adiante, softer, and leave a loophole for her relenting.

The master of Earlsfont stood for a promise of beauty in his issue, requiring to be softened at the mouth and along the brows, even in men. He was tall, and had clear Greek outlines: the lips were locked metal, thin as edges of steel, and his eyes, when he directed them on the person he addressed or the person speaking, were as little varied by motion of the lids as eyeballs of a stone bust. If they expressed more, because they were not sculptured eyes, it was the expression of his high and frigid nature rather than any of the diversities pertaining to sentiment and shades of meaning.

'You have had the bequest of an estate,' Mr. Adister said, to compliment him by touching on his affairs.

'A small one; not a quarter of a county,' said Patrick.

'Productive, sir?'

'Tis a tramp of discovery, sir, to where bog ends and cultivation begins.'

'Bequeathed to you exclusively over the head of your elder brother, I understand.'

Patrick nodded assent. 'But my purse is Philip's, and my house, and my horses.'

'Not bequeathed by a member of your family?'

'By a distant cousin, chancing to have been one of my godmothers.'



'Women do these things,' Mr. Adister said, not in perfect approbation of their doings.

'And I think too, it might have gone to the elder,' Patrick replied to his tone.

'It is not your intention to be an idle gentleman?'

'No, nor a vagrant Irishman, sir.'

'You propose to sit down over there?'

'When I've more brains to be of service to them and the land, I do.'

Mr. Adister pulled the arm of his chair. 'The professions are crammed. An Irish gentleman owning land might do worse. I am in favour of some degree of military training for all gentlemen. You hunt?'



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Patrick's look was, 'Give me a chance'; and Mr. Adister continued: 'Good runs are to be had here; you shall try them. You are something of a shot, I suppose. We hear of gentlemen now who neither hunt nor shoot. You fence?'

'That's to say, I've had lessons in the art.'

'I am not aware that there is now an art of fencing taught in Ireland.'

'Nor am I,' said Patrick; 'though there's no knowing what goes on in the cabins.'

Mr. Adister appeared to acquiesce. Observations of sly import went by him like the whispering wind.

'Your priests should know,' he said.

To this Patrick thought it well not to reply. After a pause between them, he referred to the fencing.

'I was taught by a Parisian master of the art, sir.'

'You have been to Paris?'

'I was educated in Paris.'

'How? Ah!' Mr. Adister corrected himself in the higher notes of recollection. 'I think I have heard something of a Jesuit seminary.'

'The Fathers did me the service to knock all I know into me, and call it education, by courtesy,' said Patrick, basking in the unobscured frown of his host.

'Then you are accustomed to speak French?' The interrogation was put to extract some balm from the circumstance.

Patrick tried his art of fence with the absurdity by saying: 'All but like a native.'

'These Jesuits taught you the use of the foils?'

'They allowed me the privilege of learning, sir.'

After meditation, Mr. Adister said: 'You don't dance?' He said it speculating on the kind of gentleman produced in Paris by the disciples of Loyola.

'Pardon me, sir, you hit on another of my accomplishments.'

'These Jesuits encourage dancing?'



'The square dance—short of the embracing: the valse is under interdict.'

Mr. Adister peered into his brows profoundly for a glimpse of the devilry in that exclusion of the valse.

What object had those people in encouraging the young fellow to be a perfect fencer and dancer, so that he should be of the school of the polite world, and yet subservient to them?

'Thanks to the Jesuits, then, you are almost a Parisian,' he remarked; provoking the retort

'Thanks to them, I've stored a little, and Paris is to me as pure a place as four whitewashed walls:' Patrick added: 'without a shadow of a monk on them.' Perhaps it was thrown in for the comfort of mundane ears afflicted sorely, and no point of principle pertained to the slur on a monk.

Mr. Adister could have exclaimed, That shadow of the monk! had he been in an exclamatory mood. He said: 'They have not made a monk of you, then.'

Patrick was minded to explain how that the Jesuits are a religious order exercising worldly weapons. The lack of precise words admonished him of the virtue of silence, and he retreated—with a quiet negative: 'They have not.'



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'Then, you are no Jesuit?' he was asked.

Thinking it scarcely required a response, he shrugged.

'You would not change your religion, sir?' said Mr. Adister in seeming anger.

Patrick thought he would have to rise: he half fancied himself summoned to change his religion or depart from the house.

'Not I,' said he.

'Not for the title of Prince?' he was further pressed, and he replied:

'I don't happen to have an ambition for the title of Prince.'

'Or any title!' interjected Mr. Adister, 'or whatever the devil can offer!—or,' he spoke more pointedly, 'for what fools call a brilliant marriage?'

'My religion?' Patrick now treated the question seriously and raised his head: 'I'd not suffer myself to be asked twice.'

The sceptical northern-blue eyes of his host dwelt on him with their full repellent stare.

The young Catholic gentleman expected he might hear a frenetic zealot roar out: Be off!

He was not immediately reassured by the words 'Dead or alive, then, you have a father!'

The spectacle of a state of excitement without a show of feeling was novel to Patrick. He began to see that he was not implicated in a wrath that referred to some great offender, and Mr. Adister soon confirmed his view by saying: 'You are no disgrace to your begetting, sir!'

With that he quitted his chair, and hospitably proposed to conduct his guest over the house and grounds.

CHAPTER III

CAROLINE

Men of the Adister family having taken to themselves brides of a very dusty pedigree from the Principality, there were curious rough heirlooms to be seen about the house, shields on the armoury walls and hunting-horns, and drinking-horns, and spears, and chain-belts bearing clasps of heads of beasts; old gold ornaments, torques, blue-stone



necklaces, under glass-cases, were in the library; huge rings that must have given the wearers fearful fists; a shirt of coarse linen with a pale brown spot on the breast, like a fallen beech-leaf; and many sealed parchment-skins, very precious, for an inspection of which, as Patrick was bidden to understand, History humbly knocked at the Earlsfont hall-doors; and the proud muse made her transcripts of them kneeling. He would have been affected by these wonders had any relic of Adiante appeased his thirst. Or had there been one mention of her, it would have disengaged him from the incessant speculations regarding the daughter of the house, of whom not a word was uttered. No portrait of her was shown. Why was she absent from her home so long? where was she? How could her name be started? And was it she who was the sinner in her father's mind? But the idolatrous love between Adiante and her father was once a legend: they could not have been cut asunder. She had offered up her love of Philip as a sacrifice



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to it: Patrick recollected that, and now with a softer gloom on his brooding he released her from the burden of his grand charge of unfaithfulness to the truest of lovers, by acknowledging that he was in the presence of the sole rival of his brother. Glorious girl that she was, her betrayal of Philip had nothing of a woman's base caprice to make it infamous: she had sacrificed him to her reading of duty; and that was duty to her father; and the point of duty was in this instance rather a sacred one. He heard voices murmur that she might be praised. He remonstrated with them, assuring them, as one who knew, that a woman's first duty is her duty to her lover; her parents are her second thought. Her lover, in the consideration of a real soul among the shifty creatures, is her husband; and have we not the word of heaven directing her to submit herself to him who is her husband before all others? That peerless Adiante had previously erred in the upper sphere where she received her condemnation, but such a sphere is ladder and ladder and silver ladder high above your hair-splitting pates, you children of earth, and it is not for you to act on the verdict in decrying her: rather 'tis for you to raise hymns of worship to a saint.

Thus did the ingenious Patrick change his ground and gain his argument with the celerity of one who wins a game by playing it without an adversary. Mr. Adister had sprung a new sense in him on the subject of the renunciation of the religion. No thought of a possible apostasy had ever occurred to the youth, and as he was aware that the difference of their faith had been the main cause of the division of Adiante and Philip, he could at least consent to think well of her down here, that is, on our flat surface of earth. Up there, among the immortals, he was compelled to shake his head at her still, and more than sadly in certain moods of exaltation, reprovably; though she interested him beyond all her sisterhood above, it had to be confessed.

They traversed a banqueting-hall hung with portraits, to two or three of which the master of Earlsfont carelessly pointed, for his guest to be interested in them or not as he might please. A reception-hall flung folding-doors on a grand drawing-room, where the fires in the grates went through the ceremony of warming nobody, and made a show of keeping the house alive. A modern steel cuirass, helmet and plume at a corner of the armoury reminded Mr. Adister to say that he had worn the uniform in his day. He cast an odd look at the old shell containing him when he was a brilliant youth. Patrick was marched on to Colonel Arthur's rooms, and to Captain David's, the sailor. Their father talked of his two sons. They appeared to satisfy him. If that was the case, they could hardly have thrown off their religion. Already Patrick had a dread of naming the daughter. An idea struck him that she might be the person who had been guilty of it over there on the Continent.

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What if she had done it, upon a review of her treatment of her lover, and gone into a convent to wait for Philip to come and claim her?—saying, 'Philip, I've put the knife to my father's love of me; love me double'; and so she just half swoons, enough to show how the dear angel looks in her sleep: a trick of kindness these heavenly women have, that we heathen may get a peep of their secret rose-enfolded selves; and dream 's no word, nor drunken, for the blessed mischief it works with us.

Supposing it so, it accounted for everything: for her absence, and her father's abstention from a mention of her, and the pretty good sort of welcome Patrick had received; for as yet it was unknown that she did it all for an O'Donnell.

These being his reflections, he at once accepted a view of her that so agreeably quieted his perplexity, and he leapt out of his tangle into the happy open spaces where the romantic things of life are as natural as the sun that rises and sets. There you imagine what you will; you live what you imagine. An *Adiante* meets her lover another *Adiante*, the phantom likeness of her, similar to the finger-tips, hovers to a meeting with some one whose heart shakes your manful frame at but a thought of it. But this other *Adiante* is altogether a secondary conception, barely descried, and chased by you that she may interpret the mystical nature of the happiness of those two, close-linked to eternity, in advance. You would learn it, if she would expound it; you are ready to learn it, for the sake of knowledge; and if you link yourself to her and do as those two are doing, it is chiefly in a spirit of imitation, in sympathy with the darting couple ahead . . .

Meanwhile he conversed, and seemed, to a gentleman unaware of the vaporious activities of his brain, a young fellow of a certain practical sense.

'We have not much to teach you in: horseflesh,' Mr. Adister said, quitting the stables to proceed to the gardens.

'We must look alive to keep up our breed, sir,' said Patrick. 'We're breeding too fine: and soon we shan't be able to horse our troopers. I call that the land for horses where the cavalry's well-mounted on a native breed.'

'You have your brother's notions of cavalry, have you!'

'I leave it to Philip to boast what cavalry can do on the field. He knows: but he knows that troopers must be mounted: and we're fineing more and more from bone: with the sales to foreigners! and the only chance of their not beating us is that they'll be so good as follow our bad example. Prussia's well horsed, and for the work it's intended to do, the Austrian light cavalry's a model. So I'm told. I'll see for myself. Then we sit our horses too heavy. The Saxon trooper runs headlong to flesh. 'Tis the beer that fattens and swells him. Properly to speak, we've no light cavalry. The French are studying it,

and when they take to studying, they come to the fore. I'll pay a visit to their breeding establishments. We've no studying here, and not a scrap of system that I see. All the country seems armed for bullying the facts, till the periodical panic arrives, and then it's for lying flat and roaring— and we'll drop the curtain, if you please.'



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'You say we,' returned Mr. Adister. 'I hear you launched at us English by the captain, your cousin, who has apparently yet to learn that we are one people.'

'We 're held together and a trifle intermixed; I fancy it's we with him and with me when we're talking of army or navy,' said Patrick. 'But Captain Con's a bit of a politician: a poor business, when there's nothing to be done.'

'A very poor business!' Mr. Adister rejoined,

'If you'd have the goodness to kindle his enthusiasm, he'd be for the first person plural, with his cap in the air,' said Patrick.

'I detest enthusiasm.

'You're not obliged to adore it to give it a waker.

'Pray, what does that mean?'

Patrick cast about to reply to the formal challenge for an explanation.

He began on it as it surged up to him: 'Well, sir, the country that's got hold of us, if we 're not to get loose. We don't count many millions in Europe, and there's no shame in submitting to force majeure, if a stand was once made; and we're mixed up, 'tis true, well or ill; and we're stronger, both of us, united than tearing to strips: and so, there, for the past! so long as we can set our eyes upon something to admire, instead of a bundle squatting fat on a pile of possessions and vowing she won't budge; and taking kicks from a big foot across the Atlantic, and shaking bayonets out of her mob-cap for a little one's cock of the eye at her: and she's all for the fleshpots, and calls the rest of mankind fools because they're not the same: and so long as she can trim her ribands and have her hot toast and tea, with a suspicion of a dram in it, she doesn't mind how heavy she sits: nor that 's not the point, nor 's the land question, nor the potato crop, if only she wore the right sort of face to look at, with a bit of brightness about it, to show an idea inside striking alight from the day that's not yet nodding at us, as the tops of big mountains do: or if she were only braced and gallant, and cried, Ready, though I haven't much outlook! We'd be satisfied with her for a handsome figure. I don't know whether we wouldn't be satisfied with her for politeness in her manners. We'd like her better for a spice of devotion to alight higher up in politics and religion. But the key of the difficulty's a sparkle of enthusiasm. It's part business, and the greater part sentiment. We want a rousing in the heart of us; or else we'd be pleased with her for sitting so as not to overlap us entirely: we'd feel more at home, and behold her more respectfully. We'd see the policy of an honourable union, and be joined to you by more than a telegraphic cable. That's Captain Con, I think, and many like him.'



Patrick finished his airy sketch of the Irish case in a key signifying that he might be one among the many, but unobtrusive.

'Stick to horses!' observed Mr. Adister.

It was pronounced as the termination to sheer maundering.

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Patrick talked on the uppermost topic for the remainder of their stroll.

He noticed that his host occasionally allowed himself to say, 'You Irish': and he reflected that the saying, 'You English,' had been hinted as an offence.

He forgot to think that he had possibly provoked this alienation in a scornfully proud spirit. The language of metaphor was to Mr. Adister fool's froth. He conceded the use of it to the Irish and the Welsh as a right that stamped them for what they were by adopting it; and they might look on a country as a 'she,' if it amused them: so long as they were not recalcitrant, they were to be tolerated, they were a part of us; doubtless the nether part, yet not the less a part for which we are bound to exercise a specially considerate care, or else we suffer, for we are sensitive there: this is justice but the indications by fiddle-faddle verbiage of anything objectionable to the whole in the part aroused an irritability that speedily endued him with the sense of sanity opposing lunacy; when, not having a wide command of the undecorated plain speech which enjoyed his approval, he withdrew into the entrenchments of contempt.

Patrick heard enough to let him understand why the lord of Earlsfont and Captain Con were not on the best of terms. Once or twice he had a twinge or suspicion of a sting from the tone of his host, though he was not political and was of a mood to pity the poor gentleman's melancholy state of solitariness, with all his children absent, his wife dead, only a niece, a young lady of twenty, to lend an air of grace and warmth to his home.

She was a Caroline, and as he had never taken a liking to a Caroline, he classed her in the tribe of Carolines. To a Kathleen, an Eveleen, a Nora, or a Bessy, or an Alicia, he would have bowed more cordially on his introduction to her, for these were names with portraits and vistas beyond, that shook leaves of recollection of the happiest of life—the sweet things dreamed undesiringly in opening youth. A Caroline awakened no soft association of fancies, no mysterious heaven and earth. The others had variously tinted skies above them; their features wooed the dream, led it on as the wooded glen leads the eye till we are deep in richness. Nor would he have throbbed had one of any of his favourite names appeared in the place of Caroline Adister. They had not moved his heart, they had only stirred the sources of wonder. An Eveleen had carried him farthest to imagine the splendours of an Adiante, and the announcement of the coming of an Eveleen would perchance have sped a little wild fire, to which what the world calls curiosity is frozenly akin, through his veins.



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Mr. Adister had spoken of his niece Caroline. A lacquey, receiving orders from his master, mentioned Miss Adister. There was but one Miss Adister for Patrick. Against reason, he was raised to anticipate the possible beholding of her, and Caroline's entrance into the drawing-room brought him to the ground. Disappointment is a poor term for the descent from an immoderate height, but the acknowledgment that we have shot up irrationally reconciles even unphilosophical youth to the necessity of the fall, though we must continue sensible of a shock. She was the Miss Adister; and how, and why? No one else accompanied them on their march to the dinner-table. Patrick pursued his double task of hunting his thousand speculations and conversing fluently, so that it is not astonishing if, when he retired to his room, the impression made on him by this young Caroline was inefficient to distinguish her from the horde of her baptismal sisters. And she had a pleasant face: he was able to see that, and some individuality in the look of it, the next morning; and then he remembered the niceness of her manners. He supposed her to have been educated where the interfusion of a natural liveliness with a veiling retenue gives the title of lady. She had enjoyed the advantage of having an estimable French lady for her governess, she informed him, as they sauntered together on the terrace.

'A Protestant, of course,' Patrick spoke as he thought.

'Madame Dugue is a Catholic of Catholics, and the most honourable of women.'

'That I'll believe; and wasn't for proselytisms,' said he.

'Oh, no: she was faithful to her trust.'

'Save for the grand example!'

'That,' said Caroline, 'one could strive to imitate without embracing her faith.'

'There's my mind clear as print!' Patrick exclaimed. 'The Faith of my fathers! and any pattern you like for my conduct, if it's a good one.'

Caroline hesitated before she said: 'You have noticed my Uncle Adister's prepossession; I mean, his extreme sensitiveness on that subject.'

'He blazed on me, and he seemed to end by a sort of approval.'

She sighed. 'He has had cause for great unhappiness.'

'Is it the colonel, or the captain? Forgive me!'

Her head shook.

'Is it she? Is it his daughter? I must ask!'



'You have not heard?'

Oh! then, I guessed it,' cried Patrick, with a flash of pride in his arrowy sagacity. 'Not a word have I heard, but I thought it out for myself; because I love my brother, I fancy. And now, if you'll be so good, Miss Caroline, let me beg, it's just the address, or the city, or the country—where she is, can you tell me?—just whereabouts! You're surprised: but I want her address, to be off, to see her; I'm anxious to speak to her. It's anywhere she may be in a ring, only show me the ring, I'll find her, for I've a load; and there's nothing like that for sending you straight, though it's in the dark; it acts like an instinct. But you know the clear address, and won't let me be running blindfold. She's on the Continent and has been a long time, and it was the capital of Austria, which is a Catholic country, and they've Irish blood in the service there, or they had. I could drop on my knees to you!'

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The declaration was fortunately hushed by a supplicating ardour, or Mr. Adister would have looked more surprised than his niece. He stepped out of the library window as they were passing, and, evidently with a mind occupied by his own affairs, held up an opened letter for Caroline's perusal. She took a view of the handwriting.

'Any others?' she said.

'You will consider that one enough for the day,' was his answer.

Patrick descended the terrace and strolled by the waterside, grieved at their having bad news, and vexed with himself for being a stranger, unable to console them.

Half an hour later they were all three riding to the market-town, where Mr. Adister paid a fruitless call on his lawyer.

'And never is at home! never was known to be at home when wanted!' he said, springing back to the saddle.

Caroline murmured some soothing words. They had a perverse effect.

'His partner! yes, his partner is at home, but I do not communicate upon personal business with his partner; and by and by there will be, I suppose, a third partner. I might as well deposit my family history in the hands of a club. His partner is always visible. It is my belief that Camminy has taken a partner that he may act the independent gentleman at his leisure. I, meantime, must continue to be the mark for these letters. I shall expect soon to hear myself abused as the positive cause of the loss of a Crown!'

'Mr. Camminy will probably appear at the dinner hour,' said Caroline.

'Claret attracts him: I wish I could say as much of duty,' rejoined her uncle.

Patrick managed to restrain a bubbling remark on the respective charms of claret and duty, tempting though the occasion was for him to throw in a conversational word or two.

He was rewarded for listening devoutly.

Mr. Adister burst out again: 'And why not come over here to settle this transaction herself?—provided that I am spared the presence of her Schinderhannes! She could very well come. I have now received three letters bearing on this matter within as many months. Down to the sale of her hereditary jewels! I profess no astonishment. The jewels may well go too, if Crydney and Welvas are to go. Disrooted body and soul! — for a moonshine title!—a gaming-table foreign knave!—Known for a knave!—A young gentlewoman?—a wild Welsh . . . !'



Caroline put her horse to a canter, and the exclamations ended, leaving Patrick to shuffle them together and read the riddle they presented, and toss them to the wind, that they might be blown back on him by the powers of air in an intelligible form.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRINCESS



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Dinner, and a little piano-music and a song closed an evening that was not dull to Patrick in spite of prolonged silences. The quiet course of things within the house appeared to him to have a listening ear for big events outside. He dreaded a single step in the wrong direction, and therefore forbore to hang on any of his conjectures; for he might perchance be unjust to the blessedest heroine on the surface of the earth—a truly awful thought! Yet her name would no longer bear the speaking of it to himself. It conjured up a smoky moon under confounding eclipse.

Who was Schinderhannes?

Mr. Adister had said, her Schinderhannes.

Patrick merely wished to be informed who the man was, and whether he had a title, and was much of a knave: and particularly Patrick would have liked to be informed of the fellow's religion. But asking was not easy.

It was not possible. And there was a barrel of powder to lay a fiery head on, for a pillow!

To confess that he had not the courage to inquire was as good as an acknowledgment that he knew too much for an innocent questioner. And what did he know? His brother Philip's fair angel forbade him to open the door upon what he knew. He took a peep through fancy's keyhole, and delighted himself to think that he had seen nothing.

After a turbulent night with Schinderhannes, who let him go no earlier than the opening of a December day, Patrick hied away to one of the dusky nooks by the lake for a bracing plunge. He attributed to his desire for it the strange deadness of the atmosphere, and his incapacity to get an idea out of anything he looked on: he had not a sensation of cold till the stinging element gripped him. It is the finest school for the cure of dreamers; two minutes of stout watery battle, with the enemy close all round, laughing, but not the less inveterate, convinced him that, in winter at least, we have only to jump out of our clothes to feel the reality of things in a trice. The dip was sharpening; he could say that his prescription was good for him; his craving to get an idea ceased with it absolutely, and he stood in far better trim to meet his redoubtable adversary of overnight; but the rascal was a bandit and had robbed him of his purse; that was a positive fact; his vision had gone; he felt himself poor and empty and rejoicing in the keenness of his hunger for breakfast, singularly lean. A youth despoiled of his Vision and made sensible by the activity of his physical state that he is a common machine, is eager for meat, for excess of whatsoever you may offer him; he is on the highroad of recklessness, and had it been the bottle instead of Caroline's coffee-cup, Patrick would soon have received a priming for a delivery of views upon the sex, and upon love, and the fools known as lovers, acrid enough to win the applause of cynics.

Boasting was the best relief that a young man not without modesty could find. Mr. Adister complimented him on the robustness of his habits, and Patrick 'would like to hear of the temptation that could keep him from his morning swim.'



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Caroline's needle-thrust was provoked:

'Would not Arctic weather deter you, Mr. O'Donnell?' He hummed, and her eyes filled with the sparkle.

'Short of Arctic,' he had to say. 'But a gallop, after an Arctic bath, would soon spin the blood-upon an Esquimaux dog, of course,' he pursued, to anticipate his critic's remark on the absence of horses, with a bow.

She smiled, accepting the mental alertness he fastened on her.

We must perforce be critics of these tear-away wits; which are, moreover, so threadbare to conceal the character! Caroline led him to vaunt his riding and his shooting, and a certain time passed before she perceived that though he responded naturally to her first sly attacks, his gross exaggerations upon them had not been the triumph of absurdity she supposed herself to have evoked.

Her wish was to divert her uncle. Patrick discerned the intention and aided her.

'As for entertainment,' he said, in answer to Mr. Adister's courteous regrets that he would have to be a prisoner in the house until his legal adviser thought proper to appear, 'I'll be perfectly happy if Miss Caroline will give me as much of her company as she can spare. It's amusing to be shot at too, by a lady who's a good marksman! And birds and hares are always willing to wait for us; they keep better alive. I forgot to say that I can sing.'

'Then I was in the presence of a connoisseur last night,' said Caroline. Mr. Adister consulted his watch and the mantelpiece clock for a minute of difference between them, remarking that he was a prisoner indeed, and for the whole day, unless Camminy should decide to come. 'There is the library,' he said, 'if you care for books; the best books on agriculture will be found there. You can make your choice in the stables, if you would like to explore the country. I am detained here by a man who seems to think my business of less importance than his pleasures. And it is not my business; it is very much the reverse but I am compelled to undertake it as my own, when I abhor the business. It is hard for me to speak of it, much more to act a part in it.'

'Perhaps,' Caroline interposed hurriedly, 'Mr. O'Donnell would not be unwilling to begin the day with some duets?'

Patrick eagerly put on his shame-face to accept her invitation, protesting that his boldness was entirely due to his delight in music.

'But I've heard,' said he, 'that the best fortification for the exercise of the a voice is hearty eating, so I'll pay court again to that game-pie. I'm one with the pigs for truffles.'



His host thanked him for spreading the contagion of good appetite, and followed his example. Robust habits and heartiness were signs with him of a conscience at peace, and he thought the Jesuits particularly forbearing in the amount of harm they had done to this young man. So they were still at table when Mr. Camminy was announced and ushered in.



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The man of law murmured an excuse or two; he knew his client's eye, and how to thaw it.

'No, Miss Adister, I have not breakfasted,' he said, taking the chair placed for him. 'I was all day yesterday at Windlemont, engaged in assisting to settle the succession. Where estates are not entailed!'

'The expectations of the family are undisciplined and certain not to be satisfied,' Mr. Adister carried on the broken sentence. 'That house will fall! However, you have lost no time this morning.—Mr. Patrick O'Donnell.'

Mr. Camminy bowed busily somewhere in the direction between Patrick and the sideboard.

'Our lawyers have us inside out, like our physicians,' Mr. Adister resumed, talking to blunt his impatience for a private discussion with his own.

'Surgery's a little in their practice too, we think in Ireland,' said Patrick.

Mr. Camminy assented: 'No doubt.' He was hungry, and enjoyed the look of the table, but the look of his client chilled the prospect, considered in its genial appearance as a feast of stages; having luminous extension; so, to ease his client's mind, he ventured to say: 'I thought it might be urgent.'

'It is urgent,' was the answer.

'Ah: foreign? domestic?'

A frown replied.

Caroline, in haste to have her duties over, that she might escape the dreaded outburst, pressed another cup of tea on Mr. Camminy and groaned to see him fill his plate. She tried to start a topic with Patrick.

'The princess is well, I hope?' Mr. Camminy asked in the voice of discretion. 'It concerns her Highness?'

'It concerns my daughter and her inheritance from her mad grandmother!' Mr. Adister rejoined loudly; and he continued like a retreating thunder: 'A princess with a title as empty as a skull! At best a princess of swamps, and swine that fight for acorns, and men that fight for swine!'

Patrick caught a glance from Caroline, and the pair rose together.



'They did that in our mountains a couple of thousand years ago,' said Mr. Camminy, 'and the cause was not so bad, to judge by this ham. Men must fight: the law is only a quieter field for them.'

'And a fatter for the ravens,' Patrick joined in softly, as if carrying on a song.

'Have at us, Mr. O'Donnell! I'm ashamed of my appetite, Miss Adister, but the morning's drive must be my excuse, and I'm bounden to you for not forcing me to detain you. Yes, I can finish breakfast at my leisure, and talk of business, which is never particularly interesting to ladies— though,' Mr. Camminy turned to her uncle, 'I know Miss Adister has a head for it.'

Patrick hummed a bar or two of an air, to hint of his being fanatico per la musica, as a pretext for their departure.

'If you'll deign to give me a lesson,' said he, as Caroline came away from pressing her lips to her uncle's forehead.



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'I may discover that I am about to receive one,' said she.

They quitted the room together.

Mr. Camminy had seen another Miss Adister duetting with a young Irishman and an O'Donnell, with lamentable results to that union of voices, and he permitted himself to be a little astonished at his respected client's defective memory or indifference to the admonition of identical circumstances.

CHAPTER V

AT THE PIANO, CHIEFLY WITHOUT MUSIC

Barely had the door shut behind them when Patrick let his heart out: 'The princess?' He had a famished look, and Caroline glided along swiftly with her head bent, like one musing; his tone alarmed her; she lent him her ear, that she might get some understanding of his excitement, suddenly as it seemed to have come on him; but he was all in his hungry interrogation, and as she reached her piano and raised the lid, she saw it on tiptoe straining for her answer.

'I thought you were aware of my cousin's marriage.'

'Was I?' said Patrick, asking it of himself, for his conscience would not acknowledge an absolute ignorance. 'No: I fought it, I wouldn't have a blot on her be suspected. She's married! She's married to one of their princes!—married for a title!—and changed her religion! And Miss Adister, you're speaking of Adiante?'

'My cousin Adiante.'

'Well did I hate the name! I heard it first over in France. Our people wrote to me of her; and it's a name to set you thinking: Is she tender, or nothing like a woman,—a stone? And I put it to my best friend there, Father Clement, who's a scholar, up in everything, and he said it was a name with a pretty sound and an ill meaning—far from tender; and a bad history too, for she was one of the forty-nine Danaides who killed their husbands for the sake of their father and was not likely to be the fiftieth, considering the name she bore. It was for her father's sake she as good as killed her lover, and the two Adiantes are like enough: they're as like as a pair of hands with daggers. So that was my brother Philip's luck! She's married! It's done; it's over, like death: no hope. And this time it's against her father; it's against her faith. There's the end of Philip! I could have prophesied it; I did; and when they broke, from her casting him off—true to her name! thought I. She cast him off, and she couldn't wait for him, and there's his heart broken. And I ready to glorify her for a saint! And now she must have loved the man, or his title, to change her religion. She gives him her soul! No praise to her for that: but mercy! what a love it must be. Or else it's a spell. But wasn't she rather one for flinging spells



than melting? Except that we're all of us hit at last, and generally by our own weapon. But she loved Philip: she loved him down to shipwreck and drowning: she gave battle for him, and against her father; all the place here and the country's alive with their meetings and partings:—she can't have married! She wouldn't change her religion for her lover: how can she have done it for this prince? Why, it's to swear false oaths!—unless it's possible for a woman to slip out of herself and be another person after a death like that of a love like hers.'



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Patrick stopped: the idea demanded a scrutiny.

'She's another person for me,' he said. 'Here's the worst I ever imagined of her!—thousands of miles and pits of sulphur beyond the worst and the very worst! I thought her fickle, I thought her heartless, rather a black fairy, perched above us, not quite among the stars of heaven. I had my ideas. But never that she was a creature to jump herself down into a gulf and be lost for ever. She's gone, extinguished—there she is, under the penitent's hoodcap with eyeholes, before the faggots! and that's what she has married!—a burning torment, and none of the joys of martyrdom. Oh! I'm not awake. But I never dreamed of such a thing as this—not the hard, bare, lump-of-earth-fact:—and that's the only thing to tell me I'm not dreaming now.'

He subsided again; then deeply beseeching asked:

'Have you by chance a portrait of the gentleman, Miss Adister? Is there one anywhere?'

Caroline stood at her piano, turning over the leaves of a music-book, with a pressure on her eyelids. She was near upon being thrilled in spite of an astonishment almost petrifying: and she could nearly have smiled, so strange was his fraternal adoption, amounting to a vivification—of his brother's passion. He seemed quite naturally to impersonate Philip. She wondered, too, in the coolness of her alien blood, whether he was a character, or merely an Irish character. As to the unwontedness of the scene, Ireland was chargeable with that; and Ireland also, a little at his expense as a citizen of the polite world, relieved him of the extreme ridicule attached to his phrases and images.

She replied: 'We have no portrait.'

'May I beg to know, have you seen him?' said Patrick. Caroline shook her head.

'Is there no telling what he is like, Miss Adister?'

'He is not young.'

'An old man!'

She had not said that, and she wished to defend her cousin from the charge of contracting such an alliance, but Patrick's face had brightened out of a gloom of stupefaction; he assured her he was now ready to try his voice with hers, only she was to excuse a touch of hoarseness; he felt it slightly in his throat: and could he, she asked him, wonder at it after his morning's bath?

He vindicated the saneness of the bath as well as he was able, showing himself at least a good reader of music. On the whole, he sang pleasantly, particularly French songs. She complimented him, with an emphasis on the French. He said, yes, he fancied he



did best in French, and he had an idea of settling in France, if he found that he could not live quietly in his own country.

'And becoming a Frenchman?' said Caroline.

'Why not?' said he. 'I 'm more at home with French people; they're mostly of my creed; they're amiable, though they weren't quite kind to poor Lally Tollendal. I like them. Yes, I love France, and when I'm called upon to fix myself, as I suppose I shall be some day, I shan't have the bother over there that I should find here.'

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She spoke reproachfully: 'Have you no pride in the title of Englishman?'

'I 'm an Irishman.'

'We are one nation.'

'And it's one family where the dog is pulled by the collar.'

There was a retort on him: she saw, as it were, the box, but the lid would not open to assist her to it, and she let it go by, thinking in her patriotic derision, that to choose to be likened to the unwilling dog of the family was evidence of a want of saving pride.

Besides, she could not trust to the glibness of her tongue in a contest with a young gentleman to whom talking was as easy as breathing, even if sometimes his volubility exposed him to attack. A superior position was offered her by her being silent and critical. She stationed herself on it: still she was grieved to think of him as a renegade from his country, and she forced herself to say: 'Captain O'Donnell talks in that manner.'

'Captain Con is constitutionally discontented because he's a bard by nature, and without the right theme for his harp,' said Patrick. 'He has a notion of Erin as the unwilling bride of Mr. Bull, because her lord is not off in heroics enough to please her, and neglects her, and won't let her be mistress of her own household, and she can't forget that he once had the bad trick of beating her: she sees the marks. And you mayn't believe it, but the Captain's temper is to praise and exalt. It is. Irony in him is only eulogy standing on its head: a sort of an upside down; a perversion: that's our view of him at home. All he desires is to have us on the march, and he'd be perfectly happy marching, never mind the banner, though a bit of green in it would put him in tune, of course. The banner of the Cid was green, Miss Adister: or else it's his pennon that was. And there's a quantity of our blood in Spain too. We've watered many lands.'

The poor young English lady's brain started wildly on the effort to be with him, and to understand whether she listened to humour or emotion: she reposed herself as well as she could in the contemplation of an electrically-flashing maze, where every line ran losing itself in another.

He added: 'Old Philip!' in a visible throb of pity for his brother; after the scrupulous dubitation between the banner and the pennon of the Cid!

It would have comforted her to laugh. She was closer upon tears, and without any reason for them in her heart.

Such a position brings the hesitancy which says that the sitting is at an end.



She feared, as she laid aside her music-books, that there would be more to come about Adiante, but he spared her. He bowed to her departing, and strolled off by himself.

CHAPTER VI

A CONSULTATION: WITH OPINIONS UPON WELSHWOMEN AND THE CAMBRIAN RACE



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Later in the day she heard that he was out scouring the country on one of her uncle's horses. She had too many distressing matters to think of for so singular a young man to have any other place than that which is given to the fantastical in a troubled and serious mind. He danced there like the whimsy sunbeam of a shaken water below. What would be his opinion of Adiante if he knew of her determination to sell the two fair estates she inherited from a grandmother whom she had venerated; that she might furnish arms to her husband to carry out an audacious enterprise likely to involve both of them in blood and ruin? Would he not bound up aloft and quiver still more wildly? She respected, quaint though it was, his imaginative heat of feeling for Adiante sufficiently to associate him with her so far; and she lent him in fancy her own bewilderment and grief at her cousin's conduct, for the soothing that his exaggeration of them afforded her. She could almost hear his outcry.

The business of the hour demanded more of her than a seeking for refreshment. She had been invited to join the consultation of her uncle with his lawyer. Mr. Adister tossed her another letter from Vienna, of that morning's delivery. She read it with composure. It became her task to pay no heed to his loss of patience, and induce him to acquiesce in his legal adviser's view which was, to temporise further, present an array of obstacles, and by all possible suggestions induce the princess to come over to England, where her father's influence with her would have a chance of being established again; and it might then be hoped that she, who had never when under sharp temptation acted disobediently to his wishes at home, and who certainly would not have dreamed of contracting the abhorred alliance had she been breathing the air of common sense peculiar to her native land, would see the prudence, if not the solemn obligation, of retaining to herself these family possessions. Caroline was urgent with her uncle to act on such good counsel. She marvelled at his opposition, though she detected the principal basis of it.

Mr. Adister had no ground of opposition but his own intemperateness. The Welsh grandmother's legacy of her estates to his girl, overlooking her brothers, Colonel Arthur and Captain David, had excessively vexed him, despite the strong feeling he entertained for Adiante; and not simply because of the blow he received in it unexpectedly from that old lady, as the last and heaviest of the long and open feud between them, but also, chiefly, that it outraged and did permanent injury to his ideas of the proper balance of the sexes. Between himself and Mrs. Winnion Rhys the condition of the balance had been a point of vehement disputation, she insisting to have it finer up to equality, and he that the naturally lighter scale should continue to kick the beam. Behold now the consequence of the wilful Welshwoman's insanest of legacies! The estates were left



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to Adiante Adister for her sole use and benefit, making almost a man of her, and an unshackled man, owing no dues to posterity. Those estates in the hands of a woman are in the hands of her husband; and the husband a gambler and a knave, they are in the hands of the Jews—or gone to smoke. Let them go. A devilish malignity bequeathed them: let them go back to their infernal origin. And when they were gone, his girl would soon discover that there was no better place to come to than her home; she would come without an asking, and alone, and without much prospect of the intrusion of her infamous Hook-nose in pursuit of her at Earlsfont. The money wasted, the wife would be at peace. Here she would have leisure to repent of all the steps she had taken since that fatal one of the acceptance of the invitation to the Embassy at Vienna. Mr. Adister had warned her both against her going and against the influence of her friend Lady Wenchester, our Ambassadors there, another Welsh woman, with the weathervane head of her race. But the girl would accept, and it was not for him to hold out. It appeared to be written that the Welsh, particularly Welsh women, were destined to worry him up to the end of his days. Their women were a composition of wind and fire. They had no reason, nothing solid in their whole nature. Englishmen allied to them had to learn that they were dealing with broomstick witches and irresponsible sprites. Irishwomen were models of propriety beside them: indeed Irishwomen might often be patterns to their English sisterhood. Mr. Adister described the Cambrian ladies as a kind of daughters of the Fata Morgana, only half human, and deceptive down to treachery, unless you had them fast by their spinning fancy. They called it being romantic. It was the ante-chamber of madness. Mad, was the word for them. You pleased them you knew not how, and just as little did you know how you displeased them. And you were long hence to be taught that in a certain past year, and a certain month, and on a certain day of the month, not forgetting the hour of the day to the minute of the hour, and attendant circumstances to swear loud witness to it, you had mortally offended them. And you receive your blow: you are sure to get it: the one passion of those women is for vengeance. They taste a wound from the lightest touch, and they nurse the venom for you. Possibly you may in their presence have had occasion to praise the military virtues of the builder of Carnarvon Castle. You are by and by pierced for it as hard as they can thrust. Or you have incidentally compared Welsh mutton with Southdown:—you have not highly esteemed their drunken Bards:—you have asked what the Welsh have done in the world; you are supposed to have slighted some person of their family—a tenth cousin!—anything turns their blood. Or you have once looked straight at them without speaking, and you discover years after that they have chosen to foist on you their idea of your idea at the moment; and they have the astounding presumption to account this misreading of your look to the extent of a full justification, nothing short of righteous, for their treachery and your punishment! O those Welshwomen!



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The much-suffering lord of Earlsfont stretched forth his open hand, palm upward, for a testifying instrument to the plain truth of his catalogue of charges. He closed it tight and smote the table. 'Like mother—and grandmother too—like daughter!' he said, and generalised again to preserve his dignity: 'They're aflame in an instant. You may see them quiet for years, but it smoulders. You dropped the spark, and they time the explosion.'

Caroline said to Mr. Camminy: 'You are sure you can give us the day?'

'All of it,' he replied, apologising for some show of restlessness. 'The fact is, Miss Adister, I married a lady from over the borders, and though I have never had to complain of her yet, she may have a finale in store. It's true that I love wild Wales.'

'And so do I' Caroline raised her eyes to imagined mountains.

'You will pardon me, Camminy,' said Mr. Adister.

The lawyer cracked his back to bow to the great gentleman so magnanimously humiliating himself. 'Sir! Sir!' he said. 'Yes, Welsh blood is queer blood, I own. They find it difficult to forgive; and trifles offend; and they are unhappily just as secretive as they are sensitive. The pangs we cause them, without our knowing it, must be horrible. They are born, it would seem, with more than the common allowance of kibes for treading on: a severe misfortune for them. Now for their merits: they have poetry in them; they are valiant; they are hospitable to teach the Arab a lesson: I do believe their life is their friend's at need—seriously, they would lay it down for him: or the wherewithal, their money, their property, excepting the three-stringed harp of three generations back, worth now in current value sixpence halfpenny as a curiosity, or three farthings for firewood; that they'll keep against their own desire to heap on you everything they have—if they love you, and you at the same time have struck their imaginations. Offend them, however, and it's war, declared or covert. And I must admit that their best friend can too easily offend them. I have lost excellent clients, I have never understood why; yet I respect the remains of their literature, I study their language, I attend their gatherings and subscribe the expenses; I consume Welsh mutton with relish; I enjoy the Triads, and can come down on them with a quotation from Catwg the Wise: but it so chanced that I trod on a kibe, and I had to pay the penalty. There's an Arabian tale, Miss Adister, of a peaceful traveller who ate a date in the desert and flung away the stone, which hit an invisible son of a genie in the eye, and the poor traveller suffered for it. Well, you commit these mortal injuries to the invisible among the Welsh. Some of them are hurt if you call them Welsh. They scout it as the original Saxon title for them. No, they are Cymry, Cambrians! They have forgiven the Romans. Saxon and Norman are still their enemies. If you stir their hearts



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you find it so. And, by the way, if King Edward had not trampled them into the mire so thoroughly, we should hear of it at times even now. Instead of penillions and englyns, there would be days for fiery triplets. Say the worst of them, they are soundheaded. They have a ready comprehension for great thoughts. The Princess Nikolas, I remember, had a special fondness for the words of Catwg the Wise.'

'Adiante,' had murmured Caroline, to correct his indiscretion.

She was too late.

'Nikolas!' Mr. Adister thundered. 'Hold back that name in this house, title and all, if you speak of my daughter. I refuse admission to it here. She has given up my name, and she must be known by the one her feather-brained grandmother proposed for her, to satisfy her pleasure in a fine sound. English Christian names are my preference. I conceded Arthur to her without difficulty. She had a voice in David, I recollect; with very little profit to either of the boys. I had no voice in Adiante; but I stood at my girl's baptism, and Adiante let her be. At least I saved the girl from the addition of Arianrod. It was to have been Adiante Arianrod. Can you credit it? Prince-pah! Nikolas? Have you a notion of the sort of prince that makes an English lady of the best blood of England his princess?'

The lawyer had a precise notion of the sort of prince appearing to Mr. Adister in the person of his foreign son-in-law. Prince Nikolas had been described to him before, with graphic touches upon the quality of the reputation he bore at the courts and in the gambling-saloons of Europe. Dreading lest his client's angry heat should precipitate him on the prince again, to the confusion of a lady's ears, Mr. Camminy gave an emphatic and short affirmative.

'You know what he is like?' said Mr. Adister, with a face of disgust reflected from the bare thought of the hideous likeness.

Mr. Camminy assured him that the description of the prince's lineaments would not be new. It was, as he was aware, derived from a miniature of her husband, transmitted by the princess, on its flight out of her father's loathing hand to the hearthstone and under his heel.

Assisted by Caroline, he managed to check the famous delineation of the adventurer prince in which a not very worthy gentleman's chronic fever of abomination made him really eloquent, quick to unburden himself in the teeth of decorum.

'And my son-in-law! My son-in-law!' ejaculated Mr. Adister, tossing his head higher, and so he stimulated his amazement and abhorrence of the portrait he rather wondered at



them for not desiring to have sketched for their execration of it, alluringly foul as it was: while they in concert drew him back to the discussion of his daughter's business, reiterating prudent counsel, with a knowledge that they had only to wait for the ebbing of his temper.



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'Let her be informed, sir, that by coming to England she can settle the business according to her wishes in one quarter of the time it would take a Commission sent out to her—if we should be authorised to send out one,' said Mr. Camminy. 'By committing the business to you, I fancy I perceive your daughter's disposition to consider your feelings: possibly to a reluctance to do the deed unsanctioned by her father. It would appear so to a cool observer, notwithstanding her inattention to your remonstrances.'

The reply was: 'Dine here and sleep here. I shall be having more of these letters,' Mr. Adister added, profoundly sighing.

Caroline slipped away to mark a conclusion to the debate; and Mr. Camminy saw his client redden fast and frown.

'Besides,' he spoke in a husky voice, descending upon a subject hateful, 'she tells me to-day she is not in a state to travel! Do you hear? Make what you can of it.'

The proud and injured gentleman had the aspect of one who receives a blow that it is impossible for him to resent. He could not speak the shame he felt: it was literally in his flesh. But the cause had been sufficiently hinted to set the lawyer staring as men do when they encounter situations of grisly humour, where certain of the passions of man's developed nature are seen armed and furious against our mild prevailing ancient mother nature; and the contrast is between our utter wrath and her simple exposition of the circumstances and consequences forming her laws. There are situations which pass beyond the lightly stirred perceptive wits to the quiet court of the intellect, to be received there as an addition to our acquaintance with mankind. We know not of what substance to name them. Humour in its intense strain has a seat somewhere about the mouth of tragedy, giving it the enigmatical faint wry pull at a corner visible at times upon the dreadful mask.

That Mr. Adister should be astonished at such a communication from the princess, after a year of her marriage: and that he should take it for a further outrage of his paternal sentiments, should actually redden and be hoarse in alluding to it: the revelation of such points in our human character set the humane old lawyer staring at the reserve space within himself apart from his legal being, whereon he by fits compared his own constitution with that of the individuals revealed to him by their acts and confidential utterances. For him, he decided that he would have rejoiced at the news.

Granting the prince a monster, however, as Mr. Adister unforcedly considered him, it was not so cheering a piece of intelligence that involved him yet closer with that man's rank blood: it curdled his own. The marriage had shocked and stricken him, cleaving, in his love for his daughter, a goodly tree and withering many flowers. Still the marriage was but *Adiante's* gulf: he might be called father-in-law of her spangled ruffian; son-in-law,



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the desperado-rascal would never be called by him. But the result of the marriage dragged him bodily into the gulf: he became one of four, numbering the beast twice among them. The subtlety of his hatred so reckoned it; for he could not deny his daughter in the father's child; he could not exclude its unhallowed father in the mother's: and of this man's child he must know and own himself the grandfather. If ever he saw the child, if drawn to it to fondle it, some part of the little animal not his daughter's would partake of his embrace. And if neither of his boys married, and his girl gave birth to a son! darkness rolled upon that avenue of vision. A trespasser and usurper-one of the demon's brood chased his very name out of Earlsfont!

'Camminy, you must try to amuse yourself,' he said briskly. 'Anything you may be wanting at home shall be sent for. I must have you here to make sure that I am acting under good advice. You can take one of the keepers for an hour or two of shooting. I may join you in the afternoon. You will find occupation for your gun in the north covers.'

He wandered about the house, looking into several rooms, and only partially at rest when he discovered Caroline in one, engaged upon some of her aquarelle sketches. He asked where the young Irishman was.

'Are you in search of him?' said she. 'You like him, uncle? He is out riding, they tell me.'

'The youngster is used to south-western showers in that climate of his,' Mr. Adister replied. 'I dare say we could find the Jesuit in him somewhere. There's the seed. His cousin Con O'Donnell has filled him with stuff about Ireland and England: the man has no better to do than to train a parrot. What do you think of him, my love?'

The judgement was not easily formed for expression. 'He is not quite like what I remember of his brother Philip. He talks much more, does he not? He seems more Irish than his brother. He is very strange. His feelings are strong; he has not an idea of concealing them. For a young man educated by the Jesuits, he is remarkably open.'

'The Jesuits might be of service to me just now!' Mr. Adister addressed his troubled soul, and spoke upon another conception of them: 'How has he shown his feelings?'

Caroline answered quickly: 'His love of his brother. Anything that concerns his brother moves him; it is like a touch on a musical instrument. Perhaps I should say a native one.'

'Concerns his brother?' Mr. Adister inquired, and his look requesting enlightenment told her she might speak.

'Adiante,' she said softly. She coloured.



Her uncle mused awhile in a half-somnolent gloom. 'He talks of this at this present day?'

'It is not dead to him. He really appears to have hoped . . . he is extraordinary. He had not heard before of her marriage. I was a witness of the most singular scene this morning, at the piano. He gathered it from what he had heard. He was overwhelmed by it. I could not exaggerate. It was impossible to help being a little touched, though it was curious, very strange.'



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Her uncle's attentiveness incited her to describe the scene, and as it visibly relieved his melancholy, she did it with a few vivid indications of the quaint young Irishman's manner of speech. She concluded: 'At last he begged to see a portrait of her husband.'

'Not of her?' said Mr. Adister abruptly.

'No; only of her husband.'

'Show him her portrait.'

A shade of surprise was on Caroline's forehead. 'Shall I?' She had a dim momentary thought that the sight of the beautiful face would not be good for Patrick.

'Yes; let him see the woman who could throw herself away on that branded villain called a prince, abjuring her Church for a little fouler than hangman to me and every gentleman alive. I desire that he should see it. Submission to the demands of her husband's policy required it of her, she says! Show it him when he returns; you have her miniature in your keeping. And to-morrow take him to look at the full-length of her before she left England and ceased to be a lady of our country. I will order it to be placed in the armoury. Let him see the miniature of her this day.'

Mr. Adister resolved at the same time that Patrick should have his portrait of the prince for a set-off to the face of his daughter. He craved the relief it would be to him to lay his colours on the prince for the sparkling amazement of one whom, according to Caroline's description, he could expect to feel with him acutely, which neither his niece nor his lawyer had done: they never did when he painted the prince. He was unstrung, heavily plunged in the matter of his chagrin and grief: his unhealed wound had been scraped and strewn with salt by his daughter's letter; he had a thirst for the kind of sympathy he supposed he would find in the young Irishman's horror at the husband of the incomparable beauty now past redemption degraded by her hideous choice; lost to England and to her father and to common respect. For none, having once had the picture of the man, could dissociate them; they were like heaven and its reverse, everlastingly coupled in the mind by their opposition of characters and aspects. Her father could not, and he judged of others by himself. He had been all but utterly solitary since her marriage, brooded on it until it saturated him; too proud to speak of the thing in sadness, or claim condolence for this wound inflicted on him by the daughter he had idolised other than through the indirect method of causing people to wonder at her chosen yoke-fellow. Their stupefaction refreshed him. Yet he was a gentleman capable of apprehending simultaneously that he sinned against his pride in the means he adopted to comfort his nature. But the wound was a perpetual sickness needing soul-medicine. Proud as he was, and unbending, he was not stronger than his malady, and he could disguise, he could not contain, the cry of immoderate grief. Adiante had been to him something beyond a creature beloved; she had with her glorious beauty and great-heartedness been the sole object which had ever inspirited his imagination. He

could have thought no man, not the most illustrious, worthy of her. And there she was, voluntarily in the hands of a monster! 'Husband!' Mr. Adister broke away from Caroline, muttering: 'Her husband's policy!'



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She was used to his interjections; she sat thinking more of the strange request to her to show Mr. O'Donnell the miniature of Adiante. She had often thought that her uncle regretted his rejection of Philip. It appeared so to her now, though not by any consecutive process of reasoning. She went to fetch the miniature, and gazing on it, she tried to guess at Mr. O'Donnell's thoughts when doing the same; for who so inflammable as he? And who, woman or man, could behold this lighted face, with the dark raised eyes and abounding auburn tresses, where the contrast of colours was in itself thrilling, and not admire, or more, half worship, or wholly worship? She pitied the youth: she fancied that he would not continue so ingenuously true to his brother's love of Adiante after seeing it; unless one might hope that the light above beauty distinguishing its noble classic lines, and the energy of radiance, like a morning of chivalrous promise, in the eyes, would subdue him to distant admiration. These were her flitting thoughts under the spell of her queenly cousin's visage. She shut up the miniature-case, and waited to hand it to young Mr. O'Donnell.

CHAPTER VII

THE MINIATURE

Patrick returned to Earlsfont very late; he had but ten minutes to dress for dinner; a short allowance after a heated ride across miry tracks, though he would have expended some of them, in spite of his punctilious respect for the bell of the house entertaining him, if Miss Adister had been anywhere on the stairs or corridors as he rushed away to his room. He had things to tell; he had not been out over the country for nothing.

Fortunately for his good social principles, the butler at Earlsfont was a wary supervisor of his man; great guest or little guest; Patrick's linen was prepared for him properly studded; he had only to spring out of one suit into another; and still more fortunately the urgency for a rapid execution of the manoeuvre prevented his noticing a large square envelope posted against the looking-glass of his toilette-table. He caught sight of it first when pulling down his shirt-cuffs with an air of recovered ease, not to say genial triumph, to think that the feat of grooming himself, washing, dressing and stripping, the accustomed persuasive final sweep of the brush to his hair-crop, was done before the bell had rung. His name was on the envelope; and under his name, in smaller letters,

Adiante.

'Shall I?' said he, doing the thing he asked himself about doing tearing open the paper cover of the portrait of her who had flitted in his head for years unseen. And there she was, remote but present.

His underlip dropped; he had the look of those who bate breath and swarm their wits to catch a sound. At last he remembered that the summoning bell had been in his ears a



long time back, without his having been sensible of any meaning in it. He started to and fro. The treasure he held declined to enter the breast-pocket of his coat, and the other pockets he perhaps, if sentimentally, justly discarded as being beneath the honour of serving for a temporary casket. He locked it up, with a vow to come early to rest. Even then he had thoughts whether it might be safe.



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Who spoke, and what they uttered at the repast, and his own remarks, he was unaware of. He turned right and left a brilliant countenance that had the glitter of frost-light; it sparkled and was unreceptive. No wonder Miss Adister deemed him wilder and stranger than ever. She necessarily supposed the excess of his peculiarities to be an effect of the portrait, and would have had him, according to her ideas of a young man of some depth of feeling, dreamier. On the contrary, he talked sheer commonplace. He had ridden to the spur of the mountains, and had put up the mare, and groomed and fed her, not permitting another hand to touch her: all very well, and his praises of the mare likewise, but he had not a syllable for the sublime of the mountains. He might have careered over midland flats for any susceptibility that he betrayed to the grandeur of the scenery she loved. Ultimately she fancied the miniature had been overlooked in his hurry to dress, and that he was now merely excited by his lively gallop to a certain degree of hard brightness noticeable in hunting men at their dinner.

The elixir in Patrick carried him higher than mountain crests. Adiante illumined an expanded world for him, miraculous, yet the real one, only wanting such light to show its riches. She lifted it out of darkness with swift throbs of her heavenliness as she swam to his eyelids, vanished and dazzled anew, and made these gleams of her and the dark intervals his dream of the winged earth on her flight from splendour to splendour, secrecy to secrecy;—follow you that can, the youth whose heart is an opened mine, whose head is an irradiated sky, under the spell of imagined magical beauty. She was bugle, banner, sunrise, of his inmost ambition and rapture.

And without a warning, she fled; her features were lost; his power of imagining them wrestled with vapour; the effort contracted his outlook. But if she left him blind of her, she left him with no lessened bigness of heart. He frankly believed in her revelation of a greater world and a livelier earth, a flying earth and a world wealthier than grouped history in heroic marvels: he fell back on the exultation of his having seen her, and on the hope for the speedy coming of midnight, when the fountain of her in the miniature would be seen and drunk of at his full leisure, and his glorious elation of thrice man almost up to mounting spirit would be restored to make him worthy of the vision.

Meanwhile Caroline had withdrawn and the lord of Earlsfont was fretting at his theme. He had decided not to be a party in the sale of either of his daughter's estates: let her choose other agents: if the iniquity was committed, his hands would be clean of it. Mr. Adister spoke by way of prelude to the sketch of 'this prince' whose title was a lurid delusion. Patrick heard of a sexagenarian rake and Danube adventurer, in person a description of falcon-Caliban, containing his shagginess in a frogged



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hussar-jacket and crimson pantaloons, with hook-nose, fox-eyes, grizzled billow of frowsy moustache, and chin of a beast of prey. This fellow, habitually one of the dogs lining the green tables of the foreign Baths, snapping for gold all day and half the night, to spend their winnings in debauchery and howl threats of suicide, never fulfilled early enough, when they lost, claimed his principedom on the strength of his father's murder of a reigning prince and sitting in his place for six months, till a merited shot from another pretender sent him to his account. 'What do you say to such a nest of assassins, and one of them, an outcast and blackleg, asking an English gentleman to acknowledge him as a member of his family! I have,' said Mr. Adister, 'direct information that this gibbet-bird is conspiring to dethrone—they call it—the present reigning prince, and the proceeds of my daughter's estates are, by her desire—if she has not written under compulsion of the scoundrel—intended to speed their blood-mongering. There goes a Welshwoman's legacy to the sea, with a herd of swine with devils in them!'

Mr. Camminy kept his head bent, his hand on his glass of port. Patrick stared, and the working of his troubled brows gave the unhappy gentleman such lean comfort as he was capable of taking. Patrick in sooth was engaged in the hard attempt at the same time to do two of the most difficult things which can be proposed to the ingenuity of sensational youth: he was trying to excuse a respected senior for conduct that he could not approve, while he did inward battle to reconcile his feelings with the frightful addition to his hoard of knowledge: in other words, he sought strenuously to mix the sketch of the prince with the dregs of the elixir coming from the portrait of Adiante; and now she sank into obscurity behind the blackest of brushes, representing her incredible husband; and now by force of some natural light she broke through the ugly mist and gave her adored the sweet lines and colours of the features he had lost. There was an ebb and flow of the struggle, until, able to say to himself that he saw her clearly as though the portrait was in the palm of his hand, the battle of the imagination ceased and she was fairer for him than if her foot had continued pure of its erratic step: fairer, owing to the eyes he saw with; he had shaken himself free of the exacting senses which consent to the worship of women upon the condition of their possessing all the precious and the miraculous qualities; among others, the gift of an exquisite fragility that cannot break; in short, upon terms flattering to the individual devotee. Without knowing it he had done it and got some of the upholding strength of those noblest of honest men who not merely give souls to women—an extraordinary endowment of them—but also discourse to them with their souls.



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Patrick accepted Adiante's husband: the man was her husband. Hideous (for there was no combating her father's painting of him), he was almost interesting through his alliance:—an example of how much earth the worshipper can swallow when he is quite sincere. Instead of his going under eclipse, the beauty of his lady eclipsed her monster. He believed in her right to choose according to her pleasure since her lover was denied her. Sitting alone by his fire, he gazed at her for hours and bled for Philip. There was a riddle to be answered in her cutting herself away from Philip; he could not answer it; her face was the vindication and the grief. The usual traverses besetting true lovers were suggested to him, enemies and slanders and intercepted letters. He rejected them in the presence of the beautiful inscrutable. Small marvel that Philip had loved her. 'Poor fellow' Patrick cried aloud, and drooped on a fit of tears.

The sleep he had was urgently dream-ridden to goals that eluded him and broadened to fresh races and chases waving something to be won which never was won, albeit untiringly pursued amid a series of adventures, tragic episodes; wild enthusiasm. The whole of it was featureless, a shifting agitation; yet he must have been endowed to extricate a particular meaning applied to himself out of the mass of tumbled events, and closely in relation to realities, for he quitted his bed passionately regretting that he had not gone through a course of drill and study of the military art. He remembered Mr. Adister's having said that military training was good for all gentlemen.

'I could join the French Foreign Legion,' he thought.

Adiante was as beautiful by day as by night. He looked. The riddle of her was more burdensome in the daylight.

He sighed, and on another surging of his admiration launched the resolve that he would serve her blindly, without one question. How, when, where, and the means and the aim, he did not think of. There was she, and here was he, and heaven and a great heart would show the way.

Adiante at eighteen, the full length of her, fresh in her love of Philip, was not the same person to him, she had not the same secret; she was beautiful differently. By right he should have loved the portrait best: but he had not seen it first; he had already lived through a life of emotions with the miniature, and could besides clasp the frame; and moreover he fondled an absurd notion that the miniature would be entrusted to him for a time, and was almost a possession. The pain of the thought of relinquishing it was the origin of this foolishness. And again, if it be fair to prove him so deeply, true to his brother though he was (admiration of a woman does thus influence the tides of our blood to render the noblest of us guilty of some unconscious wavering of our loyalty), Patrick dedicated the full-length of Adiante to Philip, and reserved the other, her face and neck, for himself.



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Obediently to Mr. Adister's order, the portrait had been taken from one of his private rooms and placed in the armoury, the veil covering the canvas of late removed. Guns and spears and swords overhead and about, the youthful figure of Adiante was ominously encompassed. Caroline stood with Patrick before the portrait of her cousin; she expected him to show a sign of appreciation. He asked her to tell him the Church whose forms of faith the princess had embraced. She answered that it was the Greek Church. 'The Greek,' said he, gazing harder at the portrait. Presently she said: 'It was a perfect likeness.' She named the famous artist who had painted it. Patrick's 'Ah' was unsatisfactory.

'We,' said she, 'think it a living image of her as she was then.'

He would not be instigated to speak.

'You do not admire it, Mr. O'Donnell?' she cried.

'Oh, but I do. That's how she looked when she was drawing on her gloves with good will to go out to meet him. You can't see her there and not be sure she had a heart. She part smiles; she keeps her mouth shut, but there's the dimple, and it means a thought, like a bubble bursting up from the heart in her breast. She's tall. She carries herself like a great French lady, and nothing beats that. It's the same colour, dark eyebrows and fair hair. And not thinking of her pride. She thinks of her walk, and the end of it, where he's waiting. The eyes are not the same.'

'The same?' said Caroline.

'As this.' He tapped on the left side. She did not understand it at all.

'The bit of work done in Vienna,' said he.

She blushed. 'Do you admire that so much?'

'I do.'

'We consider it not to be compared to this.'

'Perhaps not. I like it better.'

'But why do you like that better?' said Caroline, deeming it his wilfulness.

Patrick put out a finger. 'The eyes there don't seem to say, "I'm yours to make a hero of you." But look,' he drew forth from under his waistcoat the miniature, 'what don't they say here! It's a bright day for the Austrian capital that has her by the river Danube. Yours has a landscape; I've made acquaintance with the country, I caught the print of it on my ride yesterday; and those are your mountains. But mine has her all to herself



while she's thinking undisturbed in her boudoir. I have her and her thoughts; that's next to her soul. I've an idea it ought to be given to Philip.' He craned his head round to woo some shadow of assent to the daring suggestion. 'Just to break the shock 'twill be to my brother, Miss Adister. If I could hand him this, and say, "Keep it, for you'll get nothing more of her; and that's worth a kingdom."'

Caroline faltered: 'Your brother does not know?'

'Pity him. His blow 's to come. He can't or he 'd have spoken of it to me. I was with him a couple of hours and he never mentioned a word of it, nor did Captain Con. We talked of Ireland, and the service, and some French cousins we have.'



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'Ladies?' Caroline inquired by instinct.

'And charming,' said Patrick, 'real dear girls. Philip might have one, if he would, and half my property, to make it right with her parents. There'd be little use in proposing it. He was dead struck when the shaft struck him. That's love! So I determined the night after I'd shaken his hand I'd be off to Earlsfont and try my hardest for him. It's hopeless now. Only he might have the miniature for his bride. I can tell him a trifle to help him over his agony. She would have had him, she would, Miss Adister, if she hadn't feared he'd be talked of as Captain Con has been—about the neighbourhood, I mean, because he,' Patrick added hurriedly, 'he married an heiress and sank his ambition for distinction like a man who has finished his dinner. I'm certain she would. I have it on authority.'

'What authority?' said Caroline coldly.

'Her own old nurse.'

'Jenny Williams?'

'The one! I had it from her. And how she loves her darling Miss Adiante! She won't hear of "princess." She hates that marriage. She was all for my brother Philip. She calls him "Our handsome lieutenant." She'll keep the poor fellow a subaltern all his life.'

'You went to Jenny's inn?'

'The Earlsfont Arms, I went to. And Mrs. Jenny at the door, watching the rain. Destiny directed me. She caught the likeness to Philip on a lift of her eye, and very soon we sat conversing like old friends. We were soon playing at old cronies over past times. I saw the way to bring her out, so I set to work, and she was up in defence of her darling, ready to tell me anything to get me to think well of her. And that was the main reason, she said, why Miss Adiante broke with him and went abroad her dear child wouldn't have Mr. Philip abused for fortune-hunting. As for the religion, they could each have practised their own: her father would have consented to the fact, when it came on him in that undeniable shape of two made one. She says, Miss Adiante has a mighty soul; she has brave ideas. Miss Deenly, she calls her. Ay, and so has Philip: though the worst is, they're likely to drive him out of the army into politics and Parliament; and an Irishman there is a barrow trolling a load of grievances. Ah, but she would have kept him straight. Not a soldier alive knows the use of cavalry better than my brother. He wanted just that English wife to steady him and pour drops of universal fire into him; to keep him face to face with the world, I mean; letting him be true to his country in a fair degree, but not an old rainpipe and spout. She would have held him to his profession. And, Oh dear! She's a friend worth having, lost to Ireland. I see what she could have done there. Something bigger than an island, too, has to be served in our days: that is, if we don't forget our duty at home. Poor Paddy, and his pig, and his bit



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of earth! If you knew what we feel for him! I'm a landlord, but I'm one with my people about evictions. We Irish take strong root. And honest rent paid over to absentees, through an agent, if you think of it, seems like flinging the money that's the sweat of the brow into a stone conduit to roll away to a giant maw hungry as the sea. It's the bleeding to death of our land! Transactions from hand to hand of warm human flesh—nothing else will do: I mean, for men of our blood. Ah! she would have kept my brother temperate in his notions and his plans. And why absentees, Miss Adister? Because we've no centre of home life: the core has been taken out of us; our country has no hearth-fire. I'm for union; only there should be justice, and a little knowledge to make allowance for the natural cravings of a different kind of people. Well, then, and I suppose that inter-marriages are good for both. But here comes a man, the boldest and handsomest of his race, and he offers himself to the handsomest and sweetest of yours, and she leans to him, and the family won't have him. For he's an Irishman and a Catholic. Who is it then opposed the proper union of the two islands? Not Philip. He did his best; and if he does worse now he's not entirely to blame. The misfortune is, that when he learns the total loss of her on that rock-promontory, he'll be dashing himself upon rocks sure to shiver him. There's my fear. If I might take him this . . . ?' Patrick pleaded with the miniature raised like the figure of his interrogation.

Caroline's inward smile threw a soft light of humour over her features at the simple cunning of his wind-up to the lecture on his country's case, which led her to perceive a similar cunning simplicity in his identification of it with Philip's. It startled her to surprise, for the reason that she'd been reviewing his freakish hops from Philip to Ireland and to Adiante, and wondering in a different kind of surprise, how and by what profitless ingenuity he contrived to weave them together. Nor was she unmoved, notwithstanding her fancied perception of his Jesuitry: his look and his voice were persuasive; his love of his brother was deep; his change of sentiment toward Adiante after the tale told him by her old nurse Jenny, stood for proof of a generous manliness.

Before she had replied, her uncle entered the armoury, and Patrick was pleading still, and she felt herself to be a piece of damask, a very fiery dye.

To disentangle herself, she said on an impulse, desperately

'Mr. O'Donnell begs to have the miniature for his brother.'

Patrick swung instantly to Mr. Adister. 'I presumed to ask for it, sir, to carry it to Philip. He is ignorant about the princess as yet; he would like to have a bit of the wreck. I shan't be a pleasant messenger to him. I should be glad to take him something. It could be returned after a time. She was a great deal to Philip—three parts of his life. He has nothing of her to call his own.'



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'That!' said Mr. Adister. He turned to the virgin Adiante, sat down and shut his eyes, fetching a breath. He looked vacantly at Patrick.

'When you find a man purely destructive, you think him a devil, don't you?' he said.

'A good first cousin to one,' Patrick replied, watchful for a hint to seize the connection.

'If you think of hunting to-day, we have not many minutes to spare before we mount. The meet is at eleven, five miles distant. Go and choose your horse. Caroline will drive there.'

Patrick consulted her on a glance for counsel. 'I shall be glad to join you, sir, for to-morrow I must be off to my brother.'

'Take it,' Mr. Adister waved his hand hastily. He gazed at his idol of untouched eighteen. 'Keep it safe,' he said, discarding the sight of the princess. 'Old houses are doomed to burnings, and a devil in the family may bring us to ashes. And some day . . . !' he could not continue his thought upon what he might be destined to wish for, and ran it on to, 'Some day I shall be happy to welcome your brother, when it pleases him to visit me.'

Patrick bowed, oppressed by the mighty gift. 'I haven't the word to thank you with, sir.'

Mr. Adister did not wait for it.

'I owe this to you, Miss Adister,' said Patrick.

Her voice shook: 'My uncle loves those who loved her.'

He could see she was trembling. When he was alone his ardour of gratefulness enabled him to see into her uncle's breast: the inflexible frigidity; lasting regrets and remorse; the compassion for Philip in kinship of grief and loss; the angry dignity; the stately generosity.

He saw too, for he was clear-eyed when his feelings were not over-active, the narrow pedestal whereon the stiff figure of a man of iron pride must accommodate itself to stand in despite of tempests without and within; and how the statue rocks there, how much more pitiably than the common sons of earth who have the broad common field to fall down on and our good mother's milk to set them on their legs again.

CHAPTER VIII

CAPTAIN CON AND MRS. ADISTER O'DONNELL



Riding homeward from the hunt at the leisurely trot of men who have steamed their mounts pretty well, Mr. Adister questioned Patrick familiarly about his family, and his estate, and his brother's prospects in the army, and whither he intended first to direct his travels: questions which Patrick understood to be kindly put for the sake of promoting conversation with a companion of unripe age by a gentleman who had wholesomely excited his blood to run. They were answered, except the last one. Patrick had no immediate destination in view.



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'Leave Europe behind you,' said Mr. Adister warming, to advise him, and checking the trot of his horse. 'Try South America.' The lordly gentleman plotted out a scheme of colonisation and conquest in that region with the coolness of a practised freebooter. 'No young man is worth a job,' he said, 'who does not mean to be a leader, and as leader to have dominion. Here we are fettered by ancestry and antecedents. Had I to recommence without those encumbrances, I would try my fortune yonder. I stood condemned to waste my youth in idle parades, and hunting the bear and buffalo. The estate you have inherited is not binding on you. You can realise it, and begin by taking over two or three hundred picked Irish and English—have both races capable of handling spade and musket; purchasing some thousands of acres to establish a legal footing there.

'You increase your colony from the mother country in the ratio of your prosperity, until your power is respected, and there is a necessity for the extension of your territory. When you are feared you will be on your mettle. They will favour you with provocation. I should not doubt the result, supposing myself to have under my sole command a trained body of men of English blood—and Irish.'

'Owners of the soil,' rejoined Patrick, much marvelling.

'Undoubtedly, owners of the soil, but owing you service.'

'They fight sir'

'It is hardly to be specified in the calculation, knowing them. Soldierly who have served their term, particularly old artillerymen, would be my choice: young fellows and boys among them. Women would have to be taken. Half-breeds are the ruin of colonists. Our men are born for conquest. We were conquerors here, and it is want of action and going physically forward that makes us a rusty people. There are—Mr. Adister's intonation told of his proposing a wretched alternative,—the Pacific Islands, but they will soon be snapped up by the European and North American Governments, and a single one of them does not offer space. It would require money and a navy.' He mused. 'South America is the quarter I should decide for, as a young man. You are a judge of horses; you ride well; you would have splendid pastures over there; you might raise a famous breed. The air is fine; it would suit our English stock. We are on ground, Mr. O'Donnell, which my forefathers contested sharply and did not yield.'

'The owners of the soil had to do that,' said Patrick. 'I can show the same in my country, with a difference.'

'Considerably to your benefit.'

'Everything has been crushed there barring the contrary opinion.'



'I could expect such a remark from a rebel.'

'I'm only interpreting the people, sir.'

'Jump out of that tinder-box as soon as you can.'

'When I was in South America, it astonished me that no Englishman had cast an eye on so inviting a land. Australia is not comparable with it. And where colonisations have begun without system, and without hard fighting to teach the settlers to value good leadership and respect their chiefs, they tumble into Republics.'



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Patrick would have liked to fling a word in about the Englishman's cast of his eye upon inviting lands, but the trot was resumed, the lord of Earlsfont having delivered his mind, and a minute made it happily too late for the sarcastic bolt. Glad that his tongue had been kept from wagging, he trotted along beside his host in the dusky evening over the once contested land where the gentleman's forefathers had done their deeds and firmly fixed their descendants. A remainder of dull red fire prolonged the half-day above the mountain strongholds of the former owners of the soil, upon which prince and bard and priest, and grappling natives never wanting for fierceness, roared to-arms in the beacon-flames from ridge to peak: and down they poured, and back they were pushed by the inveterate coloniser—stationing at threatened points his old 'artillerymen' of those days and so it ends, that bard and priest and prince; holy poetry, and divine prescription, and a righteous holding; are as naught against him. They go, like yonder embers of the winter sunset before advancing night: and to morrow the beacon-heaps are ashes, the conqueror's foot stamps on them, the wind scatters them; strangest of all, you hear victorious lawlessness appealing solemnly to God the law.

Patrick was too young to philosophise upon his ideas; or else the series of pictures projected by the troops of sensations running through him were not of a solidity to support any structure of philosophy. He reverted, though rather in name than in spirit, to the abstractions, justice, consistency, right. They were too hard to think of, so he abandoned the puzzle of fitting them to men's acts and their consciences, and he put them aside as mere titles employed for the uses of a police and a tribunal to lend an appearance of legitimacy to the decrees of them that have got the upper hand. An insurrectionary rising of his breast on behalf of his country was the consequence. He kept it down by turning the whole hubbub within him to the practical contemplation of a visionary South America as the region for him and a fighting tenantry. With a woman, to crown her queen there, the prospect was fair. But where dwelt the woman possessing majesty suitable to such a dream in her heart or her head? The best he had known in Ireland and in France, preferred the charms of society to bold adventure.

All the same, thought he, it's queer counsel, that we should set to work by buying a bit of land to win a clean footing to rob our neighbours: and his brains took another shot at Mr. Adister, this time without penetrating. He could very well have seen the matter he disliked in a man that he disliked; but the father of Adiante had touched him with the gift of the miniature.



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Patrick was not asked to postpone his departure from Earlsfont, nor was he invited to come again. Mr. Adister drove him to the station in the early morning, and gave him a single nod from the phaeton-box for a good-bye. Had not Caroline assured him at the leave-taking between them that he had done her uncle great good by his visit, the blank of the usual ceremonial phrases would have caused him to fancy himself an intruder courteously dismissed, never more to enter the grand old Hall. He was further comforted by hearing the stationmaster's exclamation of astonishment and pleasure at the sight of the squire 'in his place' handling the reins, which had not been witnessed for many a day and so it appeared that the recent guest had been exceptionally complimented. 'But why not a warm word, instead of turning me off to decipher a bit of Egyptian on baked brick,' he thought, incurably Celtic as he was.

From the moment when he beheld Mr. Adister's phaeton mounting a hill that took the first leap for the Cambrian highlands, up to his arrival in London, scarcely one of his 'ideas' darted out before Patrick, as they were in the habit of doing, like the enchanted bares of fairyland, tempting him to pursue, and changing into the form of woman ever, at some turn of the chase. For as he had travelled down to Earlsfont in the state of ignorance and hopefulness, bearing the liquid brains of that young condition, so did his acquisition of a particular fact destructive of hope solidify them about it as he travelled back: in other words, they were digesting what they had taken in. Imagination would not have stirred for a thousand fleeting hares: and principally, it may be, because he was conscious that no form of woman would anywhere come of them. Woman was married; she had the ring on her finger! He could at his option look on her in the miniature, he could think of her as being in the city where she had been painted; but he could not conjure her out of space; she was nowhere in the ambient air. Secretly she was a feeling that lay half slumbering very deep down within him, and he kept the secret, choosing to be poor rather than call her forth. He was in truth digesting with difficulty, as must be the case when it is allotted to the brains to absorb what the soul abhors.

'Poor old Philip!' was his perpetual refrain. 'Philip, the girl you loved is married; and here's her portrait taken in her last blush; and the man who has her hasn't a share in that!' Thus, throwing in the ghost of a sigh for sympathy, it seemed to Patrick that the intelligence would have to be communicated. Bang is better, thought he, for bad news than snapping fire and fainting, when you're bound half to kill a fellow, and a manly fellow.



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Determined that bang it should be, he hurried from the terminus to Philip's hotel, where he had left him, and was thence despatched to the house of Captain Con O'Donnell, where he created a joyful confusion, slightly dashed with rigour on the part of the regnant lady; which is not to be wondered at, considering that both the gentlemen attending her, Philip and her husband, quitted her table with shouts at the announcement of his name, and her husband hauled him in unwashed before her, crying that the lost was found, the errant returned, the Prodigal Pat recovered by his kinsman! and she had to submit to the introduction of the disturber: and a bedchamber had to be thought of for the unexpected guest, and the dinner to be delayed in middle course, and her husband corrected between the discussions concerning the bedchamber, and either the guest permitted to appear at her table in sooty day-garb, or else a great gap commanded in the service of her dishes, vexatious extreme for a lady composed of orderliness. She acknowledged Patrick's profound salute and his excuses with just so many degrees in the inclining of her head as the polite deem a duty to themselves when the ruffling world has disarranged them.

'Con!' she called to her chattering husband, 'we are in England, if you please.'

'To be sure, madam,' said the captain, 'and so 's Patrick, thanks to the stars. We fancied him gone, kidnapped, burned, made a meal of and swallowed up, under the earth or the water; for he forgot to give us his address in town; he stood before us for an hour or so, and then the fellow vanished. We've waited for him gaping. With your permission I'll venture an opinion that he'll go and dabble his hands and sit with us as he is, for the once, as it happens.'

'Let it be so,' she rejoined, not pacified beneath her dignity. She named the bedchamber to a footman.

'And I'll accompany the boy to hurry him on,' said the captain, hurrying Patrick on as he spoke, till he had him out of the dining-room, when he whispered: 'Out with your key, and if we can scramble you into your evening-suit quick we shall heal the breach in the dinner. You dip your hands and face, I'll have out the dress. You've the right style for her, my boy: and mind, she is an excellent good woman, worthy of all respect: but formality's the flattery she likes: a good bow and short speech. Here we are, and the room's lighted. Off to the basin, give me the key; and here's hot water in tripping Mary's hands. The portmanteau opens easy. Quick! the door's shut on rosy Mary. The race is for domestic peace, my boy. I sacrifice everything I can for it, in decency. 'Tis the secret of my happiness.'

Patrick's transformation was rapid enough to satisfy the impatient captain, who said: 'You'll tell her you couldn't sit down in her presence undressed. I married her at forty, you know, when a woman has reached her perfect development, and leans a trifle more to ceremonies than to substance. And where have you been the while?'



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'I'll tell you by and by,' said Patrick.

'Tell me now, and don't be smirking at the glass; your necktie's as neat as a lady's company-smile, equal at both ends, and warranted not to relax before the evening 's over. And mind you don't set me off talking over-much downstairs. I talk in her presence like the usher of the Court to the judge. 'Tis the secret of my happiness.'

'Where are those rascally dress-boots of mine?' cried Patrick.

Captain Con pitched the contents of the portmanteau right and left. 'Never mind the boots, my boy. Your legs will be under the table during dinner, and we'll institute a rummage up here between that and the procession to the drawing-room, where you'll be examined head to foot, devil a doubt of it. But say, where have you been? She'll be asking, and we're in a mess already, and may as well have a place to name to her, somewhere, to excuse the gash you've made in her dinner. Here they are, both of 'm, rolled in a dirty shirt!'

Patrick seized the boots and tugged them on, saying 'Earlsfont, then.'

'You've been visiting Earlsfont? Whack! but that's the saving of us! Talk to her of her brother he sends her his love. Talk to her of the ancestral hall—it stands as it was on the day of its foundation. Just wait about five minutes to let her punish us, before you out with it. 'Twill come best from you. What did you go down there for? But don't stand answering questions; come along. Don't heed her countenance at the going in: we've got the talisman. As to the dressing, it's a perfect trick of harlequinade, and she'll own it after a dose of Earlsfont. And, by the way, she's not Mrs. Con, remember; she's Mrs. Adister O'Donnell: and that's best rolled out to Mistress. She's a worthy woman, but she was married at forty, and I had to take her shaped as she was, for moulding her at all was out of the question, and the soft parts of me had to be the sufferers, to effect a conjunction, for where one won't and can't, poor t' other must, or the union's a mockery. She was cast in bronze at her birth, if she wasn't cut in bog-root. Anyhow, you'll study her. Consider her for my sake. Madam, it should be—madam, call her, addressing her, madam. She hasn't a taste for jokes, and she chastises absurdities, and England's the foremost country of the globe, indirect communication with heaven, and only to be connected with such a country by the tail of it is a special distinction and a comfort for us; we're that part of the kite!—but, Patrick, she's a charitable soul; she's a virtuous woman and an affectionate wife, and doesn't frown to see me turn off to my place of worship while she drum-majors it away to her own; she entertains Father Boyle heartily, like the good woman she is to good men; and unfortunate females too have a friend in her, a real friend—that they have; and that 's a wonder in a woman chaste as ice. I do respect her; and I'd like to see the man to favour me with an opportunity of proving it on him! So you'll not forget, my boy; and prepare for a cold bath the first five minutes. Out with Earlsfont early after that. All these things are trifles to an unmarried man. I have to



attend to 'm, I have to be politic and give her elbow-room for her natural angles. 'Tis the secret of my happiness.'



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Priming his kinsman thus up to the door of the diningroom, Captain Con thrust him in.

Mistress Adister O'Donnell's head rounded as by slow attraction to the clock. Her disciplined husband signified an equal mixture of contrition and astonishment at the passing of time. He fell to work upon his plate in obedience to the immediate policy dictated to him.

The unbending English lady contrasted with her husband so signally that the oddly united couple appeared yoked in a common harness for a perpetual display of the opposition of the races. She resembled her brother, the lord of Earlsfont, in her remarkable height and her calm air of authority and self-sustainment. From beneath a head-dress built of white curls and costly lace, half enclosing her high narrow forehead, a pale, thin, straight bridge of nose descended prominently over her sunken cheeks to thin locked lips. Her aspect suggested the repose of a winter landscape, enjoyable in pictures, or on skates, otherwise nipping. . . . Mental directness, of no greater breadth than her principal feature, was the character it expressed; and candour of spirit shone through the transparency she was, if that mild taper could be said to shine in proof of a vitality rarely notified to the outer world by the opening of her mouth; chiefly then, though not malevolently to command: as the portal of some snow-bound monastery opens to the outcast, bidding it be known that the light across the wolds was not deceptive and a glimmer of light subsists among the silent within. The life sufficed to her. She was like a marble effigy seated upright, requiring but to be laid at her length for transport to the cover of the tomb.

Now Captain Con was by nature ruddy as an Indian summer flushed in all its leaves. The corners of his face had everywhere a frank ambush, or child's hiding-place, for languages and laughter. He could worm with a smile quite his own the humour out of men possessing any; and even under rigorous law, and it could not be disputed that there was rigour in the beneficent laws imposed upon him by his wife, his genius for humour and passion for sly independence came up and curled away like the smoke of the illicit still, wherein the fanciful discern fine sprites indulging in luxurious grimaces at a government long-nosed to no purpose. Perhaps, as Patrick said of him to Caroline Adister, he was a bard without a theme. He certainly was a man of speech, and the having fearfully to contain himself for the greater number of the hours of the day, for the preservation of the domestic felicity he had learnt to value, fathered the sentiment of revolt in his bosom.

By this time, long after five minutes had elapsed, the frost presiding at the table was fast withering Captain Con; and he was irritable to hear why Patrick had gone off to Earlsfont, and what he had done there, and the adventures he had tasted on the road; anything for warmth. His efforts to fish the word out of Patrick produced deeper crevasses in the conversation, and he cried to himself: Hats and crape-bands! mightily struck by an idea that he and his cousins were a party of hired mourners over the meat they consumed. Patrick was endeavouring to spare his brother a mention of Earlsfont

before they had private talk together. He answered neither to a dip of the hook nor to a pull.



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'The desert where you 've come from 's good,' said the captain, sharply nodding.

Mrs. Adister O'Donnell ejaculated: 'Wine!' for a heavy comment upon one of his topics, and crushed it.

Philip saw that Patrick had no desire to spread, and did not trouble him.

'Good horses in the stable too,' said the captain.

Patrick addressed Mrs. Adister: 'I have hardly excused myself to you, madam.'

Her head was aloft in dumb apostrophe of wearifulness over another of her husband's topics.

'Do not excuse yourself at all,' she said.

The captain shivered. He overhauled his plotting soul publicly: 'Why don't you out with it yourself!' and it was wonderful why he had not done so, save that he was prone to petty conspiracy, and had thought reasonably that the revelation would be damp, gunpowder, coming from him. And for when he added: 'The boy's fresh from Earlsfont; he went down to look at the brav old house of the Adisters, and was nobly welcomed and entertained, and made a vast impression,' his wife sedately remarked to Patrick, 'You have seen my brother Edward.'

'And brings a message of his love to you, my dear,' the Captain bit his nail harder.

'You have a message for me?' she asked; and Patrick replied: 'The captain is giving a free translation. I was down there, and I took the liberty of calling on Mr. Adister, and I had a very kind reception. We hunted, we had a good day with the hounds. I think I remember hearing that you go there at Christmas, madam.'

'Our last Christmas at Earlsfont was a sad meeting for the family. My brother Edward is well?'

'I had the happiness to be told that I had been of a little service in cheering him.'

'I can believe it,' said Mrs. Adister, letting her eyes dwell on the young man; and he was moved by the silvery tremulousness of her voice.

She resumed: 'You have the art of dressing in a surprisingly short time.'

'There!' exclaimed Captain Con: for no man can hear the words which prove him a prophet without showing excitement. 'Didn't I say so? Patrick's a hero for love or war, my dear. He stood neat and trim from the silk socks to the sprig of necktie in six minutes by my watch. And that's witness to me that you may count on him for what the



great Napoleon called two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage; not too common even in his immortal army:—when it's pitch black and frosty cold, and you're buried within in a dream of home, and the trumpet springs you to your legs in a trice, boots and trowsers, coat and sword-belt and shako, and one twirl to the whiskers, and away before a second snap of the fingers to where the great big bursting end of all things for you lies crouching like a Java-Tiger—a ferocious beast painted undertaker's colour—for a leap at you in particular out of the dark;—never waiting an instant to ask what's the matter and pretend you don't know. That's rare, Philip; that's bravery; Napoleon knew the thing; and Patrick has it; my hand's on the boy's back for that.'



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The captain was permitted to discourse as he pleased: his wife was wholly given to the recent visitor to Earlsfont, whom she informed that Caroline was the youngest daughter of General Adister, her second brother, and an excellent maiden, her dear Edward's mainstay in his grief. At last she rose, and was escorted to the door by all present. But Captain Con rather shame-facedly explained to Patrick that it was a sham departure; they had to follow without a single spin to the claretjug: he closed the door merely to state his position; how at half-past ten he would be a free man, according to the convention, to which his wife honourably adhered, so he had to do likewise, as regarded his share of it. Thereupon he apologised to the brothers, bitterly regretting that, with good wine in the cellar, his could be no house for claret; and promising them they should sit in their shirts and stretch their legs, and toast the old country and open their hearts, no later than the minute pointing to the time for his deliverance.

Mrs. Adister accepted her husband's proffered arm unhesitatingly at the appointed stroke of the clock. She said: 'Yes,' in agreement with him, as if she had never heard him previously enunciate the formula, upon his pious vociferation that there should be no trifling with her hours of rest.

'You can find your way to my cabin,' he said to Philip over his shoulder, full of solicitude for the steps of the admirable lady now positively departing.

As soon as the brothers were alone, Philip laid his hand on Patrick, asking him, 'What does it mean?'

Patrick fired his cannon-shot: 'She's married!' Consulting his feelings immediately after, he hated himself for his bluntness.

Philip tossed his head. 'But why did you go down there?'

'I went,' said Patrick, 'well, I went I thought you looked wretched, and I went with an idea of learning where she was, and seeing if I couldn't do something. It's too late now; all's over.'

'My dear boy, I've worse than that to think of.'

'You don't mind it?'

'That's old news, Patrick.'

'You don't care for her any more, Philip?'

'You wouldn't have me caring for a married woman?'

'She has a perfect beast for a husband.'



'I'm sorry she didn't make a better choice.'

'He's a prince.'

'So I hear.'

'Ah! And what worse, Philip, can you be having to think of?'

'Affairs,' Philip replied, and made his way to the cabin of Captain Con, followed in wonderment by Patrick, who would hardly have been his dupe to suppose him indifferent and his love of Adiante dead, had not the thought flashed on him a prospect of retaining the miniature for his own, or for long in his custody.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN

Patrick left his brother at the second flight of stairs to run and fling on a shooting-jacket, into which he stuffed his treasure, after one peep that eclipsed his little dream of being allowed to keep it; and so he saw through Philip.



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The captain's cabin was the crown of his house-top, a builder's addition to the roof, where the detestable deeds he revelled in, calling them liberty, could be practised, according to the convention, and no one save rosy Mary, in her sense of smell, when she came upon her morning business to clean and sweep, be any the wiser of them, because, as it is known to the whole world, smoke ascends, and he was up among the chimneys. Here, he would say to his friends and fellow-sinners, you can unfold, unbosom, explode, do all you like, except caper, and there 's a small square of lead between the tiles outside for that, if the spirit of the jig comes upon you with violence, as I have had it on me, and eased myself mightily there, to my own music; and the capital of the British Empire below me. Here we take our indemnity for subjection to the tyrannical female ear, and talk like copious rivers meandering at their own sweet will. Here we roll like dogs in carrion, and no one to sniff at our coats. Here we sing treason, here we flout reason, night is out season at half-past ten.

This introductory ode to Freedom was his throwing off of steam, the foretaste of what he contained. He rejoined his cousins, chirping variations on it, and attired in a green silken suit of airy Ottoman volume, full of incitement to the legs and arms to swing and set him up for a Sultan. 'Now Phil, now Pat,' he cried, after tenderly pulling the door to and making sure it was shut, 'any tale you've a mind for— infamous and audacious! You're licensed by the gods up here, and may laugh at them too, and their mothers and grandmothers, if the fit seizes ye, and the heartier it is the greater the exemption. We're pots that knock the lid and must pour out or boil over and destroy the furniture. My praties are ready for peelin', if ever they were in this world! Chuck wigs from sconces, and off with your buckram. Decency's a dirty petticoat in the Garden of Innocence. Naked we stand, boys! we're not afraid of nature. You're in the annexe of Erin, Pat, and devil a constable at the keyhole; no rats; I'll say that for the Government, though it's a despotism with an iron bridle on the tongue outside to a foot of the door. Arctic to freeze the boldest bud of liberty! I'd like a French chanson from ye, Pat, to put us in tune, with a right revolutionary hurling chorus, that pitches Kings' heads into the basket like autumn apples. Or one of your hymns in Gaelic sung ferociously to sound as horrid to the Saxon, the wretch. His reign 's not for ever; he can't enter here. You're in the stronghold defying him. And now cigars, boys, pipes; there are the boxes, there are the bowls. I can't smoke till I have done steaming. I'll sit awhile silently for the operation. Christendom hasn't such a man as your cousin Con for feeling himself a pig-posessed all the blessed day, acting the part of somebody else, till it takes me a quarter of an hour of my enfranchisement and restoration of my natural man to know myself again. For the moment, I'm froth, scum, horrid boiling hissing dew of the agony of transformation; I am; I'm that pig disgorging the spirit of wickedness from his poor stomach.'



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The captain drooped to represent the state of the self-relieving victim of the evil one; but fearful lest either of his cousins should usurp the chair and thwart his chance of delivering himself, he rattled away sympathetically with his posture in melancholy: 'Ay, we're poor creatures; pigs and prophets, princes and people, victors and vanquished, we're waves of the sea, rolling over and over, and calling it life! There's no life save the eternal. Father Boyle's got the truth. Flesh is less than grass, my sons; 'tis the shadow that crosses the grass. I love the grass. I could sit and watch grassblades for hours. I love an old turf mound, where the grey grass nods and seems to know the wind and have a whisper with it, of ancient times maybe and most like; about the big chief lying underneath in the last must of his bones that a breath of air would scatter. They just keep their skeleton shape as they are; for the turf mound protects them from troubles: 'tis the nurse to that delicate old infant!—Waves of the sea, did I say? We're wash in a hog-trough for Father Saturn to devour; big chief and suckling babe, we all go into it, calling it life! And what hope have we of reading the mystery? All we can see is the straining of the old fellow's hams to push his old snout deeper into the gobble, and the ridiculous curl of a tail totally devoid of expression! You'll observe that gluttons have no feature; they're jaws and hindquarters; which is the beginning and end of 'm; and so you may say to Time for his dealing with us: so let it be a lesson to you not to bother your wits, but leave the puzzle to the priest. He understands it, and why? because he was told. There's harmony in his elocution, and there's none in the modern drivell about where we're going and what we came out of. No wonder they call it an age of despair, when you see the big wigs filing up and down the thoroughfares with a great advertisement board on their shoulders, proclaiming no information to the multitude, but a blank note of interrogation addressed to Providence, as if an answer from above would be vouchsafed to their impudence! They haven't the first principles of good manners. And some of 'm in a rage bawl the answer for themselves. Hear that! No, Phil; No, Pat, no: devotion's good policy.—You're not drinking! Are you both of ye asleep? why do ye leave me to drone away like this, when it's conversation I want, as in the days of our first parents, before the fig-leaf?—and you might have that for scroll and figure on the social banner of the hypocritical Saxon, who's a gormandising animal behind his decency, and nearer to the Arch-devourer Time than anything I can imagine: except that with a little exertion you can elude him. The whisky you've got between you 's virgin of the excise. I'll pay double for freepeaty any day. Or are you for claret, my lads? No? I'm fortified up here to stand a siege in my old round tower, like the son of Eremon that



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I am. Lavra Con! Con speaks at last! I don't ask you, Pat, whether you remember Maen, who was born dumb, and had for his tutors Ferkelne the bard and Craftine the harper, at pleasant Dinree: he was grandson of Leary Lore who was basely murdered by his brother Cova, and Cova spared the dumb boy, thinking a man without a tongue harmless, as fools do: being one of their savings-bank tricks, to be repaid them, their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns at compound interest, have no fear. So one day Maen had an insult put on him; and 'twas this for certain: a ruffian fellow of the Court swore he couldn't mention the name of his father; and in a thundering fury Maen burst his tongue-tie, and the Court shouted Lavra Maen: and he had to go into exile, where he married in the middle of delicious love-adventures the beautiful Moira through the cunning of Craftine the harper. There's been no harper in my instance but plenty of ruffians to swear I'm too comfortable to think of my country.' The captain holloaed. 'Do they hear that? Lord! but wouldn't our old Celtic fill the world with poetry if only we were a free people to give our minds to 't, instead of to the itch on our backs from the Saxon horsehair shirt we're forced to wear. For, Pat, as you know, we're a loving people, we're a loyal people, we burn to be enthusiastic, but when our skins are eternally irritated, how can we sing? In a freer Erin I'd be the bard of the land, never doubt it. What am I here but a discontented idle lout crooning over the empty glories of our isle of Saints! You feel them, Pat. Phil's all for his British army, his capabilities of British light cavalry. Write me the history of the Enniskillens. I'll read it. Aha, my boy, when they 're off at the charge! And you'll oblige me with the tale of Fontenoy. Why, Phil has an opportunity stretching forth a hand to him now more than halfway that comes to a young Irishman but once in a century: backed by the entire body of the priesthood of Ireland too! and if only he was a quarter as full of the old country as you and I, his hair would stand up in fire for the splendid gallop at our head that's proposed to him. His country's gathered up like a crested billow to roll him into Parliament; and I say, let him be there, he 's the very man to hurl his gauntlet, and tell 'm, Parliament, so long as you are parliamentary, which means the speaking of our minds, but if you won't have it, then-and it 's on your heads before Europe and the two Americas. We're dying like a nun that 'd be out of her cloister, we're panting like the wife who hears of her husband coming home to her from the field of honour, for that young man. And there he is; or there he seems to be; but he's dead: and the fisherman off the west coast after dreaming of a magical haul, gets more fish than disappointment in comparison with us when we cast the net for Philip. Bring tears of vexation at the emptiness we pull back for our pains.



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Oh, Phil! and to think of your youth! We had you then. At least we had your heart. And we should have had the length and strength of you, only for a woman fatal to us as the daughter of Rhys ap Tudor, the beautiful Nesta:—and beautiful she was to match the mother of the curses trooping over to Ireland under Strongbow, that I'll grant you. But she reined you in when you were a real warhorse ramping and snorting flame from your nostrils, challenging any other to a race for Ireland; ay, a Cuchullin you were, Philip, Culann's chain-bound: but she unmanned you. She soaked the woman into you and squeezed the hero out of you. All for Adiante! or a country left to slavery! that's the tale. And what are you now? A paltry captain of hussars on the General's staff! One O'Donnell in a thousand! And what is she?—you needn't frown, Phil; I'm her relative by marriage, and she 's a lady. More than that, she shot a dart or two into my breast in those days, she did, I'll own it: I had the catch of the breath that warns us of convulsions. She was the morning star for beauty, between night and day, and the best colour of both. Welshmen and Irishmen and Englishmen tumbled into the pit, which seeing her was, and there we jostled for a glimpse quite companionably; we were too hungry for quarrelling; and to say, I was one of 'm, is a title to subsequent friendship. True; only mark me, Philip, and you, Patrick: they say she has married a prince, and I say no; she's took to herself a husband in her cradle; she's married ambition. I tell you, and this prince of hers is only a step she has taken, and if he chases her first mate from her bosom, he'll prove himself cleverer than she, and I dare him to the trial. For she's that fiery dragon, a beautiful woman with brains—which Helen of Troy hadn't, combustible as we know her to have been: but brains are bombshells in comparison with your old-fashioned pine-brands for kindling men and cities. Ambition's the husband of Adiante Adister, and all who come nigh her are steps to her aim. She never consulted her father about Prince Nikolas; she had begun her march and she didn't mean to be arrested. She simply announced her approaching union; and as she couldn't have a scion of one of the Royal House of Europe, she put her foot on Prince Nikolas. And he 's not to fancy he 's in for a peaceful existence; he's a stone in a sling, and probably mistaken the rocking that's to launch him through the air for a condition of remarkable ease, perfectly remarkable in its lullaby motion; ha! well, and I've not heard of ambition that didn't kill its votary: somehow it will; 'tis sure to. There she lies!

The prophetic captain pointed at the spot. He then said: 'And now I'm for my pipe, and the blackest clay of the party, with your permission. I'll just go to the window to see if the stars are out overhead. They're my blessed guardian angels.'

There was a pause. Philip broke from a brown study to glance at his brother. Patrick made a queer face.



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'Fun and good-fellowship to-night, Con,' said Philip, as the captain sadly reported no star visible.

'Have I ever flown a signal to the contrary?' retorted the captain.

'No politics, and I 'll thank you,' said Philip: 'none of your early recollections. Be jovial.'

'You should have seen me here the other night about a month ago; I smuggled up an old countrywoman of ours, with the connivance of rosy Mary,' said Captain Con, suffused in the merriest of grins. 'She sells apples at a stall at a corner of a street hard by, and I saw her sitting pulling at her old pipe in the cold October fog morning and evening for comfort, and was overwhelmed with compassion and fraternal sentiment; and so I invited her to be at the door of the house at half-past ten, just to have a roll with her in Irish mud, and mend her torn soul with a stitch or two of rejoicing. She told me stories; and one was pretty good, of a relative of hers, or somebody's—I should say, a century old, but she told it with a becoming air of appropriation that made it family history, for she's come down in the world, and this fellow had a stain of red upon him, and wanted cleaning; and, "What!" says the good father, "Mika! you did it in cold blood?" And says Mika, "Not I, your Riverence. I got myself into a passion 'fore I let loose." I believe she smoked this identical pipe. She acknowledged the merits of my whisky, as poets do hearing fine verses, never clapping hands, but with the expressiveness of grave absorption. That's the way to make good things a part of you. She was a treat. I got her out and off at midnight, rosy Mary sneaking her down, and the old girl quiet as a mouse for the fun's sake. The whole intrigue was exquisitely managed.'

'You run great risks,' Philip observed.

'I do,' said the captain.

He called on the brothers to admire the 'martial and fumial' decorations of his round tower, buzzing over the display of implements, while Patrick examined guns and Philip unsheathed swords. An ancient clay pipe from the bed of the Thames and one from the bed of the Boyne were laid side by side, and strange to relate, the Irish pipe and English immediately, by the mere fact of their being proximate, entered into rivalry; they all but leapt upon one another. The captain judicially decided the case against the English pipe, as a newer pipe of grosser manufacture, not so curious by any means.

'This,' Philip held up the reputed Irish pipe, and scanned as he twirled it on his thumb, 'This was dropped in Boyne Water by one of William's troopers. It is an Orange pipe. I take it to be of English make.'

'If I thought that, I'd stamp my heel on the humbug the neighbour minute,' said Captain Con. 'Where's the sign of English marks?'



'The pipes resemble one another,' said Philip, 'like tails of Shannon-bred retrievers.'

'Maybe they 're both Irish, then?' the captain caught at analogy to rescue his favourite from reproach.



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'Both of them are Saxon.'

'Not a bit of it!'

'Look at the clay.'

'I look, and I tell you, Philip, it's of a piece with your lukewarmness for the country, or you wouldn't talk like that.'

'There is no record of pipe manufactories in Ireland at the period you name.'

'There is: and the jealousy of rulers caused them to be destroyed by decrees, if you want historical evidence.'

'Your opposition to the Saxon would rob him of his pipe, Con!'

'Let him go to the deuce with as many pipes as he can carry; but he shan't have this one.'

'Not a toss-up of difference is to be seen in the pair.'

'Use your eyes. The Irish bowl is broken, and the English has an inch longer stem!'

'O the Irish bowl is broken!' Philip sang.

'You've the heart of a renegade-foreigner not to see it!' cried the captain.

Patrick intervened saying: 'I suspect they're Dutch.'

'Well, and that 's possible.' Captain Con scrutinised them to calm his temper: 'there's a Dutchiness in the shape.'

He offered Philip the compromise of 'Dutch' rather plaintively, but it was not accepted, and the pipes would have mingled their fragments on the hearthstone if Patrick had not stayed his arm, saying: 'Don't hurt them.'

'And I won't,' the captain shook his hand gratefully.

'But will Philip O'Donnell tell me that Ireland should lie down with England on the terms of a traveller obliged to take a bedfellow? Come! He hasn't an answer. Put it to him, and you pose him. But he 'll not stir, though he admits the antagonism. And Ireland is asked to lie down with England on a couch blessed by the priest! Not she. Wipe out our grievances, and then we'll begin to talk of policy. Good Lord!—love? The love of Ireland for the conquering country will be the celebrated ceremony in the concluding chapter previous to the inauguration of the millennium. Thousands of us are in a



starving state at home this winter, Patrick. And it's not the fault of England?—landlordism 's not? Who caused the ruin of all Ireland's industries? You might as well say that it 's the fault of the poor beggar to go limping and hungry because his cruel master struck him a blow to cripple him. We don't want half and half doctoring, and it's too late in the day for half and half oratory. We want freedom, and we'll have it, and we won't leave it to the Saxon to think about giving it. And if your brother Philip won't accept this blazing fine offer, then I will, and you'll behold me in a new attitude. The fellow yawns! You don't know me yet, Philip. They tell us over here we ought to be satisfied. Fall upon our list of wrongs, and they set to work yawning. You can only move them by popping at them over hedges and roaring on platforms. They're incapable of understanding a complaint a yard beyond their noses. The Englishman has an island mind, and when he's out of it he's at sea.'



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'Mad, you mean,' said Philip.

'I repeat my words, Captain Philip O'Donnell, late of the staff of the General commanding in Canada.'

'The Irishman too has an island mind, and when he's out of it he's at sea, and unable to manage his craft,' said Philip.

'You'll find more craft in him when he's buffeted than you reckoned on,' his cousin flung back. 'And if that isn't the speech of a traitor sold to the enemy, and now throwing off the mask, traitors never did mischief in Ireland! Why, what can you discover to admire in these people? Isn't their army such a combination of colours in the uniforms, with their yellow facings on red jackets, I never saw out of a doll-shop, and never saw there. And their Horse Guards, weedy to a man! fit for a doll-shop they are, by my faith! And their Foot Guards: Have ye met the fellows marching? with their feet turned out, flat as my laundress's irons, and the muscles of their calves depending on the joints to get 'm along, for elasticity never gave those bones of theirs a springing touch; and their bearskins heeling behind on their polls; like pot-house churls daring the dursn't to come on. Of course they can fight. Who said no? But they 're not the only ones: and they 'll miss their ranks before they can march like our Irish lads. The look of their men in line is for all the world to us what lack-lustre is to the eye. The drill they 've had hasn't driven Hodge out of them, it has only stiffened the dolt; and dolt won't do any longer; the military machine requires intelligence in all ranks now. Ay, the time for the Celt is dawning: I see it, and I don't often spy a spark where there isn't soon a blaze. Solidity and stupidity have had their innings: a precious long innings it has been; and now they're shoved aside like clods of earth from the risin flower. Off with our shackles! We've only to determine it to be free, and we'll bloom again; and I'll be the first to speak the word and mount the colours. Follow me! Will ye join in the toast to the emblem of Erin—the shamrock, Phil and Pat?'

'Oh, certainly,' said Philip. 'What 's that row going on?' Patrick also called attention to the singular noise in the room. 'I fancy the time for the Celt is not dawning, but setting,' said Philip, with a sharp smile; and Patrick wore an artful look.

A corner of the room was guilty of the incessant alarum. Captain Con gazed in that direction incredulously and with remonstrance. 'The tinkler it is!' he sighed. 'But it can't be midnight yet?' Watches were examined. Time stood at half-past the midnight. He groaned: 'I must go. I haven't heard the tinkler for months. It signifies she's cold in her bed. The thing called circulation's unknown to her save by the aid of outward application, and I 'm the warming pan, as legitimately I should be, I'm her husband and her Harvey in one. Goodbye to my hop and skip. I ought by rights



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to have been down beside her at midnight. She's the worthiest woman alive, and I don't shirk my duty. Be quiet!' he bellowed at the alarm; 'I 'm coming. Don't be in such a fright, my dear,' he admonished it as his wife, politely. 'Your hand'll take an hour to warm if you keep it out on the spring that sets the creature going.' He turned and informed his company: 'Her hand'll take an hour to warm. Dear! how she runs ahead: d' ye hear? That's the female tongue, and once off it won't stop. And this contrivance for fetching me from my tower to her bed was my own suggestion, in a fit of generosity! Ireland all over! I must hurry and wash my hair, for she can't bear a perfume to kill a stink; she carries her charitable heart that far. Good-night, I'll be thinking of ye while I'm warming her. Sit still, I can't wait; 'tis the secret of my happiness.' He fled. Patrick struck his knee on hearing the expected ballad-burden recur.

CHAPTER X

THE BROTHERS

'Con has learnt one secret,' said Philip, quitting his chair.

Patrick went up to him, and, 'Give us a hug,' he said, and the hug was given.

They were of an equal height, tall young men, alert, nervously braced from head to foot, with the differences between soldier and civilian marked by the succinctly military bearing of the elder brother, whose movements were precise and prompt, and whose frame was leopardlike in indolence. Beside him Patrick seemed cubbish, though beside another he would not have appeared so. His features were not so brilliantly regular, but were a fanciful sketch of the same design, showing a wider pattern of the long square head and the forehead, a wavering at the dip of the nose, livelier nostrils: the nostrils dilated and contracted, and were exceeding alive. His eyelids had to do with the look of his eyes, and were often seen cutting the ball. Philip's eyes were large on the pent of his brows, open, liquid, and quick with the fire in him. Eyes of that quality are the visible mind, animated both to speak it and to render it what comes within their scope. They were full, unshaded direct, the man himself, in action. Patrick's mouth had to be studied for an additional index to the character. To symbolise them, they were as a sword-blade lying beside book.

Men would have thought Patrick the slippery one of the two: women would have inclined to confide in him the more thoroughly; they bring feeling to the test, and do not so much read a print as read the imprinting on themselves; and the report that a certain one of us is true as steel, must be unanimous at a propitious hour to assure them completely that the steel is not two-edged in the fully formed nature of a man whom they have not tried. They are more at home with the unformed, which lends itself to feeling

and imagination. Besides Patrick came nearer to them; he showed sensibility. They have it, and they deem it auspicious of goodness, or of the gentleness acceptable as an equivalent. Not the less was Philip the one to inspire the deeper and the wilder passion.



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'So you've been down there?' said Philip. 'Tell us of your welcome. Never mind why you went: I think I see. You're the Patrick of fourteen, who tramped across Connaught for young Dermot to have a sight of you before he died, poor lad. How did Mr. Adister receive you?'

Patrick described the first interview.

Philip mused over it. 'Yes, those are some of his ideas: gentlemen are to excel in the knightly exercises. He used to fence excellently, and he was a good horseman. The Jesuit seminary would have been hard for him to swallow once. The house is a fine old house: lonely, I suppose.'

Patrick spoke of Caroline Adister and pursued his narrative. Philip was lost in thought. At the conclusion, relating to South America, he raised his head and said: 'Not so foolish as it struck you, Patrick. You and I might do that,—without the design upon the original owner of the soil! Irishmen are better out of Europe, unless they enter one of the Continental services.'

'What is it Con O'Donnell proposes to you?' Patrick asked him earnestly.

'To be a speaking trumpet in Parliament. And to put it first among the objections, I haven't an independence; not above two hundred a year.'

'I'll make it a thousand,' said Patrick, 'that is, if my people can pay.'

'Secondly, I don't want to give up my profession. Thirdly, fourthly, fifthly, once there, I should be boiling with the rest. I never could go half way. This idea of a commencement gives me a view of the finish. Would you care to try it?'

'If I'm no wiser after two or three years of the world I mean to make a better acquaintance with,' Patrick replied. 'Over there at home one catches the fever, you know. They have my feelings, and part of my judgement, and whether that's the weaker part I can't at present decide. My taste is for quiet farming and breeding.'

'Friendship, as far as possible; union, if the terms are fair,' said Philip. 'It's only the name of union now; supposing it a concession that is asked of them; say, sacrifice; it might be made for the sake of what our people would do to strengthen the nation. But they won't try to understand our people. Their laws, and their rules, their systems are forced on a race of an opposite temper, who would get on well enough, and thrive, if they were properly consulted. Ireland 's the sore place of England, and I'm sorry for it. We ought to be a solid square, with Europe in this pickle. So I say, sitting here. What should I be saying in Parliament?'

'Is Con at all likely, do you think, Philip?'



'He might: and become the burlesque Irishman of the House. There must be one, and the lot would be safe to fall on him.'

'Isn't he serious about it?'

'Quite, I fancy; and that will be the fun. A serious fellow talking nonsense with lively illustrations, is just the man for House of Commons clown. Your humorous rogue is not half so taking. Con would be the porpoise in a fish tank there, inscrutably busy on his errand and watched for his tumblings. Better I than he; and I should make a worse of it—at least for myself.'



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'Wouldn't the secret of his happiness interfere?'

'If he has the secret inside his common sense. The bulk of it I suspect to be, that he enjoys his luxuries and is ashamed of his laziness; and so the secret pulls both ways. One day a fit of pride may have him, or one of his warm impulses, and if he's taken in the tide of it, I shall grieve for the secret.'

'You like his wife, Philip?'

'I respect her. They came together,—I suppose, because they were near together, like the two islands, in spite of the rolling waves between. I would not willingly see the union disturbed. He warms her, and she houses him. And he has to control the hot blood that does the warming, and she to moderate the severity of her principles, which are an essential part of the housing. Oh! shiver politics, Patrice. I wish I had been bred in France: a couple of years with your Pere Clement, and I could have met Irishmen and felt to them as an Irishman, whether they were disaffected or not. I wish I did. When I landed the other day, I thought myself passably cured, and could have said that rhetoric is the fire-water of our country, and claptrap the springboard to send us diving into it. I like my comrades-in-arms, I like the character of British officers, and the men too—I get on well with them. I declare to you, Patrice, I burn to live in brotherhood with them, not a rift of division at heart! I never show them that there is one. But our early training has us; it comes on us again; three or four days with Con have stirred me; I don't let him see it, but they always do: these tales of starvations and shootings, all the old work just as when I left, act on me like a smell of powder. I was dipped in "Ireland for the Irish"; and a contented Irishman scarcely seems my countryman.'

'I suppose it 's like what I hear of as digesting with difficulty,' Patrick referred to the state described by his brother.

'And not the most agreeable of food,' Philip added.

'It would be the secret of our happiness to discover how to make the best of it, if we had to pay penance for the discovery by living in an Esquimaux shanty,' said Patrick.

'With a frozen fish of admirable principles for wife,' said Philip.

'Ah, you give me shudders!'

'And it's her guest who talks of her in that style! and I hope to be thought a gentleman!' Philip pulled himself up. 'We may be all in the wrong. The way to begin to think so, is to do them an injury and forget it. The sensation's not unpleasant when it's other than a question of good taste. But politics to bed, Patrice. My chief is right—soldiers have nothing to do with them. What are you fiddling at in your coat there?'



'Something for you, my dear Philip.' Patrick brought out the miniature. He held it for his brother to look. 'It was the only thing I could get. Mr. Adister sends it. The young lady, Miss Caroline, seconded me. They think more of the big portrait: I don't. And it 's to be kept carefully, in case of the other one getting damaged. That's only fair.'



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Philip drank in the face upon a swift shot of his eyes.

'Mr. Adister sends it?' His tone implied wonder at such a change in Adiante's father.

'And an invitation to you to visit him when you please.'

'That he might do,' said Philip: it was a lesser thing than to send her likeness to him.

Patrick could not help dropping his voice: 'Isn't it very like?' For answer the miniature had to be inspected closely.

Philip was a Spartan for keeping his feelings under.

'Yes,' he said, after an interval quick with fiery touches on the history of that face and his life. 'Older, of course. They are the features, of course. The likeness is not bad. I suppose it resembles her as she is now, or was when it was painted. You 're an odd fellow to have asked for it.'

'I thought you would wish to have it, Philip.'

'You're a good boy, Patrice. Light those candles we'll go to bed. I want a cool head for such brains as I have, and bumping the pillow all night is not exactly wholesome. We'll cross the Channel in a few days, and see the nest, and the mother, and the girls.'

'Not St. George's Channel. Mother would rather you would go to France and visit the De Reuils. She and the girls hope you will keep out of Ireland for a time: it's hot. Judge if they're anxious, when it's to stop them from seeing you, Philip!'

'Good-night, dear boy.' Philip checked the departing Patrick. 'You can leave that.' He made a sign for the miniature to be left on the table.

Patrick laid it there. His brother had not touched it, and he could have defended himself for having forgotten to leave it, on the plea that it might prevent his brother from having his proper share of sleep; and also, that Philip had no great pleasure in the possession of it. The two pleas, however, did not make one harmonious apology, and he went straight to the door in an odd silence, with the step of a decorous office-clerk, keeping his shoulders turned on Philip to conceal his look of destitution.

CHAPTER XI

INTRODUCING A NEW CHARACTER

Letters and telegrams and morning journals lay on the breakfast-table, awaiting the members of the household with combustible matter. Bad news from Ireland came upon



ominous news from India. Philip had ten words of mandate from his commanding officer, and they signified action, uncertain where. He was the soldier at once, buckled tight and buttoned up over his private sentiments. Vienna shot a line to Mrs. Adister O'Donnell. She communicated it: 'The Princess Nikolas has a son!' Captain Con tossed his newspaper to the floor, crying:

'To-day the city'll be a chimney on fire, with the blacks in everybody's faces; but I must go down. It's hen and chicks with the director of a City Company. I must go.'

Did you say, madam?' Patrick inquired. 'A son,' said Mrs. Adister.



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'And the military holloaing for reinforcements,' exclaimed Con. 'Pheu! Phill!'

'That's what it comes to,' was Philip's answer. 'Precautionary measures, eh?'

'You can make them provocative.' 'Will you beg for India?' 'I shall hear in an hour.'
'Have we got men?'

'Always the question with us.'

'What a country!' sighed the captain. 'I'd compose ye a song of old Drowsylid, except that it does no good to be singing it at the only time when you can show her the consequences of her sluggery. A country of compromise goes to pieces at the first cannon-shot of the advance, and while she's fighting on it's her poor business to be putting herself together again: So she makes a mess of the beginning, to a certainty. If it weren't that she had the army of Neptune about her—'

'The worst is she may some day start awake to discover that her protecting deity 's been napping too.—A boy or girl did you say, my dear?'

His wife replied: 'A son.'

'Ah! more births.' The captain appeared to be computing. 'But this one's out of England: and it's a prince I suppose they'll call him: and princes don't count in the population for more than finishing touches, like the crossing of t's and dotting of i's, though true they're the costliest, like some flowers and feathers, and they add to the lump on Barney's back. But who has any compassion for a burdened donkey? unless when you see him standing immortal meek! Well, and a child of some sort must have been expected? Because it's no miracle after marriage: worse luck for the crowded earth!'

'Things may not be expected which are profoundly distasteful,' Mrs. Adister remarked.

'True,' said her sympathetic husband. 'Tis like reading the list of the dead after a battle where you've not had the best of it—each name 's a startling new blow. I'd offer to run to Earlsfont, but here's my company you would have me join for the directing of it, you know, my dear, to ballast me, as you pretty clearly hinted; and all 's in the city to-day like a loaf with bad yeast, thick as lead, and sour to boot. And a howl and growl coming off the wilds of Old Ireland! We're smitten to-day in our hearts and our pockets, and it 's a question where we ought to feel it most, for the sake of our families.'

'Do you not observe that your cousins are not eating?' said his wife, adding, to Patrick: 'I entertain the opinion that a sound breakfast-appetite testifies to the proper vigour of men.'



'Better than a doctor's pass: and to their habits likewise,' Captain Con winked at his guests, begging them to steal ten minutes out of the fray for the inward fortification of them.

Eggs in the shell, and masses of eggs, bacon delicately thin and curling like Apollo's locks at his temples, and cutlets, caviar, anchovies in the state of oil, were pressed with the captain's fervid illustrations upon the brothers, both meditatively nibbling toast and indifferent to the similes he drew and applied to life from the little fish which had their sharpness corrected but not cancelled by the improved liquid they swam in. 'Like an Irishman in clover,' he said to his wife to pay her a compliment and coax an acknowledgement: 'just the flavour of the salt of him.'



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Her mind was on her brother Edward, and she could not look sweet-oily, as her husband wooed her to do, with impulse to act the thing he was imagining.

'And there is to-morrow's dinner-party to the Mattocks: I cannot travel to Earlsfont,' she said.

'Patrick is a disengaged young verderer, and knows the route, and has a welcome face there, and he might go, if you're for having it performed by word of mouth. But, trust me, my dear, bad news is best communicated by telegraph, which gives us no stupid articles and particles to quarrel with. "Boy born Vienna doctor smiling nurse laughing." That tells it all, straight to the understanding, without any sickly circumlocutory stuff; and there's nothing more offensive to us when we're hurt at intelligence. For the same reason, Colonel Arthur couldn't go, since you'll want him to meet the Mattocks?'

Captain Con's underlip shone with a roguish thinness.

'Arthur must be here,' said Mrs. Adister. 'I cannot bring myself to write it. I disapprove of telegrams.'

She was asking to be assisted, so her husband said:

'Take Patrick for a secretary. Dictate. He has a bold free hand and'll supply all the fiorituri and arabesques necessary to the occasion running.'

She gazed at Patrick as if to intimate that he might be enlisted, and said: 'It will be to Caroline. She will break it to her uncle.'

'Right, madam, on the part of a lady I've never known to be wrong! And so, my dear, I must take leave of you, to hurry down to the tormented intestines of that poor racked city, where the winds of panic are violently engaged in occupying the vacuum created by knocking over what the disaster left standing; and it'll much resemble a colliery accident there, I suspect, and a rescue of dead bodies. Adieu, my dear.' He pressed his lips on her thin fingers.

Patrick placed himself at Mrs. Adister's disposal as her secretary. She nodded a gracious acceptance of him.

'I recommended the telegraph because it's my wife's own style, and comes better from wires,' said the captain, as they were putting on their overcoats in the hall. 'You must know the family. "Deeds not words" would serve for their motto. She hates writing, and doesn't much love talking. Pat'll lengthen her sentences for her. She's fond of Adiante, and she sympathises with her brother Edward made a grandfather through the instrumentality of that foreign hooknose; and Patrick must turn the two dagger sentiments to a sort of love-knot and there's the task he'll have to work out in his letter to Miss Caroline. It's fun about Colonel Arthur not going. He's to meet the burning Miss



Mattock, who has gold on her crown and a lot on her treasury, Phil, my boy! but I'm bound in honour not to propose it. And a nice girl, a prize; a fresh healthy girl; and brains: the very girl! But she's jotted down for the Adisters, if Colonel Arthur can



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look lower than his nose and wag his tongue a bit. She's one to be a mother of stout ones that won't run up big doctors' bills or ask assistance in growing. Her name's plain Jane, and she 's a girl to breed conquerors; and the same you may say of her brother John, who 's a mighty fit man, good at most things, though he counts his fortune in millions, which I've heard is lighter for a beggar to perform than in pounds, but he can count seven, and beat any of us easy by showing them millions! We might do something for them at home with a million or two, Phil. It all came from the wedding of a railway contractor, who sprang from the wedding of a spade and a clod—and probably called himself Mattock at his birth, no shame to him.'

'You're for the city,' said Philip, after they had walked down the street.

'Not I,' said Con. 'Let them play Vesuvius down there. I've got another in me: and I can't stop their eruption, and they wouldn't relish mine. I know a little of Dick Martin, who called on the people to resist, and housed the man Liffey after his firing the shot, and I'm off to Peter M'Christy, his brother-in-law. I'll see Distell too. I must know if it signifies the trigger, or I'm agitated about nothing. Dr. Forbery'll be able to tell how far they mean going for a patriotic song.

"For we march in ranks to the laurelled banks,
On the bright horizon shining,
Though the fields between run red on the green,
And many a wife goes pining."

Will you come, Phil?'

'I 'm under orders.'

'You won't engage yourself by coming.'

'I'm in for the pull if I join hands.'

'And why not?—inside the law, of course.'

'While your Barney skirmishes outside!'

'And when the poor fellow's cranium's cracking to fling his cap in the air, and physician and politician are agreed it's good for him to do it, or he'll go mad and be a dangerous lunatic! Phil, it must be a blow now and then for these people over here, else there's no teaching their imaginations you're in earnest; for they've got heads that open only to hard raps, these English; and where injustice rules, and you'd spread a light of justice, a certain lot of us must give up the ghost—naturally on both sides. Law's law, and life's life, so long as you admit that the law is bad; and in that case, it's big misery and



chronic disease to let it be and at worst a jump and tumble into the next world, of a score or two of us if we have a wrestle with him. But shake the old villain; hang on him and shake him. Bother his wig, if he calls himself Law. That 's how we dust the corruption out of him for a bite or two in return. Such is humanity, Phil: and you must allow for the roundabout way of moving to get into the straight road at last. And I see what you're for saying: a roundabout eye won't find it! You're wrong where there are dozens of corners. Logic like yours, my boy, would have you go on picking at the Gordian Knot till it became a jackasses' race between you and the rope which was to fall to pieces last.—There 's my old girl at the stall, poor soul! See her!

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Philip had signalled a cabman to stop. He stood facing his cousin with a close-lipped smile that summarised his opinion and made it readable.

'I have no time for an introduction to her this morning,' he said.

'You won't drop in on Distell to hear the latest brewing? And, by the by, Phil, tell us, could you give us a hint for packing five or six hundred rifles and a couple of pieces of cannon?'

Philip stared; he bent a lowering frown on his cousin, with a twitch at his mouth.

'Oh! easy!' Con answered the look; 'it's for another place and harder to get at.'

He was eyed suspiciously and he vowed the military weapons were for another destination entirely, the opposite Pole.

'No, you wouldn't be in for a crazy villainy like that!' said Philip.

'No, nor wink to it,' said Con. 'But it's a question about packing cannon and small arms; and you might be useful in dropping a hint or two. The matter's innocent. It's not even a substitution of one form of Government for another: only a change of despots, I suspect. And here's Mr. John Mattock himself, who'll corroborate me, as far as we can let you into the secret before we've consulted together. And he's an Englishman and a member of Parliament, and a Liberal though a landlord, a thorough stout Briton and bulldog for the national integrity, not likely to play at arms and ammunition where his country's prosperity 's concerned. How d' ye do, Mr. Mattock—and opportunely, since it's my cousin, Captain Philip O'Donnell, aide-de-camp to Sir Charles, fresh from Canada, of whom you've heard, I'd like to make you acquainted with, previous to your meeting at my wife's table tomorrow evening.'

Philip bowed to a man whose notion of the ceremony was to nod.

Con took him two steps aside and did all the talking. Mr. Mattock listened attentively the first half-minute, after which it could be perceived that the orator was besieging a post, or in other words a Saxon's mind made up on a point of common sense. His appearance was redolently marine; his pilot coat, flying necktie and wideish trowsers, a general airiness of style on a solid frame, spoke of the element his blue eyes had dipped their fancy in, from hereditary inclination. The colour of a sandpit was given him by hair and whiskers of yellow-red on a ruddy face. No one could express a negative more emphatically without wording it, though he neither frowned nor gesticulated to that effect.

'Ah!' said Con, abruptly coming to an end after an eloquent appeal. 'And I think I'm of your opinion: and the sea no longer dashes at the rock, but makes itself a mirror to the same. She'll keep her money and nurse her babe, and not be trying risky adventures to

turn him into a reigning prince. Only this: you'll have to persuade her the thing is impossible. She'll not take it from any of us. She looks on you as Wisdom in the uniform of a great commander, and if you say a thing can be done it 's done.'



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'The reverse too, I hope,' said Mr. Mattock, nodding and passing on his way.

'That I am not so sure of,' Con remarked to himself. 'There's a change in a man through a change in his position! Six months or so back, Phil, that man came from Vienna, the devoted slave of the Princess Nikolas. He'd been there on his father's business about one of the Danube railways, and he was ready to fill the place of the prince at the head of his phantom body of horse and foot and elsewhere. We talked of his selling her estates for the purchase of arms and the enemy—as many as she had money for. We discussed it as a matter of business. She had bewitched him: and would again, I don't doubt, if she were here to repeat the dose. But in the interim his father dies, he inherits; and he enters Parliament, and now, mind you, the man who solemnly calculated her chances and speculates on the transmission of rifled arms of the best manufacture and latest invention by his yacht and with his loads of rails, under the noses of the authorities, like a master rebel, and a chivalrous gentleman to boot, pooh poohs the whole affair. You saw him. Grave as an owl, the dead contrary of his former self!'

'I thought I heard you approve him,' said Philip.

'And I do. But the poor girl has ordered her estates to be sold to cast the die, and I'm taking the view of her disappointment, for she believes he can do anything; and if I know the witch, her sole comfort lying in the straw is the prospect of a bloody venture for a throne. The truth is, to my thinking, it's the only thing she has to help her to stomach her husband.'

'But it's rank idiocy to suppose she can smuggle cannon!' cried Philip.

'But that man Mattock's not an idiot and he thought she could. And it's proof he was under a spell. She can work one.'

'The country hasn't a port.'

'Round the Euxine and up the Danube, with the British flag at the stern. I could rather enjoy the adventure. And her prince is called for. He's promised a good reception when he drops down the river, they say. A bit of a scrimmage on the landing-pier may be, and the first field or two, and then he sits himself, and he waits his turn. The people change their sovereigns as rapidly as a London purse. Two pieces of artillery and two or three hundred men and a trumpet alter the face of the land there. Sometimes a trumpet blown by impudence does it alone. They're enthusiastic for any new prince. He's their Weekly Journal or Monthly Magazine. Let them make acquaintance with Adiante Adister, I'd not swear she wouldn't lay fast hold of them.'

Philip signalled to his driver, and Captain Con sang out his dinner-hour for a reminder to punctuality, thoughtful of the feelings of his wife.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:



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A contented Irishman scarcely seems my countryman
A country of compromise goes to pieces at the first cannon-shot
A lady's company-smile
A superior position was offered her by her being silent
And it's one family where the dog is pulled by the collar
Arch-devourer Time
As if she had never heard him previously enunciate the formula
As secretive as they are sensitive
Be politic and give her elbow-room for her natural angles
Becoming air of appropriation that made it family history
Constitutionally discontented
Decency's a dirty petticoat in the Garden of Innocence
England's the foremost country of the globe
Enjoys his luxuries and is ashamed of his laziness
Fires in the grates went through the ceremony of warming nobody
Foist on you their idea of your idea at the moment
Grimaces at a government long-nosed to no purpose
He judged of others by himself
Hear victorious lawlessness appealing solemnly to God the law
Her aspect suggested the repose of a winter landscape
Here, where he both wished and wished not to be
I 'm the warming pan, as legitimately I should be
I detest enthusiasm
I never saw out of a doll-shop, and never saw there
Indirect communication with heaven
Ireland 's the sore place of England
Irishman there is a barrow trolling a load of grievances
Irony in him is only eulogy standing on its head
Lack of precise words admonished him of the virtue of silence
Married at forty, and I had to take her shaped as she was
Men must fight: the law is only a quieter field for them
Mika! you did it in cold blood?
No man can hear the words which prove him a prophet (quietly)
Not so much read a print as read the imprinting on themselves
Not to bother your wits, but leave the puzzle to the priest
Old houses are doomed to burnings
Our lawyers have us inside out, like our physicians
Philip was a Spartan for keeping his feelings under
Taste a wound from the lightest touch, and they nurse the venom
That fiery dragon, a beautiful woman with brains
The race is for domestic peace, my boy
We're all of us hit at last, and generally by our own weapon
We're smitten to-day in our hearts and our pockets



Welsh blood is queer blood
Where one won't and can't, poor t' other must
Winds of panic are violently engaged in occupying the vacuum
With a frozen fish of admirable principles for wife
Withdrew into the entrenchments of contempt
You'll tell her you couldn't sit down in her presence undressed

[The End]

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