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THE
GENTLEMAN IN DEBT.

A NOVEL.

BY

WILLIAM J. O'NEILL DAUNT, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "HUGH TALBOT," "SAINTS AND SINNERS," &c.

"Base is the slave that pays!"

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE
GENTLEMAN IN DEBT.

CHAPTER I.

“How grateful to the traveller’s heart to see,
As on he wends, in quick succession rise,
The woods and mountains of his infancy,
To glad with home his unaccustom’d eyes.”

ANON.

WE resumed our homeward route on the following morning, notwithstanding the friendly importunity of our host, who begged we might prolong our stay for at least a week.

“You cannot conceive, my dear Blake,” said the kind old man, “what a treat to us

all is a visit from a social, conversible friend, who will tell the girls what goes on in the world."

But we were proof against his hospitable entreaties, and departed; the rector of Kilcummin, however, promising to return in a few days, at farthest.

We conversed but little as we journeyed along, each being engrossed with his own anxious thoughts. My fellow-traveller was probably laying new schemes for his own advancement; I was sadly ruminating on the melancholy fact that I was returning home as poor as I had quitted it. "Have I gained anything at all?" thought I; "have I even gained experience? Yes; so far as having bitterly been taught that there is almost nobody in whom I can place confidence; but, alas! how much pain is involved in that knowledge!"

About four in the afternoon we reached the well-known village of Cross-nacoppul. Tim Molony was standing at the gate of his stable-yard, and expressed the utmost delight at our appearance.

Julius thanked him for his courtesy, and proceeded to inspect the mare he had at Tim's livery. Our roads here separated; I bade him farewell, and rode on to Castle Carroll.

All my griefs were forgotten for a while in the joy of again meeting my mother after three months' absence. It was the first time I had ever been more than a week from home: and my fond parent clasped me to her heart, and then receded in order to gaze at me, and try if my illness had left any visible traces. My father also gave me a rollicking welcome, and expressed his pleasure that I hadn't been fetched off the perch by my late indisposition.

"He looks delicate," said my mother, still inspecting me with unabated interest.

"He looks as strong as a bull," cried my father, "and you must not be coddling him."

"I think his air and manners are decidedly improved," said my mother, still continuing her scrutiny.

“ We haven’t had time to see whether they are or not,” replied The O’Carroll, “ and I think they were quite good enough when he left home.”

“ But he has mixed so much latterly with good society in Dublin,” said my mother.

“ Really, ma’am,” persisted The O’Carroll, “ I am at a loss to know what better society he could meet there than he has always met in my house. You don’t suppose that because Lord Killeries and Lady Knockmaroon haunt Dublin Castle, they are in the least degree more polished than my friends”—

“ Than M’Ginty, for example, sir?” said I.

“ Yes—than M’Ginty. He is perfectly well-bred, unless when his madness predominates.”

“ That seems to be always,” said my mother.

“ No ; he has been quite tame for the last two days,” replied The O’Carroll.

“ But we are not allowing this travelled youth to tell us his adventures.”

I gave my parents a detail of my sojourn in Dublin, my pursuit of place, the surly and capricious attentions of Colonel Crumpe, and the abortive duelling adventure of my cousin Tom Blake and Captain Bodkin. I suppressed, as much as could consist with truth, the shameless conduct of Julius; the contrast between his affectionate professions and his perfect good-for-nothingness. I did not wish to excite a prejudice against him, despite his serious *laches*; for the kindness of his manners had given him an influence over my mind that I could not at once cast aside. The censure of both my parents was unreservedly bestowed on Colonel Crumpe, whose ample fortune so well enabled him to assist me, and whose narrow mind refused its sanction to all generous acts.

Whilst we conversed, M'Ginty's voice was heard in the hall, loudly chaunting the

burden of some outlandish song that had tickled his fancy.

“ I hope,” said my mother, “ that you and our crazy friend may agree better than formerly. You had some miffs, I think, before you went to Dublin.”

“ Heyday !” he cried on entering the room, “ so *you* have come back ? We have had a very quiet house since you quitted us—everything like clock-work—smooth and regular. Well, youngster, I am glad to see you safe and sound, the more especially as I heard you were seriously knocked up in town—the results, I presume, of dissipation—but we all must earn our experience—”

“ I assure you, sir,” said I, “ you are mistaken.”

“ Perhaps so ; but whatever was the matter with you, I am happy to find that you weathered it.”

“ I hope,” said I, “ that you have been quite well ever since.”

“ Yes ; but I have been unfortunate.”

“ I am sorry to hear it. In what respect, pray ?”

“ My greyhounds died of the distemper during your absence. I wore crape on my hat for a week. I was censured by some foolish persons who are slaves to the tyranny of prejudice, and who would grudge respect to the memory of a friend, because he had got four legs instead of two.”

“ Have you provided successors to your defunct friends, sir ?” asked I.

“ I have got no greyhounds now,” answered M’Ginty ; “ but I have two black spaniels, Laura-Arabella and Fadge. Do you know, I am so fond of my dogs, that I think I’ll turn Methodist.”

“ I do not see the connexion of cause and effect,” said I.

“ I understand,” resumed the odd man, “ that John Wesley admits that the inferior animals have souls. There is a benevolent, and comprehensive philosophy in that. How dearly I should love to meet Snowball and Whistler in the world beyond

the grave ! a confounded deal an honest couple than many of the bipeds we *shall* meet there."

" My dear Mr. M'Ginty," interposed my mother, " futurity is too solemn a subject to mingle with such queer speculations."

" And here comes a solemn man," said my father, looking from the window, " who will make you more orthodox."

" Who is coming ?" asked my mother.

" M'Grail," responded The O'Carroll.

" Your sight is defective," said M'Ginty, reconnoitering the advancing party, who was still at a considerable distance. " The body and legs belong to Jack Walsh, whoever owns the head and shoulders."

M'Ginty, who piqued himself on being particularly far-sighted, was right on the present occasion, and he triumphed loudly when Mr. Walsh's arrival justified the acuteness of his visual powers. Walsh was quizzed on all hands for having been mistaken for the parson ; he laughed with

his usual good humour, and expressed equal pleasure and surprise at seeing me again at home.

“ I strolled down to the sea shore,” said he, “ and finding myself in your neighbourhood, I thought I might as well come and dine with The O’Carroll.”

“ No man more welcome,” said the hospitable lord of the mansion, “ but you had better retire, as I hear the dressing bell.”

We repaired to our toilette duties; M’Ginty attacking me briskly as we went up stairs, on the failure of my Dublin experiment. “ Why, what a helpless Tomnoddy of a fellow you are ! I thought you were to have dazzled our weak eyes on your return by the blaze of your achievements ! I expected you’d come back to us a Commissioner of the Customs, or Teller of the Exchequer, or something of that sort ; and you bring us nothing but your own four bones, which, moreover,

according to the most authentic accounts, are rather the worse for the wear.”

Mr. Walsh informed me that Lady Blake's health was so much undermined, that her medical advisers thought she never would see Christmas. Her spirits were unequal. She had suffered severely from Sir Hyacinth's prohibition to Emily to visit her; a prohibition which Emily would have disregarded, if it had not been enforced with a system of the most tyrannical espionage. My informant frequently went to see the poor woman, and told me that she often named me with affection.

I resolved on going to the cottage; a purpose which I put into execution on the following day. While on the way, I congratulated myself on my rigorous virtue in visiting the invalided mother before the beautiful daughter. But if it were an act of virtue it brought its own reward; for on my entrance I beheld Emily in attendance on her ladyship, who was lying on a sofa in a state of great feebleness.

Our meeting was too much for the shat-

tered spirits of Lady Blake; she smiled her welcome without raising her head from the pillow. For some minutes she could not speak. Emily, too, returned the pressure of my hand in silence. There were tears in her eyes, but her manner was composed. I told her I had heard she was rigorously forbidden to come to the cottage.

“Yes,” she answered in a whisper; “Papa gave orders to my attendants to prevent my coming here; old Michael rode after me to-day, and I offered him money to permit me to visit my mother. I told him—and, alas! with too much truth—that I believed she was dying. The old man burst into tears—would accept no money—and said that if he was to lose his place for it, he never would keep the daughter from the dying mother. And I greatly fear, Mr. O’Carroll, that my worst anticipations will be realized.”

“What are you saying, Emily?” demanded Lady Blake.

“ We were speaking of you, mamma ; Mr. O’Carroll was inquiring about your health.”

“ I thank him,” said the invalid faintly ; “ I believe I shall not long give occasion for his solicitude. A broken heart, acting on an enfeebled frame, will soon seek repose elsewhere.”

“ My dear madam,” said I, taking her hand, “ I regret to hear you speak so despondingly.”

She smiled. “ I do not speak despondingly, my dear young friend. Do not mistake the weakness of my voice and manner for despondency. I look to my approaching end as a desirable emancipation from suffering.” More she would have added, but her feebleness prevented her. Emily hardly could restrain her tears ; but by a strong effort, she conquered her emotion. Father Macnamara was now announced ; he came to afford his ministry to Lady Blake. He read to her the beautiful chapter of Saint Luke

containing the Annunciation ; after which he requested us to leave him for a short time with "his penitent," as Catholic priests are wont to call those who confess to them.

Emily and I adjourned to another apartment. It may readily be supposed we had much to communicate to each other ; yet the melancholy circumstances under which we met, repressed for awhile our desire to converse.

I inquired whether she was still tormented with the importunities of Fitz-Eustace : she replied that she was ; and that the only mitigation of her sufferings on that score, arose from FitzEustace's occasional absence from Ballymore, which he found an irksome sojourn on many accounts, notwithstanding the flattering manner in which Sir Hyacinth received him.

We next spoke of her uncle's success in obtaining the living of Kilcummin. "I think," said Emily, "he was born to suc-

ceed — in that or anything else he undertakes. I don't approve of all he has done in the political way since he went to town; but there is an energy of character about him well fitted to bear down all obstacles. But tell me, Maurice, how have you been occupied since we parted?"

I gave her a sketch of my employments and pursuits in town; dwelling pathetically on my abortive attempts to obtain a government appointment.

"Do not expect me to condole with you on that point," said Emily; "I think you have escaped a snare, and I wish you joy of it. Whose pay would you have taken? The pay of a government that cruelly oppresses the Catholics of this country, and would rob all sects alike most impartially, if parliament permitted. Are you prepared to enter into the service of the enemy, and pocket their wages? Could you possibly become their hired servant, and yet retain your integrity?"

"Yes, certainly," said I; "I might still

keep my own opinions ; I should not, I presume, be asked to renounce them."

"Aye," she rejoined, with some asperity ; "you might *keep* your opinions, no doubt ! that is, you might keep them to yourself. You should not dare to give them utterance, under pain of being turned out of office. Where is there, pray, a single person receiving the wages of the government, who ventures to open his lips in support of the popular cause ?"

"I confess," said I, "that I never heard of one."

"Of course not. Then it just comes to this—that acceptance of place from a hostile government is neither more nor less than taking payment for holding your tongue upon national grievances."

"But, my dear Emily, without either place or payment, I have heretofore held my tongue because of my youth and insignificance."

"Those causes of silence will not last for ever," she answered ; "youth soon flies,

and as for insignificance—I think you do yourself injustice, and that it will be your own fault if you still continue insignificant.”

“ But I really have not the talent to become a champion of national rights.”

“ Why, it is true that you may not be a powerful writer or a brilliant orator ; but you are a citizen, and, as such, you have duties to perform, in the exercise both of your vote and your influence. Suppose, now, that you were a government stipendiary, and that an election should happen to-morrow, don't you think that if you voted for a man who would redress public wrongs, and keep England at bay, your masters would instantly turn you adrift ? Never confound right with wrong ; never make your own insignificance, real or supposed, an excuse for doing that which is not in itself right. Every man has, at least, the influence of his own example. If he be great, that influence is powerful ; if he be humble, it will, at all events sway

some amongst his humble compeers. But, above all, there is in doing right the inward peace of a pure, stainless conscience, which no honourable man would barter for all the advantages of guilty prosperity.”

I looked at her with mingled admiration and delight. Her eloquent words displayed a spirit whose lofty integrity was associated with clear, straightforward common sense. That one so young and inexperienced should think thus accurately, and speak thus boldly, on a subject that seldom occupies the attention of persons of her sex and age, surprised and charmed me. I took her hand, and pressed it to my lips.

“With such a monitor as you, Emily, I trust I should not only appreciate excellence, but also aspire to it.”

She was about to reply, when the door opened, and we were told that Lady Blake was disengaged. We returned to her ladyship’s parlour, and found the old priest still there. I spoke of my recent visit to his cousin at Tullymoran ; and I mentioned

the fascinating Mary and Rose with the warmth of encomium their merits deserved. He cordially joined in their praises, for he loved them dearly ; he observed, that in the character of Mary there was a touch of romance of which Rose was destitute.

“ I wish, my dear,” said he to Emily, “ that you knew them both intimately ; though I am their relation, I will say that they would be a great acquisition to the circle of your acquaintance.”

Emily’s curiosity to know the Tullymoran family was excited by our praises.

Lady Blake appeared somewhat revived, and conversed, if not with cheerfulness, at least with composure. When Father Macnamara was gone, she at once, and without preface, entered on the topic nearest to my heart.

“ It would be false delicacy,” said she, “ to refrain from speaking to you candidly and fully of the engagement that exists between you and my daughter. I owe it to her to state that before she committed

herself finally, she had asked and obtained my sanction. To yourself, personally, I now repeat and confirm that sanction. Oh, Maurice ! Emily is my dearest treasure upon earth. In bestowing her on you, I need not express my firm confidence that you will not prove unworthy of the trust." She then joined our hands in hers, and said, " I give you her hand : may heaven bless you both."

There was a silence for some minutes. Our hearts were too full for utterance.

At length Lady Blake resumed, " You cannot marry now, nor, probably, for some time to come ; but it is well that your engagement should be ratified by the parent who loves Emily best, and prizes her happiness the most dearly."

Emily stooped down, and her mother kissed her forehead. " Leave me for a while, my children," said her ladyship ; " I cannot continue the exertion of speaking ; but you need not quit the room."

We repaired to a window, and conversed

in a low voice. I found that Emily's attachment to her uncle had sensibly diminished, as he not only did not abet her opposition to FitzEustace's suit, but even gave that gentleman a sort of indirect encouragement.

"He is perfectly ready," she said, "to place his own interest in the scale against my happiness; but yet he has got such *coaxing ways*, that even knowing him as I do, I cannot quite break with him."

"Coaxing ways," indeed he had; and these were much aided by the expression of his clear blue eyes, inviting confidence, and the sentiments of benevolence which were frequently upon his lips.

"He is the more culpable," continued Emily, "in withholding his assistance from me, as he sees, with his usual acuteness, the misery inflicted upon me by FitzEustace's persecution."

Miss Blake's servant now entered to remind her that it was time to return to Ballymore, as a longer delay would in-

fallibly incur the baronet's suspicions. "What a cruel condition is mine," she said, in a low voice, "to be obliged to visit my mother by stealth, as if I were committing some crime that shunned the light!"

She embraced her parent, and bade her an affectionate farewell; I also made my adieu, and accompanied Emily to the verge of the cottage grounds; but, as she was under the necessity of hastening her movements, and I was on foot, we were obliged to separate.

CHAPTER II.

“So here we’re home again, and nought the better for
the range we took ;
All things appear in *statu quo* ; in vain for any
change we look ;
The toping, gambling, roaring blades keep up their
wonted riot—
Shall these old halls ne’er see a day of decency and
quiet?”

HERBERT SMITH.

AT my father’s gate I met Bodkin.

“Well, old fellow, how goes it?” said he, extending his hand with an air of familiarity from which I recoiled. I did not proffer mine in return, but replied very coldly to his inquiries.

“I am going to storm your governor’s dinner-table,” said he ; “I think my appearance will surprise him.”

“Not more than it does me,” I answered ; “I thought you were in Dublin.”

“That is as much as to say, ‘What the devil brings you to Connaught?’”

“I have no title, Captain Bodkin, to inquire the causes of your movements.”

“Then,” said he, “it will be only the more gracious in me to give you the information unasked. I was pressed, entreated, to go down to Knockmaroon House for the autumn; and I should have been most happy to oblige her ladyship, if it were not for a hint that I got that my presence was essential to the happiness of a most enchanting heiress in the western world.”

He paused. I was silent. Perceiving that he did not pique my curiosity, he added, “Can you form a guess whom I mean, eh?”

“No; nor have I the slightest desire to encroach on your confidence.”

“If you knew, you would think me a happy dog,” resumed the captain.

“Perhaps so.”

“Perhaps, says't thou? no; but certainly, positively, incontrovertibly!”

As I was silent, Bodkin became sulky, and we exchanged no further conversation until we reached the house. The door

was opened by M'Ginty, who was just going out. I ran rapidly up the steps, and ere the captain had dismounted I announced his arrival.

"Ring for some one to take his horse," said The O'Carroll.

"*I shall make my exit,*" said my mother, quitting the room; "if he dines here, I shall not appear."

"Heyday!" cried The O'Carroll; "you are marvellously squeamish. Bodkin is a capital fellow, sings a famous song, is seldom without a swaggering brag of some sort, which makes people laugh, and never baulks his bottle;" but my mother had vanished ere the sentence was ended, and the object of my father's encomium entered the room. His company was a pleasant excitement to a man of The O'Carroll's condition and habits. His gossiping small-talk filled up the vacuity of thought, and dispelled the ennui to which a life of forced seclusion and inaction condemned my father. He now embarked, full-sail, on his recent adventures in town; and, in

order to pay his court to my father, he expatiated with infinite unction on Lady Knockmaroon's civilities to me, strongly insinuating that it rested entirely with myself whether the viscountess abandoned her dowagerhood. At this information my father appeared in an ecstasy of delight. "Why, you rascal!" said he to me, "you didn't tell me a syllable of all this; and it is by far the best part of your doings in Dublin."

"I was quite ignorant," said I, "that Lady Knockmaroon regarded me so favourably."

"Tut, man! that's your own modesty," replied The O'Carroll, "or perhaps your inexperience. An old soldier like Bodkin could not well be deceived in such a matter. Positively you must go to town again, and bring down your bride with you the next time."

"My dear sir, Captain Bodkin is only amusing himself at the expense of your credulity."

“ On my honour as a soldier and a gentleman,” cried the ex-captain, “ I protest I think the dowager was *un peu touchée*.”

“ If you really think so, Bodkin, I’ll hunt the fellow back to Dublin, or Wicklow, or wherever she is.”

“ If I go on such an errand,” said I, “ I shall insist on being provided with a written certificate from Captain Bodkin of her ladyship’s tenderness; for really, unless she discovers from such good authority the encouragement she has given me, I’ll be bound she will never find it out from any other source.”

“ On my honour as a gentleman and a soldier,” cried Bodkin, “ I flatter myself I should know the indications of female preferences pretty well by this time. But you all will understand that what I say here is said in strict confidence.”

“ Well,” said The O’Carroll, “ if we cannot induce this stubborn young gentleman to try his luck in that quarter, we can at least celebrate his return with a jolly

dinner party. The neighbours must come and drink the health of the youngster who might have picked up a peeress on his debût in the capital, only he wouldn't."

"Bravo, O'Carroll," cried Bodkin. "That's an excellent suggestion, and the sooner you put it in practice the better. Faith, a jovial night we'll have of it."

"Who's that coming up the lawn?" inquired The O'Carroll looking from the window; "he has greatly the look of a bailiff—see, he doesn't keep the avenue, but skulks behind the trees. Bodkin, hand me that blunderbuss," continued the insolvent chieftain in increasing irritation and displeasure; and he emerged from the parlour to take his station at a loop-hole that commanded the entrance.

"*Quitté pour la peur!*" exclaimed the captain with a loud laugh, as Jack Walsh, advancing on the gravelled esplanade before the door, displayed his well-known person. He was at once admitted, and our mirth was excited by his being taken

for a bailiff now, and for a parson on the previous day.

“I do suppose,” quoth Jack, “that there’s a touch both of law and gospel in my appearance. As to your mistake just now, I’d prefer being taken *for* a bailiff to being taken *by* a bailiff, any day.”

“Well said, Jack,” responded my father. “But little more than the skirt of your coat could be seen behind the trees. However, the chief fault is in my poor eyes,” he added, rubbing them. “I don’t see as well as I did a dozen years ago. The inactive life I lead is bad for the sight.”

Undoubtedly his habits of indulgence had seriously injured his visual powers.

“But that’s not the point just now. We were talking before you arrived, of having a party of the neighbours to meet this cub of mine on his return from Dublin, and I’m glad you popped in to talk over it. Who shall we have? There’s Julius Blake and Emily, and Sir Hyacinth—Shall we ask that frolicsome damsel Bell Trench?”

M'Grail calls her and Sir Hyacinth, 'Bell and the Dragon'—not bad that? eh? Well—what d'ye think—shall we ask 'Bell and the Dragon'?"

"I think, sir," said I, "that if you invite Miss Trench, it will be under the penalty of some desperate extravagance of M'Ginty's. I shouldn't wonder if he threw her out of the window."

"No fear of that," said Jack Walsh. "Bell could hold her own against M'Ginty with infinite ease."

"But one would not desire a collision between the madman and the amazon."

"It would look marked to leave her out if one asked the rest of the Ballymore party," observed my father.

"And you'd gain nothing by it," added Jack; "for she would come if she chose, whether you asked her or not."

"I am quite certain," said I, "that my mother would object to our asking Sir Hyacinth, because of his conduct to Lady Blake."

“Those women always take part with each other,” muttered The O’Carroll—“just as if Sir Hyacinth might not have excellent reasons for sending his wife to grass. Well,” (speaking aloud) “suppose then we omit Bell and the Dragon, who else does any one suggest?”

Walsh and Bodkin supplied a copious list. “There’s Major Bullman, an English officer, and his wife, who arrived last week at the Kildrummery barracks,” said Jack. “Very nice people, I am told. Suppose you send them a card?”

“Aye, very good. English visitors are generally silent; but when they do talk, there’s some variety about them.”

The discussion soon wearied my patience. I yawned, and gazed vacantly abroad from the window. By and by, Jack Walsh, who also seemed rather bored, came over and stood at my side.

“Pretty landscape that,” said Jack, in an under tone; “you are glad to feast your eyes on the paternal acres after your long absence.”

“ I love those hills,” returned I, “ much better than the smoky streets of Dublin. They were the hills of my infancy and childhood. Were I to die, I should like to be interred in the lonely grave-yard at their feet.”

“ Wheugh !” whistled Jack. “ Prodigiously romantic and sentimental ! Were I to die (which I incline to think I shall do some day or other), I should like to be interred near the Ballymore dog kennel, in order that my wandering ghost, when revisiting the relics of its mortal tenement, might be cheered now and then with the music it loved best on earth, the voice of the fox-hound !”

My father now amused himself in writing cards to his intended guests, including the English officer who had been mentioned by Jack Walsh. A card was despatched to him in the customary style of our Milesian invitations, which, for the benefit of my readers on the eastern side of the Irish sea, I transcribe :

“The O’Carroll and Madame O’Carroll, present their compliments to Major and Mrs. Bullman, and request the honour of their company to dinner at five o’clock on Thursday next.

“Castle Carroll, Monday.”

It so fell out that Bullman, who, being a stranger, was perfectly unacquainted with the style assumed by the representatives of ancient Celtic families, was extremely perplexed by my father’s hereditary designation. Prior to answering the card, he chanced to meet Bodkin, whom he slightly knew, and to whom he immediately applied for information. “This is the oddest thing, Mr. Bodkin!” said the major; “I have got an invitation from a gentleman who does not call himself *Mister*, but prefixes *The* to his name; and his lady is *Madame*; can you explain it all?”

“Oh dear yes,” replied Bodkin; “it is the universal custom in this part of the world; and if you wish to pay a particular compliment, the rule is, that you must

adopt precisely the same style yourself in your reply."

"Certainly—whatever is right," said the unsuspecting major; "I wish to conform to the etiquette of the country in every thing."

Acting under the treacherous instructions of Bodkin, the major wrote the following answer:—

"The Bullman and Madame Bullman present their compliments to Mr. and Mrs. O'Carroll, and will have the honour of accepting their invitation to dinner on Thursday next."

Words are indeed faint to describe my father's rage on receiving this answer. He stamped, stormed, and swore the English rascal should pay for his audacious insult. "How dares he ridicule my hereditary title with his rascally Bullman parody? The fellow shall fight me in the hall, since my evil fate confines me to the house."

I endeavoured to appease him. I clearly saw there was some mistake. I judged it

utterly impossible that Major Bullman should offer an intentional affront in return for hospitable courtesy; and I implored my father not to astound the English stranger with the solecism of asking him to dinner one day, and asking him to be shot at the next, without at least affording him an opportunity for explanation. By means of urgent entreaty I at last prevailed so far as to induce him to write, in the first instance, to the English major, acquainting him with our usual style, and trusting that his mistake arose from unacquaintance with our customs. As I acted as amanuensis, I took care that the language of the note should be perfectly courteous. — Bullman's reply, whilst it satisfied my father that he was not to blame, disclosed the mischievous waggery of Bodkin, to whom my dislike consequently became more confirmed than ever.

The day arrived, and with it arrived the guests. The dinner was profuse; the company talkative; pleased, apparently, with

themselves and with each other ; my father in one of his most social moods, encouraging the general hilarity. What stranger, on a superficial view of the gay scene, could have dreamt of the dire distress that undermined the fortunes of our house ?

But our equanimity was much disturbed in the course of the night by the appearance of a suspicious-looking gentleman, whom nobody knew. He had driven up in a carriage when the evening guests were arriving ; and our janitor taking it for granted that he had received an invitation, promptly admitted him. He was elaborately overdressed, and had not *l'air comme il faut*. During one of the pauses of the dance he stepped forward, and exhibiting a warrant, arrested my father at the suit of a Dublin tailor for a debt of fifty pounds. My unlucky parent was thunderstruck. He seemed stunned for a minute, and then vented an execration at old Martin, to whose want of vigilance he at first ascribed the catastrophe. Bodkin

cursed at the bailiff for his d—d impertinence ; and some of our more effervescent friends seemed inclined to execute prompt vengeance on him. But Jack Walsh interfered for his protection, protesting that he had shown such a fearless spirit in venturing into the enemy's stronghold, it would be a pity to do him any bodily injury.

“ But are we to suffer The O'Carroll to be insulted in his own house by a rascally scum like that ? ” demanded a young baronet indignantly.

“ My good friend, ” said M'Grail, “ there is a better mode of meeting the emergency than by vapouring about it. ” He took him aside ; they conversed together, a few friends were speedily added to the council, which appeared to include the bailiff. The result of M'Grail's proposition was soon manifest ; the money was made up by subscription on the spot ; a receipt obtained from the officers of the law ; and peace restored by the expulsion of that personage.

The doors were double-locked; The O'Carroll once more breathed freely; he declared "that the whole affair appeared to him like a passage in a dream, there was something so strange, so unexpected, so incredible"—

"In that rascal's having got into the house?" suggested Bodkin, as my father paused to take breath.

"No; but in his having got out alive!" exclaimed The O'Carroll.

"He was armed," said Julius; "so that if he had been interrupted there might have been desperate work."

"But really, gentlemen," resumed The O'Carroll, "as to your having settled with that fellow—upon my sacred honour—I—I cannot permit—it wounds my delicacy."

"Strike up, fiddlers!" cried Julius. "Miss Lynch, are you inclined for Sir Roger de Coverley?"

Loud music drowned my father's words, and the dance recommenced with great energy.

“ It is really comical to hear The O’Carroll talking of his ‘ delicacy,’ ” observed M’Ginty to his next neighbour. “ His habits and feelings are so inveterately formed on interminable tick, that his ‘ delicacy’ is mortally wounded when a debt is paid off. Well—of all the notions of ‘ delicacy’ I ever heard of, that is the most laughable.”

“ If all his entertainments included a similar adventure,” responded the other, “ I should beg to decline being one of his guests for the future.”

“ Speak lower, gentlemen,” said good M’Grail, “ you may be overheard. Be assured that the matter of which you are speaking occasions more pain to The O’Carroll than to anybody else. And do not grudge him the assistance he has received in the unexpected dilemma of tonight: recollect, pray, the many occasions on which he has contributed to your festive enjoyment.”

The most mortifying feature in the affair

was Major Bullman's liberal contribution of five pounds, which he tendered to M'Grail with an eagerness that seemed designed to atone for his unintentional infraction of our family dignity in the affair of the card. To the latter he slightly alluded, observing to M'Grail that he trusted The O'Carroll was properly convinced his error was purely one of ignorance. "I knew nothing about your etiquette," said he, "and you must have been as much amused at my reply as I once was at the answer I got from a Nottingham shopkeeper whom I asked to dinner; 'Shall have the honour of dining with you at 4 P.M. *as per invitation* ;* also my son Samuel.'"

* Verbatim.

CHAPTER III.

“Boast not, tyrant! in thy pride,
Thy victim thou shalt still oppress;
Soon from thy cruel power she'll glide,
To seek in Heav'n her meet redress.”

ROBINSON.

THE next few months passed away undiversified with any incident worthy of record. Julius was constantly upon the wing between Dublin, Ballymore, Tullymoran, and Kilcummin. His fame increased, as also did his favour at the Castle, and his friends predicted his eventual attainment of the highest honours in his profession. He was frequently requested to preach before great men and public bodies, and his sermons upon such occasions were usually printed by public subscription.

When he next came to our neighbourhood, I saw much less of him than I had

done before my profitless sojourn in the metropolis. Although he still amused, yet my confidence in him had been so severely shaken by the wretched experience of that period, that I felt far less pleasure than formerly in his society. His visits to the house of Tullymoran were frequent, and protracted as long as could possibly consist with the occasional Sunday duties of Kilcummin, and the energetic chase after patronage he was understood to prosecute in Dublin.

Miss Trench had left Ballymore after a sojourn of unprecedented duration. The general rumour of the country alleged that Sir Hyacinth only awaited the death of Lady Blake, in order to make Isabella her successor; to which arrangement the fair amazon was nothing loth. But she had left Ballymore in a pet. Some misunderstanding had occurred between her and the baronet; and neither chose to make the first advances to a reconciliation. Emily was glad of anything that relieved her

for awhile from her visitor's presence. She had, however, no faith in the permanency of her quarrel with Sir Hyacinth, and looked to her return to Ballymore as a matter of proximate occurrence.

Winter now set in with great severity; and the rigour of the season acting on Lady Blake's enfeebled frame, seemed likely to put a speedy end to her temporal sufferings. Her physicians expressed their surprise that she held out so long. Emily, notwithstanding Sir Hyacinth's jealous precautions, found means through the connivance of old Michael, to visit her mother from time to time. Notwithstanding the vulgar propensity to gossip, these precious visits remained long unknown to Sir Hyacinth; they could not, and did not, escape the observation of the peasantry; yet such was the universal sympathy with the mother and the daughter, and so great was the baronet's unpopularity, that not a single tattler was found to apprize him of Emily's disobedience.

At last, however, his suspicion was aroused by a hint, conveyed, it was supposed, by Jerry M'Ilroy, the bailiff. Emily had visited her mother; I had been also at the cottage to inquire for the invalid, and being on horseback, I escorted Miss Blake on her homeward route. The hopeless condition of her mother's health, left a deep gloom upon her spirits; and our ride continued almost in silence until we reached a spot where two roads separated; that which led to Ballymore, making a sharp turn to the right, prevented our seeing any object in that direction. On passing the corner we were suddenly confronted by Sir Hyacinth, who was riding smartly on in the opposite direction. He checked his horse with such violence as to throw the animal on his haunches. Emily also stopped, anticipating from his countenance and manner a stormy interview. He had, indeed, a very ominous frown on his brow.

“Where have you been, Miss Blake?” he demanded, in his harshest accents.

“To see my mother,” replied Emily, with assumed firmness.

“And how dared you disobey my orders? Did I not forbid your going there?”

“You did, sir—certainly.”

“Why then did you presume to disobey me?”

“I *could* not obey you, sir, in such a case. At all events your commands will soon be superfluous, for my mother cannot live many days—if indeed she still survives,” added Emily bursting into tears. “She received the last sacraments this morning.”

“Humph!”

Sir Hyacinth apparently suppressed some ill-conditioned answer with difficulty. His anger was probably to some extent disarmed by the pleasing intelligence of his approaching freedom from connubial shackles.

It was now nearly dark, and a smart snow shower that began to fall warned us to make the best of our way to our homes.

I took leave of Sir Hyacinth and Emily, and spurred my horse to Castle Carroll. At Crossnacoppul I was met by our post-boy, whose bag, unconscious of a key, I explored. Among its contents was a letter for me from the usurers to whom I had joined doctor Blake in a promissory note. They informed me that the note had been dishonoured by the doctor, and trusted I would promptly discharge the amount, to preclude the unpleasant necessity of litigation. The letter was dated a good while back; and having been misdirected had made the circuit of numerous post offices prior to its reaching my hands.

This was an awkward liability. As to my *paying* sixty pounds; such an event, the reader knows, was not in *rerum naturá*. A lawsuit, a decree, an imprisonment, would be rather unpleasant results of my acquaintance with the agreeable physician. I was indignant and mortified. It was humiliating to have been bit by the smooth, plausible, insinuating rascal. I bitterly

asked myself whether I was fated to exemplify still further my hereditary destinies? I was afraid to mention the circumstance to my parents. From both I should have certainly received lectures condemnatory of the imprudence of incurring obligations upon any one's behalf except my own ; and my father's homilies would have been embittered by the dislike (well merited, as I believe) which he bore to his sister Blake and her family.

Thus mournfully ruminating, I arrived at home.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Yes, we must follow soon, will glad obey,
When a few suns have roll'd their cares away ;
Tir'd with vain life, will close the willing eye,
'Tis the great birthright of mankind *to die.*”

THOMSON.

IN about a week Lady Blake breathed her last. For many hours prior to her death she had not stirred nor spoken. The wounded spirit silently took flight. Sir Hyacinth had so far relented as to permit Emily's attendance on her dying parent ; to which relaxation of his previous rigour he was persuaded by the joint entreaties of Jack Walsh and Julius. Influenced, probably, by the same advisers, the baronet decreed, or consented, that his wife's remains should have a magnificent funeral. It was represented to him that a sumptuous interment was essential to the family dig-

nity. On this score, therefore, Emily had nothing to complain of. The pale, shrunken form of her whom in life she had loved so dearly, and tended with such ceaseless filial care, was encased in a costly coffin, adorned with heraldic insignia. No expense was spared. Nodding plumes, pennons of black crape, and banners displaying the Blake and Barnewall quarterings, imparted to the long procession all the gloomy solemnity appropriate to the occasion.

It was a wild, stormy day on which the funeral train set forth from the cottage; and the harsh, fitful gusts ploughed up the sullen waters of a lake, whose margin a portion of our road adjoined. The country around was covered with a thin coat of newly fallen snow, of which the dazzling whiteness formed a strange contrast with the sable train that wended slowly onwards to its destination.

The cemetery of the Blakes was about a furlong from the coast. It was a lonely

grave-yard, in which stood the roofless ruins of a church, disused beyond the memory of living man for purposes of worship. Two gables overgrown with luxuriant ivy, a belfry tower detached from the main building, and a few crumbling walls, were all that now remained. In the tower was an ancient bell, which still held its place amidst the general wreck, although its tones had long ceased to summon the parishioners to prayer. It had escaped being stolen, from the prevalence of a feeling partly reverential, and partly, perhaps, superstitious. The circumstance of its being only used on occasions of sepulture, invested it with a certain solemn interest in the popular estimation; its voice was mute unless when it told of death, and, therefore, impressed with a feeling of awe a simple and imaginative people. The grave-yard was approached by a long, narrow bridle-road or bohereen, upon which the gorgeous hearse and handsome equipages were slowly and

with difficulty dragged along. Sir Hyacinth did not attend the funeral, a fit of the gout conveniently serving for his apology. Julius, however, did duty for his absent brother, and admirably represented the agonizing woe of the whole family. He was, indeed, the *beau ideal* of a chief mourner, with his appliances of scarf, hat-band, sable streamers, and cambric handkerchief. Every crease of his linen, every fold of his crape, bespoke the appropriate feeling of intense affliction. Jack Walsh seemed truly and unaffectedly sorry for his deceased friend. The tears rushed to his eyes, though he struggled hard to check them. Jack was a sworn foe to humbug ; and this expression of his sentiments was perfectly sincere. Indeed, it would be unfair to deny that Julius also grieved to some extent ; but he overdid affliction so much, there was such an amount of exaggerated agony in his grimaces, that I was, perhaps, disinclined to give him credit for the sorrow he really

felt, associated, as it was, with so much that was merely theatrical.

The coffin was lowered, at last, to the grave; and the earth, mingled with the falling snow, was cast over it. I could not but remember, at that moment, with feelings of poignant grief, the merits of the friend I had lost; her undeviating kindness; her almost maternal affection for myself; the uncomplaining patience with which she had endured the cruel persecution that hurried her to her grave; and the sacred bond of love that had bound her and Emily together.

“God be merciful to her!” cried Jack Walsh, after a burst of tears, when the earth had at last been levelled in. “She was a good woman, Julius, and an ill-used woman.” (Julius shook his head). “A very ill-used woman,” continued Jack, “and bore it all like a martyr. Now, Julius—you who have read the divinity books, and all those sort of things—do you think so good a woman, although she

was a Papist, hasn't some chance of getting into the kingdom of heaven?"

"Why, Jack, it is not for us to pronounce. If Papists could get to heaven, there would have been no use in the Reformation, you know. But it is said, that 'in my Father's house are many mansions;' and we must charitably hope that some, at least, of those mansions may be appropriated to the use of such children of unwitting and hereditary error as our much-lamented and most excellent poor friend."

Jack seemed comforted by this assurance. I was amused, despite the time, the scene, and my own feelings, at the air of benevolent patronage with which Julius suggested a sort of celestial back-door, through which our lost friend's entrance into heaven might be expedited.

When the interment was concluded, and the funeral train were dispersing, Julius deposited himself and his griefs in the Ballymore family coach, and Mr. Walsh asked me to dine at his house, "Come

in my carriage," said Jack ; " I want to talk to you."

" And what shall I do with my horse?"

" O, give him to your *orderly*, Jerry Brien, whom I see in attendance: if he comes too, he shall have something to eat."

This arrangement was accordingly made ; and we rumbled along in Jack's rather antiquated chariot, bumping and jolting over the innumerable ruts in the bohereen.

" It was the spirit of gossip," said Jack, " that impelled me to solicit your company. I wanted to talk to you about the Ballymore family. In the first place, my heart really bleeds for that sweet girl, Emily. There is no doubt Sir Hyacinth will speedily give her Bell Trench for a stepmother. I pitied her from my soul, for having to endure Bell in the character of guest ; but that was a mere trifle to enduring Bell in the capacity of queen-consort."

" Cannot Miss Blake reside with her uncle," said I, " if she finds Ballymore disagreeable?"

“Reside with that sly Julius? My dear boy, that were no better than a choice of horrors. Julius, to be sure, would be civil; but then to-morrow or next day he might present her with an aunt who would render her refuge intolerably irksome. I protest poor Emily’s case is worthy of all commiseration. I could positively find it in my heart to marry her myself, and carry her off from all her tormentors, only that I am quite too old for such a piece of knight-errantry, even supposing that Miss Blake would consent to it.”

“Do you know when Mr. FitzEustace was last at Ballymore?”

“He arrived there the very day Lady Blake died,” answered Jack; “but, reprobate as he is, he had the miraculous decency to withdraw when Lady Blake’s death was announced.”

“I have sometimes had occasion,” said I, “to admire Miss Blake’s high spirit; and from what I have seen of her, I venture to predict that she never will be

bullied into marrying FitzEustace; and moreover, that Miss Trench, if she should become a member of the family, will not venture to repeat any improper liberties with her stepdaughter."

"All that may be true," returned Jack; "yet just conceive to what a miserable scene of domestic dissension your supposition would consign poor Emily—open warfare with a hateful suitor and an insolent virago!"

"But after all," said I, "I do not see what temptation Miss Trench has to marry Sir Hyacinth; don't his settlements limit his succession to his issue whatsoever by our poor late friend?"

"They do; and I really believe he did not retain power to charge Ballymore with even a jointure for a second wife."

"There is ground for hope in that," said I; "surely the knight is not personally so attractive as to make it worth Miss Trench's while to marry him, unless she could secure the more substantial ad-

vantages from which the settlement excludes her.”

“That is a matter of opinion,” replied Jack : “I can only tell you that the lady, less decorous than FitzEustace, arrived on yesterday at Ballymore, and will probably make good her billet there.”

When we emerged from the bohereen upon the high road, we mended our pace, and the carriage bowled rapidly along to Jack’s abode ; Jerry Brien trotting briskly alongside upon my hunter.

The company at dinner were merely my host and myself. Jack’s conversation was amusing, from the acute discrimination of character he displayed ; and it was frequently mingled with touches of good feeling, which, on the present occasion, were especially called forth by the scene we had on that day witnessed, and by his sympathy with Emily Blake. The hours sped away as pleasantly as could consist with my many anxieties, and when ten o’clock struck, I rose to take my leave.

“ O, stay and sleep,” cried Jack ; “ it is snowing, man.”

I looked out upon the night ; it was not snowing ; but the snow that had fallen during the day was frozen into a hard and firm surface. Stars innumerable shone and sparkled ; a brisk wind had set in from the north ; the restless condition of my spirits impelled me to seek relief in motion ; the pure cold air without was exhilarating ; and, rejecting my host’s proffered courtesy, I set forth upon my horse (which was frost-shod), attended upon foot by my trusty Squire, Jerry Brien.

CHAPTER V.

“ ’Mongst graves and grots, neer an old charnel house.”

BEN JONSON, *The Sad Shepherd*.

JERRY kept pace, in a light swinging trot, with the motion of my horse. We had not proceeded more than half a mile when the wind rose to a storm, and the snow began to fall so heavily that I regretted my rejection of Jack's hospitable offer. But we pushed on; my hunter was strong, and carried double; so I allowed Jerry to mount *en croupe*, as I did not wish to leave him behind, nor yet to slacken my pace to accommodate his movements, which were now retarded by the fast falling snow. The violence of the wind, which at first prevented my conversing with my comrade,

soon made it a difficult matter to keep our seats on horseback. Our nearest way to Castle Carroll led along the bohereen, and close to the wall of the graveyard where Lady Blake's remains were interred. By the time we had reached the cemetery, we were obliged to dismount, and avail ourselves of the shelter of the wall. The night was now so tempestuous that we looked anxiously about for any tenement in which to take refuge. None was near us, except the ruined church; and entering the cemetery through a breach in its crumbling enclosure, we skirted the chancel and aisle, and were glad enough to find ourselves beneath the vaulted roof of the stout old belfry tower. It was not without some difficulty we made our way thither, for the inequalities of the ground were concealed by the snow-drifts, and the horse, led by Jerry, stumbled three or four times. We seated ourselves on a stone bench, awaiting the subsidence of the storm, and experiencing a feeling of relief from the com-

parative calmness of the atmosphere in our retreat. At last Jerry spoke—

“An’t we bould, sir, to walk into a graveyard at such a lonesome hour? And they say that this one is *hanted*. But it was hang-choice between the spridhs and the timpest.”

“And who says that this place is haunted, Jerry?”

“Och, *shandheena* says it, your honour. There used to be a big, buck-ghost, strutting up and down, inside the ould chancel; he was a shocking wicked-looking object, and had a quare way of winking and grinning that would frighten the life out of you to look at him. Ould Brennan, the schoolmaster, said he was the ghost of Crohoorena-muck, grandfather of Judy O’Shaughnessy, Sir Hycie’s miss: he knew him by his wink.”

“I hope he won’t visit us to-night, Jerry; but why was he called Crohoorena-muck?”

Jerry informed me that this epithet had

its origin in Crohoore's talent for appropriating other people's pigs. "I told your honour before," said he, "that them O'Shaughnessys were a knowing, cunning set; but it wasn't an honest sort of 'cuteness; it was a tricky, blackguard way they had, that follied them in all their dealings. Once upon a time it chanced that my grandfather missed a fine fat porker, he was fattening against the March rent; he hunted up and down, and high and low, but no tidings of his pig could he get; at last ould Brennan gave him a hint that an outlawed* grunting and screeching had been heard the same day, in Crohoore-na-muck's bahawn, and all the world knew that Crohoore had ne'er a pig of his own, nor so much as a bonnav: so my grandfather got a magistrate's search-warrant, and went to look for his property on Crohoore's premises. When he entered the place he hadn't the heart to make search, the O'Shaughnessys were all in

* Unusual.

such grief; there was one of the family dead—a sudden death, they said—and they were waking the corpse upon the kitchen-table; and a bran-new sheet was thrown over him, and the candles were burning; and such an elegant ullagone and pillilew, and such beautiful keening never was heard before or since! And then the grief, my dear! Ould Shivawn O'Shaughnessy cried a quart to her own share; and, mavrone! but she was a pattern for keeners that evening; how she *did* ullagone for 'poor Shamus,' and recount all his virtues, and scowld him for dying, and the like! and then the whole houseful would tackle to screech altogether. I protest, they'd draw tears from a stone, just to hear them. My grandfather and his party went quiet and asy about the house, just out of respect for the sorrow of the family; but at last his patience wore out, and, going up to ould Molly O'Shaughnessy, he says, 'I've no doubt it's a corpse you've got undher that sheet, ould lady;'

says he ; ' but it isn't quite clear to me which it's the corpse of a Christian or of a pig,' says he ; so with that he whips up the sheet, and what should be under it but the dear dead body of his pig ! Just think of the 'cuteness of the villains, to pretend it was a corpse they were waking ! Och ! there was nothing too hot or too heavy for Crohoore-na-muck, or for his breed, seed, and generation."

" Was he punished for his theft ?" asked I.

" No, sir ; my grandfather thought himself lucky to get back his pig. Ould Crohoore used to make himself convanient to his landlord, Sir Ulick Blake, and of course he was protected, and got off."

" And Crohoore's ghost," said I, " walks the chancel ; I wonder you are not afraid, Jerry, to draw him upon us now, by recounting his misdeeds. Hush ! what noise was that ?"

The storm roared, and raved, and screamed ; the air was vocal with a thou-

sand wild sounds. An occasional momentary pause was succeeded by yet louder gusts, as if the elements had taken breath for redoubled warfare. There was something appalling in the magnificent thunder of the wind, and my comrade and I remained silent for some minutes, anxiously watching the night from the deeply sunk portal of the tower. Once or twice I fancied that I heard the sound of voices, and again the tempest drowned all noises save its own. The bell in the tower tolled, untouched by a human hand. It was swung against the clapper by the violence of the wind. I confess that I started at the weirdly sound. There was an awful solemnity in its deep, sullen tone, mingling with the storm in the solitude and darkness of midnight. Jerry Brien, who was proof against the terrors of Crohoore-namuck, was appalled by the mysterious note of the bell.

“Lord save us, sir!” said he; “that bell never rings for a wedding, or for prayers, it only rings for a burial. I protest,

Master Maurice, I wish we were safe out of this." So saying, he crossed himself devoutly ; and although my reason negatived his apprehensions, yet it was not so easy to resist the impressions of awe and gloom so germane to the hour and to the scene.

The fury of the tempest rendered it impossible to leave our refuge for the present. We resumed our seats upon the stone bench ; Jerry still holding my horse by the bridle. In one of the brief intervals of the storm, voices were again heard, and three men came hurriedly and unsteadily into the tower, in the manner of persons who could scarcely keep their feet, and eagerly sought shelter from the elemental war without. They felt about for a seat, and as the bench ran entirely round the interior of the tower, they seated themselves on the side facing that which we occupied. We could faintly see their figures, as they severally entered, relieved against the snow without : within, they were invisible in the darkness. They were silent

for a few minutes ; at length one of them said,

“ It’s a desperate night, Jem ; I don’t ever remember the like. It was a cruel hard tack with us to come here.”

“ It was precious luck, though,” returned Jem, “ that your brother landed his cargo before this devil’s weather came on. Such a night as this would send the Black Rover to the bottom, I fancy.”

“ So you landsmen think ; but you wouldn’t believe the ugly squall she has weathered. Not but Tom would rather be snug at anchor such a wicked night.”

“ I believe you had tight work enough to land the cargo yesterday evening,” observed a person who had not yet spoken.

“ Yes, thanks to that meddlesome rascal, Captain Bodkin, who was dodging about on the outlook with his party. He is promised a place in the excise by some cousin in Dublin, and he is trying to earn it. He mayn’t have much cause to thank himself, though, if he becomes too troublesome.”

“But you got it all ashore?”

“Every keg of it,” answered the smuggler, “and stored it all into that ould family vault of Sir Hyacinth Blake. ’Gad! it would raise the corpses of some of his forefathers, if they knew what prime cognac and nantz they have stored at their elbows.”

“The best lady that ever belonged to his house was put underground to-day,” said Jem.

“Who’s that?” asked the smuggler.

“Lady Blake.”

“Death alive! not in the vault where we stowed away the brandy, sure?”

“No,” replied the other with a faint laugh. “Her grave is dug these three days—she lies by herself, beyond the ould chancel. They wouldn’t put her into the family vault, and she is to have a grand monument all to herself.”

“And so she is dead at last,” said the smuggler, the immediate cause of his anxiety being removed. “Well, by all

accounts, that *was* a good woman ; and one who was well spoken of by every soul that breathed, except her husband."

" That poor collieen, her daughter, will have a d—d bad life of it," said Jem, " now that the mother is gone."

" Oh, Heaven help her, if she's left to the tindher mercies of Sir Hyacinth," observed the smuggler.

" Yerra, why do you say that?" inquired the third member of the party.

" Yerra, why need you ask?" returned the smuggler. " Sure everybody knows the sort of life he has led her, wanting her to marry that scapegrace in spite of her, and she all the while in love with another *oganach*."

" With another *oganach*? Why, then, blessings light upon you, sir ; who is he?"

" He's a neighbour of her own ; as poor as a rat ; but an honest, proper boy, of good ould blood, too—young O'Carroll."

The reader may judge the astonishment with which I heard what I believed to be

an inviolable secret, known only to Emily and myself, the subject of familiar talk among such characters. I involuntarily started; the motion was perceived by Jerry Brien, who pressed my arm to enforce quiescence. Jem begged the smuggler to disclose the source of his information. This he refused to do; but he said that any one with half an eye must have seen that it was not merely attachment to a sickly old lady that could have prompted my frequent visits to Lady Blake at her recent residence; the attraction was doubtless not the mother, but the daughter, who generally met me at the cottage.

“The couple think,” continued the oracle, “that nobody knows their secret but themselves; and indeed they are right to keep it as close as they can, for if Sir Hycie once got the wind of the word, he’d send young master packing. He’d sooner see his daughter dead than give her to a poor struggling devil that hasn’t got sixpence to jingle on a tombstone.”

“ And it’s like he has got into some scrape,” observed Jem ; “ for there was a strange cock this very day at Crossnacoppul, who had greatly the look of a processarver, or bum-bailiff, inquiring about him, and wanting to know from Tim Molony where he could be seen. Upon my troth, I would be sorry if the boy got into mischief ; for though nobody ever saw the colour of his coin, yet everybody knows he has a flahool heart, and would give like a prince, if he had it.”

I did not doubt that the mysterious inquiries of the strange emissary seen at Crossnacoppul were connected with the promissory note in which Doctor Blake had inveigled me to join him.

The party continued to converse ; Sir Hyacinth and his family were still the theme of their discourse ; and when Jem conceived that he had got the smuggler into a very communicative humour, he coaxingly asked him what was the business upon which the knight had desired a pri-

vate interview with him some three weeks previously.

“ If I knew,” replied the smuggler, “ mayhap I would not tell you. But although I may have a sort of guess, yet in sober earnest I don’t know what the devil he wanted with me. He kept cross-examining me, and sounding me, as if he wished to trust some weighty job to my management ; and somehow I fancy he didn’t like my answers, for he told me nothing at all, in the end.”

“ But you say you had a guess ?”

“ Well—and if I had, what then ?”

“ Why then, sir, *do* tell us what deviltry your guess was about ; for if Sir Hycie had a secret job of any sort on hand, it can’t have been for any good purpose.”

At these words my fears instinctively pointed to some danger to Emily. But a qualm of honour stirred my mind. Here was a man, unconscious that I was his auditor, perhaps about to develop some mysterious machinations in Sir Hyacinth’s

family. Was it right, was it honest, to take advantage of his ignorance of my presence, in order to become acquainted with matters that he never would intentionally reveal to me? On the other hand, Emily's happiness—nay, possibly her personal safety—might depend on the information thus obtained; and was I lightly to sacrifice these to a punctilio? And to whom was the speaker on the point of making his confidences? To persons in the lowest walks of society. And was not I better fitted than such persons to receive communications that might essentially concern the welfare of Miss Blake? Yet there was something from which I revolted, in the notion of eavesdropping; I had listened, perhaps, too long already. These scruples flitted through my mind with the rapidity of lightning; but ere I could decide on the course to adopt, the attention of the talkers was diverted by the abrupt entrance of a confederate, who rushed in breathless, exclaiming as he entered,

“ Are yez here, boys ? ”

“ Aye, ” returned the leader of the trio ;
“ are the Ballycasey horses coming ? ”

“ Musha, now, what horses or men would come out in such a timpest as this, to drag your bales and kegs across the Ardtornie ridge ? It was as much as myself could do to scramble across it on all-fours, and I was twice blown into Togher bog. Bad as the storm is here, it’s ten times worse upon the *cnoc*. It was by a sort of maracle I was able to come here at all. ”

“ You’re all a d—d good-for-nothing set ! ” replied the leader. “ A night like this is always the best for transporting the cargo through the country ; the sharks are sure to be a-bed—and them lazy Ballycasey vagabonds to be snoring away at their ease, instead of keeping their appointment ! Why, what brought yourself here at all, at all, Padhre, if that was all you had to tell us ? ”

“ Just to bid yez not be waiting. Ould

Costigan said it was a sin to lave you here till morning, and I'm sure 'twas almost as much as my life was worth to come with his message."

"But as to what you were saying awhile ago, sir, about Sir Hyacinth," said Jem, reverting to the subject of his curiosity.

"Aye, about Sir Hyacinth—Och! least said is soonest mended, and an empty guess goes for nothing."

As he spoke, a tremendous gust swept through every crevice of the old tower, and again stirred the bell overhead.

"Was it the wind done that?" cried Jem.

"Either the wind, or old Crohoore-namuck," answered Padhre; "sorrow a Christian ever touched it."

At this moment my horse, who had previously been quiet, became suddenly frightened, and snorted violently.

"Lord presarve us!" cried the leader, "there's something unlucky among us;" and whilst his comrades rapidly recited

some formula of devotion, he struck a light, and revealed to their astonished eyes the forms of Jerry Brien, myself, and the quadruped.

“Why then, Jerry a-bouchal! is that yourself?” exclaimed the whole party simultaneously; “and what the dhunnas brings you here at such an outlawed hour? and why, above all things, didn’t ye spake to us?”

“I declare I thought it was a spridh!” cried Padhre.

“I declare I thought it was a revenue officer,” cried the leader. “And Mr. Maurice O’Carroll, too, by all that’s quare! I’m afeard I took your name in vain, awhile ago, young gentleman; but how could I tell you were hearkening to me?”

“Nay, never say a word about it, friend,” said I; “you know the old proverb about listeners, and I am rather ashamed of being caught in the fact. Jerry and I were driven here for refuge from the gale.”

The fellow laughed, as he answered, "I hope, sir, we'll be better friends than I should have been with any of the revenue blackguards. I had to quit this coast some years ago ; but I a'n't afeard to tell you that I've helped the free trade inland."

Although his face was strange to me, yet I fancied that I had seen some person very like him ; and whilst he spoke, the tones of his voice seemed not wholly unfamiliar to my ear. He was tall and muscular ; coarse featured, but gifted with a shrewd and intelligent eye. I asked his name.

"Samuel Patterson, at your honour's service."

"What ! any relation of a carpenter named Patterson, whom I saw at Tullymoran ?"

"He is my brother," replied my new acquaintance ; "and we are both in good request (though in different ways) with the Catholic gentfolk of this province. But it is cowl'd, Mr. O'Carroll, and I hope you

won't refuse a sup of something to warm your heart."

So saying, he produced a large flask of excellent brandy, of which he generously dispensed a share to all around. I was not so warmly attached to the revenue laws as to refuse an offer which the severity of the night rendered more than usually welcome. While Jerry conversed with the subordinates, Mr. Patterson ventured to address me confidentially. There was a freedom in his manner that would, under other circumstances, have been offensive. As it was, I considered that whilst my teeth were chattering with cold, I could not well stand upon my dignity with the man who held a comfortable brandy bottle.

"I know much more about your honour than you think," he said, in a low voice. "My daughter Sally is Miss Emily's lady's-maid, and is a hearty well-wisher of her mistress and your honour."

"And what is this mystery," asked I, "about Sir Hyacinth? What was the

guess you said you made about his purposes?"

"Och, for that matter, I may wrong him; he *said* nothing I could positively fasten upon; yet, somehow, from his way and his questions, I couldn't but fancy he was thinking of having Miss Emily smuggled away to France in my brother Tom's brig—I suppose to be housed in some convent, or otherwise shut up, as he best could provide."

"Good heaven! he surely did not—could not dare to say"—

"Why, for that matter, your honour, he *said* nothing that could by any means commit him to any such purpose. But if ever a man's mind spoke in his face, I could read in Sir Hycie's that some evil intention was working inside of him. And I got a hint—you won't betray me, now, upon the honour of a gentleman?"

"On my honour, Patterson, you have nothing to fear from me."

"For if you did," continued he, "if a

word—a syllable—slipped from your lips, Sir Hycie and them Trenches would set the revenue dogs all at our heels, and the country would be soon too hot to hould us.”

“Fear nothing from my indiscretion, Patterson ; I pledge you my honour that you need not.”

“Then, sir, if ever a man was haunted by the devil in the shape of a woman, Sir Hycie has the devil at his elbow, in the form of Miss Trench.”

“In the name of heaven, how do you know”—

“More than I have said I cannot tell you, sir ; so do not ask me. One word to your sweetheart, young gentleman,” and he sank his voice to the lowest whisper ; “*tell her to beware of them both !*”

He wrung my hand, and looked at me with a hard, expressive glance, and with lips compressed ; the expression plainly said, “I have discharged my conscience now ; do *you* look to the young lady’s safety.”

And then, to put an end to our conference, he rose, trimmed the little lamp in his dark lanthorn, and resumed his conversation with the rest of the party.

About four in the morning the hurricane abated. The moon had risen, and shed her wan and ghastly light upon the snowy waste. Nature seemed wrapped in her winding-sheet. Disturbed by the agitating and mysterious information of Patterson, and depressed by the death of the friend I had lost, I pursued my way homewards through the dreary scene, escorted by Jerry; who, as we passed the newly-made grave, dropped devoutly on his knees for a few moments, to offer up a fervent prayer for the soul of its occupant.

CHAPTER VI.

“To see the earth crackt with the weight of sin,
 Hell gaping under us, and o'er our heads
 Black ravenous ruin, with her sail-stretch'd wings,
 Ready to sink us down, and cover us ;
 Who can behold such prodigies as these,
 And have his lips sealed up ?”

BEN JONSON, *Every Man out of his Humour*.

I ARRIVED at home as the clock struck six, and immediately retired to bed. But sleep was impossible. My mind was fevered with anxiety. I asked myself a thousand times if Patterson's information was authentic? whether his imagination had not overcoloured the modicum of fact he possessed? I mentally debated the profitless question if he had any other informant than his daughter, the soubrette? Again—I asked whether he had told me all he knew? but to none of these queries could I discover a satisfactory answer. Assuming that he had rightly interrupted Sir Hyacinth's

purposes, I sought for the motives that might influence the knight in consigning his daughter to a foreign convent. True, Emily was a Protestant; but if her presence in Ireland were obnoxious to her father, he was not very likely to trouble his head about the religious belief of the companions with whom she might be placed when in exile. He had found her intractable in the FitzEustace affair; he had set his heart on the alliance with the future Lord Killeries, and his daughter had thwarted his ambition.

One great obstacle to his union with Miss Trench was now removed by the death of Lady Blake. But another obstacle remained, in Emily's rights of succession. Patterson's half-uttered hints about Miss Trench recurred to my mind in a new and startling light. Was that lady likely to be satisfied with the barren distinction of being Sir Hyacinth's wife? of being, possibly, the mother of a family, whom a prior settlement debarred from all share in the

Ballymore inheritance? I reflected on her character. Grasping, ambitious, domineering, and unprincipled, was it probable she would bestow her hand where so serious a drawback existed to her influence in the family? It was notorious to the whole country that she exercised an irresistible sorcery over the mind of Sir Hyacinth; and I shuddered as I thought of Patterson's homely but emphatic description of her evil qualities. What steps should I take for Emily's protection? Honour, of course, forbade me to name my informant; but I might assuredly warn her that her present abode was fraught with peril, and strenuously urge her to claim the hospitality of Julius at Kilcummin. Patterson, indeed, appeared not only to sanction, but to expect some such step as this; otherwise, why had he spoken?

After anxiously revolving these matters in my mind for some hours, I resolved to go to Ballymore in the course of the day, and seek an opportunity of stating my views to Emily.

On entering the breakfast room, my mother, displaying an opened letter addressed to The O'Carroll by his nephew, Mr. Peter Blake, informed me that my aunt Elizabeth had died unexpectedly. "Peter writes to your father," said she, "to solicit pecuniary assistance towards a handsome funeral. It is really odd how they *will* persist in taking it for granted this family are able to make such advances."

"Did the letter come by post?" asked I.

"O, dear, no! by express; they would not entrust it to the tardiness of the mails."

I glanced my eye over it with sufficient nonchalance, to own the truth; for I could not feel much for the loss of a person whom I scarcely remembered to have seen, and from whom we had been utterly estranged for many years. My mind, too, was fraught with reflections that interested me infinitely more than the exit of my aunt; and I scarcely heard some remarks my father made about getting handsome mourning.

In the afternoon I rode to Ballymore, and just as I reached the house two gentlemen, who arrived at the same time, were emerging from a carriage drawn by four horses; I instantly recognized them as Blake, of Castle Blake, and his cousin of Droumballyknockawn; whom I had met, as the reader will probably remember, at the family muster at Athlone: they both recollected me, and we exchanged civil greetings. Whatever causes had retarded their mission to the baronet, I did not doubt that they were now come as a deputation from the tribe to remonstrate, on behalf of the entire Blakery, against the bestowal of Emily's hand upon Mr. Fitz-Eustace. Sir Hyacinth and his daughter had walked out together; Julius had gone off after breakfast to Kilcummin; and, whilst we awaited the return of Sir Hyacinth and Emily, the dignitaries conversed without reserve on the purpose of their visit.

“ It is twenty years since I was last

here," said Castleblake, looking out of the window, "and the place seems immensely improved; I don't mean the demesne alone, but the property we drove through: better farm-houses, better enclosures, better everything."

"It is quite intolerable that Sir Hyacinth should think of throwing away such a noble inheritance on that execrable puppy," responded the bachelor-lord of Droumballyknockawn; "but I hope to place matters in such a point of view before him, that he will consult at once his daughter's happiness and the interests of the tribe."

"Which of us had better open the matter?" resumed Castleblake; "he is obstinate and self-willed, and the business should be broached with the utmost discretion and tact."

"I think, for that reason, you had best begin," replied his colleague; "I am conscious of my own infirmity of temper, and Sir Hyacinth will probably be very provoking."

They continued to discuss the programme of their attack, until the early winter's evening closed in. "It is strange how long Sir Hyacinth is absent," said Castleblake; and, pulling the bell, he asked the footman who answered it, if he was sure that his master and mistress had not driven out anywhere? The footman could not say where they had gone; he was certain, however, that they walked; he had seen them set out together three hours before.

"They must soon return," said I; "they are, indeed, unusually late."

In a few minutes Sir Hyacinth made his appearance; pale, haggard, and with symptoms of the utmost horror and distraction.

"Good God!" cried I, "where is Miss Blake? Has anything happened——"

"Oh, ask me not!" he exclaimed; and convulsively grasping the hands of his relatives, who had risen to greet him, he threw himself upon a chair, uttered a piercing groan, and abandoned himself to a paroxysm of anguish.

“What, in Heaven’s name, is the meaning of this?” cried Castlelake; “has any misfortune befallen your daughter?”

“I HAVE NO DAUGHTER!” replied the knight, looking wildly up, and in a tone that almost amounted to a scream. “I have lost the most angelic child that ever blessed a parent.”

“How?—where? The particulars, for Heaven’s sake!”

“About an hour ago,” said Sir Hyacinth, “we were walking on the verge of the crag beyond the Point—the frozen surface of the path was slippery from the congealed spray—my beloved Emily lost her footing, and ere I could possibly attempt to seize her—indeed, ere I was well aware of the hideous catastrophe, she had sunk to rise no more.”

“Good God!” cried I, “can no effort be made——”

“And do you think, young man,” exclaimed Sir Hyacinth reprovingly, “that I left any effort untried? I raised the

neighbourhood at once ; collected what assistance I could from the fisherman's cabins ; we dragged the water with the utmost care ; but, alas ! without success."

And the bereaved father, leaning on the table, sank his head in his hands, and gave way to a hysterical burst of grief. His visitors, who were both dreadfully shocked, uttered some incoherent words of comfort.

" How inscrutable are the decrees of Providence !" said Castlelake ; " the object of our visit was expressly to talk to you of Miss Emily, and to make known to you some views we entertained respecting her settlement in life. But ' in the midst of life we are in death,' and here is that solemn truth brought painfully home to our hearts."

" Thank you—thank you—my kind friends—my good friends," sobbed the knight, as if scarcely knowing what he said. " I am sure of the kindness of your purposes. But, alas ! all is now too late. O ! when I saw the water closing over *her*

who was my chief tie to life, I wished the same waves might efface me from existence for ever !”

I waited to hear no more, but hurried to the spot where the horrible catastrophe had taken place. Boats were out in the vain search for the body of Emily ; their torches, flickering in the wind, threw a red and fitful light on the rocks and on the surface of the bay. But they were soon extinguished by a heavy shower that drifted from the west. The boats were now invisible, although the voices of the men were occasionally borne on the gale, and mingled wildly with the sounds of surging waves and dashing rain. I called—shouted from the crag, in the hope that the nearest boat would take me on board—the agony of my mind almost deprived me of the power of thought. A horrible suspicion crossed my mind. *Could* Sir Hyacinth—but no ! it was impossible. Harsh, peremptory he might have been ; he had formed schemes for Emily incompatible with her happiness.

But to suppose he had been accessory to this horrible event—Oh, no! It was utterly impossible that even the most selfish parent could be guilty of so black a crime. I was angry with myself for harbouring, even for a moment, the frightful suggestion. Yet, in spite of me, it *would* recur. The more I tried to banish the idea, the more strongly it haunted my mind.

I was taken into one of the boats ; the shower drifted off, and the torches were again lighted. The boatmen, to every one of whom the angelic virtues of my lost love had endeared her, wept as if each and all had suffered a domestic bereavement. They would not surrender the search, vain and hopeless though it seemed. The body might have risen to the surface, and drifted with the tide to the mouth of the bay. Amidst the howling waves and wailing winds we spent the night ; we continued to search until two hours after dawn ; and then, wearied and exhausted, with unutterable misery and bodily fatigue,

I rode home, spurring my horse as if my life depended on his speed. Worn-out nature demanded repose. I sank into a feverish slumber, which was disturbed with frightful visions. The horrible suspicion of my waking hours still haunted me in sleep. I thought I saw Sir Hyacinth and Emily upon the verge of the beetling precipice; the eye of the knight assumed a demoniac expression, as he glanced around, to ascertain if he were observed; he said, "I have already got rid of *one* thorn in my path, and shall *you* obstruct my will?" With these words he pushed her from the crag into the foaming gulf beneath. My dream then lost all distinctness; confused and shifting groups of strange and hideous forms seemed to flit around me, "mopping and mowing;" and at length I wakened to a renewed and stunning sense of misery.

Though habitually regardless of dreams, my vision of Sir Hyacinth left a deep and ineffaceable impression behind. "Thou

art the man !” I incessantly repeated to myself. I remembered Patterson’s impressive words : “ He has the fiend at his elbow in the shape of a woman ; *tell her to beware of them both.*” And again I repeated, “ Sir Hyacinth, *thou art the murderer !*”

CHAPTER VII.

“ Mark well this man ; regard his seeming grief ;
Shall we believe that the dark deed was his ? ”

HERBERT SMITH.

GRIEF and horror took possession even of our reckless household. M'Ginty himself was appalled at the melancholy fate of one so good, so young, so lovely. My father's sympathy was profusely bestowed upon Sir Hyacinth.

“ Poor man ! poor man ! ” exclaimed The O'Carroll ; “ my heart bleeds for him. An only child—and such a child ! ’Tis just as if *I* lost *you*, Maurice, which the Lord in his mercy forbid ! Poor unhappy man ! the light of Heaven will be black to him henceforth to the day of his death.”

In the course of the next day, a mes-

senger on horseback brought me the following note from my friend Mr. Macnamara :—

“ Strictly private. Tullymoran, Saturday.

“ MY DEAR MAURICE,

“ We have heard with the most poignant grief, reports of the sad occurrence at Ballymore. Come to me as soon as possible; I wish to discuss with you some circumstances connected with that event. Do not let the purpose of your visit transpire. Yours ever,

“ MACNAMARA.”

Prior to going to Tullymoran I rode to Ballymore, whither I was led by a resistless curiosity; this was a detour of about three miles. I desired to try whether the conduct of the knight would afford me any date for either accepting or rejecting the suggestion of his guilt.

On arriving at Ballymore I met my warm-hearted friend M'Grail. His strong disapprobation of Sir Hyacinth's conduct

to the late Lady Blake had caused him to absent himself from the house for several months previously ; but he now forgot the errors of the husband in the compassion he felt for the agony of the bereaved parent. Conceiving that his pastoral duty called him to the house of mourning, he was at the side of Sir Hyacinth, administering such consolation as the case admitted. Sir Hyacinth, with his handkerchief to his eyes, was sobbing violently.

“ Be of good comfort ! be of good comfort ! ” said M'Grail.

“ Great Heaven ! ” cried the knight, “ how *can* you name comfort to me at a moment of such unspeakable anguish ? Do you fancy me a stone ? a block of wood ? ”

“ No, Sir Hyacinth ; but I want to bring to your mind the blessed conviction that there is no human sorrow so poignant, no human anguish so intolerable, that it may not find in religion a healing balm. O, my friend—my friend,” continued the good vicar, whilst the tears streamed from

his eyes, and his quivering lip betrayed his deep emotion, "when our Maker calls for the surrender of all that we have loved best on earth, our hearts will doubtless feel a bitter pang—but let us remember that He who hath given is He who taketh away, and imitate the ready submission of Abraham, who did not hesitate one instant to sacrifice his son Isaac when the voice of his Creator demanded that proof of his obedience."

Sir Hyacinth groaned. "If Abraham had loved Isaac as well as I loved Emily, he never, never could have consented to his sacrifice. Never!" repeated the baronet with wild vehemence, striking the table a violent blow with his clenched fist.

"Nay, my dear friend," resumed the vicar, "do not deceive yourself; it is not that you love Miss Emily *more* than Abraham loved Isaac, but that you love God *less* than the patriarch loved him. The comfort I would instil into your mind is not a stoical indifference to your afflicting bereave-

ment ; but the balm that flows from a ready recognition of the hand of God in our sorrows as well as in our prosperity, and from the promptness to say with all our hearts in grief as well as in joy, ‘ Thy will be done.’ Try, now, Sir Hyacinth, to say those blessed words ; to say them from the bottom of your heart, ‘ Thy will be done.’ ”

“ I cannot ! alas, alas ! I cannot,” sobbed Sir Hyacinth. “ O, my lost angel ! what a hopeless, cheerless blank will my wretched existence henceforth be to me ! ”

“ Not hopeless, so long as there is hope of heaven,” said M’Grail in a tone of the kindest, the most touching encouragement. “ Your Emily, I humbly and fervently trust,” he continued looking solemnly upwards, “ is gone there before you. I knew her well—I speak as her affectionate pastor—and I never met a mind in a state of more habitual preparation for the awful change to which her heavenly Father has so suddenly summoned her. Her piety was warm, constant, and

sincere, and the actions of her life accorded with its dictates. This sorrow, bitter as it is, may yet be blessed to you, according to the use you make of it. Seek for grace to turn it to the right account. Let it wean your heart from this transitory world, and its delusive pursuits, of which you have no certain lease for a single day—no, nor for an hour. Let the strength of your paternal love come in aid of your efforts after godliness : strive that you may hereafter be admitted to rejoin your lost Emily in those regions of bliss into which she has, I trust, been received through her Saviour's mercy."

The vicar paused, as if to afford Sir Hyacinth time to reflect on what he had advanced.

" You mean well, M'Grail, and I am obliged to you. But you cannot fathom the depth of my sufferings. One only daughter—one ewe-lamb. *You* never lost a daughter, M'Grail."

" Pardon me," returned the vicar ; " it

is many, many years since I lost my sweet child Alice ; and I lost her under circumstances more shocking than those that now afflict you."

"That is impossible!" exclaimed the baronet.

"You shall judge. Never since I entered this parish have I named the matter until this moment, for I hate to obtrude my domestic afflictions upon any one ; and if I do so now, it is merely to show you that I preach a resignation of which I have myself tested the practicability. We were travelling among the Alps, for the health of Alice had been delicate, and the air of southern Europe was prescribed by her physicians. Our small party were attacked by a gang of brigands, and in the scuffle that ensued, a shot from one of their pistols struck my child in the head : she instantly sank upon my breast and breathed her last. Now," continued M'Grail, looking earnestly at Sir Hyacinth, "to behold a beloved child lose her life,

not by any natural accident, but by the hand of ruffian violence—”

Sir Hyacinth started from his seat, greatly agitated, and walked over to the window. “ I beg your pardon, M‘Grail,” said he; “ I am not equal to this conversation.”

“ *Thou art the man !*” thought I within myself, as I watched the shifting colour of his cheek, and the troubled expression of his eye. “ If, instead of pursuing the subject at present,” continued the baronet, “ you pointed out such portions of Scripture as are suited to one who suffers from so dreadful a calamity, I should try, undisturbed and alone, to study them.”

M‘Grail, without speaking, immediately opened the large family Bible, which, bound in crimson morocco and gold, and emblazoned on the cover with the Ballymore arms, reposed upon a pier table. Whilst he sought out appropriate passages, Miss Trench entered the apartment, dressed in deep mourning. She was not uncivil,

and uttered a few common places, such as "Terrible shock!" "Awful occurrence!" gave a sanctioning shake of her head in answer to some remarks M'Grail made when he had finished his selection of passages, and behaved on the whole with becoming decorum. M'Grail and I then took our leaves. As we rode together down the avenue, I could not help saying that I feared his admonitions were likely to fall on very barren soil.

"We must hope otherwise," he mildly answered. "Sir Hyacinth seems strongly touched; and if his mind does not quite evince the humble resignation I strove to inculcate, we ought still to remember that God will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed—No—I am inclined to believe that this dreadful calamity will awaken Sir Hyacinth from the worldly dreams in which his life has been hitherto wasted."

I would not for worlds have whispered to the worthy clergyman my dark suspi-

cions of the real nature of the catastrophe. Whilst I thought of his earnest and affecting expostulations with the knight, I could not help saying to myself, "How unlike is this good man's religion to that of Julius Blake! Every word he uttered, Julius could also utter, and probably with much more eloquence and a greater display of erudition. But I *feel* what M'Grail says; and I can only *admire* what Julius says without feeling it at all. Such is the difference between the religion of earnest conviction, and that which is blended with outward parade."

At the gate of the domain my reverend companion and I separated; he to return to his vicarage, and I to pursue my road to Tullymoran.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ *Æglamour*. It will be rare ! rare ! rare !
An exquisite revenge ; but peace, no words !

* * * * *

A spring, now she is dead : of what ? of thorns ?
Briars and brambles ? thistles, burs, and docks ?
Cold hemlock, yew, the mandrake, or the box ?”

The Sad Shepherd.

NIGHT had fallen long ere I reached the ancient woods of Tullymorán. Macnamara, who seemed to have anxiously awaited my arrival, received me in the hall. He immediately conducted me into his study.

“ Never in my life,” said he, “ have I been more deeply and painfully interested in any occurrence than in poor Miss Blake’s most melancholy fate. I know, O’Carroll, how *you* must feel ; in truth I know much more of *that* affair than you imagine. My poor, dear Miss Emily ! Her mother and I were close friends over

twenty years ago, and this dreadful event has startled old feelings into life. It is a most mysterious business, too—Have you seen Sir Hyacinth since it happened?”

“I saw him to-day.”

“And does his manner—does—in short, does any suspicion attach to him of having—I *must* out with it—of having murdered his daughter?”

“I cannot say whether any such suspicion has extended beyond one or two obscure individuals,” I answered; “but it is a very extraordinary circumstance that prior to the event, a person I am not authorised to name desired me to caution Miss Blake against both her father and his present inmate. But why, Mr. Macnamara, do you ask me such a question? What has led you to harbour suspicion yourself?”

“Come with me,” he replied, “and you shall know.”

Taking the light, he led the way through a small door that opened with a spring.

Apparently it formed part of the wainscot, from which it could not be detected by ocular scrutiny. We entered a long narrow passage, floored with stone, at the farther end of which was a suite of apartments in one of the wings of the mansion. We passed through a small ante-room, and entered a parlour in which were two ladies. One of them was Mary Macnamara, who knelt at a lounger, on which was extended the second occupant of the chamber, on whom her fair hostess appeared to bestow the most assiduous care. The recumbent dame raised her head from the pillow ; a blush crimsoned for a moment her cheek, which again became as pale as death. Could it be—Yes ! it *was* Emily.

My astonishment deprived me of utterance. I rubbed my eyes ; unable for a moment to believe in the reality of what I saw. Emily looked at me with an expression of great kindness and gave me her hand ; but she did not smile. She seemed wasted ; almost haggard ; there was a

wildness in her eye that told of horror and alarm.

“Come, Mary,” said our host to his beautiful daughter; “we will retire to the next room for a few minutes. Miss Blake has much to communicate.”

When left alone with Emily, I took my seat at her side. She covered her face with her hands, and was silent. I saw she was reluctant to begin her disclosure. I relieved her from the difficulty. “Is it then,” said I, “as I suspect? Did Sir Hyacinth—”

“He *did*,” she answered; replying to my half-uttered query. Although I had previously arrived at this belief, yet the confirmation from Emily’s own lips came upon me with the force of surprise.

“Good God! How could he have been tempted to perpetrate so great a crime?”

“Alas,” said she, “his motives are palpable enough. You well know his old partiality for Miss Trench. He had, it seems, destined her to be my dear mother’s

successor. Her influence over him amounted to something like sorcery. But she, on her part, was perfectly cool and calculating, and resolved to make the connexion as profitable as possible. She ascertained that the settlement of the Ballymore estate on me was unreserved and absolute; and as this would necessarily interfere with the interests of a second family, she positively refused to marry Sir Hyacinth unless I could be got out of the way."

"How did you become aware of all this?"

"I infer it," answered Emily, "partly from the result, and partly from a warning I actually received of his purpose on the morning of his horrible attempt. I was warned in vain, for I could not believe him capable of it. He sent to ask me to walk out with him. My maid, Rebecca Patterson, seemed struggling to reveal some dreadful secret. At last she said, 'Do not go alone with him, ma'am: for within this week I was walking in the meadow

near the shrubbery, and as I passed close to the yew hedge, I heard Miss Trench and Sir Hyacinth in warm debate ; I could not hear what he said first, but I heard her say in answer to it, ‘ Then, sir, you must either give up me or Miss Emily ;’ and then Sir Hyacinth replied, ‘ My love, I’ll get rid of her for you, depend upon it.’

“ I was not much frightened by my maid’s information, for although she was herself greatly alarmed by what she had heard, I confess I merely understood my father’s words to refer to some plan in agitation for a change of residence for me. So I accompanied my father without hesitation. We walked along the cliffs towards the Point ; you remember that spot where the crag overhangs the water : my father, under pretence of admiring the scenery, brought me to the very verge : I felt instinctive terror as I marked the expression of his eye ; he glared wildly round, to try if any human being were in sight. I would have retreated, but it was too late ; with a

sudden and violent push he plunged me into the deep water beneath. I just remember a brief struggle for life—a choaking sensation—then all is a blank in my memory until I found myself in a cave, with Jerry Brien and Patterson (my maid's father) watching anxiously over me."

"God bless Jerry!" exclaimed I. "Whenever good service can be done he generally contrives to be at hand. And how came he there? Was it he who rescued you?"

"Yes, with Patterson's assistance. They had been watching some hours in the cave for a boat that was expected to take off some smuggled goods that were stored there. The entrance to the cave was extremely small, and concealed by a thick hazel bush that grew in the fissures of the rock. It faced the jutting crag where my father and I stood, at a distance of not more than about twenty feet. Brien and Patterson, seated within the opening, had therefore a near and perfect view of what was going on; whilst the branches of the

hazel and the darkness of their unsuspected retreat effectually screened them from my father's observation. Patterson in especial had the strongest suspicions, which he had derived from his daughter's information. He did not like to betray the cave to Sir Hyacinth's knowledge by issuing from it in his presence ; but whilst he was yet undecided how to act, he and his companion saw the perpetration of the crime. My father, I am told, looked over the verge for a moment, as if to satisfy himself that his purpose had fully succeeded ; and, concluding that it had, he ran hastily off in some other direction ; told some story of my losing my footing and slipping from the crag into the sea, and sought help to recover my dead body. Quick as light, Jerry Brien scrambled down the rock, threw himself into the water, and—under Providence—recovered me ere life was extinct. He and Patterson lifted me into the cave, and owing to the promptitude of their efforts, I did not very

long remain insensible. As long as I live I shall never forget the delicate kindness of those two poor men. They asked me where I wished to be conveyed. I shuddered at the thought of returning to my father's house—indeed, they both saw it was impossible. Jerry recommended his own cottage as a retreat until I could find a permanent refuge; but Patterson, whose brother is much in the confidence of Mr. Macnamara, suggested Tullymoran. I had often heard my mother speak with much regard of the Tullymoran family—the time admitted no deliberation—I consented, and, as soon as night fell, I was placed on a car, wrapped up in a cloak Brien borrowed from his sister, and conveyed to this hospitable mansion. Brien had the precaution to wait in the avenue while he sent forward Patterson to prepare Mr. Macnamara for my arrival. I had strictly enjoined my preservers to keep silence with regard to my fate. They promised to do so; and I regard their promises as sacred.”

“My life for Jerry Brien’s fidelity!” cried I; “and I doubt not Mr. Patterson is equally faithworthy.”

“My kind host entered into my feelings,” continued Emily; “and, instead of receiving me before the servants at the principal entrance, he came out, and conducted me by a private postern that opens from the garden into this suite of rooms. Excepting his own family, not a soul here knows I am an inmate of his mansion. I could not bear that my father should know of my existence. He would find some mode of rendering it miserable”—

“Why, Emily,” interrupted I, “You have him completely in your power; the evidence you have of his crime”—

“Do not speak of it,” she hastily answered. “Evidence!—No, Maurice; worlds should not tempt me to become his accuser. Think of the agony, the ignominy”—

“I do not mean that you should become his public accuser,” said I; “but the notion that you *might* do so, and the con-

sciousness of your power over him, would surely make him alter his whole line of conduct towards you."

"I have told you, Maurice, that no consideration could tempt me to carry such a threat into exercise. And, I trust, "she proudly added, "that I am incapable of making a threat that I have not the smallest intention to execute."

"Incomparable Emily!" I exclaimed, in irrepressible admiration of the high, unswerving principle which, even in the midst of her distresses, was conspicuous.

"It is better for us both," she added, with a deep sigh, "that my father should at present remain ignorant of my escape. Need I tell you that I could not endure to look in his face? That I should shudder at the notion of coming in contact with him? *Here*, thank God, I have a retreat for a while; as long, indeed, as I choose to avail myself of it. My venerable host received me like a father—*father*, did I say?—how like a mockery does the word seem from

my lips when used as an illustration of parental kindness! Rose and Mary treat me as if I were their favourite sister. In this retreat it is possible my spirits may recover from the horrible shock they have sustained. No—though at a future time it may be right, nay necessary, that Sir Hyacinth should know his daughter lives, yet I feel that at present, and probably for a long time to come, my health could not possibly sustain the results of the disclosure.”

“Emily, was it you who requested Mr. Macnamara to send for me?”

“It was.”

“What apology did you make to him for what must have seemed an extraordinary request?”

“Apology! None. There was surely none requisite. I told him we were betrothed, and with my dearest mother’s sanction. He is your friend—has been your host—what more was needed? I have never,” added she with a faint smile, “been much addicted to missyish frivolity

or *mauvaise honte* ; and they surely would now be more misplaced than ever."

I must here pray the reader to think none the worse of my friend Jerry Brien for having assisted in the concealment and transmission of contraband articles. It must be borne in mind that poor Jerry's existence, as a Catholic, was by the law of the land at that time as contraband as any of the goods that were stowed away in Patterson's cave. Jerry himself was a smuggled commodity, only drawing his breath by connivance or sufferance ; and it was, and is, morally impossible that men can respect laws by which they are not themselves respected. When the statute-book is the enemy of the lieges, the lieges will be sure to reciprocate the enmity. As to Patterson, I am not quite so much interested in making out a case in his defence. He was an excellent fellow in his way ; and with respect to his connexion with "the fair trade," I have only to say, that his brother, the intrepid skipper and

owner of a smuggling brig, had realised opulence himself, which he shared with his relations ; who all took pride in their connexion with a person of such daring and adventurous character.

Soon after Emily finished her narrative, our host re-entered, accompanied by his daughter Mary. He took Emily affectionately by the hand, and hoped her spirits were becoming more calm. "I trust," said he, "you will like us all better on further acquaintance. I flatter myself that by-and-by you will be quite happy among us. When spring advances you can enjoy air and exercise in the girls' flower-garden that adjoins these rooms, and where you can remain for hours unseen by the prying eye of mortal ; that is, if you shall then wish to be *incog.* ; and there is also a private passage to the library where you can immure yourself in the midst of old books—aye, and new ones too. In truth, I scarcely think you could find in all Ireland a house better fitted than this to combine the most perfect concealment with as

much amusement and even exercise as can consist with such a condition."

"And when your uncle Julius comes next," said Mary, "you can enjoy his delightful society. He often visits us, and I am quite sure that your presence will induce him to come still oftener."

"My good friends," said Emily, with a look of alarm, "I beg most earnestly you may say nothing of my retreat to uncle Julius."

Macnamara and his daughter uttered exclamations of surprise. "Good heaven! Not tell Julius! What objection can you possibly have? Would it not gratify you to be visited by a relative so near and so truly excellent?"

"Nevertheless," repeated Emily, "I persevere in my request. Your compliance is essential to my peace of mind. My uncle, in his anxiety to reconcile all parties, might possibly consider it his duty to apprise Sir Hyacinth of my refuge."

"Not, surely, if he promised to be silent," said Macnamara.

“ I would gladly waive the discussion altogether,” said Emily ; “ but I must beg, my dear sir, that you will observe to my uncle the same perfect silence on the subject that I know you will to everybody else.”

Mary bit her lip, and seemed offended. Macnamara was astonished. “ This is odd—extremely odd!” said he. “ I should have thought the occasional company of such an uncle could only be regarded as a solace and a privilege. But Miss Blake doubtless knows her own business best, and I obey her wishes. Yet I cannot conceal my surprise—Good, excellent fellow, Julius ; all heart ! Why, the warmth of his affections always seemed to me to equal the brilliancy of his talents. And *you* don’t wish for the delightful consolation of seeing him ! I do not understand it at all,” he continued ; “ but, as I said, Miss Blake’s commands shall be laws.”

Emily offered no solution of the mystery. She could scarcely have done so

without either outraging truth, or avowing a serious want of confidence in Julius.

Rose, whom I had not yet seen, now tapped at the door, and stated that Brien and Patterson were going home, and wished to bid Miss Blake farewell if she would permit them. They were both admitted. Emily extended a hand to each, which they affectionately pressed to their lips.

“ God bless your ladyship’s honour, miss,” said Jerry; “ I wouldn’t have been asy if I hadn’t seen with my two eyes how you look, after all that you’ve gone through. And indeed, though you haven’t rightly come to your colour yet, I think you’re looking better than I had any right at all to expect.

“ Will I bid my daughter to come here to attend upon you, miss ?” inquired Patterson. Emily was anxious for the services of her faithful soubrette. But she feared less Miss Patterson’s presence at Tullymoran would, of itself, direct suspicion to her retreat ; and she, there-

fore, with reluctance, declined the proposal for the present. The men then departed, imploring blessings on her head. As they quitted the room, Emily emphatically said, "You will not forget your pledge of silence."

"Is it silence you say, jewel dear?" answered Patterson. "Sure we'd die, one and other of us, miss, before we'd betray you."

CHAPTER IX.

“There was at the farther end of her garden a kind of wilderness, in the middle of which ran a soft rivulet, by an arbour of jessamine. In this place I usually passed my retired hours, and read some romantic or poetical tale till the close of evening.”

The Tatler, No. 33.

I COULD fully understand and sympathise in the feelings that made Emily desire the repose of perfect privacy ; but I did not doubt that as time advanced, and the period of Sir Hyacinth’s unnatural attempt receded, the natural elasticity of her mind would display itself, and her present anxiety for concealment gradually diminish.

Meanwhile, Tullymoran was, as its owner pronounced it to be, an admirable refuge for any person who desired to elude the public ken. As the spring advanced, the fair recluse experienced the reviving influences of the season. The soothing

kindness of which she was the object, had its share in restoring her spirits to their former tone. My visits were become so frequent, that my parents began to suspect that Rose or Mary was concerned in them.

“Take care of your heart, Maurice,” was my mother’s advice. “Such an alliance is out of the question, you know; and you could not, I hope, be so base as to ensnare the affections of a lady whom you could not marry.”

“I hope,” said The O’Carroll, who was alarmed on a different score, “that Macnamara never tries to convert you to popery. I am told he has a plausible way of talking about theology; but as matters stand in this country, you might just as well at once tie a stone round your neck and jump into the sea. I had, myself, a hard run for it once before; do *you* stick fast to what we’ve trained and taught you.”

I quieted the fears of both my parents respecting my affections and my orthodoxy.

A turnpike-stair led from Emily's apartments to a small postern, that opened on a private flower-garden, separated by high and close yew-hedges from the other gardens of the mansion. In this sweet quiet spot she ventured to walk occasionally. No doubt the romance of her seclusion had its influence upon my feelings ; but in looking back upon my pilgrimage through life, the period that affects me with the tenderest memories is that of Emily's sojourn at Tullymoran. If the flower-garden were a tiny paradise by day, it was twice a paradise by moonlight. The bright planet shone down upon the vast and venerable mansion ; the balmy fragrance of the evening air, laden with the scent of the sweet briar and jasmin ; the softened beauty of the arbours, trellises, and flower-knots ; the sparkling dew-drops upon flower and leaf ; the note of the cuckoo from the neighbouring woods ; and the exquisite clearness of the atmosphere, all combined to wrap the senses in enchantment. Doubt

and difficulty might attend my fortunes ; but in such a spot, and with such accompaniments, it was easy for the young and buoyant heart to banish despondency and surrender itself to enjoyment. Our evening walks were invariably shared by either Rose or Mary, and often by our host. His affection for Emily was quite paternal.

The days were sometimes passed in the library ; a large room, containing a very miscellaneous collection of books, more abundant than select ; rich in works of Catholic party-politics and history, which often presented a foreign *imprimatur* on the title-page ; although the types that professed to have been set up at Paris, Antwerp, or Brussels, bore convincing marks of an origin much nearer home.

One day Miss Blake and I were amusing ourselves with the tomes the apartment contained. Taking up Puffendorf's Account of European Nations, I remarked that author's brief, contemptuous, and disparaging notice of Ireland. " It is evi-

dent," said I, "that he scarcely considers us a nation."

"Scarcely, indeed," answered Emily, "though the valour of our countrymen has been distinguished on the continent, from Staffardo* to Fontenoy. Ours is a perverse fate. The best materials for national honour and distinction are neutralized by the mutual hatred and jealousy of Irishmen. Before other nations can respect us, we must first respect ourselves. One party in the kingdom must cease to forge shackles for the other."

"From whom did you learn your politics?" I asked.

"Partly from my own reflections; partly from the writings of Henry Brooke, and the conversation of my uncle Julius."

"And you think, Emily, that the reverence of foreign nations and writers for the Irish name would be increased if our

* The battle of Staffardo, near Saluco, in Italy, was fought on the 8th of August, 1690. The Irish brigade, under the command of Mountcashel, distinguished themselves in the engagement.

good host were eligible to a seat in parliament—and if my father had been able to keep his estate without turning his coat?”

“I think,” said she, “that with free trade, free religion, and free parliament, we should be a proud and prosperous people. Without them we shall always be divided and despised.”

Whilst we thus patriotically moralized, Mary Macnamara entered, to announce that Julius was coming up the avenue.

“I wish, my dear Emily,” said she, “that I could induce you to meet him. You have now for some months been more recluse than if you occupied a cloister; and surely the desire for rigid privacy might relax in favour of your uncle!”

But Emily was still inflexible. Julius, I should observe, had made several passing visits at Tullymoran since his niece's arrival there; but the Macnamara family, bound by their promises, never uttered a word to induce a suspicion that Emily was

still unscathed on *terra firma*. I had met him upon two of those occasions ; and I now accompanied Miss Macnamara to the drawing-room. A walk in the woods was proposed ; and whilst the girls went to get their bonnets, Julius, who was left tête-à-tête with me, said :—

“ Upon my word, Maurice, you are becoming rather a frequent visitor here. Who is the attraction, if I may presume to ask—Rose or Mary ? ”

“ Nay, as to Mary,” I answered, in the same light tone, “ you surely do not think I would enter the lists against *you* ? ”

He immediately assumed a tone of grave remonstrance :—“ I am surprised, Maurice, that you can be so indiscreet as to give utterance to such a thought. I am astonished—ashamed ! Let but one whisper of such a thing reach the ears of our friend, or of any of his family, and it is a sentence of banishment to *me* from Tullymoran for ever ; from Tullymoran, Maurice, to which I originally procured *you* a hospitable welcome.”

I confess I was not wholly unmoved by this appeal. Yet, despite the disclaimer of my reverend friend, nothing could appear more certain than that he was paying Mary the attentions which are usually understood to precede matrimony.

“ I am glad,” said I, “ to hear from your own lips that my surmises were mistaken. But since the ice is broken, I must own I feared your affections were becoming entangled before you were aware.”

“ Mind your own affairs, sir !” said Julius, with a sternness I had never previously seen him exhibit. “ I can take care of myself, and must forbid your officious surmises. Your misconstructions are perfectly absurd.”

“ Really, Mr. Blake, I must protest against the tone you think proper to assume. Your frequent interference in my personal affairs has given me, I think, a title to candid remonstrance in yours.”

“ I beg your pardon, my dear Maurice,” said he, resuming in a moment his usual

winning urbanity ; “ if, from a sudden impulse, I spoke harshly, will you forgive me ?” and he took my hand, in token of his wish for amnesty. “ But what a thought you uttered ! Just conceive the impracticability—the difference of faith—the state of the laws—my clerical character——”

“ I *did* consider all those impediments ; and if it had not been for them, I should not have spoken,” answered I.

“ Let us have no more about it,” said Julius ; “ it is a painful topic, and your fancies are perfectly unfounded.”

Despite his protestations, I became more and more convinced that my fancies, as he called them, were extremely well founded. He passed from that topic to another. “ I am going,” said he, “ to Ballymore to-morrow.”

“ For what purpose ?”

“ To be present at the nuptials of my brother and Miss Trench—I see—I know all you are going to say,” he hurriedly

added, in a deprecating tone. " Believe me, I do not approve of the match—quite the reverse. It is painful to think of such a successor to our loved, lost friend. But what can I do? The thing *will* go on : Sir Hyacinth makes it a point I should be present. And I own I am a friend to the policy of showing as much family union as possible to the public. Besides, Maurice, although there may be an objection on the score of the bride-elect's temper and disposition, and in a precipitancy in respect to the time, yet I should not like to cross or thwart my brother by showing any neglect. His feelings have been wofully harassed by the sad, sad loss of my angel Emily." Here Julius put his handkerchief to his eyes, stifled a sob, and looked reverently upwards. " You know not, Maurice, how his heart and health have suffered. I have seen him at moments when the intensity of his affliction nearly amounted to insanity. I reason—I remonstrate—but in vain ! He secludes him-

self at all such periods from his family, and does not re-appear for an hour or two."

In this state of Sir Hyacinth's emotions, I thought I recognized the workings of remorse. My good Julius, thought I to myself, if *you* knew what *I* know—

"I think," said he, "you ought to accompany me to poor Sir Hyacinth's nuptials."

"*Ought?*" repeated I, interrogatively.

"O, I mean that your coming would be an act of benevolence and kindness, and would be very acceptable to Sir Hyacinth."

"I got no invitation, Julius."

"Because he does not know you are here. He has probably sent one to Castle Carroll."

"I own, Julius, I cannot go; nor could I, if I got fifty invitations. I cannot overcome certain recollections of poor Lady Blake; recollections that are connected, too, with Emily."

"I honour your feelings," he said, with a profound sigh. "Need I say that I more

than partake them? Emily was indeed a matchless being. It is some consolation to think that I had a share in forming her admirable mind."

Mary and Rose now entered, attired for their walk. I accompanied the party; and whether it was that my conversation with Julius had sharpened my perspicacity, or that his penchant for Mary was perfectly irrepressible, certain it is that his manner convinced me that a secret understanding existed between them, which could have its origin, on *her* part, in but one source; namely, that Julius, all obstacles notwithstanding, had proffered his hand, and had been accepted. Did Rose observe all this? I cannot tell. As to Mr. Macnamara, there is no doubt that his open, unsuspecting disposition, and his affectionate confidence in Julius, conspired to blind him to what was going forward.

In the cool of the evening Julius pushed on to Ballymore, to attend his brother's nuptials on the morrow.

The local papers were filled with descriptions of the splendour of the ceremony and rejoicings. The attendance was tolerably numerous. But besides those persons over whom the bridegroom had direct control, the company were chiefly composed of the second-rate gentry, who were glad to be the guests of a man of Sir Hyacinth's consequence. And he, on his own part, was glad to have their countenance, such as it was ; for his conscience bitterly told him how slender were his claims on popular respect or sympathy.

There was a pretty fair muster of Trenches. Invitations had been sent to all at Castle Carroll. The only one of our household who went was M'Ginty. The bride was all gentleness and sweetness.

“ This is *so* kind, my dear sir,” she gently murmured, as she pressed the odd man's hand at parting ; “ I had scarcely ventured to promise myself the pleasure of seeing you.”

“ Upon my conscience, cousin Bell,”

replied M'Ginty, " I couldn't deny myself the pleasure of seeing *you* get your due. As soon as I heard you were to be yoked to that devil incarnate, I resolved to be one of the spectators. May he make you as happy as he made his late wife, and that's to break your heart."

So saying, he abruptly departed, and boasted for a week of the bridal compliment with which he had hansom'd the knight's honeymoon.

CHAPTER X.

“ However, it struck upon the vanity of a girl that it may possibly be, his thoughts were as favourable of me, as mine were amorous of him, and as unlikely things as that have happened, if he should make me his wife.”

The Tatler, No. 33.

I WAS seriously perplexed what conduct I ought to adopt with reference to the attachment of Julius to Miss Macnamara. An excessive dislike to unauthorized interference, withheld me from day to day from communicating my sentiments to the lady's father. I was deterred by feelings of delicacy from speaking on the subject to the young lady herself. Julius had already repelled my intervention in a mode that convinced me he was resolved upon his course, whatever that might be. It occurred to me to consult Emily ; but her peculiar position prevented her from remonstrating

with Julius; and I feared to make her sojourn uncomfortable by involving her in any of the family tracasseries. Undecided, yet anxious and interested, I allowed a fortnight to elapse, during which I made several resolutions to apprise Macnamara of his daughter's peril, and weakly abandoned them all.

The library was Emily's favourite resort. It communicated with her private apartments by an unfrequented stair, and it never was approached by any of the domestics. The books it contained greatly interested her curiosity, as many of them were not to be found in the Ballymore collection.

Entirely removed from all external sources of agitation; associating only with kind friends, who loved and valued her; advancing daily in the estimation of her host and his family, she began to taste more of real happiness than she had enjoyed at any former period of her life. Her energetic mind could not brook inactivity; and having at present no other source of occu-

pation, she engaged herself in making extracts from the rare and curious old works in the library.

We were both much interested in the love of the old English poets. There was an especial charm in the picturesque witchery of Ben Jonson. Some of his descriptive lines on Penshurst struck me as being very appropriate to Tullymoran :—

“ Thou joy’st in better marks of soil, of air,
Of wood, of water ; therein thou art fair.
Thou hast thy walks for health as well as sport ;
Thy mount, to which thy Dryads do resort,
Where Pan and Bacchus their high feasts have made,
Beneath the broad beech and the chestnut shade.

* * * * *

Then hath thy orchard fruit, thy garden flow’rs,
Fresh as the air, and new as are the hours.
The early cherry, and the later plum ;
Fig, grape, and quince, each in his time doth come ;
The blushing apricot and woolly peach
Hang on thy walls, that every child may reach.”

“ But Tullymoran,” said I, “ cannot boast a Sir Philip Sidney ; nor do its woods contain

“ ‘That taller tree, that of a nut was set,
At his great birth where all the Muses met.’ ”

“ The qualities,” said Emily, “ that acquired for Astrophel half his renown were merely ephemeral ; his literary efforts, though they seized on the taste of his age, seem dull and uninspired to our modern notions. The Muses would scarcely assemble to celebrate the birth of a second Sir Philip. But his real greatness, his stainless honour and true nobility of soul, have been equalled, I make no doubt, by many members of the gallant race of our good host.”

“ Not by his youngest son, alas !”

“ His youngest son,” said she, “ is a very degenerate Macnamara. But was there never a degenerate Sidney ?”

The day on which this conversation occurred, I had promised to return to Castle Carroll, to be present at an entertainment. I protracted as long as possible the moment of my departure. Four o'clock found me still in the library. Macnamara came to summon me to dinner. When we were assembled in the dining-room,

Mary did not make her appearance. The servants were desired to call her; but the garden and her own apartment were searched in vain. I suggested that she had probably extended her walk through the woods. This surmise quelled anxiety for the first quarter of an hour; but her father and sister then became indescribably uneasy at her protracted absence.

“Go—try the library, my dear fellow,” said Macnamara to me; “or stay—I will go there myself.” We both went; Emily was still there, and her anxious alarm, on hearing the object of our search, nearly equalled that of our host and Rose. Unable to make any consoling suggestion, and, in truth, apprehending that the lovely fugitive was past recall, I was yet withheld from leaving Tullymoran by the very ungracious appearance of deserting my friend in the hour of domestic distress. While we talked away in driftless conjectures, Rose entered the room, evidently in the utmost agitation. In her hand she held an open letter. A

glance at her countenance showed that she had learned her sister's destination. She sank on a chair, literally unable to stand, while her father took from her passive hand the paper, which he hastily perused. Then clasping his hands, he exclaimed,—

“ Good God! and this from *you*, Julius.”

The words terrified poor Emily, who feared her uncle had been guilty of some tremendous escapade. The letter, which was abandoned to my perusal, was from Mary to Rose, who had found it on her sister's dressing-table. Whilst I eagerly devoured its contents, Macnamara continued to exclaim, “ O, Julius! Julius! whom I loved almost as if you were my son! May God give me strength to bear it!”

The letter was as follows :—

“ DEAREST ROSE,

“ I write to you instead of to my dear father, in the full belief that your sisterly affection will plead more effectually

for my pardon than any direct application from myself. Much as I deplore the pain that I know my present step will inflict for a time, yet I derive hope and consolation from my knowledge of the high and noble qualities of *him* who is the companion of my flight, and whose veneration for my father is equal to his affection for me. Julius Blake has long had my heart, and this morning I accepted the offer of his hand. The depth and sincerity of his attachment are evidenced by the sacrifice he thus makes of his hopes and prospects. Oh, dearest Rose, tell my father that his daughter's happiness is committed to the care of one who will devote every hour of his life to promote it. Adieu, my beloved Rose; God bless you. Plead for me with my father. Your fond sister,

“MARY.”

I believe that the person upon whom this letter produced the most painful effect was Emily.

“ My kind and generous friend,” said she, taking Macnamara’s hand, “ I must bid you farewell. The house in which my uncle has taken such a vile advantage of your hospitality is no longer a home for me. I thank you most fervently for the kindness you have heretofore shown me. I feel that I ought not, I cannot, trespass longer on your goodness.”

“ My dear Miss Blake—my dear Emily,” exclaimed the old gentleman, “ do not add to my affliction, I beseech you, by abandoning the shelter of my house. Surely you cannot suppose that the conduct of Julius alters in the slightest degree the sentiments with which I regard you.”

“ Do not leave us, Emily,” said the weeping Rose, taking her hand ; “ stay, and supply to me the place of the sister I have lost.”

Emily was deeply touched by this excessive kindness. She confined herself to the expression of her gratitude ; but she inwardly resolved to take the earliest pos-

sible opportunity of changing her abode. She could not endure the idea of continuing an inmate in a family on whose domestic peace her uncle had inflicted such a wound.

Rose remained in the library with Emily. Macnamara and I repaired to the garden, where the good old man, secure from intrusive observation, gave full vent to his sorrow.

“It is a deadly blow!” said he. “The most painful part of it is the total want of confidence in me that her secrecy displays. And Julius — deep, designing villain! What an outward show of candour and frankness concealed the deadly bolt he was whetting for my happiness!”

“There are doubtless many *désagrémens* in the way,” said I; “yet, if he can bring his mind to relinquish all projects of ambition, and devote himself exclusively to the duties of private life, it is possible that your daughter may yet find the felicity he has taught her to expect.”

“ Perfectly impossible, Maurice. The connexion is too incongruous. It is fraught with dishonour and misery *ab initio*. If he publicly owns her, he flies in the face of the law, and forfeits his professional livelihood for ever. And if he has her *sub rosá*, in what a state of degradation is my daughter placed ! unacknowledged, unrecognized by her husband as his wife ; her disgraceful concealment indispensable not only to his further advancement, but even to his means of subsistence. Look on it how you will, such a union is full of disaster ; full even unto overflowing. O, Maurice ! may you never know the bitter misery of having wayward or disobedient children. My unlucky son’s conduct was painful ; but the pain was trivial when compared with that which Mary has inflicted. I can but repose my hopes on the fidelity of my other children ; and may God grant that this confidence be not misplaced ! ”

There was a calm dignity in the old

man's expression of his sorrow, that commanded admiration and respect.

I told him I was bound by a promise to my father to be at Castle Carroll on the morrow ; I did not, however, mention that the purpose of my engagement was to assist in doing the honours of a fête. I was so little in love with vanity, that I should have gladly remained at Tullymorean, had it been possible ; but I knew that The O'Carroll would have been severely disappointed by my absence.

“ If you have promised your father,” said Macnamara, “ go by all means. It behoves me, Maurice, to preach filial obedience, I have suffered so much from the neglect of it by two of my own children. You must promise me, however, to return at your earliest convenience. Your society was always gratifying ; it will henceforth be a needful solace.”

I repaired to Emily, to announce my immediate departure.

“ I want your advice with respect to my

own movements," said she. " You see at a glance that I *cannot* remain here. Where to go, I know not. Without means—without a home—I have surely occasion, Maurice, for all that strength of mind which you once," she added, with a smile, " complimented me for possessing."

" O, Emily! would to heaven I could offer you a home of my own! Meanwhile, I think your strength of mind should teach you now at last to discard your privacy. So long as you chose to remain at Tullymoran, it was all very well. It gave you, too, a security against intrusion, which was at first indispensable to soothe your tortured mind. But you now have had many months' repose. I see no further use in privacy: show yourself. Demand a maintenance from your father. If he should refuse to give it, I think the courts would certainly enforce it."

" I have still twenty pounds," said she; " it was the last gift from my poor mother."

“Twenty pounds will soon be exhausted,” I answered. “If you would but give me *carte blanche* to deal as I think proper with Sir Hyacinth, I would undertake to get from him as much money as you could possibly want.”

I left Emily to think over this proposal, and was soon trotting merrily along the road to Castle Carroll. By borrowing two or three hours of the night, I reached a snug little road side inn about half-way, where I slept; so that I reached home at an early period the following day.

CHAPTER XI.

“ *Pic.* Show me a defiance.
If I can now commit father and son,
And make my profits out of both : commence
A suit with the old man for his whole estate,
And go to law with the son’s credit.”

BEN JONSON, *The Staple of News.*

THE fête was a noisy, drinking, dancing affair ; differing in no essential particular from the Castle Carroll revelries I have already chronicled.

The elopement of Julius with Mary Macnamara had not yet transpired, and I respected the feelings of her father quite too much to be the first retailer of the information.

I was strongly tempted to confide to The O’Carroll my engagement with Emily, and to request his permission to make Castle Carroll her asylum. Had it been a more

eligible residence, I would certainly have done so : but as often as the project presented itself, I was deterred by the comfortless incongruities of the abode and of its inmates. These, I feared, would disgust Miss Blake beyond endurance before the end of a month. But then, what alternative had she ? Her high spirit could not brook the hospitality of Tullymoran since Julius's exploit. The same cause placed Kilcummin (to which I once had looked as a haven) quite out of the question. I turned in my mind every probable and improbable scheme. Would the chivalrous Jack Walsh open his gates to admit a maiden in distress ? Or would Lady Knockmaroon harbour the persecuted niece of her beloved Julius, and confer on her establishment the éclat of possessing such an inmate ? O, how I desired a competence, however humble—subsistence and the shelter of a roof ; “ Love in a cottage ! ” *Hoc erat in votis*. But people cannot live upon love, no matter how enthusiastic ;

and I was recalled from the pleasing excursions of fancy to the bitter realities of my position.

Sauntering on to Crossnacoppul, I met Jerry Brien.

“ I was just on my way to the big house, to see your honour,” quoth Jerry; “ I heard you were come home, and I wanted to ax how is Miss Emily coming on ?”

“ Indeed, Jerry, her health is good, and her spirits are wonderfully recovered. Do you think any mortal here suspects that she escaped ?”

“ Och, not a bit of it. O yeh ! not at all. By dad ! if there was any notion of the sort, it would have got to Ballymore ; and *then* I’m bail for Miss Trench she never would have married Sir Hycie. Och ! what a bite upon her ladyship it will be, whensomever Miss Emily comes out of her hiding-hole (as I do suppose she will some day), and claims the estate ! Poor thing ! I’ve been thinking this week past of going to see her.”

“ She will not stay long at Tullymoran, Jerry.”

“ Arrah, why? What fault does she find with it?”

“ *That* I cannot tell you at present. But the worst of it is, that she must change her abode; it seems there is no help for it; and she has very little money indeed for such a step.”

“ That is very quare, sir. Has she quarrelled with any of the Tullymoran family, if I may make so bould as to ask?”

“ No, Jerry; she and her friends there never felt more attached to each other.”

“ And yet she must lave them? Burn me if I understand that.”

“ It is true nevertheless. Do not ask the cause, for I cannot gratify your curiosity.”

“ Och, if it's anything your honour doesn't choose to tell, I'm the last man living that would ax your honour. But you say that she's distressed for cash. Why, I'd lay a good wager that I'd get a

hatful of goold from Sir Hycie, if your honour and Miss Emily would only consent to let me take him in hand—*quietly*, you undherstand ; for, of coorse, no noise would be made about the matter.”

“The very idea that occurred to myself,” said I.

“But hould !” cried Jerry, checking himself. “We should have Miss Emily’s lave first. We are upon honour wid Miss Emily not to tell her father she got off.—Whisht ! I have it. We need not tell him she escaped. I’ll say nothing about that. I can manage without it. It is a murder to think so sweet a young lady should be pinched for want of money, while her devil of a father has more cash every day in the year than he knows what to do wid. But blame *me*, Mr. Maurice, if I don’t get enough out of him to set Miss Emily handsomely afloat.”

Leaving Jerry to mature his manœuvres, which I felt might safely be entrusted to his mother-wit, I returned to the house.

In the evening the postboy arrived. The bag contained two letters from my cousin, doctor Blake; one to myself, and the other to my father. The reader will recollect that I had recently written to him in rather indignant terms, requesting his instant discharge of the sixty guineas he had borrowed upon my guarantee. I recognized his writing on the direction of the letter, and I opened it, in the hope—a faint one, I must confess—that its contents would relieve me of anxiety on that head. Judge my surprise on reading the following epistle :—

“DEAR MAURICE,

“You are strangely impatient about those sixty guineas. I could not have conceived you would be so importunate, or I scarcely think I should have asked your assistance in the transaction. But as you are in such a desperate hurry to terminate the affair, I shall consent to authorize your father to pay over that sum

to Messrs. M'Grab and M'Quibble, as my family have a claim upon Castle Carroll to a very much larger amount ; the particulars whereof I have stated to him by the same post that takes you this letter. I trust you will consider this arrangement satisfactory ; and am,

“ Dear Maurice,

“ Your affectionate cousin,

“ THOMAS BLAKE, M.D., M.R.C.S.E.”

“ MAURICE O'CARROLL, ESQ.,

“ &c., &c., &c.”

Breathless with astonishment, I flew to my father, to learn the contents of the doctor's epistle to him. Utterly ignorant of any claim the Blakes could set up against the Castle Carroll property, I was inclined to look on the doctor's assertion as an impudent quiz. Yet I was uneasy ; for that young gentleman's conduct came in aid of my father's old anti-Blake prejudices, to teach me that there was no chi-

cane too base or too vile for him to put in practice, if he had a hope of pecuniary profit thereby. And if there were really anything substantial in the present threat, what a web of evil destiny appeared to entangle our unfortunate family ! The mansion-house, domain, and townland of Castle Carroll were settled on me ; and formed, in truth, the only morçeau of our once large estate, exempted by entail from my father's liabilities. The claim, as stated by my cousin seemed directly to affect this little patrimony. His epistle to my father was as follows :

“ HONOURED UNCLE,

“ I take leave to remind you that by the marriage settlement of my grandfather O'Carroll, bearing date 1697, there was set apart a sum of £3000, chargeable for the benefit of the younger children of my grandfather upon the lands of Castle Carroll and other lands in the said deed mentioned ; and also that by a subsequent

deed, bearing date 1734, the entire of that sum was appointed by my said grandfather to my mother as her marriage portion, and in trust for the issue of her marriage with Horatio Blake, Esquire (my late father), in such several sums as to the survivor of my parents aforesaid should seem proper. I am advised that the said sum of £3000 is a valid and subsisting charge upon the lands of Castle Carroll, and I am instructed to apply to you for payment thereof, with six years' interest, at your earliest convenience. I have taken out administration to my dear departed mother, and am in a position to enforce this claim, in the event of your refusal to discharge the amount. But I trust that you will not be so ill-advised; and that your speedy compliance will avert the expense and annoyance of litigation.

“ I am, honoured Uncle,

“ Your dutiful and affectionate Nephew,

“ THOMAS BLAKE, M.D., M.R.C.S.E.

“ THE O'CARROLL.

“ P.S. Your son Maurice joined me in a promissory note to M‘Grab and M‘Quibble, of Capel Street, for sixty guineas. The note is now several months overdue ; and if you will kindly discharge it, I will allow the amount in the settlement of our family accounts.”

No language can adequately depict my father’s rage at the foregoing epistle. He was wrought to such a pitch of fury that for some time I found it impossible to obtain from him any information with respect. At last, when he got more calm, I repeated the question I had vainly put— Was there any truth in doctor Blake’s allegations ?

“ Yes, the d—d rascal ! The money he claims is his mother’s fortune, which was paid off in full over twenty years ago, as I know to my cost. I took up £1500 of it at six per cent. from old Crabshaw, in order to get rid of the charge, as Bess and her husband got clamorous for the princi-

pal, and gave me no peace till it was paid. No other family charge ever existed against Castle Carroll ; and I am quite sure I have my sister's receipt and her husband's."

" If you have," said I, " I suppose the receipt will protect you. Perhaps the doctor has found the deeds that create the charge, and he goes upon the chance that you may have lost the *discharge*."

" I don't know—I am almost sure that it is quite safe. I threw it where I kept all papers of value—in the black ebony cabinet in my study. I'll go and look."

And The O'Carroll, with a more business-like air than I had ever seen him wear before, immediately went to search for the document. In an hour he returned, much gratified at having found it in a pigeon-hole of his cabinet. By this time M'Ginty and my mother had joined us. The O'Carroll apprized them of the nature of doctor Blake's claim, and triumphantly displayed the receipt, exclaiming that he defied the young doctor, great a rogue as

he might be, to make him pay the money over again.

“Don’t be too sure of that,” said M’Ginty.

“Why—what do you mean?” asked my father; “have I not here a release for the money?”

“Yes—so I see—signed by your sister and her husband. Now, if what your rascally nephew alleges in his letter be true, that release is no protection at all to you; for the money was rendered, by the deed of 1734, divisible among your sister Blake’s children in such portions as their surviving parent should appoint. You ought clearly to have got releases from the children.”

“They weren’t of age at the time.”

“Then your payment was both prematurely and irregularly made, and you must take the consequences. It seems to me that Mrs. Blake had only a life interest in the money, and you paid it to her absolutely. If you have deviated from any

essential provision of the deed, you are, I fear, unquestionably liable to this rascally demand."

This was alarming information, and was given with method and distinctness, as if Mr. M'Ginty knew what he was about.

"You are no lawyer, M'Ginty," said my father.

"I am not a lawyer, it is true; but I have consorted a great deal with rogues, in the course of my life; and often with legal rogues, who could swindle you, according to law, out of all you possessed in the world, in the most reputable, conscientious style imaginable. My experience did not quite go for nothing. But you ought to consult a good lawyer at once."

"Then you think the case is not quite hopeless?" said I.

"I am sure I cannot tell. Perhaps your doctor misstates the deed of 1734, and that it does not in reality establish a right for Mrs. Blake's issue. Next, there might be twenty points of law that would

upset the claim—with respect to which I am quite ignorant. All I know is, that assuming the doctor's facts to be correct, the release, or acknowledgment that you possess, is no protection to you. You may have paid the money into the wrong pocket.”

Here was a pleasant prospect! Super-added to our previous afflictions, a swindling law-suit now threatened to swamp the only remnant I had hoped to possess of our family inheritance. If a dream of offering to Emily a home at Castle Carroll had floated in my fancy, it was now dispelled. Black ruin seemed to stare us in the face. I had a very great dread of the sly, insinuating, persevering, unprincipled doctor. I anticipated that we should find him a more dangerous opponent than a whole host of the creditors my father had so long kept at bay. The very nature of the present demand was in itself evidence that its authors would stop at nothing to enforce it.

I could not terrify the doctor by “ calling him out ;” for the doctor had shown in the affair with Bodkin that he would not fight ; and even if he should, nay, even if I winged or killed him, there were still the rest of the brotherhood, Michael the man of business, Henry the warrior, and Tom the beauty, to be dealt with in succession.

CHAPTER XII.

“ *Med.* The laws who have a noose to crack his neck,
As Justice Bramble tells him, who doth peck,
A hundred pound out of his purse.”

A Tale of a Tub.

“ Now here be a rogue and an honest man. Marry,
the honest man shall outwit the rogue.”

The Moody Vintner.

TONY O'BRALLAGHAN was incontinently summoned by my father to prepare forthwith a case for counsel. But alarming as was the claim of the doctor, it did not so entirely engross my thoughts as to exclude Emily and her interests. On the second or third morning after my interview with Jerry Brien, that honest fellow, having obtained admission from old Martin, stole into my bedroom on tiptoe before I had risen.

“ How have you fared ?” I inquired.

“ Famously !” cried Jerry. “ Och, by the powers ! it was a complete job. See

here," continued he, jingling guineas in a bag, "Miss Emily may stay, or go, or coach, or ride, as she plazes. Here's what makes the mare go, faith!"

"How much have you got?"

"There's a hundred guineas here, sir—devil a farthing less; and I protest I think if I had stood out for more I could have got them."

"How did you manage?"

"Cutely, your honour. I knew who I had to dale wid, and I took my measures. I went to Patterson first, and tould him what I was about. He came with me into the domain, but I walked up to the house alone. I axed to see his honour Sir Hycie. The footmen wouldn't bring my message to him. I suppose they thought he was too grand to see the likes of me. They wanted to know my business. I tould them it was on business of their master's I came. 'Then tell it to the steward, or put it in writing,' was the answer. Any way, they wouldn't let me get speech of him. So I

had to wait till he came out. He walked into the shrubbery, and by good luck he was alone. I took off my hat, and begged liberty to say a few words to his honour in private.

“ ‘ Who the devil are you ? ’ says his honour.

“ ‘ I am Jeremiah Brien of Coolfadha, at your honour’s service.’

“ ‘ And what do you want with me ? Quick ! I’m in haste,’ cries his honour.

“ ‘ As quick as I can, sir,’ says I. ‘ Your honour will remember that day that Miss Emily—pace be with her sowl !—tumbled into the say.’

“ ‘ Yes ; what about it ? ’ cries Sir Hycie, mighty quick ; for I promise you he looked mighty unaisy at the mintion of it.

“ ‘ *I remimber it too,*’ says I ; ‘ *for I was looking at your honour all the time,*’ says I.

“ ‘ What the devil do you mane, sir ? ’ says he, mighty angry *morri-é* ; but faith ! he got as white as a sheet, and trembled like a leaf.

“ ‘ I mane that I saw what your honour done,’ says I ; and as I said it I looked up straight and steady in his face.

“ ‘ You saw me try to save my child,’ says he ; and the words seemed to stick in his throat.

“ ‘ I saw you push her off the crag into the water,’ says I.

“ ‘ How dare you presume to belie me to my face,’ cries Sir Hycie in a rage ; and yet every inch of him was trembling with the fright.

“ ‘ You well know I don’t belie you, Sir Hyacinth,’ says I.

“ ‘ You may make a mistake, though,’ says he, getting civiler all of a sudden.

“ ‘ I wish I could think so,’ says I.

“ ‘ Brien,’ says his honour, ‘ I believe I was a little hasty. You are, I make no doubt, a good, honest fellow ; but you’ve taken a most extraordinary notion into your head. Come to the house, and let us talk a little over it. I can make it your advantage to understand the matter pro-

perly. Let us enter by this private door,' says he; 'nobody will see us, and it's just as well they shouldn't.'

"With that he took a latch-key out of his pocket, and opened a small door in the side of the house. I followed him, saying nothing, and we went up an out-o'-the-way sort of backstairs and into a small dark passage, and from that into a little room with presses and boxes, and the like; and as soon as we were in it, he locked the door and put the key in his pocket.

" 'Now my buck,' says he, 'd—n me! but I'll make you sorry you ever came here on such an errand.. You will accuse me, will you?—of murdering my daughter; why, d—n you, you scum of a Papist rascal, who the devil do you think would hearken to your slanders against such a one as I am? but you're in my power now,' says he with a grin like the devil; 'nobody saw you coming into this house; nobody could hear you, if you bellowed yourself hoarse. There's many ways of

helping a troublesome fellow out of the world, and disposing of him after. You've signed your own death-warrant, you simple ommadhaun, in meddling wid *me*.'

“ ‘Yerra, now, Sir Hyacinth,’ says I, ‘did your honour think I was such a raw bos-thoon entirely, as to follow you up here, afther what I seen your honour do to your own daughter, without making provision against danger?’ and I pulled out a loaded pistol and held it presented at him; ‘offer to touch me, Sir Hycie,’ says I, ‘and by this and by that you’re a dead man! You think I wouldn’t be believed because I’m a Papist, as you call it. Whisper, Sir Hyacinth, jewel! there’s a Protestant that saw every bit of the business the day that you settled Miss Emily, Sam Patterson by name: you may have heard of him. He is at this very moment in your honour’s park, waiting for me; he knows I came to see you; he knows what brought me. Depind upon it, if I was to be missing he’d kick

up a dust about it, Papist as I am, that maybe your honour wouldn't like.'

“The sight of the pistol made Sir Hycie very civil. ‘Where could you be that day,’ he axed me, ‘and I not to see you?’

“‘Not seven yards away from your honour,’ says I, ‘in a spot that I’d show you, if you’d come there along wid me. You looked about on all sides, afore you done the job, to see if e’er a one was watching you—and you never seen them that was watching you close enough. You never thought of God’s eye, that was looking at you all the time.

“‘You want money,’ says Sir Hycie.

“‘I do, sir,’ says I.

“‘How much?’ says he.

“‘A hundred guineas, if you plase, sir,’ says I. He went over to one of the presses and took out the money.

“‘I would give you five times that,’ says he, ‘if you’d go to America.’

“‘I thank your honour,’ I made answer, ‘I’m satisfied wid Connaught; and

maybe you might give me something more now and agin.'

“ ‘Jerry Brien,’ says he, ‘by all you hould sacred,’ says he, ‘I conjure you to hould your tongue about this business,’ says he. ‘You see I can be generous, and there’s more where that came from,’ says he, as he counted out the guineas.

“ ‘Sir Hyacinth,’ says I, keeping my finger on the trigger of the pistol (for I didn’t trust him half a moment), ‘open that door,’ says I, ‘and see me down stairs out of the house,’ says I. ‘You have made it worth my while to hould my tongue,’ says I, ‘and depind upon it I won’t talk while your honour gives me such good raison to be silent.’

“ He saw me civilly out of the house, undher terror of the pistol—I went out the same way he brought me in. I’d have come to your honour last night, Masther Maurice, with the goold for Miss Emily, only that I had to be at work on a little job of Patterson’s. But there’s the goold,

sir, and take it to Miss Emily as soon as you can, and my hearty blessing along wid it."

I complimented Jerry on the intrepidity and adroitness he had displayed in his management of the delicate mission to Sir Hyacinth. We were both agreed that the baronet would plot his destruction and Patterson's, now that he was aware they had got possession of his secret. But Jerry was unappalled at this probability.

"I'll put my trust in God," said he, "and fear nothing. His honour may get up a charge against me, of anything he likes. But if he does, there's Miss Emily, who, I'm sure and sartain, if she saw me in danger, would come forward to save me. Faith, *her* resurrection may turn out an ugly business for her father yet."

Possessed of the gold, I took an early opportunity of presenting myself at Tullymoran. The family were suffering bitterly from Mary's elopement. More than a week had now elapsed since she left her

father's roof. In a day or two after my arrival, the following letter came, addressed to Rose by her ill-starred sister :

“ Woodbine Bower, near Kilcummin.

“ MY DEAREST ROSE,

“ I am inexpressibly grieved at not having received a line from you, just to say that you and my dear father love me still. Do not tell me you did not know where to address me ; you could have written under cover to Julius, at his rectory.

“ If all were right at home, I should be very happy here. No one could be kinder than my husband ; every word and act of his, evinces the devotion of his heart to my felicity. This cottage is a perfect terrestrial paradise. It is small, but in exquisite taste, and surrounded with a charming garden. Julius has engaged it for a twelve-month. It is about a mile from the glebe house, and the way leads chiefly through an unfrequented wood. The privacy of the

situation was a principal inducement, as I cannot reside at the glebe, and this sequestered spot is the very thing for an incognita. O, my dear Rose, you would not blame me for the step I have taken, if you did but know the incomparable excellences of temper, character, and disposition, that are daily, nay hourly, developing themselves in the partner of my lot. I trust that my beloved father does not look on him with any angry feelings. I should infinitely rather be myself the object of censure. As soon as he disengages himself from the daily duties with his few parishioners, he steals away to this rustic retreat, and here, amidst embowering roses, jessamine, and honeysuckle, the hours are devoted to intellectual enjoyment. We read, we converse, and he often enlivens the evenings with his flute. O, Rose, tell me—tell me that my father has forgiven me, and my happiness will be complete. Surely he cannot be inexorably angry at my selecting one who has both a *head* and a

heart. His affections are as warm as his intellect is brilliant.

“ The clergyman by whom we were married congratulated me warmly on having secured a husband for whom many women of merit and distinction had sighed in vain.

“ Adieu, my dearest sister. Say for me to my father everything your good heart prompts. Ever your affectionate

“ MARY BLAKE.”

“ Poor, hapless girl!” exclaimed Mr. Macnamara; “ most readily would I forgive her, if I could thereby render her happiness permanent. All is sunshine still, it seems. She does not yet begin to feel the unspeakable bitterness of her position. Time enough for that—and too soon when it comes.”

From Mary and her woodbine paradise, we passed to the subject of Emily. Macnamara begged I would use my influence to induce her to prolong her stay at Tullymoran. “ She wrongs me much,” said

he, " if she thinks that the conduct of her uncle abates in the smallest degree the sincerity of my welcome for her. The poor thing was driven by adverse storms into this safe and quiet haven ; and my strongest desire is that it should continue to be what it has been to her—a shelter and a home."

CHAPTER XIII.

“ How charming is Divine philosophy ;
 Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as is Apollo’s lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.”

MILTON.

EMILY’S objections to remain at Tullymoran were insurmountable. She was greatly surprised at the supply of money I produced, and still more so at the mode of its acquisition. The question was now, whither should she turn her steps ?

“ If it were not that the habits of Castle Carroll,” said I, “ would make it intolerable to you as a residence, I should have long ago begged you would honour us by making it your home.”

“ What are the habits you speak of ?” she asked ; “ none of you, I hope, have got

a habit of throwing superfluous young ladies into the sea?"

"Not quite so bad as that," I replied; "though indeed I would not answer for M'Ginty if you happened to offend him. But, dearest Emily, can I hope you would consent to come? Shall I desire my mother to prepare an apartment for your reception?"

A sigh escaped me, as I thought of the Blake claim for £3000, with interest, and the ruinous results which litigation, whether successful or not, would probably entail upon my patrimony.

"Whence that sigh, Maurice? Do you repent your invitation even before I have accepted it?"

"No, Emily; but my mind reverted to a new source of sorrow—one which, in fact, has arisen within the last week." I then stated to her doctor Blake's modest request to be paid his mother's fortune over again; although my father was still paying interest for money he had borrowed

more than twenty years ago to make up the amount.

“It is certainly very like what would happen to Castle Carroll,” said she; “I hope the star of your destinies may change; but there are men, Maurice—I trust you may show yourself one of them—who are superior to what is called destiny. Many misfortunes have been entailed upon you by others. The worst are generally those which a man entails upon himself.”

“Very sententious, fair lady. And now, with so much wisdom to bestow upon me, have you left sufficient for yourself to guide you to an advantageous residence?”

“I think,” said she, “from what you say of Castle Carroll, and, indeed, from what I know of it, I should be exceedingly uncomfortable there, just at present. I am in doubt whether to take a lodging in some retired part of Dublin or its environs, or to seek the hospitality of one of my mother’s Barnewall relations.”

“Do you know any of them personally?”

“No; but the relative I mean has often been mentioned to me by Lady Blake. He is now an old man, and in the humble condition of a farmer. His father lost his all after the Revolution, and sank quietly into the rank of a tiller of the ground.”

“Has your relation any children?”

“I believe he has both sons and daughters. I have thought of going to reside with him, partly from the obscurity of his condition and the retirement of his abode; and partly, because my mother, who in her youth had known him well, often spoke of his high sense of honour and his friendly disposition.”

“Where does he live?”

“At a farm called the Scrub, three or four miles from the high road, about half way between this and Athlone.”

“Such a residence would never suit you, Emily. Accustomed all your life to luxury and splendour, the transition to the fare, the accommodation, and the humble company of a farm-house would exceedingly disgust you.”

“Not as much as you think, perhaps,” said she; “but at any rate I am strongly tempted to try.”

“If you persevere in your purpose of privacy,” said I; “weigh well the consequences of committing your secret to a new set of confidants.”

We discussed the topic for some time; and it was at last agreed that Miss Blake should visit her rustic cousin; and if his abode seemed endurable, establish herself there for the present.

Macnamara renewed his hospitable request that she should stay at Tullymoran; and when he found she was inexorable, he proposed to ride with her to Barnewall's cottage; an offer that evinced the affectionate interest she excited, much more than any of his previous acts of kindness; for his habits were, for many years, so formed to the seclusion of Tullymoran that it had become quite irksome to him to stir beyond its precincts.

“I knew your cousin Barnewall very

well in my younger days," said he ; " he received in early life strong encouragement to enter the military service of France, but notwithstanding a good deal of family interest there, he resisted the charms of a brilliant profession, and has plodded through life unnoticed and unknown ; from a mal-du-pays that would not let him quit his native land."

We set out in our host's chariot. Miss Blake's appearance excited but little curiosity among the attendants, who did not know her, and by whom she was surmised to be a relation of their master's. A little bit of mystery (as times then went) was too common an occurrence at the mansion of a Catholic gentleman to elicit much surprise or inquiry. The carriage was left at the village of ——, and thence Emily and I, under Macnamara's guidance, proceeded to " the Scrub" on foot.

The name of the farm was derived from a wilderness of ancient hawthorns, now in all their summer loveliness. The milk-

white flowers exhaled their delicious fragrance on the evening breeze as we followed the narrow path that led to Barnewall's dwelling. This was a mere farmhouse, rather of the better sort ; but without any of the ornamental adjuncts of flower-knots or shrubbery, with which a decayed gentleman, in such a habitation, sometimes displays traces of his former condition. The farm-yard was in front of the house ; and, to judge from its contents, Mr. Barnewall's chief wealth apparently consisted in cattle. The cows had been driven home to the milking, and Macnamara was connoisseur enough to admire their points. A very handsome girl, followed by a train of damsels, emerged from the house ; the whole party were furnished with pails, and prepared for the business of the evening. Approaching the fair leader of this phalanx, we inquired her name. " Bessy Barnewall," she answered, with a modest curtsy.

“ Is your father at home ?” asked Macnamara.

“ He is, sir,” replied Bessy, whose language and manners were those of a peasant. Not a trace of former aristocracy was visible.

“ Can we see him ?”

“ Certainly, sir,” and pretty Bessy tripped into the cottage to summon her father. Old Barnewall presently made his appearance. Despite freize coat, felt hat, and clouted shoe, there was a certain air of dignity in his address, that told of an origin higher than his present state. He easily recognized Macnamara, although many years had elapsed since they last met. The greeting on both sides was affectionate. Macnamara presented Miss Blake and myself to the old farmer, who did not attempt to conceal his astonishment at our visit. So completely apart did he live from the highway of the world, that matters of far more pressing public interest than the domestic calamities of

Ballymore rarely reached him. He had not heard of the death of his cousin, Lady Blake ; the information now affected him much ; and it was quite with a fatherly manner that he extended his hand to Emily, and assured her of his satisfaction at receiving the daughter of his deceased friend. It was curious to see how the easy good breeding of his original habits had survived more than half a century's exclusive association with the lower orders.

“ We have taken a great liberty with you, sir,” said Macnamara ; “ we have come to ask you whether you can conveniently permit your relative, Miss Blake, to remain for some time in your house in strict seclusion. Circumstances have arisen that render her residence under her father's roof quite impossible. For several months she has been my guest at Tullymoran ; I heartily wish I could prevail on her to be so still ; but having persuaded herself of the necessity of a change, she has thought of you, and trusts you can afford her the accommodation of an apartment.”

“I shall feel most happy,” replied Barnewall; “I only regret that Miss Blake will find everything here so different from all she has been accustomed to.”

“Why, Barnewall, it is true that your father could once see guests in a more sumptuous style than you can; but a welcome and privacy are all my young friend wants or wishes.”

“And those she shall certainly have,” replied the farmer; “but will you think me impertinent for asking what circumstances—for they must indeed be extraordinary—can have induced Miss Blake to seek such a residence as I can offer her?”

“At a future period you shall know, sir,” said Emily; “but I would gladly avoid entering on the detail just at present.”

“As you please, my dear,” said Barnewall; and he led the way into his house, where he told us to be seated, in an apartment that scarcely merited the name of parlour. His sons soon came in from the

fields—two goodly youths; personal comeliness was lavishly scattered in this family; but although they appeared quite at their ease, it was the ease of civil and respectful peasants—not of gentlemen. Bessy, when the cows were milked, joined our party, and soon bestirred herself in getting tea ready.

The years that had passed since Barnewall and Macnamara last met in friendly intercourse seemed to both the old men to have vanished. Their ancient intimacy sprang at once into renewed existence.

“If you had followed the French banner many a long year ago, Barnewall, you might have been exalting the military fame of Ireland at Ramilies, and Denain, and Fontenoy. Who can tell but you might now wield a marechale’s baton?”

“Who can tell but I might have been long ago knocked on the head?” replied Barnewall with a smile; “to be sure, if I had taken Count Barnewall’s advice to enter the French service, I might have

kept up our family dignity—that is, if I had the luck to escape a bullet; no doubt we once held our heads higher than we do—*Fuimus Troës*. I sometimes tell these lads here,” (pointing to his sons) “that I am the son of a gentleman, but *they* are the sons of a peasant; and what does it signify, after all? I do assure you there is just as much happiness in our present rank as in any other. Give me the ‘*mens conscia recti, nullâ pallescere culpâ* ;’ and it matters not whether I am dressed in a freize coat or in a laced suit. When the grave closes over us, what will our pedigrees and titles avail? and then as to enjoyment in this life—why, sir, I am perverse enough to enjoy the lowing of the kine, the fragrance of the hawthorn groves, and the cares of a pastoral farm, much more than the intercourse of polished and profligate courtiers, or even a hollow smile now and then from King Louis.”

“I am glad,” said I, “to perceive that you treat these matters so very philosophically.”

“ I treat them, I hope, as a Christian ought,” replied the old man. “ He who thinks as deeply on futurity as its boundless importance demands, must arrive at the conclusion that all things here are but shadows : it is only in the world beyond the grave that we shall find realities. Let us busy ourselves about the realities, and let the shadows vanish, even as they are passing away.”

“ I wish,” said Macnamara, with a sigh, “ that I could arrive at your indifference to sublunary things. I do confess that my mind is strongly and painfully affected by misfortune — by the misfortune, for instance, of filial ingratitude.”

“ That, I thank God, is an evil I have not to deplore ;” and as old Barnewall said this, he looked round with affectionate pride upon his children. “ As to other evils—you must not esteem my resignation too highly. It is easy to be resigned to the deprivation of wealth that took place nearly seventy years ago. I was then but

a boy of six years old, and I remember as if it were but yesterday our departure for the last time from our family home. I felt it acutely—child though I was, I felt it with the bitterness of maturer years. But the king whom my father served lost his crown; a heavier loss than that of our estate. We had this consolation—that our land was not wasted by debt, or dissipation, or extravagant living: we lost it in the cause of loyalty and honour. Why should I repine? What have I to wish for? Half a mile hence is the graveyard, of which I must soon be a tenant. The best corrective for inordinate anxiety about temporal affairs is to occupy the mind with the great and eternal concerns that must, one day, press upon us—whether we will or no—and that speedily. The longest life is very short.”

Every word the old man uttered strengthened Emily's purpose to become for awhile an inmate of his house. True, his habitation was uncouth, and its accommodations

were scanty ; but the little apartment that was appropriated to her use might easily be rendered more commodious. She could get some books there ; and she hoped to derive benefit from the christian wisdom of her host. His relationship to her beloved mother had predisposed her to like him ; and her prepossession in his favour was confirmed by his kindness, and by the sentiments to which he unaffectedly gave utterance.

His children had imbibed his principles ; but their manners belonged to a totally different class of society.

After tea, Macnamara and I rose to return to the village, and at parting I promised Emily to visit her at the earliest moment I could escape from Castle Carroll.

“ I wish to heaven,” said I, as we strolled together a few paces through the hawthorn thickets, “ that you would give me a legal title to protect you.”

“ I have already told you, Maurice, that I shall not marry until I am twenty-one.

As matters stand just now, it is plain our union would only be the source of fresh embarrassments."

"Adieu, then, dearest Emily. I trust that ere the period you mention we may be extricated from all our difficulties."

CHAPTER XIV.

“ Look ! he follows me.”

DR. DONNE.

THE lawyer before whom our case was laid, pronounced unfavourably. He put some queries relative to the registry of the deeds of 1697 and 1734 ; and also with reference to the registration of The O’Carroll’s marriage settlements. Tony O’Brallaghan was to make the requisite search on his next visit to Dublin.

Time sped apace ; I occasionally visited the Macnamaras, and I often went to see Emily, who continued during the summer and autumn an inmate of Barnewall’s cottage.

Macnamara still refused to receive Mrs.

Julius Blake at Tullymoran, although she repeatedly implored, through Rose, permission to visit him. It was infinitely painful to Rose to perceive that the rapturous style in which her sister at first spoke of Julius's affection and her own happiness became gradually exchanged for a tone of discontent, which was not the less manifest that the writer did not make any specific complaint. The public papers occasionally mentioned Julius's name in the Viceroy's dinner lists; so that it was evident he was often absent from his rural paradise.

Emily, during her residence at Tullymoran, had abstained from attending public worship. She now resolved on going to the parish church, convinced that in such a sequestered spot she would incur no risk of recognition; especially as the Protestant parishioners only amounted to four individuals, and service was performed by the stupid and purblind old curate of a non-resident rector. She continued to make

one of this small flock for several Sundays. One morning she observed some slight tokens of a deviation from the usual quiescence of the sabbath ; there was an addition of one or two well-dressed persons to the congregation ; a subdued excitement was perceptible ; looks of expectation were directed to the door leading to the vestry room ; and after some delay there issued thence two clerical figures, whereof one was the Reverend Robert FitzEustace.

To avoid his observation was Emily's first impulse ; and she turned her head aside, in the hope that he had not recognized her. The service was most impressively read ; nor did the reverend gentleman by word or look indicate that he was cognizant of her presence ; until, when alluding in his sermon to the passage of the Israelites through the sea, he observed, *par parenthése*, that the same divine power that in days of old thus preserved the chosen people, had more recently been exercised in rescuing a daughter of the

Christian faith from the perils of the deep. His half-dozen hearers were, perhaps, a little mystified, but he cared not ; for he had accomplished his object of apprizing Miss Blake that he was aware of her presence. Immediately on the conclusion of the sermon she left the church, and was proceeding rapidly homewards.

She walked on, hoping to avoid a rencontre with her reverend admirer ; but just as she was congratulating herself on having succeeded, she heard the sound of a horse's feet in full chase along the church-yard path ; and in a few moments FitzEustace, springing from his saddle, stood at her side.

“ Miss Blake ! I am equally charmed and astonished ! At first I could scarcely believe the evidence of my eyes ! Why, we had all supposed that you were converted into coral by this time, or else that you were transformed into a most fascinating sea-nymph. May I venture to ask for a solution of the mystery ? ”

“I fell from a crag near Ballymore Point into the water, and was promptly rescued. You will oblige me, Mr. FitzEustace, by inquiring no further.”

“Your wishes are, as usual, laws,” replied he with a bow; “but you will, at least, permit me to express my delight at finding you quite safe on *terrâ firmâ*. And really you look most charmingly—a second Venus risen from the sea. I had once, you may recollect, a submarine adventure in that same bay of Ballymore, and was rescued by a son of The O’Carroll’s. May I ask if you are staying in this neighbourhood at present?”

“Yes.”

“That is delightful! I have just been appointed to this parish by my father; and I need scarcely say that the pleasure of renewing our intercourse will be a strong inducement to me to come frequently among the savages here.”

“You must excuse me, Mr. FitzEustace; there are reasons why your visits

would be as improper as they certainly would be unwelcome."

"Why this cruelty, Miss Blake? How have I merited your coldness?—your severity? Is it that you have heard the rumour that connected my name with that of Miss O'Callaghan?"

"I heard no such rumour, sir; and I am quite indifferent to its existence."

"For I can assure you," he continued, unheeding her interruption, "that the arrangement in question was entered into, in the full belief that you had ceased to exist. It presents no obstacle; for as it was formed under a misconception, I am perfectly convinced Miss O'Callaghan would never insist on its fulfilment."

"Sir," said Emily with dignity, "I have always been perfectly explicit as to my decided rejection of your suit. You cannot have misunderstood me. Is it because you find me here alone and unprotected, that you venture to harass me with the importunate renewal of a subject on

which I have decisively answered you long ago?"

"Nay, madam, if you persevere in your rigour, I have done. But, by Jove! you must pardon the enthusiasm that forced to my lips the topic nearest to my heart; and if I have erred, you must consider also my surprise at thus suddenly meeting the object of my fondest affections, whom I had supposed to have perished many months ago."

"Let the topic be ended for ever," said Emily.

"As you please," replied FitzEustace, with a bow. "But am I forbidden to ask whether Sir Hyacinth is aware of your being here? For when I was last at Ballymore, he professed the greatest grief for your loss."

"That, sir, is also a question I decline to answer."

"You move in a cloud of mystery," said FitzEustace, "and mystery doubtless has its charms. But," he gravely added,

“ as it seems to me probable that Sir Hyacinth is ignorant of your habitation—perhaps of your existence—it may become my duty as a clergyman to apprize him of my accidental discovery of both. You are too young, too inexperienced, and (pardon me) too lovely, to render prudent your sojourn in such a spot as this, where there

cibleable with his characteristic nonchalance ; but he was now strongly influenced by curiosity, which was greatly increased by Miss Blake's evident reluctance to gratify it. I had arrived from Tullymoran a few minutes previously, and emerged from the cottage just as FitzEustace was making his adieus. " Ah, Mr. O'Carroll—happy to see you," said he, offering his hand, whilst his countenance displayed the surprise to which his tongue denied utterance. He then raised his hat, and, gracefully bowing, took his departure.

" An unlucky rencontre," said Emily.

" Perhaps not," answered I. " He may, indeed, tell Sir Hyacinth where you are ; yet that is not so certain ; for it is said that he has quarrelled with your father. But if he betrays your secret, and if Sir Hyacinth should be mad enough to try to resume parental authority over you—O ! Emily, let me again entreat you to give me a legal title to protect you."

She placed her finger on her lips.

“ Hush ! here comes Mr. Barnewall—No romance !”

We accompanied the old man into the cottage. The conversation turned on his family reverses ; and he showed us—not in the spirit of boast or ostentation, but simply as matters of historical and antiquarian curiosity—two autograph letters addressed to his father by King James the Second. They were dated, “ Dublin Castle, 1689,” and bore warm testimony to the worth and valour of the elder Barnewall, who was a colonel in his majesty’s army, and a member of parliament for one of the western counties.

“ It is indeed curious,” said the old farmer, “ that I, whose father was trusted by royalty, and whose ancestors have moved in courts, should find myself placed on a level with the lowly sons of labour, whose progenitors have tilled the earth and tended the herds in all past generations. Many a family of your *novi homines* would be proud to possess these royal relics, to-

gether with some other curious family memorials I happen to have. Yet here we are—peasants!—and peasants in all likelihood we are destined to remain. Such are the chances of this world. God be praised, who has taught us contentment! who has trained us to thank him for the blessings we possess, and to anchor our hope on eternity.”

The year was passing rapidly away; for Time is swift, whether his course be strewed with pleasures or encumbered with cares. Our cares indeed were heavy; and I often asked myself if the ruin that threatened Castle Carroll would find me as resigned as old Barnewall’s family were in the humble lot to which their fortunes had consigned them. True; there is a difference between the loss we sustain in our own persons, and that which we chiefly know by traditionary record. But the tradition in Barnewall’s case was so vivid as almost to possess the force of a passing reality. He had trained his mind not only

to resignation, but to happiness, by the simple process of weighing earth and heaven at their real relative values. His example awakened within me those solemn sentiments of which I had first become distinctly conscious from witnessing the unfeigned religious emotions of Jerry Brien. Such society formed a most useful contrast to that which I too frequently met ; and I ventured to hope I might in time imitate an example whereof even now I could appreciate the excellence.

We had now reached the month of October. The "long vacation" had been spent in the dreary expectation of the bill in equity that doctor Blake threatened to file against my father early in the November term. Our lawyers said that some points might be urged in our favour ; but they did not encourage us to anticipate success.

CHAPTER XV.

“ His patience I provoke,
Mistake, confound, object at all he spoke :
But as coarse iron, sharpened, mangles more,
And itch most hurts when angered to a sore ;
So when you plague a fool, 'tis still the curse,
You only make the matter worse and worse.”

Dr. Donne's Satires, Versified by Pope.

IN October an event occurred of so much public importance as to supersede for awhile the private cares arising from domestic events.

King George the Second died. The political world was in full commotion. The worshippers of the rising sun, the speculators on changes of measures and of ministers ; all who had any thing to hope or to fear were up and stirring.

The pulpits were loud in affectionate reminiscences of the departed father of his people, and in loyal adulation of his successor. Their praise was laid on with

various degrees of skill : some divines flattered coarsely, and daubed with clumsy eulogy the objects of their panegyric. Others, more dexterous, administered their incense with greater economy. Every one appeared to keep a steady eye upon the court. But of all who preached and praised, Julius was pronounced to be the most successful. His sermon was printed in the newspapers, and published in a pamphlet. It was, indeed, a very able composition of its class. Its distinguishing feature was the adroitness wherewith Julius contrived to surround a man of very so-so morals with a halo of sanctity, and yet avoided to outrage good taste and common sense with ^{an} overstrained encomiums on the royal profligate. Much was suggested, or insinuated ; nothing was directly asserted, in praise of his Majesty's private and personal character ; the grand eulogistic bouquet was reserved for his sacred zeal for the Protestant religion ; and the preacher duly chronicled the proofs of divine appro-

bation accorded to his defunct Majesty's merits, in the victory given to the royal house of Brunwick over the domestic enemies who, some few years back, had attempted to restore the scion of an outcast popish race. There was a delicate hope expressed that the youthful king might emulate the virtues of his sire.

November term passed, without the commencement of legal hostilities on the part of doctor Blake. This delay was occasioned by the hope of a compromise, with which our legal adviser managed to amuse the doctor. The reprieve, although a short one, raised my father's spirits. Constitutionally sanguine, despite all his misfortunes, he flattered himself that the enemy had finally retreated, and suffered no anxious foreboding to mar his hilarity. To mark his exultation, he resolved on giving a large dinner party. The guests included most of the neighbouring gentry. Sir Hyacinth Blake was asked, although not with my mother's concurrence. His precipitate marriage had increased her strong prejudice against him,

Hyacinth Blake

and actually excited suspicions which, vague and undefined as they were, hovered marvellously near the horrible truth. But my father would or could see none of this. He was anxious for a full and jovial gathering. Sir Hyacinth on his own part felt desirous to receive the countenance of his neighbours; for his affrighted conscience told him that if Jerry Brien or Patterson—the present depositories of his guilty secret—should reveal his crime, neither his rank nor influence could save him from being hunted with universal execration from the pale of society. Had the new Lady Blake been invited along with him, Madame O'Carroll would have raised a successful rebellion, so strong was her dislike of the *ci-devant* Bell Trench; but the contemplated entertainment was to be exclusively a gentlemen's party, to which the canvass, which already anticipated the coming elections, would necessarily give a political turn.

On the appointed day our guests assem-

bled a little before dinner. The conversation turned on the elections ; the parliament was to dissolve six months from the death of the late sovereign, and a sharp contest was expected in our county, for which Sir Hyacinth Blake intended to offer himself. He had, at the previous election, been a candidate, but his opponent carried the day by a very large majority. He was trying to conciliate the support of some influential gentlemen, when dinner was announced, and the war of politics was suspended for a while by a more pleasing occupation. Jack Walsh acted as croupier. At his left sat M'Ginty, whilst the baronet was seated near the upper end of the table, on the opposite side.

“ How marvellously civil Sir Hyacinth is to every one to-day,” observed Walsh.

“ Yes, the rascal !” returned M'Ginty, in the same low tone. “ I hope he won't presume to be civil to *me*, though. I can stand anything but his blarney. When he contested the county before, he wrote me

a canvassing letter, beginning, 'My dear sir,' although he had never exchanged two words with me in his life. Just conceive the impudence of that! I had a strong idea of calling him out. As it was, I canvassed night and day against him, and I flatter myself I contributed not a little to his defeat. If it wasn't for his free-and-easy letter, I never would have troubled my head about him."

"I think," said I, "your revenge was too severe."

"Not a whit! not a whit! Why, what was the meaning of 'My dear sir,' and 'Yours very sincerely,' to a man he hardly knew by sight? It meant this, and nothing else—It meant 'Mr. Edward M'Ginty, you occupy so low a place in the social and intellectual scale, that my condescension in familiarly addressing you will wheedle you out of your vote and support.'—That's what it meant. Egad, I showed him whether it did or not!"

When the cloth was removed, the poli-

tical talk of the party grew loud and earnest. A sleek-faced gentleman named Cassidy, who seemed particularly assiduous in paying his court to Sir Hyacinth, had hinted to him that M'Ginty could command at least a dozen votes, and that his interest would probably be thrown into the baronet's scale if he were propitiated by a volunteer promise to establish a fishing station on the coast of Balmacraw; by which it was supposed his property would be materially benefited. Sir Hyacinth took the hint, and in the course of the evening, he said —

“There is a local matter I am extremely anxious about—I have long been of opinion that a pier and fishing-station would be a matter of great public utility to this part of the country. The only question is, on what part of the coast to erect it.”

“The natural advantages of Balmacraw point it out as the spot,” said the baronet's confederate.

“That means, ‘Your vote and interest,

Mr. M'Ginty,' " whispered that eccentric gentleman to me. " What a gull they take me for !"

Sir Hyacinth deemed that his ruse was conducted with exquisite tact, as he had avoided particularising M'Ginty's property ; the specific application of his remark being made by his ally. But this manœuvre did not escape the perspicacity of M'Ginty, who felt an additional impulse to resist the attack, from the tortuous method employed by the assailant.

" Perhaps, however," said Sir Hyacinth, " Mr. M'Ginty does not wish to have a fishing station upon his estate ?"

" Why, when men fish rather for votes than for haddock and mackarel," returned M'Ginty—

" What do you mean by that, sir ?" broke in the confederate, proud to exhibit himself as an ally of the baronet.

" I mean that you are dodging after my vote and interest, Mr. Cassidy, and that I see through it all."

“ Well sir—and is there anything extraordinary, or improper, or offensive, in asking your support for a candidate ?”

“ That depends very much on the sort of candidate you offer me. But I’ll tell you what *is* highly improper and offensive—to come in that sneaking, sly, circuitous mode, and to try to ensnare my vote through a moonshiny expectation of building your pier, or whatever it is, on my property. A bribe, sir—a direct bribe, and not the less so because it is a humbug; an affront at once to the honesty and common sense of the elector.”

“ O, sir, I beg pardon of your political purity,” said Cassidy, with an air of mock deference. “ Yet, if I don’t mistake, when you voted for Sir Lionel Martin at the last election for the county, there was a snug post in the customs conferred on Mr. Patrick M’Ginty, who, if I err not, is your first cousin—it was a pleasant coincidence, doubtless, at least to Mr. Patrick.”

M’Ginty started upon his feet, and

straightway confronting his jeering accuser with a scowl of determined ferocity, said in an ominous voice,

“So then, you presume to insinuate that I bartered my vote for a place for my cousin—in other words, that I acted like a rascal?”

Cassidy, alarmed at the spirit he had evoked, and perceiving from the countenances of the company that they watched the dispute merely as an amusing set-to between him and M'Ginty, and without the least intention of taking his part, hesitated, and at last stammered out,

“I meant no reflection on your private character, Mr. M'Ginty; I only spoke with reference to your political conduct.”

Quick as lightning, M'Ginty sprang at Cassidy, seized him by the shoulders, whisking him round by a powerful exertion of strength, and bestowed half-a-dozen vigorous kicks on his nether extremity. “I mean you no personal offence, Mr. Cassidy,” said he; “I only kick you in your political capacity.

Take *that*, sir, in return for an impertinent species of canvassing; an irregular sort of electioneering diplomacy. I mean you no personal affront—not the least—I have only bestowed the correction on Sir Hyacinth Blake's political toady."

The whole scene passed in less time than I have taken to describe it. M'Ginty, who was greatly the superior of Cassidy in point of strength, had achieved his revenge almost before any one could interfere. Smarting from the pain and the indignity, that gentleman declared he should have prompt satisfaction on another field, and that Mr. M'Ginty should speedily "hear from him." Having thus delivered himself, he was moving to the door.

"You needn't leave the room," cried M'Ginty; "choose your man now, and name your weapons: I'll fight you with anything you like, from a pop-gun to a howitzer. If you choose, you may have the twelve-pounders on The O'Carroll's battery; I am sure he won't refuse his friends the use of them."

“Not I, faith!” cried The O’Carroll; “you may pick and choose from my armoury.”

Mr. Cassidy made his bow, and vanished, leaving Mr. M’Ginty in expectation of “hearing from him.”

This ruffle on the surface of our party seemed, at one time, likely to extend itself; and a pacific gentleman, hight Jerry Burke, who sat near the foot of the table, desirous to divert attention from warfare, suggested to Jack Walsh that he ought to follow up the toasts we were in the course of drinking. The speaker delivered his advice across my next neighbour and myself, and his words were half-drowned amidst the murmur of voices; so that Jack, although he gathered the general purport of the advice, failed to catch the name of the person recommended by Mr. Burke for vinous celebration.

“Lay it on pretty thick,” suggested Mr. Jerry Burke; “you may say ‘distinguished nobleman,’ ‘public benefactor,’ ‘honour

to his native land;’ it will please Sir Hyacinth and put him in good humour, for the noble lord is his cousin, and the knight is looking rather black.”

Jack, ever friendly to peace, sprang instantly upon his legs to put the good counsel into execution.

“ I beg The O’Carroll’s permission to propose a toast,” said he; (my father smiled blandly, and a general silence ensued); “ it is of a most distinguished nobleman,” continued Jack, “ whose statesmanlike abilities have ever been devoted to the welfare of his country; I need scarcely say that I anticipate from all around me a warm response to his name, and a cordial recognition of his merits.” Jack here began to feel the awkwardness of not having caught the name of the personage he eulogized thus highly, and he threw a significant glance for assistance at Mr. Jerry Burke, but the hint was not taken; so that Jack had nothing for it but to flounder along, expecting that his friend

would help him to fill up the important hiatus, when he saw him in the pinch of his difficulty. "A nobleman," continued Jack, "of whom it is impossible to say whether he is seen to the best advantage when diffusing social happiness around his hospitable hearth, or when guiding the councils of his sovereign for the public welfare; a friend to popular liberty—a patron of the arts and of literature—a man who combines the elegant accomplishments of the scholar with the matured wisdom of the experienced senator" — (here Jack threw an agonizing glance at his Mentor, who merely nodded, as much as to say, "That's it, my boy; go on!")—"whose domestic life," said Jack, driven to desperation, "affords a perfect model of the duties of husband and father, and whose illustrious name, I confidently predict, will be ever fresh in the memory of a grateful posterity. Hip, hurrah!"

Jack here raised his glass aloft; we all stood up to honour in a fitting manner

the object of such a magnificent eulogium. Jack looked again at his friend, whose lips seemed hermetically sealed. "Fresh in the memory of the devil!" muttered poor Jack in my ear. "So it may, faith! but it has escaped my own. Pray, Maurice O'Carroll, favour me by asking Jerry Burke who the deuce his noble friend is? Quick! quick! before the cheers subside!"

Whilst the measured "hip! hip! hurrah!" thrice repeated, gave a few moments of grace, I tried to elicit the name of that illustrious unknown from Mr. Jerry Burke, but in vain.

"You must excuse me, sir," said Jeremiah, in a whisper across the back of the intervening convive. "Mr. Walsh has described him as a model of parental and conjugal duty. Now, that would never do—for he lamed his eldest son for life by throwing him over the banisters in a passion; and he was divorced from two wives in succession after breaking their hearts.

Besides, Sir Hyacinth might deem it a satire on himself to name such a man, after praising his conjugal qualities."

"Name! name!" sounded from all sides of the room. "Who's your toast, Mr. Walsh? Who are we to drink?"

"Upon my soul I don't know!" cried poor Jack, after a rueful and embarrassed pause. "Mr. Jeremiah Burke, there, desired me to make a speech in praise of a certain noble lord. I have pronounced the panegyric—let *him* name his saint."

A roar of laughter followed this explanation, and Burke was called upon to announce the subject of the eulogy.

"Mr. Walsh's description has been a little inaccurate," said he; "I was thinking of Lord Killeries, who has neither wife nor child."

"And why the devil should any one here do honour to Lord Killeries?" cried M'Ginty; "the greatest rascal who ever jobbed on power, and swindled not only the public, but his own personal followers."

“ Mr. M'Ginty,” exclaimed Sir Hyacinth warmly, “ you take very unwarrantable liberties with your superior. Recollect that Lord Killeries is *my* second cousin—”

“ Faith, you may be thankful that he isn't your brother !” retorted M'Ginty. “ Not but that if he were,” mumbled the odd man inarticulately to himself, “ even *he* could scarcely add to the Ballymore stock of rascality !”

“ Remember, sir,” continued the baronet majestically, “ that you speak of a nobleman of high rank, large fortune, and the head of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom.”

“ High rank ?” cried the unmanageable M'Ginty. “ That only renders his villainy the more conspicuous. Large fortune ? Faith, his fortune may well be large, since he robs the nation to augment it. Ancient family—ancient fiddlestick ! Is his lordship descended from Pontius Pilate ? for that would be ancient enough. Or from

Judas Iscariot? That would be equally venerable antiquity."

"Sir," said the baronet, with the air of one who wishes to silence by a pungent sentence a presumptuous inferior, "the only persons who disparage pedigree are those who have got no pedigree to boast of."

And having thus juridically spoken, Sir Hyacinth threw himself haughtily back in his chair.

"And nobody ever boasts of pedigree," returned M'Ginty, "except some block-head who has got nothing else to boast of. Pedigree! pedigree!" continued our eccentric friend, becoming quite ungovernable, "my grandfather was an honest, industrious linen-draper. The only foolish thing he ever did was to form a *mésalliance* with a sprig of quality, a relation of your present wife, Bell Trench that was. But he didn't ill-use his wife, Sir Hyacinth, like a certain gentleman of 'pedigree;' and he didn't slander her, Sir Hyacinth; and

he didn't hunt her out of his house, and out of the world, Sir Hyacinth. He was quite too plebeian for aristocratic tricks of that sort."

"Is this to be borne?" cried the enraged knight, violently rushing at M'Ginty, who slipped out of his way, his eyes sparkling with delight at having irritated his antagonist; who, on his part, was doubly incensed at the affront, inasmuch as it proceeded from a foe with whom he deemed there was no honour to be gained in a hostile rencontre.

My father started up to interpose. "My dear Sir Hyacinth," said he, "you know I told you long ago that nobody ever minds what M'Ginty says: he is a privileged person"—

"That may be all very well for *you*, O'Carroll," replied Sir Hyacinth, "but really it is too bad that your guests should be exposed to the impertinent antics of the half-tamed ape, or mountebank, you think proper to keep in your house."

“ If you feel offended, Sir Hyacinth,” said M’Ginty, “ I am ready to give you satisfaction the very instant I settle accounts with your toady, Mr. Cassidy. *He* has precedence at present, though possibly he won’t object to cede it to his patron. If he yields the pas, then heigh ! for pistols, tomahawks, or any thing at all you like.”

The baronet only answered by a glance of infinite contempt. Half-a-dozen efforts were made to divert the conversation into indifferent channels ; but all would not do. A feeling of constraint pervaded the company, which was scarcely diminished by Sir Hyacinth’s precipitate departure. The rest of the party broke up much earlier than usual. At parting, Jack Walsh whispered me—

“ Mars is predominant to-night. With so many elements of war, there cannot but result a skirmish somewhere. If M’Ginty survives Mr. Cassidy’s pistol, I protest I don’t see with what face Sir Hyacinth can avoid giving him the meeting. *Entre nous,*

it is suspected that the worthy knight has always preferred *fighting shy* to any other mode of fighting. But he can scarcely escape on the score of his dignity. M'Ginty's grandsire sold tapes, twist, and linen—what then? M'Ginty is *ingenuus*, or, at least, *libertinus*, according to the ancient Roman scale; and by consequence he is dignified enough to entitle him to shoot or to be shot at. Apropos of shooting—don't you think I ought to shoot Jerry Burke for the pretty trick he served me to-night about the toast? And then his pretending that he meant Lord Killeries! Sir, he no more meant Lord Killeries than he meant our new monarch, King George the Third, God bless him!"

Jack, having now buttoned on his great coat in the hall, shook hands and bade me good night. The other guests filed off, and on returning to the parlour I found The O'Carroll alone. "It is a horrible nuisance," said he, "to have the decorum of one's household destroyed by that crack-

brained M'Ginty. A duel is an excellent thing, and a respectable thing—but then there should be a respectable antagonist to render it so—an adversary of a certain condition, and moreover *compos mentis*, is quite indispensable. But M'Ginty ! without position, without common sense. Really there is too much truth in Sir Hyacinth's strictures on his residence here. If I submit to the infliction, Maurice, 'tis all on *your* account. I'll speak to him, though, and tell him he must mend his ways."

Old Martin entered, bearing the post-bag : amongst its letters was one, of which I perused the address with astonishment. I looked again with doubt, but there was the address in plain, legible characters,—

“ MAURICE O'CARROLL, ESQ., M.P.”

And to authenticate the magic designation, the epistle was post-free. Ere opening it I indulged for a moment in conjecture—what constituency had done themselves the honour of selecting me ? I had canvassed none ; I had not even dreamt of

any ; or was it a hoax ? The general election was still some months away, as the half-year of parliamentary survivorship had not yet reached its close. If really elected, I must owe my elevation to the death or retirement of some individual member.

I opened the letter, and my doubts were speedily removed ; I was, indeed, a senator, invested with one three-hundredth part of the legislative wisdom of the kingdom.

Behold the epistle :—

“ St. Stephen’s Green, Saturday.

“ DEAR NEPHEW,

“ I have got you returned, as my colleague, for my family borough of Kilgorman. I am always ready to assist you, provided I can do so free of expense. Old Freke lately died, so I told my rascals to elect you in his place : if you have a grain of sense, you may make something of it. A pocket-borough is a pleasanter seat than a county ; you can no more be unseated by a petition than by an earth-

quake. There must be some favouring gales, just now, at the outset of the new reign: keep your eye on the weather, and trim your sails accordingly.

“ Robert FitzEustace has been here. He tells me an incredible story about your paying delicate attentions, in a remote farm-house, to the heiress we all thought was drowned. Have you fished her up from the bottom of the deep? If there be any truth in Bob’s story, don’t let her escape you. If requisite, I would even have you venture an abduction. The Ballymore estate is settled on her. Hoping to hear all particulars,

“ I am, dear nephew, yours truly,

“ JEREMY CRUMPE.

“ P.S. You may sleep and breakfast in my house, during the sessions of Parliament, and you can dine almost daily at Lady Knockmaroon’s. Your old friend, Julius, is making desperate way in her ladyship’s affections.”

This was in every respect a startling communication ; and not the least so was the last sentence of the postscript : what did it mean ? Surely Julius could not superadd to the misfortunes in which he had already involved poor Mary Macnamara, that last and worst blow to her peace—desertion ?

Whilst I read, my father had been engaged with one or two letters of his own. He then turned to me :

“ What does your correspondent say ? ”

“ That I have been returned to Parliament,” said I.

“ Nonsense ! When ? by whom ? for what place ? ”

“ For my uncle’s borough of Kilgorman,” said I.

He uttered an exclamation of astonishment. “ Then there is, after all, some good in that old hunk ; I am sure I never thought there was any. Read his letter for me.”

I did so ; suppressing, of course, the passage about Emily.

“Well,” said The O’Carroll, “you have got the personal privilege—that’s a good thing; you needn’t fear an arrest at the suit of any low blackguard, and you’ve got no assets for any rogue to pounce upon. I wish to heaven your constituents had returned *me*,” continued my poor father with a sigh, “for I am deadly sick of this imprisonment; but how are you to keep afloat in Dublin? Bed and board are good things, but a member of Parliament should make some display.”

“Unless I display my poverty,” said I, “I can display nothing else. But my uncle looks on the seat as the means of making money—not as an occasion for needless expenditure.”

“You will certainly want money,” said my father, “and there is not any. How opportune if that M’Ginty was to pop off to kingdom come, and leave you in possession of the lands!”

“Very opportune indeed!” echoed M’Ginty, popping suddenly into the room.

“I thank you for your friendly sentiments ; but they do not surprise me. I have known the world too long not to know that if the dearest friends had an object to gain by hanging each other, rope and hangman would not be idle.”

“On my honour, Mr. M’Ginty, you take my badinâge too seriously. I meant—I meant—”

“Precisely what you said,” broke in M’Ginty. “That is what you meant. D——n thine eyes, (as a quaker once said to me, in whom the spirit of the ancient Adam impaired his usual meekness, though not his formality of phrase,) d——n thine eyes, O’Carroll, dost think to cajole me with thy palpable evasions? Or dost thou think me such an arrant ass as to be either surprised or annoyed at one more proof of that universal ingratitude which fifty years’ experience of my species hath taught me to expect in all men?—But I am in no humour just now to scold or to quarrel. I think I gave our county can-

didate and his rascally toady a savour of my quality to-night. I taught 'em both that they should not take liberties with *me*. Verily I had a triumph!" And he strutted about the room with his chin a couple of inches higher than ordinary, and his arms a-kimbo. "I think I could tread the clouds, as one of your poets says, catch the moon by the horns, and kick her about the sky like a football."

The high spirits of M'Ginty appeared to me to be ominous of some approaching fatality; for in those days I partook of the superstitious notion that impending evil is heralded by extravagant hilarity on the part of the victim.

"Apropôs of candidates, Mr. M'Ginty," said I, "do you know that I am now member of parliament for Kilgorman?"

"What has bewitched old Crumpe—if, indeed, you do not jest—to transmute such a jackanapes into a legislator? Yet why not? why not? Are you not as well calculated to destroy the country as three-

fourths of the scoundrels and blockheads who compose the ' Legion Club ?' ”

“ I can give you franks at all events,” said I.

“ Aye. It was considerate of your uncle to return you upon that score. He knew the paucity of cash at Castle Carroll, and put you into parliament to save postage for the family.”

CHAPTER XVI.

————— “ 'Tis all a joke,
Inexorable Death shall level all.”
Pope's Imitations of Horace.

“ *Astolpho.* But is he fit to die ?

“ *Inez.* Alas, who is ?”

The Spanish Father.

THAT night, ere he retired to bed, M'Ginty received a challenge from Mr. Cassidy, who resolved to avenge with powder and ball the indignities offered to his nether end. Those who best knew him, knew that he exceedingly disrelished the task thus imposed upon him ; but he was one of the numerous class who are too much afraid of what the world will say to follow the dictates of a more natural and rational fear.

The result of the duel was fatal to M'Ginty, and nearly so to his opponent. The former received Cassidy's bullet in his

heart, staggered a few paces, and fell down a dead man. His fire took effect on Cassidy's neck, and the surgeon in attendance predicted a long confinement.

Whatever the eccentricities of M'Ginty might have been, we could not see without emotion the lifeless form of one who had been our inmate and our intimate, and whose end was so fearfully sudden. He was laid out in the hall, and had a grand wake, that lasted for three days and three nights. Mike—the faithful Mike—undertook, as a labour of love, the superintendence of all the details. My father and mother readily compounded for the inconvenience, in consideration of the handsome succession upon which, pursuant to the terms of M'Ginty's deed, I was now forthwith to enter. All that could conduce to the splendour and hospitality of the wake was forthcoming. Crowds attended, subject only to the rigorous scrutiny of old Martin, who dreaded lest any of the legal interlopers might effect a surreptitious en-

trance. The brandy and whiskey punch, and likewise the undiluted liquors, were served out by Mike in person ; and really the care the poor fellow took that every person should be well attended to, could not have been greater if he imagined that his own salvation and that of his late master depended on his exertions. The funeral was performed in befitting style ; yet Mike, on returning from that sad solemnity, appeared dissatisfied. Something had gone wrong, or had fallen short of his expectations.

“ What disturbs you, Mike ? ” asked I ; for Mike looked indignant.

“ Not a man knocked down at my mather’s *berring* ! ” exclaimed he, with passionate emphasis ; “ though I sarved out whiskey enough to set a whole parish by the ears. ”

I could not help smiling at this extraordinary ground of complaint ; but I found on inquiry that Mike (although a very good-humoured fellow in the main) be-

longed to a peculiarly belligerent sept, and that the funeral of every one of his own ancestors had been graced with a faction fight. Mike was fastidious in the matter of posthumous honours; and he could not conceive a higher compliment to the memory of departed worth than a downright *skrimmage* at the wake or funeral. That Mr. M'Ginty's remains had incurred the indignity of pacific interment was, according to Mike's notions, a proof that the neighbours undervalued his merits, as they manifestly did not think him worth fighting about.

I soon proceeded to Dublin; not in order to make my debüt as a senator, for parliament was not to meet till the following January; but in order to thank Colonel Crumpe in person for his kindness; my mother imagining that the colonel would be very much gratified at the promptness of my homage. She stocked my purse from the last half-yearly payment of M'Ginty, who had always settled his accounts with laudable punctuality.

“ You know,” said she, “ you can refund me this advance from the first rents you receive.—Well, poor M’Ginty, with all his crazy oddities, was neither an unfriendly nor illiberal man at bottom.”

I set out for the metropolis, congratulating myself on the altered character of my fortunes. On the occasion of my previous visit to town, I was the penniless, unknown, and inexperienced adventurer. Now, I was the possessor of a certain income, and I promised myself I would be strictly economical. I was also a senator; and I could not help feeling my self-importance rather inflated by my new acquisitions and honours. It was with a thrill of unutterable joy that I reflected on my ability to offer Emily a home. An humble one, no doubt; but the income to which I should succeed on M’Ginty’s death amounted to £200 a-year; a sum sufficient to ensure every needful comfort to persons of moderate wishes.

On my journey I visited Tullymoran.

The deep dejection into which Mary's elopement had thrown her father was still painfully visible. His was a grief that lapse of time seemed rather to aggravate than soften.

“It is easy,” said he, “to *talk* of resignation to the will of heaven. I try to be resigned—I pray that I may become so—But the utter destruction of your fairest and your dearest! It is no easy task to be resigned to that.”

The old man's appearance bore evidence to the acuteness of the sorrow that was gnawing at his heart. His manner, formerly so courteous and social, was now abrupt and negligent. It was plain that his thoughts were engrossed by his domestic griefs, and that it was by an effort he constrained his attention to the ordinary topics of conversation.

“As for Julius,” said he, “I hate to speak of him—I hate to think of him. Divine authority commands that we forgive our neighbours' trespasses, on pain of

the non-forgiveness of our own. O, it is a hard, hard lesson! Yet it is one that must be learned."

I diverged to Barnewall's farm, where I apprized Emily of my present comparative independence. I pressed her to consummate my happiness by an immediate marriage, and suggested Jack Walsh's cottage, which her mother had inhabited, as our future home till better times. Jack would let it at an easy rent, and—and, in short, I vowed that I saw no wisdom in waiting till the snows of age should silver our heads, when affairs began to wear such a promising aspect.

My urgency was not wholly ineffectual. But all I could elicit at present was a request to postpone the topic until after the next session of parliament.

"As to your concealment from Sir Hyacinth," said I, "nothing can be more precarious, if, indeed, he has not already learned your abode. FitzEustace, perhaps, has not told him that he saw you; but he has

told Colonel Crumpe ; and there cannot be a doubt that so remarkable a circumstance will speedily find its way to the ears of the good baronet. So put the notion of *hiding* quite out of your head. Exert your spirit ; confound your enemies ; confer happiness on *me* ; and defy the world."

"A very pretty speech indeed," returned Emily ; "but I hate precipitation. I shall quietly stay where I am, until you have tested the reality of your agreeable visions by a little experience. You have not yet received a farthing of the late Mr. M'Ginty's rents?"

"No—but there is no doubt"—

"Perhaps not. But I should wish to see you firmly established in your new possessions before you introduce them into your fiscal calculations."

Finding Emily for the present inflexible, I took an affectionate leave of her, and resumed my route to Dublin.

Arrived in the capital, I lost no time in

repairing to my uncle. As I passed the House of Commons in my way, my heart swelled within me at the thought that the member for Kilgorman should henceforth do what no member for Kilgorman had ever done before ; oppose all ministerial jobbery, sustain the rights of Ireland, and labour for the independence and consequent prosperity of this ancient kingdom. I did not trouble myself with any speculations how far the patron of the borough might relish my parliamentary patriotism.

I soon found myself at Colonel Crumpe's door. The domestic by whom it was opened, having heard of my election, received me with an amount of respect proportioned to the advance in his master's good graces that circumstance betokened. The colonel was at home. I advanced to express my obligations with some warmth. The offer of my hand was met by the colonel's rigid forefinger, whilst the expression of his face seemed to say, " What the

devil brought you up to town in such a hurry?" Lest I should err in interpreting his physiognomy, he asked me the reason of my journey.

"To thank you, sir," said I, "for all your thoughtful kindness. Really the seat of Kilgorman, and your hospitable offer—"

"You are quite too quick, young gentleman," interrupted the colonel. "You cannot take your seat, I presume, until parliament meets; and I did not intend that my invitation to this house should take effect till then. But since you *are* here, sit down, and tell me all about the heiress. And first—is FitzEustace's legend of her resurrection a figment or a fact?"

"A fact, sir; but involved in a great degree of mystery, from feelings on the part of Miss Blake that you cannot but appreciate." I then gave my uncle a history of Emily's rescue by Patterson and Jerry Brien; avoiding in my narrative all direct crimination of Sir Hyacinth. But the colonel inferred the baronet's guilt.

“ If his daughter thought otherwise,” said he, “ why should she burrow in obscure holes and corners, among her mother’s papistical relations—instead of enjoying herself, as she might and ought, at Ballymore ?”

“ At any rate,” said I, “ the presence of the new Lady Blake would drive her to seek any other house in preference to her father’s roof.”

“ Pooh, pooh ! I see through it all. The man would have murdered his daughter ; and his vixen of a wife put him up to it, for the sake of a second family. No doubt there are some men who would scruple to marry a young lady whose father was an assassin, and her mother a papist. Not a very reputable lineage. But *you* aren’t fool enough to mind that, when Ballymore is pinned to the daughter’s petticoat-tail. And now, d’ye think you have really any chance with her ?”

“ Why, sir, I should hope I have.”

“ Did you press her hand—tender your lips—swear you would die of despair if she

refused you? For women expect those attentions."

"I made every declaration befitting an ardent attachment, I assure you."

"Right—quite right—all that flummery goes down with the women—there's no getting on without it. And how did the girl take your balderdash—eh?"

"Why, indeed, sir, not unfavourably, if I may judge from her manner; you know young ladies are diffident."

"Some of them are shy enough, no doubt—but that is often merely meant for encouragement. In such a case a fiercer squeeze round the waist may do the business, or even a pinch on the elbow, or perhaps an additional rapture or two, or merely a passionate pressure of your lips to her fingers—just as the girl's taste may incline her to violent or delicate manifestations. And on this point your own discernment must be your guide. The mode of action that succeeds with one girl may ruin you with another. It is just as your

sweetheart is disposed more to sentiment or passion. A man of tact and delicacy will see his game at a glance, and comport himself accordingly.”

Colonel Crumpe delivered these instructions with the air of a man who felt that his own *sçavoir faire* was unimpeachable. A martinet by habit, he conceived that a love affair, like a military evolution, should be managed with scientific precision, and display in its progress certain stated manœuvres. I could scarcely help laughing as I looked at the stiff, repulsive disciplinarian, who thus laid down rules for the proper development of the tender passion.

When he had satisfied his curiosity on the subject of Emily Blake, he told me, that in getting me returned for Kilgorman, he had hit upon the cheapest way of putting me forward in the world.

“ It may turn out a lucky thing for you, if you have any political material in you, and can manage judiciously. Don’t begin

by voting with the Castle all at once : it makes a man cheap. They will never give you anything, if you let them think they can have you gratis. A little spunky patriotism to commence with will be useful—Rights of the People—Liberties of Ireland—Freedom of Trade, and so forth. Pray, which does Miss Blake espouse, Castle or Country ?

“ Oh, the country certainly.”

“ So best. You can tickle her prejudices at the same time that you enhance your own marketable value.”

“ I am much afraid, uncle, that if I began as a patriot, I should continue such.”

“ That is, I suppose, from some idea of preserving your consistency. But that is all nonsense. The true consistency is always to shape your course with an eye to your pocket. But who knows ? Patriotism may be the winning side by and bye. Some people say it will ; and if so, you would have the apparent merit of having adopted it when there was nothing to be made by it.”

The colonel asked me where I meant to dine.

“ At Lucas’s coffee-house.”

“ Better come with me to Lady Knockmaroon’s.”

At this moment a visitor called, and drew off his attention. I made a hasty toilette, and was soon ready to accompany him to the house of the viscountess. She appeared quite charmed to see me, thanked my uncle repeatedly for bringing me to dinner; and asked me a thousand questions about our western regions.

“ I have not been there for several years,” said she, “ although I have a country-house not many miles from Castle Carroll; but perhaps,” she added, with a sigh, of which I could not exactly hit off the meaning, “ perhaps I may soon—very soon—revisit some old scenes in your neighbourhood.”

Her ladyship’s appearance was even more fantastic than formerly. There was a more desperate effort to personate youth;

a more liberal display of her pearl-powder neck, upon which the toilette-artist had taken the trouble to delineate blue veins ; a more airy legerétè of manner which once or twice verged on the confines of frisk ; so that the painted old dowager, animated with the frolicsome spirits of sixteen, almost suggested the idea of a galvanized mummy.

We had not long arrived when Julius Blake was announced. Notwithstanding his habitual self-command, he was obviously disconcerted by my presence. He did not venture to offer me his hand, but nodded familiarly, with a " Glad to see you, Maurice," and then covered his embarrassment by entering into animated conversation with some of the company. I attentively watched him, to try if I could verify Colonel Crumpe's assertion that he was laying siege to Lady Knockmaroon's heart. That heart, indeed, seemed well inclined to surrender without any siege ; but nothing could be less responsive to the

tender mood than Julius's demeanour. He preserved more than clerical decorum; he was frigid; he might as well have been a block chiselled off the north-east corner of an iceberg, for any success that attended her ladyship's efforts to thaw his frozen rigour. He listened, it is true, with scrupulous politeness to her *persiflage*, and replied, when reply was indispensable, in an icy sentence—perhaps in a monosyllable. But he evidently did not encourage the tender advances of which her ladyship was lavish.

Some of his idiosyncracies came prominently out in the course of the evening. The colonel having casually named Macnamara of Tullymoran, one of the guests said, "You know him, I believe, Mr. Blake; what kind of person is he?"

Julius replied, with great solemnity; "An admirable man indeed! a most excellent Christian, whose daily life is full of the fruits of his religious faith. His heart is fraught with charity, and the whole

tenor of his blameless existence excites a wish that he were a member of that purer church, to which it is our boast and our blessing to belong. If he were, I can only say that he would be an honour to it."

To praise excellence is to claim the virtue of sympathy with what is good ; and Julius was not the man to let so fair an opportunity pass. He pronounced his elaborate encomium with the self-complacency of one who consciously performs an act of exalted virtue. The merit of the act, too, was enhanced by its liberality ; as the person who was eulogized differed in creed from his eulogist.

The evening wore away ; and when we were returning, the colonel said that Julius was a capital tactician in affairs of the heart ; "He can wind that old goose round his finger."

"Good heaven!" exclaimed I, as my thoughts reverted to Mary Macnamara, "his manner was all but repulsive to-night."

“Aha! Julius knows what he is about—that was only to heighten the flavour of their billing and cooing to-morrow. Julius has tact, sir—you might take a lesson from him. There was her ladyship—all tenderness—Julius just throws in the zest of a little *froideur*—a mock retreat—a little pleasant acid, without which love would be the merest molasses.—Believe me, that, whether in love or in politics, it is very bad statesmanship to allow the enemy to think you can be had for asking. I told you so to-day, apropos of your votes in the house. I tell you so now, apropos of your courtship.”

I thought the colonel erred in supposing that Julius encouraged Lady Knockmaroon's attentions; apparently, nothing could be farther from his mind than any such design. I deemed it quite impossible that Julius, possessing, *sub rosa*, the incomparable loveliness and fascination of Mary Macnamara, could tolerate for an instant any serious idea of marrying such

an antidote to love as her ladyship. True, his marriage with Mary was only a left-handed one; but it was, of course, as binding on a man of conscience and of honour (supposing Julius to have any) as a thousand statutes could have made it. On both accounts, then, I dissented from my uncle's judgment. I abstained from informing him of Mary's elopement; for it was an event that inflicted humiliation as well as grief upon her father; with whose feelings upon the occasion Colonel Crumpe could not possibly have sympathised.

CHAPTER XVII.

“What’s Property? dear Swift, you see it alter,
 From you to me, from me to Peter Walter;
 Or in a mortgage prove a lawyer’s share;
 Or in a jointure, vanish from the heir;
 Or in pure equity (the case not clear)
 The Chancery takes your rents for twenty year.”
 POPE’S *Imitations of Horace*.

—“Fairly make your Will.”—*Ibid*.

NEXT day the colonel gave me a broad hint to decamp.

“You’ve no business in town,” said he, “till parliament meets; and you *have* business in the country; keep close siege to your heiress—women are capricious and unaccountable—there’s not one of them under the canopy of heaven to be trusted, and absence is dangerous. And then you have got your Drumfeeny interests to look after.”

The latter proposition, at least, was undeniable, and I accordingly prepared to return. I merely delayed to visit the law-

yer, to whom a brief had been sent in the case of Doctor Blake *v.* The O'Carroll. He received me very kindly ; said it grieved him very much that such a swindling attack was likely to succeed ; but the money, although paid in full many years ago, and doubtless enjoyed by the very persons for whose benefit it was destined by the family settlements, had *not* been paid in accordance with the terms of those settlements, and was consequently still claimable against the estate. The irregularity was fatal ; at least, he thought so, until better advised. The law, he took great pains to assure me, was not at all to blame ; it would have protected my father, if he had but performed its requirements.

Disheartened by this intelligence I quitted town, and arrived at Castle Carroll without any adventure worth recording. It was some consolation that Drumfeeny and its sub-denominations were exempt from liability. For myself, I was not only willing, but anxious, to live economically.

I determined I would never encumber my little property.

Full of these resolves, I took the earliest opportunity after my return of apprising the tenants that I was M'Ginty's representative. They startled me with the counter-information that Mr. Peter Costello, the Kildrummery attorney, had warned them all, immediately upon M'Ginty's death, to disregard any claim I should set up. I threatened to distrain. They replied, that in such an event Mr. Costello had directed them to rescue the distress and abide the consequences. What could be the meaning of all this? Was I to be harassed with litigation in order to establish my rights?

On returning to Castle Carroll after this unsatisfactory interview with the *adscripti glebæ*, a polite note from Mr. Costello awaited me. This document bore that on the following day, at noon, Mr. M'Ginty's will was to be opened, in presence of his friends and relations, at the attorney's resi-

dence in Kildrummery; and that this intimation was given me, as I might possibly consider myself interested. I was quite aware that M'Ginty's will could not set aside the deed he had executed in my favour, yet I felt some curiosity to know its contents. I also was desirous to procure from Mr. Costello an explanation of the grounds upon which he contested my right to Drumfeeny. I accordingly repaired to Kildrummery, and was in attendance at the attorney's house before the hour specified in his note. There was a numerous attendance of Trenches and M'Ginty's, the former clan fastidiously affecting to shun all intercourse with the latter, although perfectly willing to accept any testimonial of relationship the eccentric deceased might have chosen to bequeath. During the interval that preceded the opening of the will, the party preserved an almost unbroken silence; nobody would readily have relinquished his expectations, although nobody had the

least ground for forming any, except the chance of some friendly caprice on the part of M'Ginty. A few whispers, however, were exchanged, of which the purport was a qualified encomium on the defunct, as "one who meant well in the main, although he had, like all of us, his own peculiarities." These comments were uttered, I presume, by those members of the company whose hopes were the most confident.

At last Mr. Costello, who had been heretofore engaged in his office with a client, appeared in the parlour where the party of expectants were assembled.—"I beg to apologise, gentlemen," said he, looking at his watch, "for detaining you so long—it is ten minutes after the time I specified—couldn't get away from a client till this instant—I believe the best apology is to proceed at once to business."

So saying, Mr. Costello produced the will from a bureau, broke the seal, and began to read in a distinct and emphatic manner.

Forthwith we were all attentive.

The commencing portion of the will was not such an extravagant affair, either in its provisions or in its phraseology, as the peculiarities of the testator might well have led one to expect. One hundred pounds, and the testator's clothes and gold watch, were left to Mike, for whom great affection was expressed. The testator's estate in a neighbouring barony was devised to a relative, a naval officer bearing the patronymic of M'Ginty; the motive assigned for the gift being that the gallant midshipman had never worried or disgusted the testator with any applications for pecuniary assistance. At length my attention was seized by the words,

“Item; I give to The O'Carroll of Castle Carroll, and to his son, Maurice O'Carroll, Esquire,” (Mr. Costello here hemmed! and paused for a moment to excite my curiosity: he went on), “a Bible each; requesting them to study that sacred volume with pious assiduity, in order to

derive from its pages consolation for the disappointment they will experience on learning that I imposed on their rapacious credulity and ignorance with a Deed that I had no power to execute ; my moiety of the lands of Drumfeeny, &c. having previously been given by me to my old and worthy friend, Peter Costello, attorney-at-law, in trust for the use and benefit of the Kildrummery Lunatic Asylum. I fervently hope that this lesson on the fallacy of human expectations may lead The O'Carroll and his son to set their affections on that better world, which, I grieve to say, appears to occupy so small a portion of their thoughts in this."

I rushed at Mr. Costello with clenched fist, but was forcibly withheld by a friendly arm.

"For shame, young gentleman," said the man of law, "to return assault and battery for my deceased friend's considerate bequest of the Bible!"

The absurdity of my predicament ex-

cited a general smile, and my only relief from embarrassment was in a hasty escape. I afterwards found that the statement in the will was perfectly correct. During the interval between M'Ginty's promise to give me his moiety of Drumfeeny, and the arrival of our legal friend Tony O'Bralaghan to draw the deed, the odd man had gone to Kildrummery, and, with Mr. Costello's professional aid, settled the lands on the Lunatic Asylum of that town. The deed in favour of the Asylum had thus priority in point of date over the subsequent donation of the same lands to me; which priority M'Ginty took care to secure in point of law, by immediately having it registered.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ Alas, life’s evening’s dimm’d with clouds,
Life’s feverish day is well nigh done.”

HERBERT SMITH.

UNDER the pressure of increasing afflictions, my father’s health began sensibly to decline. He alternated between dull and moping melancholy, and fits of unnatural hilarity. The disappointment in the affair of M’Ginty’s succession, embittered by the jeering insult that accompanied it, increased the irritability of his temper, and preyed continually on his spirits. Then, there was the pressing evil of doctor Blake’s claim, which directly affected the only scrap of the estate I had been taught to expect. The O’Carroll’s sole resource was his habitual one of drowning painful thoughts in

the din of dissipation ; and when not actually under the influence of this artificial excitement, his condition of gloomy despondency was most pitiable. Ruin loomed above, beneath, around ; and he sometimes remarked that the crash of approaching destruction was cruelly mocked by my elevation to parliamentary honours ; “ of which,” he would add, “ I foresee you will never make a penny.”

The rapidity with which his strength was prostrated was remarkable. His manner to Jack Walsh and some other old companions became almost morose. Jack was much struck by the change in his appearance, and could not help telling him so.

“ Yes,” said The O’Carroll ; “ I am just like a worn-out ship in foul weather ; I shall soon go to pieces among the breakers. I think the estate and I will see it out together. It is bad enough to be imprisoned in this old house. It will be far worse to be turned out of it, without knowing where to find a roof to cover me. Alas, Jack !

my whole life has been a protracted blunder, and I feel it now in all its bitterness. My fate is very cross-grained, too, for the most contradictory things alike come against me. The fellows that I *never* paid, have beggared me in courts of law ; and those rascally Blakes, whom I *did* pay, are going to beggar me in equity, to make me pay twice, if they can !”

Jack shook his head sympathetically. “ Melancholy state of things, upon my honour !”

“ And yet,” continued my father in a tone of great feeling, which was the more touching from its rarity, “ I grieve much less for myself than for Maurice. It is galling to contrast what his prospects are, with what they would have been if I had acted differently.”

The poor chieftain sighed, and imbibed a long draught from a hunting flask of brandy and water he generally carried in his pocket. He was gradually subsiding into a slumber, which was now become of

daily occurrence ; and Jack was not sorry to see the postboy arrive with his budget of news, which accident had delayed from the previous evening. We opened the post-bag ; many legal letters for The O'Carroll, doubtless announcing foreclosures and other disagreeable particulars ; no letter for me ; but there were two or three newspapers, to which we eagerly applied ourselves. Turning to the matrimonial corner of the last " Dublin Journal," I was electrified with the following announcement :—

“ Married by special license, on the 31st ult., at the town residence of the bride, the Rev. Julius Blake, D.D., Rector of Kilcummin, younger brother of Sir Hyacinth Blake, of Ballymore, Bart., to the Right Hon. Adela - Clementina - Rose d'Amour-Corisanda, Dowager-Viscountess Knockmaroon, third daughter of the late Earl of Moycullen. The fair and noble bride was given away by her distinguished relation, the Earl of Killeries, of whom the

bridegroom has also the honour to be a kinsman. The solemn ceremony was graced with the presence of numerous friends and connexions of her ladyship and the reverend bridegroom. The nuptial party partook of a sumptuous entertainment at Knockmaroon House ; after which the happy pair proceeded to Tullygask, County Wicklow, the viscountess's country residence, to spend the honeymoon, and to remain, it is believed, until after the Christmas festivities."

In another part of the newspaper was a paragraph, intimating that the vacant deanery of Kildrummery in the west would be probably bestowed on " that popular and highly-gifted divine, the Rev. Julius Blake."

A brief biography of the Rector of Kilmummin appeared in a prominent column, consisting principally of bald incidents and dates, not over accurate ; anecdotes of Julius's academical prowess ; the small personal gossip which, when it concerns a

man who has achieved notoriety, possesses so great a charm for the public.

When I had perused the paragraphs, I involuntarily exclaimed, with an energy that startled Jack Walsh, "Good Heaven, what a rascal is Julius!"

"Why—what has he done?" inquired Jack. In reply, I handed him the paper.

"I don't understand you," said Jack; "I see nothing iniquitous here. To be sure, there is something *outré* in his marrying such a person as Adela-Clementina-Rose d'Amour-Corisanda; but it only shows he prefers ambition to sentiment."

"But what will you say, Jack, if I tell you that Julius has got another wife already?"

"The devil he has! Nay, but in that case I should say he is a villain in earnest. But who is she?"

"The dowager's rival is Mary Macnamara."

"What?—daughter of the good old gentleman at Tullymoran?"

“ The same.”

“ But—but *she* is a Papist,” said Jack, rather puzzled.

“ That only makes the matter worse,” said I, “ because it renders the proof of Julius’s guilt impossible. Poor Mary, of course, will not compromise the clergyman who married them by disclosing his name ; besides, if she did so, she could not thereby validate her marriage. And if their *liaison* got wind, it would probably pass for a pardonable escapade on the part of Julius ; a fugitive amour ; for which he now testifies the vigour and sincerity of his repentance, by marrying a Protestant of undoubted orthodoxy and ecclesiastical influence. Any stir poor Mary could make in the matter would only compromise her own character, without giving the least chance of redress.”

“ It is a very naughty business,” quoth Jack. “ What a fool the girl was, to have anything to say to him.”

“ Why, you know his powers of insinua-

tion : he worked himself into her confidence ; her charms are transcendent—Julius courted the temptation, and then probably found upon trial that a left-hand marriage was both perilous and inconvenient. The impossibility of redress is the cruellest part of it. The unfortunate girl has made sad shipwreck of her happiness. I must beg, Jack, that you will not send the melancholy tale about. I was inadvertently startled into the mention of it, by the news of this marriage. But the poor old father feels it not only as a bitter wrong, but as a deep disgrace, and we owe it to his feelings to preserve silence.”

“ This promotion to the deanery of Kildrummery,” said Jack, “ is of course owing to Lady Knockmaroon’s influence. Aye, aye—I see how it is—the dowager made her terms with Julius—she gets him his deanery, and receives the dean’s person as her guerdon ; she procures him the flock, and she shares the gentle shepherd’s pastoral crook and staff. You know the late

dean is promoted to the see of B——. I suppose we shall soon have dean Julius and Corisanda-Rose d'Amour—what a name!—down here among us.”

My father now snored—started—stretched, and awoke.

“It is very cold,” cried he, shivering, and trying to correct the inconvenience with a draught from his flask. “When did the post-bag come?”

“Just now, sir.”

He seized the contents of the bag, and having hastily inspected the addresses, exclaimed, “Every one of them from some devil of a dun or an attorney—here goes to make short work with them;” and he flung the whole unopened collection *en masse* into the fire. “Pity that some of their writers can’t be sent there along with them!” he exclaimed; “a set of fellows whose sole business seems to be to rob honest men of house and home! What news in the papers?”

“Julius is married.”

“Married!”—He eagerly took the paper, and was at once immersed in the detail. “Ah, Maurice, you unfortunate dog! if you had but attended to your game, Bodkin assures me you might easily have snapped up that viscountess, and here’s Julius who has seized her. The woman was actually going a-begging for a husband, by all accounts; and you (to say the least) had equal opportunities with Julius. Really, considering our family difficulties, you *might*, I think, have made an effort.”

CHAPTER XIX.

“I fell into the acquaintance of a lady extremely well known in this town for the quick advancement of her husband, and the honours and distinctions which her industry has procured him.”

The Tatler, No. 33.

SOME business took me to Kildrummery the following week. It was on a Saturday; and after I had transacted my business, I met Mr. Walsh, who observed that the wetness of the evening was an excellent argument for taking our ease in the inn, instead of returning to our respective abodes. I acquiesced; and mine host of the Knockmaroon Arms (Kildrummery was part of the estate of that noble family) enjoyed the advantage of our custom. “By remaining here to-night,” said Jack, “we shall come in for a sermon from Ju-

lius to-morrow. He is to arrive here, for formal installation in his deanery, and her ladyship will probably accompany him."

I was amused at the homage the landlord seemed disposed to pay me, in virtue of my recent election for Kilgorman. He came for a frank, which I graciously bestowed on him—then he timidly insinuated similar requests on behalf of a few friends, and hinted a gossiping surmise that my uncle, to whom I was indebted for my senatorial character, would repair on a liberal scale all the havoc that bad management had made in my patrimony.

"You know our new dean, sir?" pursued our loquacious host; "a sweet, pleasant gentleman as ever lived: not a bit proud or distantious, but as ready to crack a joke with an humble man like me as if I was the first earl in Ireland. That's a great hit he made lately with the ould lady: she was a very purty girl about five-and-thirty years ago. Ould Lord Moycullen and herself spent a week in

this house, at the time of the first race-balls that ever was held here. The dean and her ladyship are coming down to us in thundering style, sir; two coaches-and-four and outriders, and a great lot of servants: they all sleep here to-night, but they can't come in till late, for they only were to lave Athlone this morning. The dean and her ladyship are to sleep in No. 4; the dean is a great man, Mr. O'Carroll—a very great man—and, upon my word, I think he well deserves his luck. The ould lady will whip him up the ladder now, in great style; they say she has the height of interest. Sorrow a bit, but she'll have him a bishop by-and-bye, if he coaxes her properly; and we all of us know that the dean is the mischief of a boy for coaxing: devil a finer bishop ever wore a wig than what the dean will make; and never fear but we'll see him with the mitre yet, if it depends upon putting the *comether* on her ladyship."

The landlord was enthusiastic in praise

of the dignitary, and merely checked his eulogium in order to see that the fire was lighting well in No. 4, and every comfort properly attended to in that destined sanctuary of dean Julius and his bride. Not feeling desirous to encounter the bridal party, I retired to my room shortly prior to their arrival. Towards midnight the thunder of equipages startled the burghers of Kildrummery from their slumbers : the roll of wheels, the trampling of horses, the cracking of whips, and the sound of voices, disturbed the silence of the night, and announced the approach of travellers of importance. The cavalcade drew up at the Knockmaroon Arms : mine host received his guests at the door with due courtesy, and escorted them into his hospitium. The corridor leading to No. 4 soon became a scene of noisy bustle, from the transfer of the multitudinous luggage of the party. Bridesmen and bridesmaids had accompanied the newly-married pair, and amidst the Babel of tongues upon the

passage I could clearly distinguish the voice of my old friend Adrienne, scolding, lecturing, giving orders in broken French and English, with astonishing volubility. By-and-bye Adrienne, who appeared to have got into an animated dialogue with some member of mine host's establishment, suddenly said,—

“Tais toi!—miladi is coming, and Mistare Blake—les nouveaux mariés—Ah!”

Probably Adrienne's gestures were more intelligible than her words, for silence immediately ensued. Presently afterwards, steps slowly paced along the corridor, and I heard Lady Knockmaroon complaining of fatigue as she passed my door, en route to No. 4.

“Indeed, you look sadly fatigued, my sweetest love,” responded the well-known accents of Julius, “but I trust a few hours' repose will recruit you.”

“Did you hear that?” said Jack Walsh; “‘*My sweetest love!*’ Faith! our friend has his eye upon the mitre already, as good Boniface shrewdly surmised.”

Her ladyship returned a sympathetic murmur to the dean's endearments, and the door of No. 4 soon closed on the enamoured couple. My own door was half open, and I heard one of the inn-servants, who had lingered in the passage to obtain a sight of Mr. Julius's wife, exclaim, in a grumbling soliloquy, "Bluranagers! but she's the comical cut of a bride! Upon my sowl, I wouldn't marry such an ugly ould hake as her ladyship, to be made Archbishop of Dublin!"

On the following morning Mr. Walsh and I met the dean and his party, just as all were preparing to go to church. Julius advanced with his wonted cordiality, and taking Jack's hand, said, "Well, my old friend, I heartily congratulate you. I believe I am right in thinking that, of all my friends, there is not one to whom my promotion gives more pleasure than to *you*."

"Great public benefit," muttered Jack; "useful appointment for the church."

“ I trust it may prove so, with the assistance of divine grace,” said Julius, with an aspect of the deepest humility. “ Allow me to present you to Lady Knockmaroon.”

Jack paid his compliments to her ladyship with formal and old-fashioned politeness. It was extremely diverting to see her in her youthful character of bride ; her dress, her air, her manner, were all laboriously devised in imitation of youth. She seemed to imagine that her juvenile pretensions were authenticated by her marriage ; and when the dean offered his hand to conduct her to the carriage, she coquetishly rejected his help, and skipped with girlish lightness down the steps of the inn and into the vehicle.

Mr. Walsh got into his gig, and by taking a shorter route, reached the church before the dean and his helpmate.

It was a great sight to behold the dean at his devotions. Whether the waggery of Jack had contrived it, I know not, but there was certainly a prodigious to do in

marshaling the exemplary dignitary into his stall, followed up with all the multiform apparatus of his piety. First of all marched Jack, looking oleaginously sanctimonious—throwing awe-stricken glances askance at the newly made dean; he opened the door of the dean's stall, and bowing lowly as the Very Reverend Julius entered, he remained in the attitude of semi-prostration till the object of his veneration sublimely rustled past. As for Julius, he had never looked so apostolic; the high, capacious forehead looked loftier, more expansive, and more blandly benevolent than ever. His eyes, as he moved along, seemed fixed on some object more holy than aught the external world presented; his countenance expressed a devout abstraction, an humble unconsciousness that he was in truth the observed of all observers.

Presently a fat, fussy sexton came puffing up to the stall, bearing the huge folio prayer-book that was suited to the magnitude of the dean's devotion. Next came

a little boy, the sexton's son, tottering under the weight of a Bible of tremendous dimensions. Duodecimo piety is only fit for laymen and curates. The devotions of a Christian dignitary should be on a folio, or, at least, a quarto scale. The fussy sexton was followed by another portly functionary bearing a plethoric velvet cushion to sustain the Very Reverend weight of Julius ; this indispensable accommodation having been forgotten till the dean had actually taken his seat. At last everything was got into order—the dean, the books, the velvet cushion and all. Whilst all this preliminary bustle signalized Julius's arrival at his stall, the procession of Lady Knockmaroon and her party to the Knockmaroon pew was distinguished with an equally imposing parade. Jack Walsh retired to an adjacent seat, where he maintained an exquisite expression of contrite abasement—the downcast look of the self-condemning sinner, rebuked by the presence of exalted piety. Soon the service began. It was

performed by the curate of the parish. Julius repeated the responses aloud, and never did I hear tones that more thrillingly expressed the humble contrition of conscious unworthiness than his recitation of the responses in the litany, "Miserable sinners." The dean's sermon was a wonderful display of oratory. It opened simply and unpretendingly. Yet you were immediately interested. As the preacher warmed to his subject, he ascended to loftier flights, and when he became thoroughly impassioned, his discourse was a perfect storm of eloquence. The peroration was magnificent, and concluded with admirable force in the words of the text. An extraordinary effect was undoubtedly produced upon the audience. Streaming eyes were lifted up to heaven; sobs of irrepressible emotion were heard on every side, and Lady Knockmaroon was lifted out of the church in a violent fit of hysterics.

It may give the reader some notion of the thrilling power of Julius's eloquence,

to be told that the cynical Jack Walsh was actually moved to tears, despite every effort to restrain his feelings.

“Hang the fellow!” exclaimed Jack, as we walked to the inn, “he certainly is a marvellous genius—but I cannot forgive him for making me snivel in spite of myself. It was a truly astonishing discourse; I never heard anything equal to it. But the rascal’s religion is all grimace and sham.”

“Not *all* sham,” interrupted I; “not above four-fifths of it.”

“Why, surely,” said Jack, “if he really practised all that he inculcates—aye, or the one half of it, the man would be an actual saint. You perceive how well he can tell us what is right. Yet, see what pranks he can play; things that would make *our* hair stand on end, poor sinners though we be!”

“I think I know Julius better than you do,” replied I, “and I think he is sincere to this extent, that he certainly *believes*

what he preaches, though he may not practise it. No doubt he is an unaccountable sort of fellow. It has often struck me, that if his ordinary conversations were collected, the man would almost pass for a saint. But he squints at his own peccadilloes with a good-natured leniency that is somewhat suspicious ; and he really mistakes a scrupulous observance of the outward formalities of religion, coupled with a *quantum sufficit* of pious talk, for a full discharge of all his Christian duty. He does not mean to be a scoundrel, and to persuade the world he is a saint. He is himself fully persuaded of his own sanctity, and with the best faith imaginable wishes to communicate the same conviction to the public."

"An odd fish, truly," exclaimed Jack, "but amazingly clever withal."

When we reached the inn, the dean and his party were partaking luncheon, prior to driving off to the deanery-house. The dean rose — welcomed Jack with great

kindness, and seemed doubtful how far he could extend his courtesy to me. Lady Knockmaroon was very cordial, and hoped she should often see me at the deanery during their stay. Julius said he had lately heard some talk about establishing a fishery at Balmacraw, part of the late Mr. M'Ginty's property. "I consider it more conducive to the public interest, and also to yours, my dear Walsh," said he, "to establish it upon your estate. Command me in any way you please. I think I have some interest; and, believe me, I should delightedly travel from this to Dublin, for no other purpose than to ensure that advantage for you."

"Humph!" grunted Jack, the cynical discourtesy of whose manner now formed a ludicrous contrast with the bantering affectation of reverence he had previously adopted. But the dean's kind smiles were undiminished.

The bridal party were now moving to their carriages; hands were shaken—kind

adieux were exchanged, and when they had driven off, I said to Jack, with a laugh, "You received Julius's offer to go to Dublin about your fishery business with marvellously little suavity."

"*He* go to Dublin to serve me?" cried Jack. "Faith, Maurice, I hardly think the same man would walk across the street to save me from the gallows, unless some project of his own were involved in my escape. To be sure, if I *were* hanged, he would deliver a profusion of indignant eloquence about the angelic virtues of his murdered friend—but to stir a finger when I wanted it—No, no—Julius is not just the man for that."

"I must own," said I, "you *do* begin to know him pretty well."

An incident occurred during the religious ceremonies of the day, that deserves commemoration. Bodkin received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in order to qualify himself, according to law, for the duties of a situation in the revenue

department, the interest of Lady Knockmaroon had procured for him. Thus, the most sacred ordinance of Christianity was desecrated by the official communion of a notorious profligate, in order that he might have full protestant credentials for the performance of the equivocal duties of an office supposed to be not very favourable to the morals of its functionaries.

When will the wicked bigotry of our laws give place to the influence of Christianity?

CHAPTER XX.

“Nay then, my lord, it's not enough I see,
You are licentious, but you will be wicked.
You're not alone content to take my daughter
Against the law ; but having taken her,
You would repudiate, and cast her off,
Now at your pleasure.”

BEN JONSON, *The New Inn.*

INSTEAD of returning to Castle Carroll, I proceeded from Kildrummery to Tullymoran. Having lounged away a good deal of the day with Jack Walsh, it was late when I quitted the town, and the winter's night had fallen ere I reached the gates of Mr. Macnamara's residence. The faint, wan beams of the moon struggled through the misty atmosphere, and cast a doubtful light upon the long, straight avenue. The place wore an air of inexpressible gloom

and desolation, which doubtless was enhanced in my eyes by the deep calamity that had fallen on its owner. As I entered the house, Rose chanced to cross the hall. She met me with her wonted cordiality, but it was painfully evident that grief had left its brand upon her heart.

“I have one caution to give you,” said she; “the mention of Mr. Julius Blake’s name makes my father quite frantic, ever since his marriage with Lady Knockmaroon. Prior to that event my poor father used to seem almost resigned; he strove to hope, that, incongruous as was my sister’s match, Julius might at least be faithful to her. But this last stroke has entirely unmanned him, and at his age I fear it will undermine his health.”

I readily promised caution, and proceeded to the drawing-room. There the old man was seated by the fire, reading a devotional work. He bade me welcome, and affectionately pressed my hand; but his welcome was unenlivened with a single

smile. He made an effort to converse, and talked for awhile about the current topics of the hour ; about everything rather than the subject that lay rankling in unspeakable bitterness at his heart. *That* topic was unnamed ; although it was plain that the suffering parent sought my sympathy, if not in words, at least by the mute eloquence of look and manner.

In the course of the evening Rose's soubrette entered the apartment, and called her young lady to the hall. When more than an hour had elapsed, Macnamara expressed his surprise at her protracted absence, and rang the bell for a servant, whom he desired to go in search of Miss Rose.

“That sweet girl,” said he, “is the only comfort I have now left at this side of the grave.” He stopped—it was the sole allusion he had made to his bereavement. He passed his hand over his eyes, and a sudden shudder bespoke a paroxysm of

anguish. But he conquered the emotion, and again assumed a calm exterior.

Another hour passed, and I began to partake my host's surprise at Rose's non-appearance, when Rose at last entered, deadly pale, and very much agitated: she wore her cloak and bonnet, and had apparently been out. She approached her father, and laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"What is the matter with you, my love?" he asked.

She replied, in a low voice, "Mary has come home."

Macnamara turned his head aside, and I could perceive that he was weeping. Rose said timidly, "Will you come to her, papa?" Her father made no answer.

"O, papa," pleaded Rose, "do not be angry with her—it would kill her—I am sure it would. Papa, she is very ill."

Macnamara seemed to struggle between conflicting impulses. At last the father

triumphed within him. "Is she in the house?" he asked.

"No; she feared to venture; feared to face you, papa; she doubted whether you would let her in."

"*Let her in!*" echoed Macnamara, "my poor, unhappy child! To think she could suppose my door or my heart could be shut against her! Where is she?"

"In the lodge, papa; she did not wish to venture farther till she knew whether she could hope for pardon. O, this is an agonizing interval for her!"

Macnamara rose, and put on his hat and great coat. Rose asked the assistance of my arm, and, indeed, without it she could have scarcely supported herself. The moon had set; and although the trees were now bare of foliage, yet the huge boughs of the embowering sycamores made

"A double night of darkness and of shades."

The avenue seemed of interminable length, to the impatience of poor Rose. At last we reached the lodge. A light

burned in the window of the inner room, and in another moment we stood in the presence of Mary Macnamara—I should say Mary Blake. Her appearance shocked me. It more than realized what her sister had said about her health. Her face and form were shrunk and wasted, and there was at times an unnatural fire in her eye that suggested the horrible suspicion that her sufferings had touched her intellect. When we entered the cottage, Macnamara tried at first to be stern ; but the deep dejection and ghastly appearance of his once-blooming daughter disarmed him. One word of reproach he pronounced, and only one—“ How *could* you leave me ? ” Mary did not attempt a defence, nor even a reply ; she only sighed in heaviness of spirit. “ But you poor, feeble, helpless sufferer, you are welcome to me even as you are,” said the old man, affectionately embracing her. His kindness affected her more sensibly than his apparent displeasure.

“ O, sir ! ” she uttered, “ how little I de-

erve this goodness! I dreaded lest you would have spurned me from your presence."

"Come," said he, raising her from the chair on which she sat; "let us go to the house—you want refreshment and rest;" but she tottered, and would have fallen, if he had not caught her in his arms. It was evident that she had reached almost the last stage of weakness. Her journey from Julius's "terrestrial paradise" was performed on one of the little country cars; it had greatly fatigued her; and to her bodily weariness were added the results of the most harassing mental agitation. The chariot was sent for to convey her to the house; and when she reached it, she exclaimed, "I have but one wish now on earth—to die."

"Do not say so, dearest sister," said Rose. "Since God has restored you to us, we must hope that He will gradually calm your troubled mind, and that in course of time we may all once more enjoy our former peace."

A smile of melancholy import was Mary's only answer. Her father asked her about the mode of her journey, and conversed in a tone of encouraging affection. By no person was the name of Julius once mentioned.

The night's repose, and the certainty that she was not to be treated as an out-cast, contributed in some degree to restore Mary. Next day she seemed a little better. As she did not name Julius, delicacy deterred Rose and me from doing so. Whilst I looked at his victim, and noted her wasted, pallid appearance, I did not envy Mr. Blake his deanery. It was indeed dearly purchased by the reflections that sooner or later were sure to obtrude themselves upon him. He undoubtedly had a curious code of morals of his own. One of its noticeable features was the readiness with which he censured in others the errors he committed without scruple himself. For instance—who so flippant to complain of unperformed promises?

yet who so neglectful of his own? And when, on my first journey to Dublin, we witnessed at Jerry Casey's wake the fatal results of FitzEustace's perfidy, he was shocked into bestowing a most moral censure upon the delinquent. Yet here was the censor himself, the hero of a not dissimilar exploit; differing chiefly from FitzEustace's in the rank and education of the victim, and the greater elaboration of treachery with which the design had been accomplished.

Mary spoke of her future plans, and said she was desirous to retire into a convent; "that is," she added with a sigh, "if any convent would receive such a wretched, unfortunate creature as I am."

From Tullymoran I proceeded to Barnewall's abode, where the unassuming sweetness and easy affability of Emily had endeared her to every member of the family. I told her of the disappointment I had sustained from M'Ginty. She laughed, and observed that I had been quite ready

to marry, and encounter the expenses of a household, on the faith of the odd man's settlement.

“ But I think,” said she, “ you will now admit the prudence, or at least the good fortune, of the postponement I insisted on. Do you know, I am so charmed with the simple integrity and hearty good-nature of my poor cousins here, that, if their manners were a little more refined, I could almost consent to spend my days among them. Certainly their humble home contrasts very favourably, in one respect at least, with Ballymore ; it is the home of *peace* : no spites, no hatreds, no jealousies, no heartburnings. Really, I have become quite enamoured of its peaceful privacy.”

I then gave her a detail of the Knockmaroon marriage, which she had not previously heard of, and I told her its effect on poor Mary Macnamara's health. Emily was greatly shocked.

“ Thank heaven !” said she, “ that I quitted Tullymoran when Mary went off with my uncle ; had I remained there till

now, I could not have endured Macnamara's eye; what *must* he think of us all? what must even his charity pronounce upon our family? But how does my uncle dare to do these things? Does he not rashly calculate on his connexion with Miss Macnamara remaining secret? Surely, if her outraged father will but utter the word, his bishop must dismiss him with ignominy from the ministry!"

Such was the indignant expression of Emily's feelings; but she did not estimate—indeed, she scarcely knew—the many obstacles that deterred the Catholic father, now stricken in years, from becoming the public accuser of the rising favourite of viceroys; the acute and energetic attaché of the court, who possessed resources that had bent reluctant statesmen to his will, and who enjoyed so many important advantages over the proscribed proprietor of Tullymoran.

"And now Emily," said I, "let us talk a little about your own affairs. Whether

Sir Hyacinth has heard of your residence here, or even of your continued existence, I know not ; it is, however, very improbable that he should not have heard something of the matter ; for FitzEustace certainly revealed your retreat to Colonel Crumpe, and he is likely to have babbled to other persons also. That he is not just now on good terms with your father, appears to me of very little moment. There are tongues enough to communicate your escape to Sir Hyacinth ; and it is indeed barely possible, but extremely improbable, that he should still be ignorant upon the subject. I advised you before, and I now again advise you, to renounce your precarious concealment. Face the enemy. You must, as a matter of course, possess the public sympathy. Empower me to acquaint my parents with the terms on which you and I stand. Colonel Crumpe already knows them, and approves our engagement so highly that I should not much wonder if his satisfac-

tion induced him to make some settlement."

"I should wonder—very much!" said Emily.

"Why you know," said I, "he has put me into parliament—who could have anticipated that?"

"It was indeed surprising," she answered; "and his generosity will probably terminate there. But suppose I adopt your advice, and apprise the world of the important fact that Miss Emily Blake still lives, what is to be the next step? Where am I to establish myself?"

"Come to Castle Carroll," said I boldly. "I long hesitated to suggest it as a residence; but we are much less unruly since M'Ginty's death, and my parents would only be too glad to receive such a daughter-in-law. As to finances—"

"Aye; let us hear about *that*," interrupted Emily with an air of the most provoking attention. "That is a puzzling chapter, I apprehend."

“ I am quite certain,” said I, “ that Sir Hyacinth will be quite ready to follow up in your case the generosity that Jerry Brien induced him to practise. You started a romantic objection to this, while the wound of your feelings was fresh and recent ; but there really is no reason why your father’s attempt on your life should hermetically seal up his pockets against you. He owes you some indemnification for a good deal of misery.”

“ I—I believe, Maurice, that what you say deserves to be seriously considered.”

“ Then consider it, Emily, as seriously as possible, and as fast as you can. Am I authorized to acquaint The O’Carroll and my mother with what is coming ?”

Emily took an hour to consider, and ended by acquiescing in my proposal. “ But mind,” said she, “ I shall only go there as a visitor ; not as a daughter-in-law. We must first ascertain the success of your financial project, and also the result of doctor Blake’s dishonest suit to

make you pay his mother's fortune twice."

"As you please, dearest!" replied I; too well pleased at her consenting to become our inmate, to criticize very severely the conditions she at present annexed to her compliance.

To guard against the possibility of her changing her mind, I proceeded at once to Castle Carroll, and informed my parents of my attachment—my engagement—and the singular escape and present domicile of the *fiancée*. The reader will easily conceive their astonishment. Emily had always been the especial favourite of both; and their delight was indeed very great when they learned I had won the heart of the fair inheritress of Ballymore. They acquiesced with alacrity in my request that she should be received at Castle Carroll.

"Received?" cried my father, in an access of Celtic hospitality; "I only wish the rooms were floored with gold for her to walk on! 'Tis the best bit of news I've

heard these ten years. I think the luck of our house seems turning round, and better fortunes are in store for us. Why, the *angiol asthoir*! She shall have a salute from the battery, that will startle the echoes at Corrinard! How the devil did you manage to keep such a secret so long, you rascal?"

My mother's satisfaction was as fervent, but less eloquent. She joined me in recommending a quiet reception, as being probably much more acceptable to the feelings of Miss Blake than the proposed canonnade.

The indignation excited by Sir Hyacinth's conduct was too great for words. After some ineffectual efforts to give adequate utterance to his horror, The O'Carroll gasped for breath, and was fain to relinquish the attempt. It was agreed that until Emily's arrival, we should all preserve silence on the topic of her visit; a prudential resolution, which The O'Carroll immediately fortified with a bumper of

brandy and water to her health and happiness.

I communicated our projected movements to Jerry Brien. The affectionate fellow insisted on accompanying me to Barnewall's farm, "in order," as he said, "to escort his young mistress to her home. And if it's God's will," added he, "that you get rid of that swindling blackguard of a doctor next term, there's no fear of you, dear, but you'll do well and thrive, for all that's come and gone."

Jerry's visit to The Scrub eventuated in an episode of some importance to himself. His comely aspect, frank bearing, and some traits of his character which Emily with warm gratitude depicted, made so deep an impression on pretty Bessy Barnewall, that Jerry was induced to return at a subsequent period, and offer himself as a suitor.

"I'd have been afeard to say a word about it," said he, "in regard of the high blood, if I didn't see that Miss Bessy

milked the cows and made the butter all as one as my sister Eileesh." Bessy herself, as she gazed on her humble hero, seemed to think that his true, tried heart, and hand good at need (to say nothing of his arch and winning smile, and the row of pearly teeth that it disclosed), might weigh something in the balance against the faded royal autographs that evidenced the bygone distinction of her house. In fine, she surrendered her heart to the safe keeping of Jerry, who acquitted himself excellently well of the trust; and she transplanted herself and her housewifery to his cottage, which was soon famed far and wide for its neatness and comfort, and the thrifty industry of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER XXI.

“ God save great George our king,
Long live our glorious king,
Long live the king.”
English National Anthem.

THE gentry of our neighbourhood were inspired at this period with a strong desire to give a public ball, to which numerous motives were the stimulants. The ball was intended, in the first place, to celebrate his majesty's happy accession to the throne, and thereby to testify the loyalty of all who attended it. As it was proposed, moreover, to relax the exclusive rules of rank in favour of some of the more opulent farmers and shopkeepers of the neighbourhood, it was hoped that this happy condescension would consolidate the attachment of the persons thus honoured

to our Glorious Constitution in Church and State. Again, Sir Hyacinth, who was actively prosecuting his canvass, considered that the festive gathering in question might be rendered auxiliary to his political purposes. Finally, everybody approved of the ball, because it was a ball—and because it promised to afford the usual occasion for social enjoyment and gossip.

As it was meant to be more numerous than select, it became requisite to find a public apartment in a central situation, capacious enough to accommodate the expected numbers. This was rather a difficult matter, until somebody suggested the long hay-loft of Tim Molony's establishment at Crossnacoppul. The idea was immediately adopted; and the ladies of our neighbourhood, assisted by some professional decorators, forthwith set to work in transforming the loft into a ball-room. Day after day they laboured at their task, with a zeal that was worthy of a better object. As the readiest mode of conceal-

ing the coarse rafters and roof, and the rough, unplastered walls, they hung the apartment with a copious covering of ivy, interspersing the dark foliage with artificial flowers of the gayest colours. Overhead were branches of the vine, with its clustering grapes, the work of their own fair hands. My mother and Lady Knockmaroon, who actively participated in the preparations, stained their lady-fingers with the villainous compound of clay and indigo which they dexterously metamorphosed into tempting fruitage. None were permitted to enter the precincts until the transformation was complete; and doubtless the effect of the apartment, when well lighted up, was extremely picturesque and brilliant, and to our rustic friends might almost appear magnificent.

The night of the ball was the next after Emily's arrival at Castle Carroll. Her journey had been managed with such privacy, that her presence had not yet transpired. My mother pressed her to go.

“ Do, do !” cried The O’Carroll ; “ your appearance will come like a thunderclap on every one.”

“ A strange compliment to pay a young lady,” said Emily, laughing ; “ but as I do not wish to convulse the elements, I think I shall stay at home and amuse The O’Carroll.”

“ Thank you, my dear,” returned he ; “ but I should far prefer your amusing yourself ; and, as Maurice says, there is really no reason now why you should remain under a cloud.”

“ Especially as it seems to be a thundercloud,” said Emily, “ and I need only show myself to produce an explosion.”

She was half inclined to go ; but a difficulty occurred about her toilette. Madame O’Carroll offered everything her own could afford to supply the deficiency ; and a feminine discussion arose, the details of which I don’t pretend to understand ; but matters were still undecided when the carriage drove to the door to take my mother

to the ball. I was of course obliged to attend her ; but I promised to return with the carriage, and escort Miss Blake, if she should by that time have prevailed on herself to appear in public.

To Crossnacoppul we were driven. The hayloft, now metamorphosed into the temple of Terpsichore, was approached by a broad and easy flight of steps, that were shaded with an awning ; and the extreme end of the ball-room opened into an inner repository of Tim Molony's, where refreshments were served. There were supper-tables laid in two or three of the rooms in the inn ; and in a corner of the ball-room stood a hogshead of delicious negus, accessible by four different spigots to the thirsty caperers. There was a pretty numerous gathering of all ranks prior to our arrival.

I never have been one of those who can discover sources of ridicule in the manners of the humbler classes ; and on the occasion which I now commemorate, I was

sincerely happy to see them resolved to enjoy themselves. Their superiors, indeed, did their best to encourage this good resolution ; and without the least parade of condescension, contrived to put them quite at their ease by the simple magic of a friendly word or smile. Sir Hyacinth and Lady Blake were present ; rank and wealth, like charity, will cover a multitude of sins ; and as general good humour was the order of the night, the reception accorded to the baronet and his wife was as courteous as they could have desired. Dean Blake and Lady Knockmaroon were there : the dean looked delightfully benign, and distributed his attentions among the company with admirable tact. Lady Knockmaroon insisted on being introduced to all the ladies by whom she had not been previously known ; and what with her lively town gossip, and the dean's colloquial abilities, they contributed greatly to the animation of the different groupes to which they in turn attached themselves.

Some of the farmer's daughters were attracted by the unusual dress of her ladyship, and contrived to get near enough for an accurate inspection of her attire, and also for the benefit of her fashionable anecdotes, if they could have understood them. But their knowledge of English was too limited for that.

Sir Hyacinth led forth the daughter of one of his political supporters. Bodkin danced with Lady Blake ; there was a long set of couples for the opening country dance ; and the dancers seemed determined to do full honour to the strains of the merry orchestra of fiddlers who were rasping away in a corner. Passing out of the apartment to return for Emily, I met Jerry Brien at the door, looking in at the gay scene.

“ I don't see Eileesh here,” said I ;
“ why didn't she come ? She is a great deal a prettier girl than nine out of ten of them.”

“ She doesn't care a traneeen about it,”

answered Jerry; "besides, she has no great fancy for balls since the evening that Sir Hycie gave a dance on the lawn at Ballymore last summer three years, and gathered all the pretty colliciens he could get. So he sent for Eileesh, and sorrow a step she'd go. So then he sent a magistrate's warrant to bring her, signed, 'Hyacinth Blake, Justice of the Peace;' and you know she couldn't disobey *that*.* And his honour was tipsy, and he made her dance jigs for two hours on end with Hickson the horse jobber, and Shamusheen Kearney wid the bandy legs. And Eileesh thought it was a hundred years till she'd get out of it; and she as good as took her oath that till the day of her death she never would have any call to ball-dances or the like, if they sent fifty warrants to fetch her!"

I got into the carriage, and drove to Castle Carroll. Emily, partly induced by the solicitations of my father, and partly

* Fact.

by a little female curiosity (which was mingled, I suspect, with a stronger motive) had made up her mind to come. She was dressed with the utmost simplicity; wearing no ornament except a handsome diamond brooch of my mother's. When we reached the ball-room, she paused for a few moments at the door. "I know," she whispered, "it will be a very agitating scene. But I have nerved myself for it; and I candidly own to you, that the spirit of mischief impels me to inflict thus publicly the mortification of my reappearance upon my amiable stepmother."

We entered, and at first were not observed, for Jack Walsh and a rustic belle were footing it vigorously to the tune of a well-known country dance, and the applauding attention of the spectators was entirely engrossed by the dancers. The set was a small one, not exceeding some five or six couples; and it was evident, from the subdued hilarity of the country folk, as well as from their whispered commentaries,

that Jack had made a somewhat popular hit.

“Aye, let him sit there mumchance, with his back against the wall.”—“The never a partner he’ll get for *this* night, anyhow.”—“Let the fellow put *that* in his mill and grind it.” These and similar expressions, evidenced a feeling of popular triumph over some person who had incurred the displeasure of the speakers, who continued their remarks in Irish and English until Jack had danced down his partner—a very pretty peasant girl—to the end of the set. The solution of the little mystery was this: Jack’s partner, the daughter of a highly respectable farmer, had exercised the privilege of choice which the customs of our peasantry permit to her sex, and had asked a young neighbour to dance with her, exactly as she would have done at a pattern. The youth, who kept a little mill, by which he had made some money, deemed it proper to exhibit his superior gentry in the presence of so many of the aristocracy, by rejecting with disdain the proffered hand

of Peggy Mahony. Jack Walsh espied the whole transaction, and resolved to mortify the conceited grinder of corn, and avenge the wrongs of pretty Peggy, by loudly calling on the fiddler to play up "The Dusty Miller," and leading off the set with the rejected fair one. Jack's little manœuvre succeeded admirably; the uncourteous swain was severely punished; Peggy was avenged; and when the dance was concluded, Jack led her to her seat with as much deference as if she were a duchess, and seating himself at her side, conversed with her for a few minutes.

"Heaven bless your honour, Mr. Walsh!"—"Good luck to your honour, sir!"—"Glory to your sowl, Mr. Jack!" With such tokens of approval the chivalrous Jack was greeted by Miss Mahony's faction, as he quitted her with a profound bow, to rejoin his own coterie.

Heretofore Emily and I had remained, unobserved, near the door: the position we occupied was rather in shadow, and

the eyes of the company were employed elsewhere ; but when the little interlude of Jack Walsh and Peggy Mahony was ended, and a pause of some minutes ensued, startled glances, one by one, were bestowed on my companion, who, leaning on my arm, now advanced slowly through the centre of the room ; and exclamations met my ear, such as, “ Look, look ! who is that ? Why, sure it is’n’t — By the powers, it *is* Miss Emily Blake, or her spridh ! ”

Meanwhile, we advanced to the upper end of the apartment, and came to a full stop in the midst of a large circle, in which Lady Blake and Lady Knockmaroon were holding forth, to the delight of their respective auditors. The viscountess raised her eye-glass, and after a moment’s scrutiny (which, however, was free from the vulgar impertinence of a stare), half-whispered to the dean, “ Pray, who is that beautiful creature ? ”

Julius looked up, and, from the bewildered astonishment depicted in his

countenance, it was evident that he doubted at first whether his living niece, or some optical illusion, was presented to his gaze. Lady Blake turned pale, and actually trembled with rage: — of fear, I believe, she was incapable. Sir Hyacinth was leaning on the back of her chair, but the instant he beheld his daughter his visage became ghastly white, his knees smote each other, and he sank down upon a seat in an uncontrollable agony of terror and detection. Jack Walsh alone seemed self-possessed. Quitting the circle, he seized both Emily's hands in his.

“ Good God, Miss Blake ! ” he exclaimed, “ is this, in real truth, yourself ? Welcome, my dear ! ten thousand times welcome, from the coral caves and briny caverns of old ocean ! Let me look closer at you. If you'll trust an old bachelor's opinion, I protest your long submersion has improved your charms. Really, Miss Emily, if you are a specimen of what sea-nymphs are, I shall be tempted to get a

diving-bell, and inhabit some submarine lodge: but in true and sober earnest, my dear girl, I am heartily delighted, and inexpressibly astonished. Do, I beg, unravel the mystery of your disappearance: tell us where you were?"

Whilst Jack thus rattled away, giving utterance to his good-natured feelings and extreme surprise, dean Julius had arisen from his seat, and embracing his recovered niece with infinite enthusiasm, offered up most eloquent praise and thanksgiving to heaven for her preservation. He wept—he ejaculated—he presented Emily with excessive tenderness to Lady Knockmaroon; but he took care not to follow up Mr. Walsh's questions; for his penetration immediately told him there was a dark and guilty secret somewhere.

Meanwhile, such a strenuous preserver of appearances could not but acutely feel the awkwardness of Sir Hyacinth's manifest trepidation. Whilst other persons crowded round his daughter, to offer their

congratulations and express their happiness, the baronet remained in the chair upon which he had sunk down, speechless and agape; his whole frame apparently quite paralysed. Julius, to cover his brother's embarrassment, led Emily to him, saying, "I cannot wonder at your agitation, my dearest Hyacinth—this is, indeed, an overwhelming mercy, and naturally absorbs all your faculties in speechless gratitude. The lost is found—she whom we mourned as dead is restored to our embraces;" and the dean took Emily's hand, and held it towards her father. But the baronet's wandering eye met the face of Jerry Brien, whom irrepressible curiosity had drawn into the group: he shuddered; he shrank from the fixed look of the young peasant, and by a strong effort raised himself with the aid of Jack Walsh's ready arm, and staggered rather than walked out of the assembly; Julius officiously supporting him, and giving the *key-note*, which his personal followers immediately caught up. "Overcome with delight at so suddenly

seeing his daughter—the emotion was overpowering. Poor fellow! Pray, my dear friends,” continued the dean, “do not let this incident disturb the amusements of the evening; nothing could annoy my brother more. He will be well in a few minutes—he only wants a little fresh air and aromatic vinegar. Play something”—(to the orchestra)—“play Planxty O’Rourke; and harkye, Jerry Brien” (in a whisper) “ask somebody to dance—set them all dancing—there’s a good fellow—and I’ll do as much for you another time.”

Emily unresistingly submitted to all the parade of affection that Julius had got up; for her good sense told her that such a public place was unsuited to explanation or censure. She quitted the room with her uncle; but they both returned presently; the former saying that Sir Hyacinth was quickly recovering, and would soon reappear.

I thought it impossible but that he must have learned FitzEustace’s meeting with Emily during her abode with farmer Barne-

wall. The fact was, that having quarrelled with FitzEustace he had no direct communication with him ; and some whispers on the subject that reached him through one or two other persons to whom FitzEustace had spoken, he was inclined to disregard ; setting down the information to the quizzical propensity of that gentleman.

The dance went merrily on ; the musicians played with might and main ; the various couples, patrician and plebeian, displayed their agility and grace ; Emily was conversing with Lady Knockmaroon, Jack Walsh, and me, in the refreshment room, at the door of which the dean stood on guard, exchanging a word or jest with every one who passed.

Suddenly a stranger presented himself, who had advanced unseen at the backs of the dancers. He was a tall, commanding-looking man, in a military undress. His distinguished air announced the gentleman, and there was an ominous sternness in his voice, as he said, " I believe, sir, that you are Mr. Julius Blake."

The dean bowed assent.

“ I, sir,” returned the stranger, in the same impressive tone, “ am Mr. Henry Macnamara. When I tell you that I am the brother of Miss Mary Macnamara, of Tullymoran, you will probably anticipate the object with which I have sought this interview.”

Julius was very much perplexed. He occupied the doorway, as I have mentioned. To advance into the ball-room would be to expose this disagreeable colloquy to the ears of the public. To retreat into the inner apartment would be to make Lady Knockmaroon an auditor of more than it was desirable she should hear. He replied, with as much self-command as he could assume, “ I know not, Mr. Macnamara, to what I am to ascribe the honour you confer upon me.”

“ If you mean what you say,” returned Macnamara, “ you are incredibly dull of apprehension. It therefore devolves upon me to state to you explicitly that I have come to demand satisfaction for the de-

stroyer of my sister, and the betrayer of domestic hospitality and personal friendship.”

These words had caught the quick ears of Jack Walsh, who good-naturedly drew off Lady Knockmaroon’s attention to a jig, which had just commenced in the ball-room, and led her and Emily forth to be spectators of the exhibition. Her ladyship smiled a thousand Cupids at the dean as he made way for her passage ; and as soon as Mr. Walsh’s manœuvre had taken her out of hearing, Julius retreated into the supper-room, where Mr. Macnamara said in a voice of strong, though suppressed emotion,

“ Your guilt, sir, can neither be denied nor palliated. I have come from France to demand from you the only satisfaction that remains to the injured honour of my family. You shall expiate your crime with your blood, or I myself shall fall by your hand. I pray you to name your friend without delay, and to lose no time in arranging all preliminaries.”

Julius lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, as if utterly horror-struck and scandalized at such a proposal. He knew that Macnamara (who was an officer in the Irish brigade in the service of Louis XV.) had acquired a high reputation for address at every weapon; whereas his own pacific pursuits had left him destitute of even ordinary skill. The predicament in which he so suddenly found himself taxed his *sçavoir faire* to the utmost. On the pressure of the moment he deemed it best to oppose the sanctity of his cloth to the pugnacious purposes of Macnamara.

“I can scarcely imagine,” said he, “that you are serious in proposing a hostile meeting to a clergyman. Not for all that the earth can give would I stain my soul with the guilt of a fellow-being’s blood; nor would I dare to rush uncalled into my Creator’s presence. No, sir; it may not be. Calm your irritation by some other process; for I would infinitely rather submit to every conceivable indignity than commit the deliberate breach of

the divine law, to which you are so ill-advised as to invite me."

"Parbleu! what miserable cant is this? where was your respect for the divine law when you basely deceived and ruined an innocent girl, whose affections you had won?"

"For that offence, Captain Macnamara, I am ready to make you an apology as abject as my penitence is bitter and remorseful. It was, alas! an infraction of the sacred law, for which I have only to plead the headlong impetuosity of a passion excited by the lady's unspeakable attractions. But one error does not justify a second; and my having been so unfortunate as to offend heaven once, is no reason why I should commit the second offence of imperilling your life or my own."

"Sir," cried Captain Macnamara, "this is merely the hypocritical cant of the profligate poltroon. You have already proved yourself a scoundrel; you now show yourself a dastard; and as such I will chastise you and proclaim you."

With these words he aimed a blow of his horsewhip at the dean ;

“ Hold !” exclaimed Julius, with inimitable coolness, and parrying the stroke with an uplifted chair ; “ I warn you not to expose yourself to any legal penalties. I am perfectly willing to pass over this little brusquerie ; but persevere in your assault and battery, and you will only accomplish your own ruin. I know more about you than you think. I know that you accompanied Thurôt in his attack on Carrickfergus last February. My friendship for your family has not only kept me silent on that subject, but I have contrived to shut the mouths of others who were eager to turn the tale to your father’s disadvantage. Do but provoke me, and not only shall you be hunted out of the kingdom like a noxious animal, but the very name of Macnamara”—(here he clenched his teeth, and his voice expressed the most resolute defiance)—“ the very name of Macnamara, which has heretofore survived penal laws and social persecution, shall be utterly obliterated from the land.”

Despite my detestation of Julius's conduct, I could not withhold my admiration from the ability and firmness with which he stood his ground. He showed that he could be dangerous when turned to bay. Macnamara's rage disdained the prudential considerations suggested by the dean ; and evading his guard he struck him several blows with his horsewhip. Unwilling that the scene should acquire publicity, I had closed the door, and, as it happened, no one sought to enter ; the music, the noise of the dancers, and the murmur of conversation without, prevented the raised voices in our apartment from reaching the ears of the general company.

“There,” cried Macnamara, having partly satiated his rage, “vile, degraded coward and villain as thou art ! I shall try to forget thy name, as something too base, too loathsome, to soil the memory or stain the lips of a person of honour.”

The dean's brow was clouded for a moment, and only for a moment. Raising

himself to his full stature, and assuming an air of the most lofty and commanding magnanimity, he answered,—

“Even so be it. If your outrage on my person be any consolation to your wounded feelings, you are welcome to it. It is my boast that you have not provoked me to retaliate. He who can forgive a wrong, is infinitely greater than he who inflicts it. Would that the indignity I have suffered at your hands could expiate the wrong I have myself inflicted !”

Ere the sentence was ended, Macnamara had quitted the room, with a military curse upon his lips, and was now stalking rapidly through the ball-room. When he was gone, dean Julius turned to me :

“That was an unpleasant rencontre,” said he ; “but when we unhappily diverge from the path of rectitude, we must only kiss the rod that punishes our transgressions. I am thankful that I was not more violent with Macnamara. Although his profane language shows him a stranger to

the influences of religion, yet it cannot be denied that he had injuries to complain of. We should practise forbearance with a wronged man. You," he added, in an insinuating voice, "have witnessed my conduct during our very exciting interview, and I appeal to you whether—"

But the appeal was not made; for Mr. Walsh, who had seen the exit of the military stranger, now returned with Lady Knockmaroon and Emily, and inquired with some interest who he was?

"A son of Macnamara, of Tullymoran," answered Julius.

"Oh, a captain in the French service, I believe?" said Jack.

"Yes," replied Julius.

"Why did you not make him stay here, dean?" asked Lady Knockmaroon; "I daresay he would have been very entertaining?"

The slightest possible glance from Emily's eye apprized me that she divined the species of entertainment the French captain was likely to bestow upon Julius.

Sir Hyacinth did not return to the ball-room. A message announced that he and Lady Blake had driven home.

“Come, dean,” said Lady Knockmaroon, “it is time, I think, to retire: I don’t wish to wait for supper. Emily, dearest, is there the least chance of our persuading you to accompany us?”

“Not the least—to-night, at all events.”

“But you will certainly come to us soon, Emily?” said the viscountess.

Emily extricated herself without any distinct pledge, and the dean’s set departed.

Jack Walsh was “the bright perticular star” of the supper-table; and, assisted by some congenial spirits, discharged its duties to the infinite delight of the assembled rustics. Dancing was resumed with great spirit after supper, and the party did not finally break up until warned by the crowing of matin cock.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ Glad Time is at his point arriv'd
For which love's hopes were so long liv'd.
Lead, Hymen, lead away ;
And let no object stay,
Nor banquets (but sweet kisses)
The turtles from their blisses.”

BEN JONSON, *Masques at Court.*

THE January term was to decide the fate of our lawsuit. We pleaded the statute of limitations ; twenty years having elapsed without any claim, or payment made, on account of the sum litigated. The Chancellor was sick, and the seals were in commission; his lordship being represented by a judge of the Common Pleas, a baron of the Exchequer, and an eminent king's counsel who had acquired a high reputation in equity practice. These three judicial luminaries delivered their several judgments. The first was for dismissing doctor

Blake's bill with costs. This judgment was echoed by the second. But the third expressed a doubt whether the statute of limitations protected us ; inasmuch as in his opinion, the twenty years should commence and be reckoned from the death of my late aunt Blake. He instilled his "doubt" into the minds of his brethren, and judgment was accordingly deferred, in order to afford time for further consideration. The adjourned judgment was unfavourable. To gain time, we petitioned for a rehearing before the Lord Chancellor. The petition was granted ; and matters thus remained in suspense for some time longer.

Meanwhile, The O'Carroll, who looked on Emily in the light of a good security for cash *in futuro*, and who valued her accordingly, strenuously urged our immediate marriage. I need not say that I pressed Emily to comply ; and she, to say the truth, was nothing loth, as her residence, whilst unwedded, beneath any other roof than her father's, began to excite a thousand strange

commentaries. These soon settled into a public belief so unfavourable to Sir Hyacinth and Lady Blake, that they deemed it advisable to quit the country, and take up their abode in England. My mother made an effort to interest Colonel Crumpe's generosity in behalf of the young couple ; and as she spared no eloquence in her appeal, she flattered herself that so near a relative, possessing an unincumbered estate of £7000 a-year, would at last be melted to tenderness. Her epistle produced the following reply :—

“ DEAR NIECE,

“ I have already shown that I am willing to advance your son's interests in any mode that does not make an unreasonable inroad on my own resources. I have put him into Parliament, where he has the best market for his tongue, if he can talk ; and for his brains, if he has got any. I have also got him the entrée of some useful circles in town.

“ I am bound to say, and I say it with pleasure, that on the whole I have but little fault to find with him. It is no crime of his to have entered the world the offspring of an embarrassed family. He is a modest youth, too, unnecessarily diffident in his own merits ; for he would not believe me when I told him Lady Knockmaroon had a desperate passion for him ; which, as he was insensible to the fact, her ladyship transferred to the dean of Kildrumnery, who wisely bartered his embraces for that good snug deanery.

“ I entirely approve his marriage with the heiress of Ballymore. It is a thousand pities she has got no money at present. But if she survives Sir Hyacinth, the brilliant future will amply compensate for present poverty. As this is an alliance that I can cordially sanction, I shall settle One Hundred Pounds sterling per annum on the youthful couple till the death of Sir Hyacinth—mind, *only* till then ; for after that event they will not require it.

With reasonable economy they can do very well on that allowance. As wedding occasions require some outlay, I enclose you £50, being the first half-year in advance; but I beg you will impress on both your son and Miss Blake, that this union could not possibly commence under more unfavourable auspices than any extravagant expenditure at the outset.

“ Wishing every prosperity to the bride and bridegroom, I am, with compliments to The O’Carroll,

“ Yours truly,

“ JEREMY CRUMPE.”

We all agreed that this was an astonishing exertion of munificence on the part of the colonel; and as Emily and I had no expensive desires to gratify, we readily determined to bring our expenditure within the prescribed limits; a purpose that involved no great sacrifice in a country where the necessaries of life are very cheap.

The day for the nuptials was fixed;

there was no ostentatious parade ; no tumultuous gathering ; even The O'Carroll seemed for once inspired with the spirit of quiet economy which certainly was paramount within my breast. Some half-dozen friends were invited, including, of course, Jack Walsh, who contributed by his lively manners to the gaiety of the party. Julius and Lady Knockmaroon were also asked ; it having been decided in our family conclave that his niece's marriage should, for the sake of appearances, be celebrated in the presence of at least one or two of her relations. The dean gave the bride away, and the ceremony was performed by my excellent old friend M'Grail. When it was concluded, the dean pronounced an eloquent, though brief exhortation to us to discharge the important duties of that holy state upon which we had entered, according to the requirements of religion.

“ And take care, my young friends,” added M'Grail, “ that your religion be

real, and that it operate in all your actions. Men may have a good deal of religion, and yet not enough to bring them to heaven. Keep no dark corners of the heart uncleaned from the futile fancy that your virtues will countervail your faults. Give *all* unreservedly to God ; for *all* is his."

My union with Emily produced a very sedative effect upon some of the most formidable of my father's creditors. They were now content to wait, in the belief that the Ballymore rental would be eventually used to clear off their demands. Thus far our condition became immediately easier ; and we also had the good fortune to defeat doctor Blake with costs, the Lord Chancellor deciding that our plea against his swindling bill was valid.

I need scarcely tell the reader that Emily conferred upon my married life every happiness that a true, fond heart, lofty principle, and engaging manners could bestow. Our union has been blessed with two sons and a daughter. The eldest youth is

destined to transmit the hereditary honours of The O'Carroll to posterity ; our old inheritance having been rescued from the ruin that impended over it by the aid of the Ballymore wealth. My second son will inherit Ballymore; having (at the earnest instance of "the tribe," in whose views his mother acquiesced) adopted the name and arms of Blake.

Sir Hyacinth died in 1772 at Paris, whither he had travelled from England, in the vain pursuit of the happiness his crimes had forfeited. His expenses had been much retrenched ; for his wife turned his life-interest in the estate to the best account for her children, by saving as much as she could of her income.

Macnamara lived to an age far exceeding the Scriptural "three score and ten;" his latter years were cheered by the return of his eldest son, who quitted the French service to settle at Tullymoran. Rose remained unmarried ; Mary sought in a cloister the solace of religion for the wound

from which her mental peace had so bitterly suffered.

My father's health had been too much undermined by years of uneasiness, confinement, alarm, and jovial excesses, to allow a permanent amendment. Old habits were not easily to be got rid of; and each succeeding day he continued to toast all the loyal sentiments, and all the leading magnates, in the Protestant catalogue. It befel upon a winter's day, the 17th of January, 1774—when the howling storm and drifting snow without were pleasantly contrasted with the cheerful blaze and warm atmosphere within—that The O'Carroll rose after dinner to perform this diurnal duty. He rose with difficulty; for he was now so feeble, that while raising aloft his glass with one hand, the other rested on a crutch. Amongst our guests was a chaplain of the viceroy's, on a tour through the west; and as that gentleman's politics were known to be particularly "strong,"

The O'Carroll was anxious to display his own with congenial emphasis.

“ I give you,” said he, “ the Glorious, Pious, and Immortal Memory of the Great and Good King William the Third, who delivered us from Popery, slavery, arbitrary government, brass money, and wooden shoes : and may the rascal who refuses this toast be made ammunition for the devil's ordnance, and blown to—blown to—”

The O'Carroll did not finish the sentence. The upraised glass fell from his hand, and a dark change came over his countenance. He sank into his chair ; his livid face and swollen veins announced an apoplectic fit. M'Grail sprang to his aid, loosened his neckcloth, and breathed a vein with his penknife ; but life had fled.

“ May the Lord have mercy on his soul !” exclaimed the good vicar, undeterred by the Popish nature of the prayer.

“ Amen !” cried the vice-regal chaplain.
“ Our poor friend died in the act of attest-

ing his heartfelt attachment to our Protestant institutions in church and state.”

M'Grail shook his head.

The O'Carroll's wake and funeral were conducted with a degree of éclât sufficient to vindicate our family dignity. My mother, who loved him sincerely, notwithstanding their occasional misfs, now mourned him with affectionate constancy, and followed him to the grave within a year.

Colonel Crumpe still lives. He has made no disposition of his estate, nor will he do so. He says that he intends to leave it open to litigation between me, as next of kin, and an obscure and distant relative of the name of Crumpe, who is said to possess some claims under an old deed of entail.

Having mentioned the fate of so many of the persons I have introduced to the reader, I must say a word or two of Julius Blake.

That indefatigable personage now dis-

ported himself in the character of a Model Husband and Father. Strange to tell, his incongruous mate presented him with a son, who afforded to the excellent dean a thousand delightful occasions of displaying parental affection. Julius, as the reader may possibly remember, had formerly stigmatized my parents' attachment for me as the mere animal instinct of bears for their cub. His sarcasm seemed literally applicable to himself; except that no parent-bear ever paraded the parental sentiment, whereas Julius was exceedingly desirous that the force of his fatherly affection should be known to the whole world. What touching sentences did he not utter, all about "the unspeakable felicity that encircled his domestic hearth!" How he *did* press the hand of his promising son *pro bono publico*; and with what inimitable fondness did he not bestow his lackadaisical glances upon Lady Knockmaroon, whenever he had the benefit of an observer! It was I believe, quite

true, that in private as well as in public all this *fanfaronnade* of conjugal and fatherly tenderness was performed. But it was equally true, that Julius never tried to arrest his dear son in his progress to the devil ; a career on which that young gentleman entered with distinguished enthusiasm. The dean imagined he discharged all his duties by ostentatious fondling, boundless indulgence, and balmy professions of unparalleled, unprecedented love. It was perfectly astounding how he managed to shut his eyes to the boisterous blackguardism of his accomplished offspring. He practised the miserable policy of pretending not to observe the gross outrages on decency which he could not have noticed without the trouble of reproof ; and it once or twice happened that after some villanous escapade had excited the indignant disgust of society, the dean would exclaim, with an exquisite semblance of unconsciousness, " My son, thank heaven, is a Christian gentleman."

I forbear to sketch the career of the luckless cub who was exposed to this ruinous system of mismanagement. Be it enough to say, that his personal fortunes, as well as his character and conduct, appeared to receive their impress from his evil training. Under different auspices he would probably, nay certainly, have turned out better. As it was, he showed brains enough to entitle him to be called scatter-brained, and to induce a belief that if his intellect had been judiciously cultivated, it might have even been respectable. The grotesque part of the affair was, that whilst this poor creature was the wreck of unregulated impulses and passions, the dean, whose selfish and criminal negligence was primarily in fault, looked blandly round upon the world for the applause due to a judicious and affectionate parent.

Meanwhile, years rolled on, and the dean became a bishop. His own indefatigable industry, backed by Lady Knockmaroon's interest, achieved this promotion for him.

And here his conduct did him real and enduring honour; for having arrived at the episcopal bench, he forthwith began to show that his ambition was *not* inordinate, and that his thirst for advancement *could* be satiated. He could now afford to act upon his private convictions. He had got enough to satisfy him; and he gave his talent and energy, freely and heartily, to the cause of Irish liberty. He had always had strong intellectual impulses in favour of what was right and just; but these were too often countervailed by his overwhelming selfishness. He now was placed above all petty influences; and whilst, with his eloquence in the House of Lords, and his pen in the public press, he ably advocated the rights of the nation, he also raised and armed, at his own expense, a battalion of the volunteers in 1779. He possessed so many claims upon my admiration, that I thought with tenfold grief upon his imperfections. He served his country well. Had his moral qualities been equal to his intel-

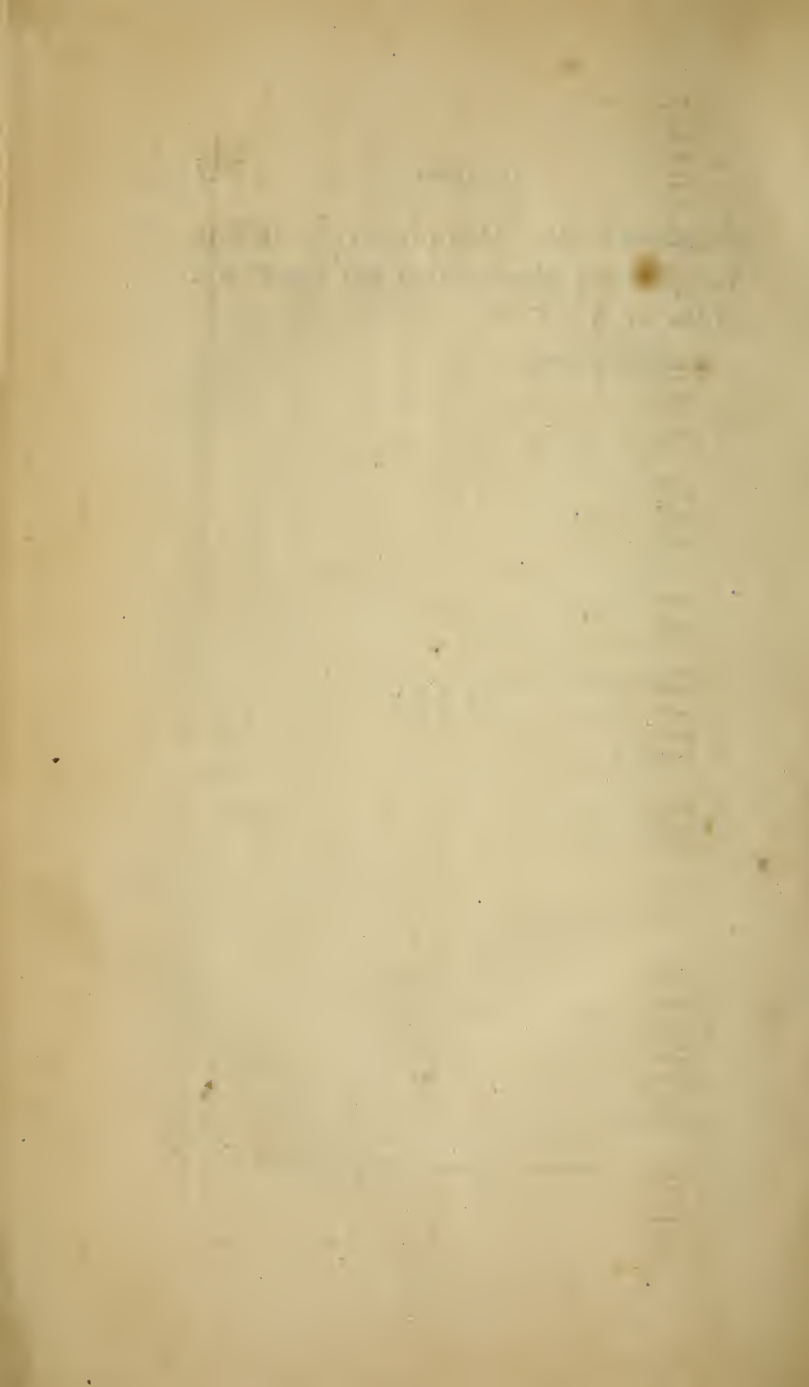
lectual, he would have been one of the noblest beings heaven ever created. Whilst he powerfully backed up the efforts of Grattan, I worked humbly in the patriot-band of the House of Commons. It was—it *is*—a glorious era. The whole nation was inspired with the sentiment of liberty. Each man's heart was an altar, upon which the sacred fire burned; and each man deemed life cheap and worthless when placed in the scale against his country's freedom. Much has been done; but all our gains may be snatched from us in some future hour of weakness, unless the strength of the Irish parliament and people be consolidated by Reform and Catholic Emancipation.

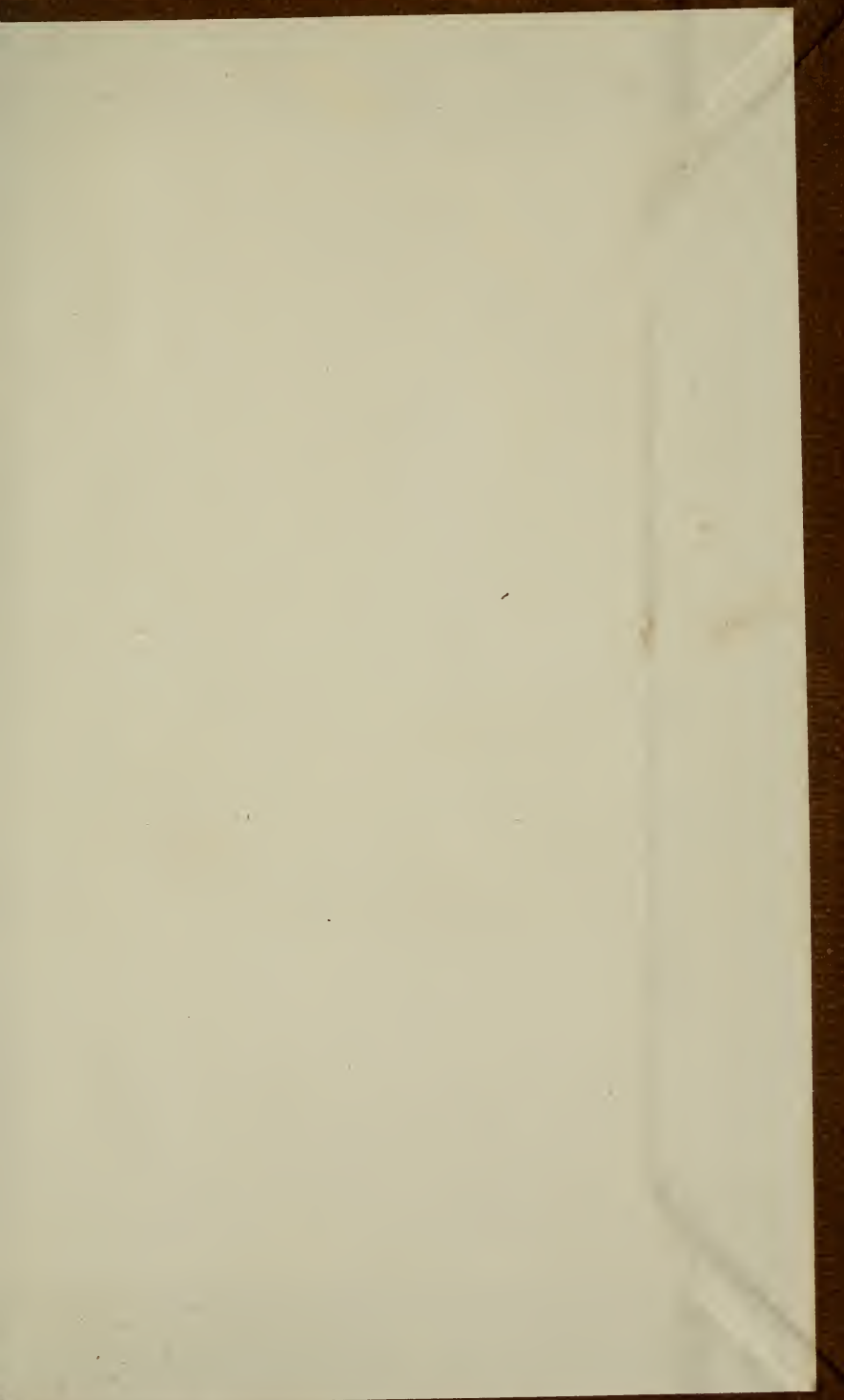
My tale is ended. This is Saint Patrick's Day, and I must attend the review of the citizen army in the Park. I hear the roll of their drums, and the boom of their cannon. We have seen the triumph of their virtue in the independence of our

parliament. May God preserve to Ireland
the priceless blessing that her sons have
nobly won!

17th March, 1783.

THE END.





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